

# THE HEART OF DESTRUCTION



WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY  
SFCC MELTON I



THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT

**WRITE A BOOK IN A DAY**

## Parameters Form

### Team Details

STATE: VIC  
DIVISION: Upper School (Required word count 3500 to 5000 words)  
SCHOOL/GROUP: St Francis Catholic College - Melton  
TEAM NAME: SFCC Melton 1  
TEAM ID: 1658

### Parameters and random words

#### Parameters

Primary character 1 Carpenter  
Primary character 2 DJ  
Non-human character Canvas bag  
Setting Yacht  
Issue Hidden treasure

#### Random words

event  
crisp  
elastic  
clumsy  
bright

### Instructions

- Start no earlier than **8am**
- Write an original story:
  - based on all **five parameters** (above)
  - including all **five random words** (above) as written, and in bold type
  - with some identifiable **Australian content** (in theme or setting or characters, etc)
  - keeping within the allowed word count (remember every word on every page counts!)
  - include this parameters form in your book **immediately after the front cover**
- Remember: **Every** word on **every** page counts. This includes your front cover, back cover, blurb, acknowledgements and copyright form.
- **Be sure to give yourself enough time to submit your book and complete the following checklist before 9pm**

Log on to the Team Coordinator Portal to:

- ☐ Check the spelling of your team name and team members' names  
(how these are spelt on submission will be how they are displayed on certificates)
- ☐ Complete the Declaration
- ☐ Submit your finished book in **both** PDF and plain text format by 9pm

## **Copyright**

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## **Acknowledgment of Country**

**SFCC Melton 1 would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this book was created, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin nation and pay our respects to Elders past and present.**

**SFCC Melton 1 would also like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which this book will be read. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.**

## Chapter 1

The waves were crashing off the Northeast Coast of Queensland, Australia. A large, brown yacht sits at the pier idly. It was quite a large yacht that looked as if it came straight out of a steampunk fairytale, with intricate cogs and wheels clanking together to keep the boat running. A sun-kissed man with dirty blonde hair wiped the sweat off his brow and continued to hammer at the worn, dark wooden floorboards.

“Hey Lachie! You finished yet?” A taller man yells.

“Nah mate, I’ve still got a bit to go over ‘ere”, Lachie replies.

It was a bright, sunny afternoon in the Sunshine State, and preparations were underway to host the biggest yacht party of the year – The Rocking Rave. Lachie and a few other skilled tradies were hired to fix the yacht in time for the established guests.

“These yuppies are working me to the bone out here,” Lachie heaves.

“Hey at least we’re getting paid well – we’re on a good wicket here.” The other man replied.

“I guess so.”

The yacht bobbed up and down in the dock while the tradies slaved away tirelessly. Lachie was a carpenter who had been hired to repair the floors of the yacht and was well known for his work in restoring beautiful houses in Teneriffe. However, he got invited to work on the big yacht to attend the party as a valued worker.

“Useless.” Lachie mumbled.

“What?” The taller man asked.

“I just don’t see the point of keeping the Great Barrier Reef alive. I mean it’s almost dead anyway and it doesn’t serve much of a purpose other than looking pretty. There are so many resources that are laying there untouched.”

The other man paused for a moment and laughed.

“Are you serious mate? It’s a national treasure! What about the turtles?”

“There’s more ocean out there they can swim to...” Lachie hesitated.

“You’re nuts mate. Why are you so obsessed with machines anyway? You’re a bloody carpenter.” The other man laughed.

“I’m just saying. If machines can do things faster, why wait? I think that machinery will replace us all soon anyway.”

The men continued to work throughout the afternoon and finished with an hour to spare, except for Lachie, who continued to work until guests started arriving. It was party time.

## Chapter 2

The clock struck eight and the guests started flowing in immediately. Guests with jewellery and outfits that cost more than the average Australian's salary filled the yacht. Lachie looked out of place among the guests. With his goggles and rugged work boots making him distinguishable from a mile away. Lights shined brightly in various hues, flashing quickly while music played an almost deafening volume.

Half an hour passed with Lachie wandering around, bored and uninterested. It was the perfect time to familiarise himself with the people here.

A woman suddenly caught his eye. She stood atop of a small stand where the DJ booth laid, allowing her to play around with the music. Apparently, she owned the yacht. Tarni was her name.

The woman wore a white blouse, covered by a brown vest and corset. Her waist was adorned with emu feathers that draped atop her black skirt and tights.

Lachie sat near the bar while staring lifelessly into his drink. As he took a sip, he overheard two men talking about some treasure kept on the yacht.

"What'd you say?" Lachie said to the men next to him.

They paused for a second and looked at each other. One of the men finally spoke up.

"Oh... Well, we were hearing myths earlier about some kind of ancient treasure that's being kept somewhere on this boat. Apparently, it's some kind of indigenous artifact or something? Anyways... legend says that the item started the rise of industrialism in Australia," the man responded.

"Huh..." Lachie exhaled, turning back to his drink.

### Chapter 3

It was a crisp evening; the yacht glowed like a floating palace under the stars. The party was still ongoing, but the guests were enjoying the night— talking loudly and holding their glasses high.

Lachie started to walk away from the crowd, his boots making a solid sound against the deck. He was walking along the corridors of the yacht and saw a huge painting that covered the whole wall. It lit up with warm lights, and it looked beautiful; the painting had stolen his attention away from everyone else.

The painting depicted a group of people standing together on a sandy beach in the deep blue water. There were humanoid figures, all of them looked different but wore the same clothes while standing together. He could see every brush stroke and every fingerprint. The painting looked so alive that he could practically feel the cool spray of water and the smell of salt rising from the canvas by just looking at it.

Towards the group of people, he saw them all standing together. He noticed that their hands were raised and placed toward the centre of the scene. Their faces looked calm, steady and unbreakable.

They all stood as one. Lachie squinted his eyes and moved closer toward the painting. He noticed that everything was detailed, except for the one in the middle, which looked like it was intentionally blurred. He squinted harder.

"What in the world is this?" He exclaimed.

The colours were a mix of gold, silver, and deep blue—shining brightly under the lights. But one thing was very visible; every single person looked as if they were pouring their power into that mysterious entity in the middle. Lachie leaned in closer



out of curiosity. There was something being covered in a blurred, glowing spot in the middle of the painting. He didn't know what it was, but he knew it was something powerful, something that held all knowledge and all truth.

After his observations, he stepped back slowly. He did not understand exactly what the painting was trying to hide. He wanted to find the treasure. He wanted the truth. He wanted to know everything.

## Chapter 4

Lachie was still thinking of what he saw earlier. He started hearing noises of whispers, but his mind was still thinking about the painting, especially the bright, blurry spot in the middle. He stood near the railing, staring at the wall. He was just a carpenter, but he wanted to do more than that. He believed in industrialising Australia, and the painting was whispering to him that it had something that could help his plan.

"Hey..." A woman said

Lachie looked up. There was a woman in a formal, red dress standing closely to him. She looked gentle. After a while, the woman spoke.

"I see you were looking at this painting for a while, something bothering you?" she said.

"You were listening to the song too, weren't you? The one that Tarni was playing?"

Lachie was suddenly caught off guard when the woman talked about it. 'Does she know something?' He nodded.

"Yes. This may sound weird, but it sounds very familiar to me. Like I had heard it somewhere before." Lachie said cautiously.

The woman made a face toward the DJ and then looked back at Lachie. "That is an old, old song. It was sung in a language that has been spoken here for thousands of years. It tells a story about a tribe watching over something precious," the woman said.

Lachie listened carefully.

The woman spoke again.

"I heard a story once from a wise elder. He said a long time ago that there was a powerful being. He knew many things and had the power to do great things for the entire country. But its knowledge had a terrible cost. The country was damaged because of it; every great thing it made had its life taken," the woman said.

She softly laughed. "Kinda hard to believe though. That story was never proven as fact. That's just what I heard. It could be true or just another silly old theory. I mean who knows?" She smiled sarcastically.

With that, she turned away, leaving Lachie standing alone against the rail, thinking hard about everything she had told him.

## Chapter 5

Lachie sat at the edge of his assigned bed, his brow furrowing as he stared into nothing. From there, an imaginary scenario played out in his head, trying to piece together what this story could mean.

*'An ancient being... forbidden knowledge about the future?'*

The image of a large serpent appeared in his mind; its body caused plants in the surrounding area to die.

*'How did the Aboriginals feel?'* The image of the serpent then shifted into a group of Indigenous Australians who had terrified expressions on their faces as they witnessed the serpent destroy their homes.

*'Elimination. They had to eliminate the serpent. I would've done the same.'*

The man stood back up and paced around the lantern-lit room, a train of thoughts hitting him like a brick.

*"Shamans using their spells to bind this poisonous being and it's... knowledge together into one mystical and dangerous object that could grant great advancements to whatever technology obtained today. I need it."*

Lachie peered outside the window. The night sky being illuminated by the flashing lights.

*'That DJ girl. Does she know more about this thing? Could she be connected to it...?'*

Lachie made his way to the main room where the party was being held. His mind was set on the bright and proud individual managing the turn tables. He needed to investigate the reason for why she knew this song so well in the first place.

Pinks and blue lights blinded his vision, making him wince as he made his way to where the DJ stood. She was entirely focused on the music she was remixing; her hands skilfully danced around the sliders that changed different sounds.

“Hey, that song you sang last night was beautiful. Could you expand a little on the meaning behind it?” Lachie said as he leaned on the booth.

With a huff of annoyance, Tarni gazed up.

“Sorry, what...?”

“The song last night, could you explain the story behind it?”

“Oh. It’s an ancient dreamtime story passed down by my ancestors which explains how the world changed for the worse.” Her eyes travelled back down to the turntables, continuing to produce her music.

“Uh-huh... and what is this core device thing crafted by the shamans? If your ancestors were the ones who created and protected it, then their descendants must still be guarding it too, right?” Lachie leaned in closer, his eyes widening with an unsettling curiosity.

“The remains of that dead beast...? It’s unknown where it is currently... um... yeah.” She began to sweat, having been caught off-guard at the sudden

bombardment of questions. Her hand clutched her canvas bag but instantly let go of it.

She began to panic further as she witnessed the man's eyes were now glued to her bag. "Hey, personal space mate; quit staring at my things—"

"What's in there?" Lachie questioned.

The woman's gaze darkened as she shoved him away with a rough grunt. A silence soon filled the room as she turned off the music.

"Crikey... Alright mob, let's finish off the party for tonight, this fella over here is a bit of a creep, eh?"

Tarni then shot him a dirty look before exiting the booth.

## Chapter 6

It was morning once more. Having slept a little late that night, Lachie was still a little drowsy because of the lack of sleep. Still, his mind was entirely filled with future technological advancements that could be made somewhere in the future. He just needed one last component that could perhaps provide him with this knowledge.

**He needed that core.**

Lachie made his way towards the main deck again. The man's eyes widened; the DJ was there, but the component he needed wasn't — the bag was missing. As soon as she saw him, a sneer stretched upon her face. Lachie couldn't help but feel a surge of irritation bubble in his stomach. Tarni approached him, her posture straight and arrogant with every step towards him.

"You do understand that this yacht is welcome to allies of the aboriginal people only, yes?" Her gaze darkened suddenly. "So, are you going to leave or respect me? Because I'm not afraid of dropping you off in the middle of this rancid sea."

Lachie had the urge to cackle right there in front of her face. As 'intimidating' as she tried to be, she couldn't ever affect his pursuit of advancement.

"Who said I wasn't an ally? I just want to learn about your history. Why are you so sensitive?" He spat back almost instantly.

She didn't reply. Instead, she gave him a look of shock before storming off once more down to the kitchen.

It was the afternoon and people were getting ready for Tarni's presentation. Lachie sat down, trying to calm his mind when suddenly, the soft thud of her footsteps caused the group to quiet down.

"Welcome mob, thank you all for the time you have put in on this cultural journey! I hope you've learned much about my culture as a descendant of the Nyawaygi tribe. Our time is almost up!"

"Sometimes, people breach my borders like my dear friend, Lachie or whatever... **Sometimes**, people end up being **too** clumsy, putting their grimy hands in places they don't belong... Life as an indigenous Australian is hard."

The entire meeting was a blur to him, but the sudden mention of his name snapped him out.

Everyone in the group looked over at him in an instant.

"How great," he murmured under his breath before getting up and walking away without a word, their stares following him.

*'No one gets to humiliate me like this. Trust me, she won't get the last laugh I'll get that artifact.'*



## Chapter 7

The next day, he spent most of his time looking for the darn thing.

Her room? Empty

The kitchen? Empty

The engine room? *Empty!*

There wasn't anything near the mural either, which made Lachie spiral out of control. For some reason, he felt this irresistible obsession with this **thing**. It was his last step in his pursuit of total industrialisation.

Lachie began to feel defeated. He had circled the yacht until his legs had started to cramp and the walls started to blend into one. *'Where could this stupid treasure be? This yacht is so big.'*

He made his way into Tarni's room when out of the blue, a quiet creak escaped the floorboards. Lachie glanced around and began to shimmy the floorboard out of its place, revealing a shallow hole, which had a dark green canvas bag sitting in the darkness. An ordinary looking bag. However, there was a faint glow escaping the bag, which made him reach to grab it.

He slowly opened the bag to reveal a glowing orb, which suddenly sprouted void-like hands, stretchy as elastic, that tried to pull Lachie into the bag. He resisted the arms and threw the bag onto the ground, gasping in shock.

He desperately tried to calm himself down, as a million questions spiralled in his head.

*'What is that thing? Is it even real? Am I hallucinating?'*

He paused for a moment, then inched closer to the bag. *'Is this the orb...?'*

## Chapter 8

Lachie stared down at the rusted sphere.

It laid in his hand, roughly the size of his palm, rather innocent looking for the great power it supposedly held. Its surface was covered in rusted, interlocking pieces of metal, engraved with images of Aboriginal dot paintings. There were remnants of colour in the engravings, as though it had once been coloured with natural paints that had eventually faded away.

He sighed. “Well, that’s underwhelming — definitely doesn’t feel as though it stores great power.”

Lachie reached into the pockets of his work apron and pulled out his carpentry tools. He then began to tinker with the core with a screwdriver.

*Click.*

The carpenter jumped as a burst of light briefly filled the room. He looked down at his hands clenched around the core and stared in astonishment as the interlocking plates on the core slid back to reveal... another sphere. But this one was made of wood and glowed with purple light.

He furrowed his brows in confusion, that quickly turned into amazement as he realised what he was looking at.

“*This* is the core! Crikey, this power... It’s like holding the sun in the palm of my hand!” He jumped up and paced around the cramped space of his room animatedly. “This is incredible! All this energy stored inside, this could do so much, maybe it could even kickstart another industrial revolution! It could launch us into the

future! All the new technology that could be built because of this,” Lachie raised his hands up excitedly, “This could make *the world* a better place! With this power-”

The ship groaned loudly and began to sway from side to side.

Lachie jumped again.

“What-“

He lowered his hands and froze as he looked down at the core.

The purple glow intensified, and Lachie threw open his door and sprinted out onto the deck in panic.

Outside, the smog had thickened, and the sea was turning pitch black and spreading like tar from the yacht, staining the ship’s sides black. Lachie sprinted to the railings on the side of the ship and gasped as one by one, dead fish started floating up to the surface.

The core’s glowing intensified even more, and his eyes widened as streaks of grey were absorbed into the sphere.

Tarni threw open the doors to the ship.

**“What have you done!?”** Have you any idea what you’ve released?!”



Lachie stammered.

“I- Well- With the amount of energy the core produces, it could-”

He blinked in surprise as he registered what she was wearing. Tarni had traded her usual DJ outfit into her traditional attire, dressed in a black tube top with kangaroo skin over a black skirt. She’d adorned herself with necklaces of shells and a headband with a feather, and had painted ochre on herself. She marched towards him with a sudden surge of strength.

“NO! Look around you, do you really think that this is innovation? That this...” gesturing around at the steadily growing black stain on the ocean and the growing number of lifeless sea life floating to the surface, “...is the future? This is nothing but

death! You're **poisoning** the land!" With every word she stormed angrily towards the carpenter.

"I- And?! Who cares about the land, when with this we could create so much new technology?!" Lachie hissed back agitatedly as he clutched the core—ominous streaks of grey surrounding it and all—to his chest. "What does the land even do for us that technology can't do better? It's a terrible trade-off, but a necessary sacrifice! What does it matter anyway! The land's already polluted and it's too much work to fix it now, we may as well just do what we can with what's left!"

Tarni narrowed her eyes. "How dare you. The moment truly hard work is needed, you give up? You're incredibly selfish and lazy for a tradie; isn't hard work supposed to be your thing? The land **can** be saved, it's just that lazy people like you don't want to put in the hard work to do it!"

She froze suddenly and looked out to the ocean, where shadows appeared to rise from the blackened water.

## Chapter 9

“Those shadows...” Tarni gasped.

She walked slowly towards the railing; her fists relaxed as she gazed out at the sea and the growing number of shadows emerging from the water.

“They’re my **ancestors**. Those who fought the beast at the beginning, and those who have been guarding it ever since.”

Lackie stared up at the shadows surrounding the boat with fear and shock. “What? Are they coming closer?!”

Tarni’s ancestors converged on the boat as if pulled by some mysterious force. He glanced down at the glowing wood-encased core he still clutched to his chest. Deep in thought, he looked up and stared at the shadow waiting in front of him. Frozen in shock, he didn’t move away as the ancestor touched his forehead.

Suddenly, before him stood the view of Indigenous Australians preparing for something. Somehow, he knew that those were the ancient Nyawaygi peoples gathering in preparation for a great war.

They sharpened their spears and arrows and strung their bows in anticipation of a fight. The ground shook terribly as the sand and surrounding waters beneath them turned ash grey and a black as deep as tar. The strongest warriors ran in first, the black waters expelling a purple haze as the sky rapidly darkened to pitch black.

The battle fought was legendary, as warriors climbed and attacked the beast with a deep ferocity despite their own fear. The Nyawaygi had courage like no other and caused the beast to fall into the reef, a small tsunami following in its downfall.

The ancient tribe thought they could rest, but abrupt the remains of the giant beast began to melt into a deep, cursed ooze that acted as poison.

"These remains will infect the land."

"With the death of this land, comes the death of the people." The shaman said solemnly. "We must seal the remains, as we do not have the power to destroy it."

As one, the Nyawaygi peoples raised their hands towards the beast, and sealed the swirling miasma of purple-glowing remains in a wooden sphere engraved with Aboriginal dot paintings.

But this came at a cost.

Many of the Nyawaygi collapsed, their bodies and souls unable to bear the strain of sealing off the great beast.

The shaman silently walked forward and picked up the sphere—the **core**.

*'This was the core's origin.'*

"These remains hold great power, but it will corrupt anything it touches. From this day forward, we will pass down warnings of the harm it can do, and we must guard this from anyone who seeks its power." They looked over at the remaining people around them. "If we fail, the land will be poisoned. And with the death of this land-,"

Lachie's surroundings changed again, but to one with duller colours, and the shaman before him was replaced with another.

"-Comes the death of the people. They have taken the core and abused its power, and now look at the land! It is **poisoned**." As they spoke to the people



surrounding them they gestured at the land, impaled with pipes, the water dirtied with factory waste and the air choked with smog. “We must act **now**, perhaps we can’t fix the already existing damage, but we can stop it from decaying further, and one day our children will be able to bring back the land’s bounty. That alone, the promise of a better tomorrow for our children free of the haze and poisoned harvest, is *enough*.”

Lachie gasped. The core could create another industrial revolution. This was incredible! And yet, as he looked around at the worried Nyawaygi people as they expressed their concerns for the survival of their children, the dying animals, the poisoned food and water, he felt... uncertain. ‘Are they... right, about the core’s power?’

The scenery changed again, but this time Lachie’s surroundings were more familiar. A room built of concrete and metal that looked as if it belonged in a factory. Around him, men moved busily around a pedestal in the middle of the room.

On the pedestal was the *core*.

Atop the pedestal the core was currently being assembled into the form Lachie first found it in, contained within interlocking plates of unruined metal, though without the engravings. Then chaos erupted as Nyawaygi people burst into the room, overpowering the scientists and engineers within the room as they took back the core.

He watched as the surroundings shifted again, and he saw the current Nyawaygi shaman engraving the dot painting art that was within the metal casing, resealing the core, not as securely sealed as it was when the first shaman sealed it.

The world faded away and Lachie gasped as he saw the deck of the yacht. ‘I was wrong.’

He placed the core down and stepped back.

Alongside Tarni, her ancestors converged on the core and pushed the poison emanating from the beast's remains back down. With a final flash of purple light, her ancestors disappeared, the core sealed once more.

Lachie looked around at the now desolate landscape, while the ocean was no longer a deep black, it was still dirtied with waste and dead sea life. The Great Barrier Reef was basically dead.

"You're right, Tarni. I took the lazy way out with no thought to how people would be affected. I'm sorry."

Tarni sighed, her gaze heavy. "Then show me that you're sorry. Come on."

## Chapter 10

Lachie heaved as he pulled his net out of the cloudy blue waters, filtering the leftover black gunk out of the ocean. He laid his net down gently on the dark wooden floorboards of the yacht as he took a moment to catch his breath and look at the glistening waters.

The cleanup after the events that unfolded have lasted quite a long time, about three years now.

Lachie and Tarni were both trying to rebuild the environment after the core decimated a chunk of the Great Barrier Reef. However, they've made great progress in restoring the local ecosystems that thrived once before.

"I am going to be so happy the day this sea stops smelling like rotten eggs."  
Tami exclaimed

"Yeah same..." Lachie chuckled.

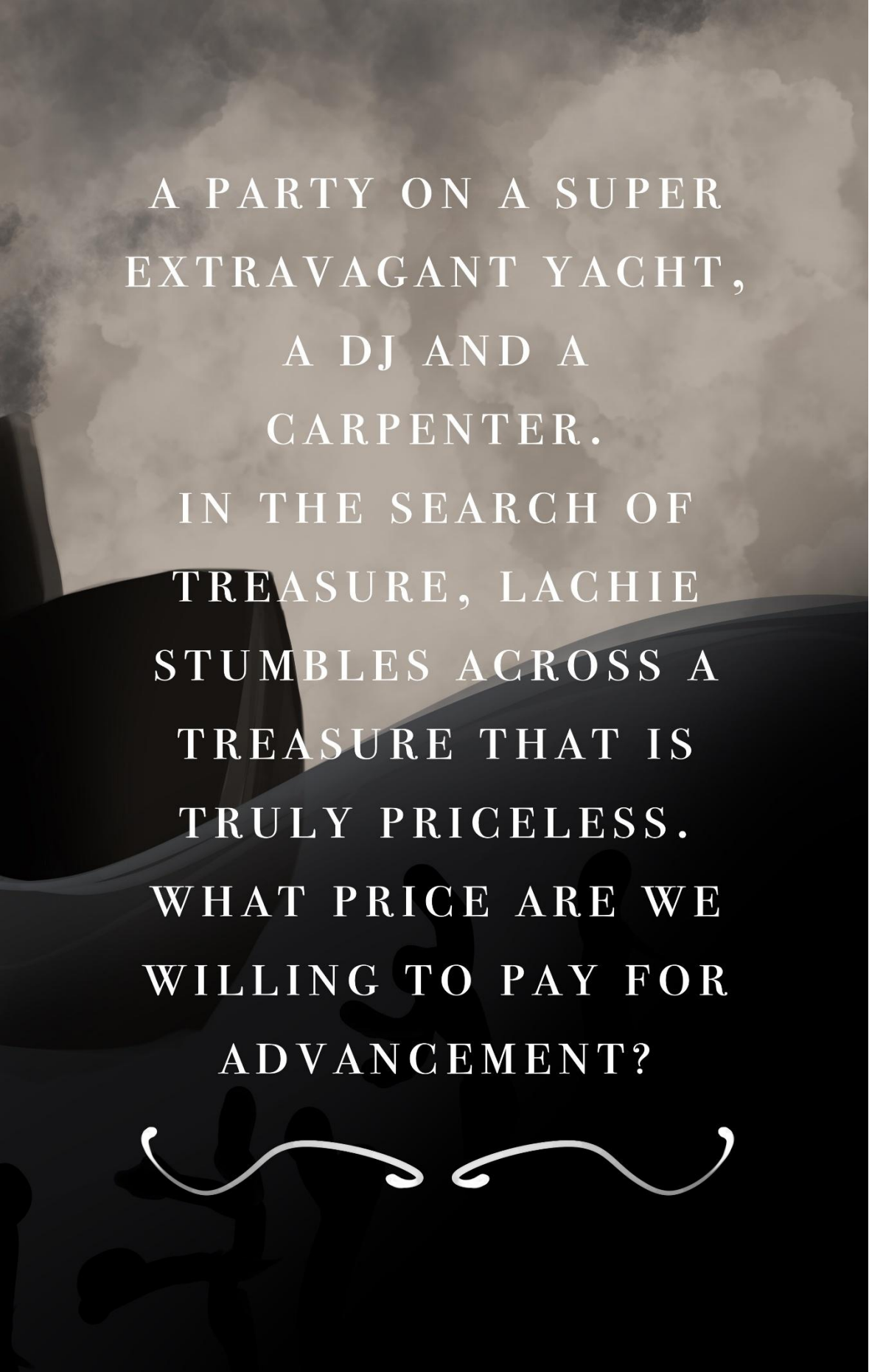
They both sat on the deck together in silence, letting the sunlight beam on their faces.

"Hey. I just want to say... I'm sorry for what I did to you, Tarni. I know how much this sea means to you, and I just ruined everything because I was reckless and irresponsible." Lachie said with his head in his hands

“Lachie, look... What you did was terribly reckless, but thing is, you’ve been here doing everything you can to help. You’ve been endlessly filtering and cleaning these seas, so stop beating yourself up.” Tarni said.

“Yeah... I know.” Lachie sighed.

“Although we still have a lot left to do, you've shown up, and that's amazing. Cmon, let's grab a coldie.” Tarni said while grabbing Lachie's arms.



A PARTY ON A SUPER  
EXTRAVAGANT YACHT,  
A DJ AND A  
CARPENTER.

IN THE SEARCH OF  
TREASURE, LACHIE  
STUMBLES ACROSS A  
TREASURE THAT IS  
TRULY PRICELESS.  
WHAT PRICE ARE WE  
WILLING TO PAY FOR  
ADVANCEMENT?

