I'm not sure exactly what I'm doing but I know you're going to help me. We need to work together to figure this out. Your intuition is crucial, maybe we can work off your powers when I'm upside down. Your mother and your father... they need us. We need to figure out the mystery of your powers and how to control them. It's important to protect us from harm. Your father and your mother... they need us. We need to figure out the mystery of your powers and how to control them. It's important to protect us from harm. Your father and your mother... they need us. We need to figure out the mystery of your powers and how to control them. It's important to protect us from harm.
Kirsty Murray

Working on 'The Blooming' with Manjula made me realise that when you start weaving a story with someone, threads will connect you to each other across time and space, across oceans, continents and cultures. I’d admired Manjula’s writing for years, so when she suggested we play a writerly version of a game called ‘Exquisite Corpse’ I was a little daunted. Would I be able to keep pace with such a formidably clever and talented author? Each of us wrote a section of the playscript without knowing the other’s intent. We didn’t discuss the story at all but sent each other a ‘surprise’ section of the manuscript every few days, bouncing scenes, characters and dialogue back and forth across cyberspace until the story had formed itself. The strangest thing was to discover that sometimes our thoughts were interconnected, even though we’ve never met. Symbiosis, imprinting and clones aren’t exactly mainstream ideas but they came to us simultaneously and found expression in our collaboration. Truth is stranger than fiction and every thought you conjure connects you to someone else.

THE RUNNERS
Isobelle Carmody

I never much liked the idea of collaboration because I thought it would be all about having to compromise, but when Kirsty Murray sent me a link to the website of the illustrator she proposed to match me with, I couldn’t resist having a peek. That was all it took to be blown away. Prabha is brilliantly versatile and amazingly talented. Dabbling in drawing in my own books has made me a lot more interested in artwork, and reverent when I stumble on someone who does it really well. So the thought of having Prabha draw my story was completely enchanting. I couldn’t wait to see what she would come up with and I loved her illustrations enough to cut thousands of words down to a few, so that there would be plenty of room for her to spread her wings, artistically speaking. I feel absolutely honoured to be able to work with her, and we are already plotting to collaborate again.

Prabha Mallya

Creating The Runners was a gradual process of working with a detailed futuristic world and characters with backstories, extracting from it all just enough to tell What Happened, with clues to the How and the Why and the What If? for a dreamlike read to flow.