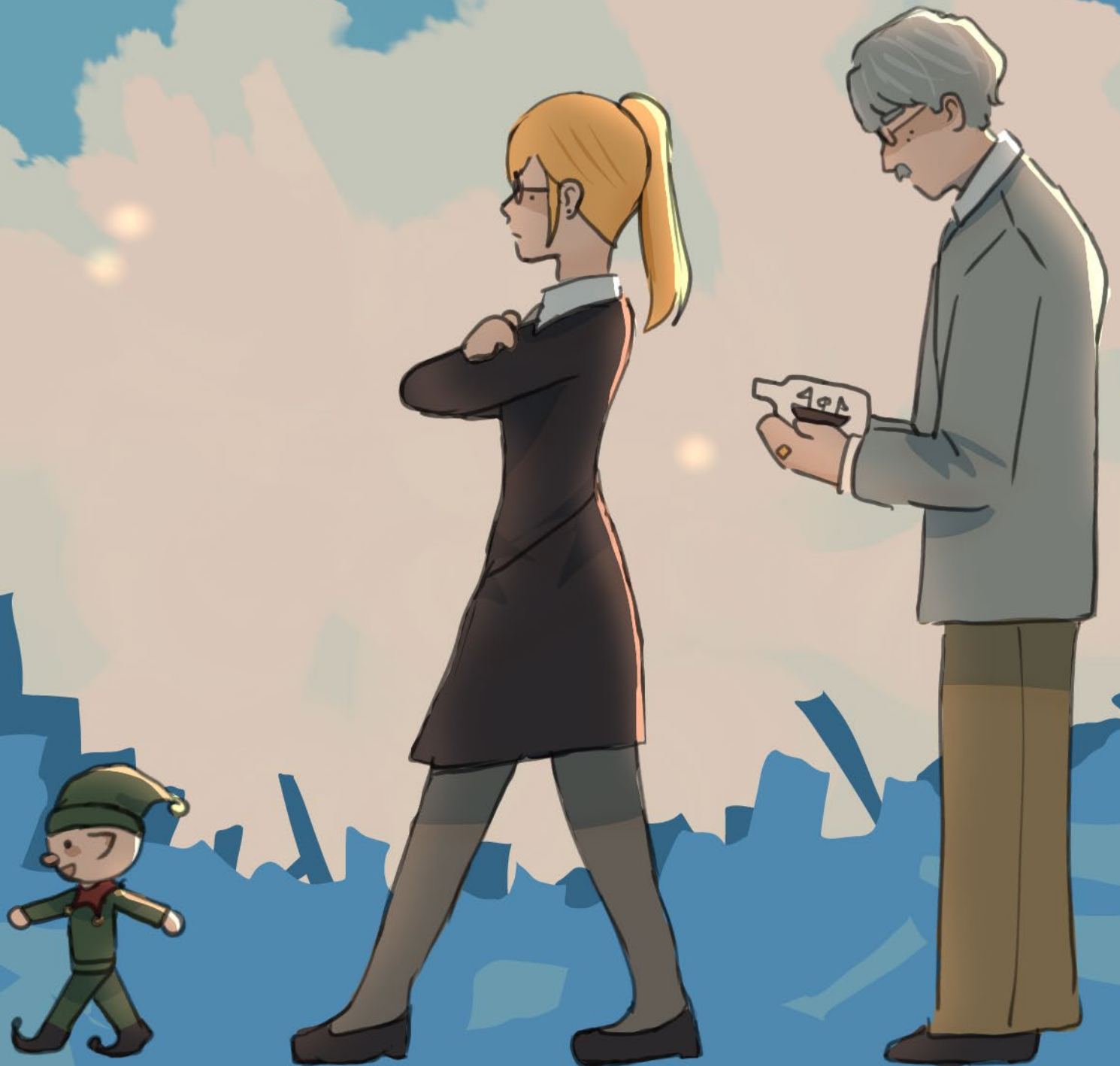


# DOCKED BY DAWN

written by SFCC Melton 8, St. Francis Catholic College





# THE KIDS' CANCER PROJECT WRITE A BOOK IN A DAY

## Parameters Form

### Team Details

STATE: VIC  
DIVISION: Middle School  
SCHOOL/GROUP: St Francis Catholic College (MELTON)  
TEAM NAME: SFCC Melton 8  
TEAM ID: 1298

### Parameters and random words

#### Parameters

Primary character 1 Bookshop owner  
Primary character 2 Tailor  
Non-human character Elf  
Setting Rubbish tip  
Issue Shipwrecked

#### Random words

swept  
dazzling  
faded  
wrinkled  
quirky

### 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

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Illustrators: **Kai Del Mar, Lorebeth Palar**

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# CONTENTS

**Chapter 1** – Rushwell Island

**Chapter 2** – Shipwrecked

**Chapter 3** – Seeking Help

**Chapter 4** – Kicked Out

**Chapter 5** – The Tailor’s Aid

**Chapter 6** – We’ll try it Ourselves

**Chapter 7** – What a surprise

**Chapter 8** – The Big Purple Ship



## Rushwell Island

The waves **swept** against the glistening sand of Rushwell's shore. Rushwell Island was mostly known as a dumping ground for Australian scraps. Plastic pieces covered every corner of the city, creating a musty scent that filled the air. There, an old man stood with his feet in the water, feeling the sharpness of the plastic rubbing against his toes. A **wrinkled** frown adorned his sharp face, as he pondered his sad life.

The music from the nearest tailors rang in his ears, the soft and sombre melody of the store creating a melancholic atmosphere. The moody man looked up over the doc to see that tailor shop, knowing who resided inside of it.

Katarina, a middle-aged woman, who had a passion for donating newly fixed clothing to the poor, sat atop her stool, fixing up a shirt that belonged to a 10-year-old child who ripped his shirt searching for metal scraps to sell. Katarina couldn't help but feel bad for the children that lived in Rushwell, a lot of them didn't have the chance to have a proper childhood.

The woman's gaze travelled down to the beach ahead, looking at the man who stared back at her with disdain. She felt the tension as soon as her eyes met his, feeling his resentment from where she was. This wasn't so surprising though; Katarina was used to it. *He was like that to everyone.*

Ever since she met the poor guy near that one neighbourhood, she knew that he was bitter and didn't even bother to pry.

Albert shifted his head back and saw another flying boat that he did not recognise. There were many other trade ships that come from the mainland, both in the air and the water. This wasn't something that would usually appear, but he couldn't even care less.

He turned his body away from the shore and the man slowly made his way towards his old suburban home that was planted in a small, grubby neighbourhood.



## Shipwrecked



*CRASH*

The ship's metal creaked and groaned, warping under the pressure. A little elf named Chippy squeaked in terror, his hands frantically pressing various buttons and levers in a desperate attempt to regain control over his ship. He yelped as the ship hit a particularly rough turbulence, although he was thankfully strapped into his chair, which stopped him from being tossed into walls. Looking around as his ship quickly became decimated and burnt, small fires lighting into existence everywhere, he rapidly realised that he needed to abandon his ship.

Chippy slowly turned around to stare at a large red button with a plastic case around it. Pushing back tears, already mourning the loss of his ship, he raised a shaking hand towards it, flipped the case open, and firmly pressed the button.

*WHOOSH*

A hatch above Chippy snapped open and the little elf was ejected out into the sky, leaving his falling wreck of a ship behind.

Chippy let out another squeak as he fell into a rubbish bag. He stood up shakily, dusting himself off and still trembling with adrenaline, he looked up to see mountains upon mountains of trash. There were towers of cars, piles of rubbish bags, and a few scavenging animals rooting around for scraps of food. The mountains of trash rose up from beyond the horizon, towering over the little elf and casting him in shadow.



Chippy frowned as he turned his head this way and that. This place was a wasteland, dull and bleak. It was... depressing to look at the dismal place.

Thick white smog filled the sky, pollution evident wherever Chippy looked. It showed in how it was harder for him to breathe, the smoke choking his lungs, the random dirty pieces of broken plastic strewn everywhere, and the stinky trash flung into messy piles.

Distantly, Chippy heard a loud bang. He turned around in surprise, which quickly shifted into panic as he saw his precious ship off in the distance swan dive towards the ground and splinter into pieces. The elf froze at the sight, and his spirits plummeted and cracked open like his ship did just then.

He stood there for a while, his eyes quickly tearing up, as he looked at the burning wreckage of his ship with growing dread. After what felt like lifetimes had passed, the sky had lightened from pinks and reds to a nice, pale blue and he turned around in sorrow. Tears dripped down his cheeks. He couldn't stand to look at his ship, the ship that he had built with his own *sweat and tears and blood*, the ship that he had just witnessed meet its fiery end. He had created so many memories, gone on so many adventures with it, and dropped off so many presents to children. Now, it was gone. Destroyed by an unfortunate coincidence and his own poor travel planning. He had just wanted to collect materials to make presents for the kids!

Behind him, Chippy noticed a village, illuminated by the rays now beaming brightly from the sun. It was small, evidently run down, and rather dilapidated. The colour on the wooden panels of the houses facing the sea were pale and fading, black mould slowly creeping up to the rafters. The houses closer to Chippy, and closer to the trash piles, were made out of bricks slowly turning green with moss and weathered with age. The pipes on the houses' roofing were overcome with rust, the few untouched spots that were still a shining bronze standing starkly out.

Chippy slowly made his way towards the small village, gracefully skipping around the towers of trash around him, his eyes **dazzling** in the sunlight. As he got closer, he noticed how quiet the village was, the few people he could see out and about were melancholic and gloomy. They walked slowly with their shoulders hunched, heads down and eyes downcast, some lugging around scrap pieces of metal.

The first building he came across was old, older than even the buildings surrounding it, vines creeping down the sides. The sign told Chippy that it was a bookshop. He hesitantly reached out a hand and pushed the door open.



## Seeking Help

A bell chimed when Chippy opened the door, the lights were dimmed, and the walls were filled with books. There were all different types of books on the shelves, the shop looked very old-fashioned, and you could tell it was built in the 18 hundreds. A sliding ladder was sitting in the corner of the room.

Chippy wondered around, looking up at all the novels and admiring how many books there were when suddenly an old grumpy man walked out.

“Who are you?” an old man appeared from behind a bookshelf.

“The names Chippy mate, I need help getting back’ome.” Chippy huffed out; his Australian accent included a **faded** hint of British.

“Where’d you come from?” He grunted.

“I’m from North Aus.” Chippy replied.

“Why do you need to go home so bad?”

“I was trying to get materials for the presents this year for Santa and the crew, I got sent out alone since I know the way to where everything is. Santa said that my route was clear and there wouldn’t be any wind or any disruptions, but he must have read it wrong because halfway through my trip, my ship got smacked by the wind and I lost control of the gears. I tried to regain control, but the wind was too strong, and I crashed out here this morning, I need to get back before dawn or else I’ll have to wait ‘till next year to enter again.” He said with a soft sigh.

“Enter where?” He asked.

“The North silly, don’t be around the twist!” Chippy laughed to himself.

“Well, I can’t help you.” He grumbled aggressively.



## Kicked Out



Chippy's eager smile slowly wavered, and for a moment he remained silent, allowing the air to linger.

"Sorry?"

Albert shook his head and repeated himself, reaffirming the statement that he just couldn't help him, nor did he really want too either. As strange as the encounter was, Albert didn't care.

"Come on sir, won't ya help a poor little elf out?"

Chippy pleaded once more, bringing his hands together and batting his eyelashes. Albert's patience was thinning with each plea, and as Chippy kept urging Albert to help, the old man snapped.

"Enough!" His deep voice bellowed, echoing as it bounced off the bookshelves.

He took a broom which was propped up against the wall and pointed it at the little elf.

"An elf like you yaps too much. I don't care where you're from and what you need. I told you; *I can't help*. What part do you not understand?" Albert stepped closer, sweeping the broom through the air.

Chippy's eyes were wide as he took multiple steps back. "What a grumpy old man!" He thought to himself fondly, the bell on his hat jingling with each swift movement he made. Albert thought that Chippy was reminiscent of a rodent, which made him even more eager to have him out the door.

"Please, sir!" Chippy kept begging, dodging each attack from Albert.

“Where am I supposed to go?”

“Well, aint that a pity story?” Albert scoffed,

“We all got lives of our own, and some of us can’t afford to bring another one in. It’s all or nothing. Now *scram!*”

Chippy wondered how the old man had gotten so hardened, with such a sad, cold heart and eyes that were shallow. Chippy held no hate towards him, because he knew that something sad must’ve happened. And so, instead of looking at the old man with disdain, he looked at him with pity. “Everyone has a good heart!”. That was the idea that Chippy lived by throughout the years, that everyone, deep down, no matter how calloused, has some good in them. That belief made Chippy even more determined.

In a swift motion, Chippy clung onto the old man and wailed. “Please, sir! At least let me stay the night!”

“What?! Get off me, you rodent!” Albert spun around, bumping into his shelves and causing a mess.

Books scattered across the floor, taking the trinkets he collected with them. After the chaotic scene, Albert had finally taken a hold of Chippy, pulling the little elf from his shirt.

Albert held him up and pointed his finger at him, scolding the poor elf. “I’m telling you; *I can’t help*. Why don’t you go off and bother someone else? Say, that tailor right by the shore? I’m sure she’d love the company.”

Chippy smiled gleefully.

“Would she?”

“Of course, of course. Now get outta here!”

Albert set Chippy down and opened the door for him. Chippy murmured a little “thank you”, but Albert had already slammed the door before he could hear Chippy’s gratitude. The little elf huffed with amusement before he set off to go find the generous tailor. As Chippy walked, his smile would waver once more upon seeing just how trashed the entire place was. There were skyscrapers made of plain metal, and the floor, which was supposed to be painted green with grass, was nothing but dirt and rubbish.

Santa never mentioned giving presents to this place either and this broke Chippy’s heart.

“Goodness, isn’t this place a dump!” Chippy whispered to himself. Finally, after navigating his way through the mountains of junk, he had found a small little tailor shop wedged between two hills of tires. Chippy took a breath in, held it, and trudged forward with his best smile.



## The Tailor's Aid

The door creaked open as Chippy made his way into the tailor shop. He studied the interior of the shop. Sewing supplies were displayed everywhere, fabrics and sewing threads of all colours showcased on the wall. There were many different sized boxes stacked atop each other against the wall with different labels. The soft music entered Chippy's ears and put him at ease in an instant, a faint sound of tearing and metal scissors clipping could be heard in the background. Chippy's focus eventually settled on a determined looking woman, hacking away at a royal-blue-coloured fabric. The woman eventually looked up and saw Chippy standing in the doorway.

"Can you close the door please? It stinks out there and it's way too cold." Katarina said softly.

"Oh! Alright mate, sorry about that." Chippy exclaimed.

"Who are you? Or rather... *what* are you?" She questioned.

"The name's Chippy, and I'm an elf from Northern Aus. I sailed here on a boat and got shipwrecked! I asked the fella across the block for help, but he showed me to the door! I was hoping that you could lend a hand with helping me get back home?" He explained.

"Nice to meet you Chippy, I'm Katarina, or Kat for short. I'll help you out later, I've got to stitch this blouse back together first, I'm busy now." Katarina said.

"It's urgent, I need to get back home by Dawn, the portal that can transport me back home will close by then and I'll be stuck in this dump forever!" Chippy blurted.

"Hey!" Kat shouted.

She rose from her chair and carefully placed her needle and thread down.



“This place is not a dump. It’s my *home*, so don’t use those words to describe it.”

“Sorry Kat. I just really need to get home, and I’m desperate!” He said in a defeated tone.

Kat paused for a moment, then sighed. She gazed down at Chippy and then a slight frown appeared on her face.

“Fine. I guess I must help you with utmost haste before your portal closes. I despise talking to Albert, but we can’t build the ship without him. Follow me, Chippy.” Kat said.

They both exited the shop and made their way to Albert, who was inside his bookshop tidying up the mess he made earlier. Albert jolted at the sound of the door opening, turning around to see Kat and Chippy standing there.

“Oh. It’s you. What do you want?” Albert said with a scowl, staring intensely at Kat.

He looked towards Chippy.

“And *you*. I thought I told you to get out of here, you *pest!*” The old man said sternly.

“Albert. We may not be on the best of terms, but can you please help me get Chippy back home? It’s all I ask of you.” Kat said calmly.

“No! I’ve said it once and I’ll say it again. *Get out of here!*” Albert yelled.

“Is this what your wife would’ve done?! What would she have wanted?” Katarina blurted.

The room went silent. Albert stood there, paralysed with shock. The memory of his beloved seeped into his mind, her sweet smile, replaying.



## We'll Try It Ourselves

“I said no, leave it Katarina. Goodbye.” Albert said with a stern voice.

“We were only asking for help... Come on Chippy, let's go. We've got a boat to build.” Kat stormed out of the bookshop, leaving the bell ringing.



The poor old bookshop man had an immense feel of guilt wash over him.

“Is this what my wife would've wanted for me?” Albert thought to himself.

He shamelessly walked to his nook where his bed and desk laid. It's been a while since he'd seen images of his wife, he only thought about her. He sat on his bed and only reminisced about his lovely wife and the last time he ever felt happiness. When he was younger, the image of his future was clear but since the absence of his loved one, it's been a blur. Albert reached down below the bed to pull up a box that revealed a small wooden boat with the words 'I love you' carved into it. Tears started to slowly run down his cheek. He held the antique close to his chest, embracing the spirit of his spouse.

His wife was a marine engineer, it was her dream job and it's all she would talk about. All she wanted was to finish her career, but she never could. The old man thought that her dream was quite silly, but it's what made her happy. Could he continue this empty passion? Albert continued the life of his bookshop for her, but he knew there was more he could do. Missing her was all he ever felt but this time, it stirred a bit of determination. The young man inside of him gave him the realisation of what his wife would've wanted him to be. Chippy and Katarina were only asking for help - his wife would've done it. Albert got up from his bed and

placed the wooden boat in his pocket. He put on his trench coat and walked out of his bookshop, leaving the bell ringing.



## What a Surprise

Chippy and Kat walked to the scrapyard and started to plan how they were going to build the ship to get Chippy back home before dawn.

“How are we going to make this? You’re a tailor and I’m a little elf.” Chippy questioned.

“Don’t worry about that, if we work together and try hard enough, I know we can get it done.” replied Katarina.

Chippy and Kat began gathering pieces of wood and metal. Katarina was placing them on the floor and trying to imagine where she would put everything. Chippy continued to collect strong pieces of scrap and was adding to a pile for Kat to put together.

“I’m going to go back to my old ship and grab stuff from there, it’s made out of strong material and could really help us out.”

“Okay, be safe. I’ll be here if you need my help.” Kat reassured Chippy.

“Hold on. Why are you even helping me, don’t you have better things to do?” asked Chippy.

“Well, a lot of kids like me didn’t get a childhood, I grew up with absent parents. They were always too busy making money they never had any time to spare for me. My parents tried to give me everything with money but all I really wanted was to feel loved and spend time with my parents. So, I’ve always wanted to help out and do whatever I can to make sure someone else gets to grow up a little better than I did. Seeing other kids grow up with what I didn’t have fills that hole of sorrow in me.”

“That doesn’t make sense of why you’re helping me though, I’m not a kid.” He frowned, unamused.

“Oh yeah, I forgot. You sure look like one though” Katarina laughed to herself.

Chippy pretended to be hurt by Kat’s comment. The elf started walking to get the good materials from his old ship. As the tailor continued to put the ship together, she combined the wood to make a base, then attached metal onto the base to build the walls. Shortly after, Chippy came back with a whole bunch of red coloured metal and some gears that they could repurpose. As Kat was putting the ship together, she found that nothing was welding together properly, causing faults and cracks.

“Chippy, none of this is working. Let’s go back to my shop and get some supplies.”

“Okay mate.”

Chippy and Kat made their way over to Kat’s tailor shop. Travelling back to their work site, they were walking on the shoreline when they saw a huge purple boat. Both Katarina and Chippy’s jaws dropped to the floor.

“OMG!?! WHO’S BOAT IS THAT?” Chippy screamed excitedly.

“I DON’T KNOW BUT LET’S GO ASK!!” Kat said while running over to the boat.

As the two get closer to the humongous ship, they notice a recognisable face.

“KAT, IT’S ALBERT! HE BUILT A SHIP”

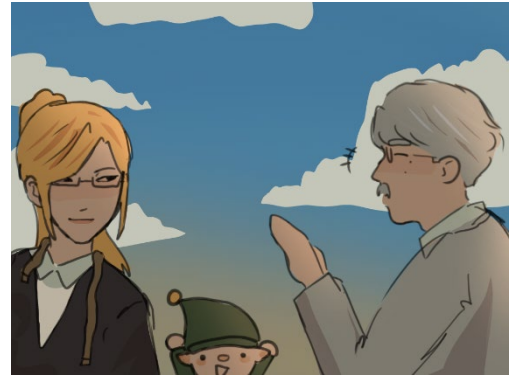
They run up to the ship. Albert was on top of the ship connecting the anchor with a **quirky** smile on his face.

“ALBERT HOW DID YOU MAKE THIS, AREN’T YOU AN OLD MAN?”



## The Big Purple Ship

“Thank you so much Albert, I shouldn’t have underestimated an old man like you.” Kat said with an audacious tone.



“Without you, I would never have been able to return back home before dawn.” Chippy exclaimed.

“Never underestimate the poor old men!” The old man chuckled.

Chippy got excited and jumped up on the boat, examining it.

“Careful now, it’s not finished yet.” Albert blurted out in slight panic.

Kat walked closer to Albert, giving him a look of gratefulness. She patted him on the shoulder and had an aura of appreciation.

“You know, I’m very proud of you. After all the years I’ve known you, you’ve improved. She’d be very proud.” Kat consoled.

“I’m sorry for my harsh words towards you Kat. I guess I was blinded by all my negative emotions, and I couldn’t find the things I could be positive about. Ever since her absence, all I knew was to say no to everyone and everything, but when I witnessed how generous you were, it reminded me of her. My perspective changed, and now I want to continue her story.” The man’s voice started to crack as he grabbed the small wooden boat from his pocket and stared at it.

“Albert... You were such a sweet man, and I’m honoured to be here by your side. I’m glad you’re back.” Kat rubbed his shoulder, a reassuring grin spreading across her face.

The precious moment was interrupted by a squealy voice.

“Well, I’m afraid I must be on my way now. I want to thank you all for helping me, I’d be stuck here if it wasn’t for you guys.” Chippy squealed.

Grief started to wash upon Katarina, it’s been her dream to explore the world, and discover places she’s never seen. Even though she loved helping others, she thought for once maybe it could be her turn.

“You know Chippy... I’d really love to come with you. It’s been my dream to explore since I was a little girl. I always see photos of magical places and just wish I could be there. Please, let me come.”

Chippy looked at Katarina. His eyes instantly lit up and he started glowing.

“Katarina, I’d love for you to come with me! Having an apprentice would be amazing and so much easier to manage my job. Also, it would work so well for you, I deliver presents for kids and aim to make childrens’ days every Christmas!” Chippy said with wide eyes and a high-pitched voice.

Kat began to smile, and she looked towards Albert.

“You should come too; you’d enjoy it as well.”

Albert looked back at Katarina with sorrowful eyes.

“I’m sorry Katarina but I’d rather not. I’m afraid I’ve got other things to do.” Albert looked down at the wooden boat once again and a small grin creeped up upon his face.

“Oh... Of course, I understand.” Kat replied with contemplative look.

“But that little elf really showed me the treasures of the little ones. Me and my wife always wanted kids, and that elf really reminds me of it.”



Kat giggled at the comment.

Albert looked at Katarina in the eyes and wished her farewell. The life of the old man has finally turned around, and happiness filled his heart. He started to feel grateful about everything and not dwell on the past.

Kat got onto the boat and stood next to Chippy.

“See ya later, Albert. It was nice meeting ya; I hope to see ya again!” Chippy exclaimed with a smile.

“Bye Albert, thank you for everything.” Katarina bid farewell to the old man.

Albert smiled back and held his wife’s antique tightly.

“Thank you for giving my life purpose, little elf.”



## EPILOGUE

The snow filled streets made it hard for Albert to even lift his leg. It was the one season that was able to melt all hearts, maybe even his own. The world around him seemed livelier and brighter. If it weren't for that little elf, he would not have felt this warm feeling inside. If it weren't for that little elf, he would have never been able to appreciate his life.

“Look, honey. I'm finally happy now... I hope that you're able to see my smile. The same one you had always loved.”

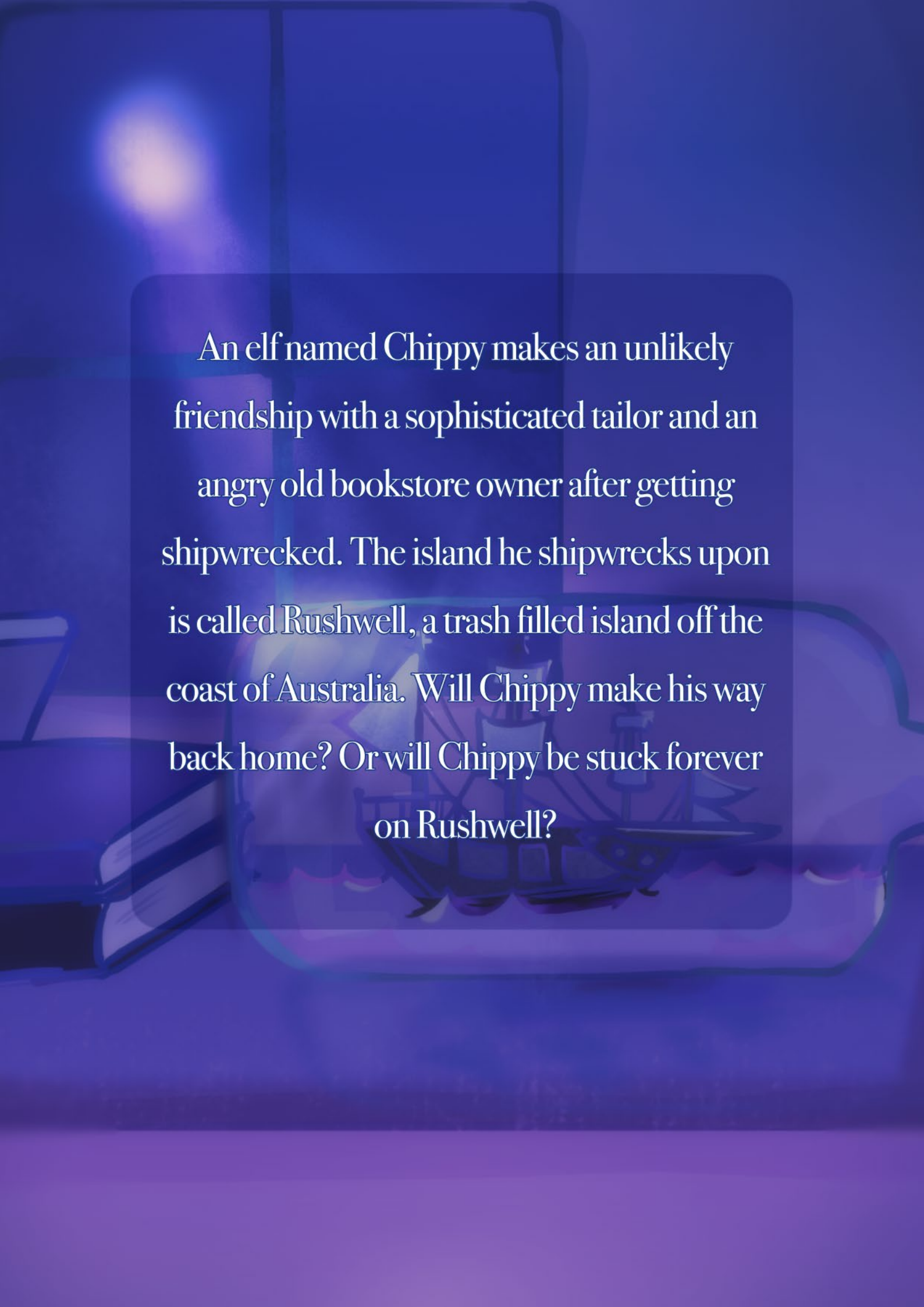
He sat up in the snow, slight shiver going down his spine as he felt the melted snow make his pants soggy. Albert kissed the grave, smiling down at it before closing his eyes and walking back to that same suburban village he lived in.

It was a surprising sight to see a little box, laid down on his front porch.

Picking it up, a tiny smile pulled at his mouth. He held the cover of the box in his hand, as he saw a bottle engulfed in pink shredded paper. As he lifted it out of the box, his heart raced as he witnessed a miniature version of the boat he built, inside the bottle, swaying back and forth.

The old man finally looked up, saw the small silhouette of a sleigh, and heard the signature jingle of the small elf's hat.





An elf named Chippy makes an unlikely friendship with a sophisticated tailor and an angry old bookstore owner after getting shipwrecked. The island he shipwrecks upon is called Rushwell, a trash filled island off the coast of Australia. Will Chippy make his way back home? Or will Chippy be stuck forever on Rushwell?