For novelist Stephanie Johnson, her relationship with Australia and Australians has been a complex one. She has lived there for periods of her life, and several of her books, including her first, a collection of short stories, have been published in Australia.

For Johnson, her longing to return has waxed and waned. ‘Why don’t I live there?’ she often asks herself. She is a sixth generation New Zealander married to an Australian, with adult children living (at times) in Australia.

In this BWB Text, a leading New Zealand novelist explores her elusive and ambivalent feelings about the sunburnt country as she follows her singer/songwriter son Skyscraper Stan on tour in Australia.

2016 publication; 84 pages; includes sources.

THEMES
Identity; Australian New Zealanders; writing memoir; musicians; working in the arts; writers; being a New Zealander

SOME CONNECTIONS
- Stephanie Johnson’s fiction, such as: The Shag Incident (2002); Music From a Distant Room (2004); John Tomb's Head (2006); and The Writing Class (2013)
- BWB Texts On Coming Home by Paula Morris and Thorndon by Kirsty Gunn

CURRICULUM AREAS
English; social studies