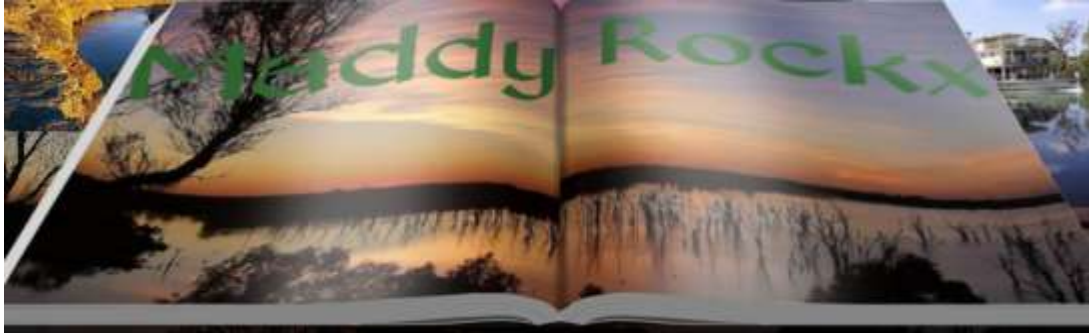


## ***Maddy Rockx,***



***By Rex Johnson,***

### ***Synopsis,***

*Kristy Stanford is a nineteen year old girl with plenty of sass.*

*On returning to her hometown of Rivers Landing, from College in Melbourne, she finds her father struggling to make ends meet doing occasional day trips, on his ageing Paddleboat Maddy. Not one to dwell Kristy decides to have a shot at kick starting the business. After convincing her father to renovate Maddy, she organizes an eight day Christmas/New Year's, Rock n Roll cruise to three river towns along Australia's Murray River.*

*Little did Kristy realize that the upcoming voyage would surpass her wildest dreams and outdo anything she had hope.*

*Jordan Samuels & Mitchell Hyland are twenty year old youths with average singing ability, laidback attitudes and dreams of greatness. Since leaving school they've worked part time at a fast food outlet. To make extra cash and improve their vocal skills they enter singing competitions around Melbourne. One day while surfing the net they spot jobs for crew members on a Rock n Roll Paddleboat cruise beginning on the upcoming Christmas Eve.*

*What starts as a leisurely cruise with a few minor mishaps, quickly turns into action packed entertainment when Maddy reaches the first town.*

***Dedication,***

*To the memory of my father Clive. When I first told him of my idea, he answered in his usual gruff manner, "I suppose I'll have to be there to make your coffee," sadly he didn't make the coffee... but was always there,*

*Rex,*

*This eBook is a work of fiction; the names of the characters & towns are all products of my imagination. That is except for the Murray River, she, like her beauty is very real.*

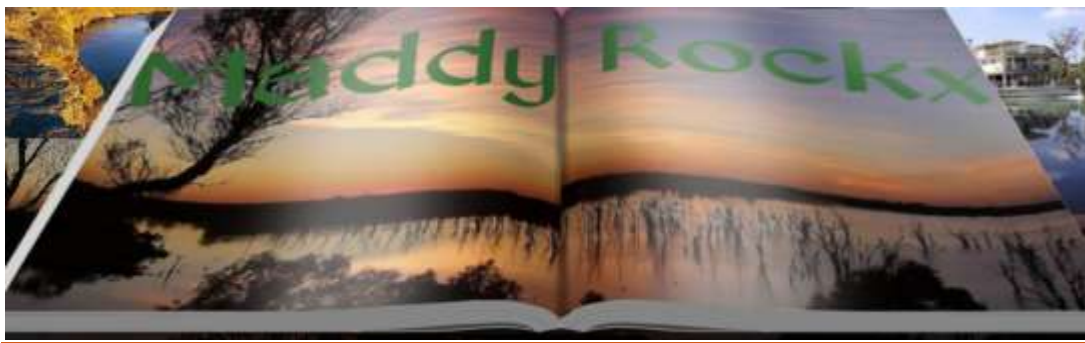
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## ***Chapter One, Christmas Eve, Maddy's departure,***

***From the wheelhouse of their Paddleboat Maddy,*** Captain Percival Stanford and his daughter Kristy had the perfect view of Rivers Landings Main Street. It was a hive of activity; tourists ambled along, stopping to browse at various stalls, or peruse through historical shops. Others sat at quaint alfresco Cafés sipping cool drinks as they relaxed in the late afternoon sun. Captain sent Kristy a wink, then eased the engines throttle back. Large paddlewheels churned through the water, pushing Maddy slowly away from the wharf. Kristy pulled the whistle cord and a high pitched toot pierced the sky. Behind them, on the upper level sundeck, passengers let go a resounding cheer... and they were on their way.

Further along, the riverbank was alive with holidaymakers; all set up with tents and caravans; well prepared for a lengthy stay, to enjoy the tranquility over the Christmas break. Mothers splashed about in the water with their children, or hovered over BBQ's that simmered along; waiting in the hope of a fisherman's catch. One man, fishing off a fallen tree partly submerged in the water pulled hard on his line. A large Murray Cod flapped through the air to meet its inevitable fate, of being lightly seasoned then grilled on a hot BBQ plate.

"Looks like it'll be Cod on hot coals for dinner," Kristy laughed to her father, then joined the passengers to applaud the fisherman's catch.

As Captain navigated Maddy around a sweeping bend, Rivers Landing and the holidaymakers disappeared from sight.

Kristy pressed a button on the control panel and a gradual tempo of lively music drifted through the PA system. She left the wheelhouse and raced toward the aft; her light blue summer dress, and tangled auburn hair, flickered in the warm breeze as she bopped her way past the passengers. She sprang down the centre stairs onto the second decks railed terrace, spun toward the bow and darted into the hallway; she skipped past the entertainers VIP suite and first class passenger cabins. Saw Captains gangly first mate Norman, dressed in his white sailor's uniform striding toward her and sent him a wink, "How spoofy do you look,"

"What can I say? I'm a *babe magnet*,"

They both laughed and continued on their prospective journeys.

Norman marching toward the wheelhouse. Kristy dancing toward the dining room.

When she reached the end of the hallway, Kristy stopped before a frosted glass door with carved redwood frames. Above the entrance, a sign with a caricature of a large Murray Cod read. *'Cod on Hot Coals Restaurant,'*

She opened the door and stepped in. The lively music faded, replaced by a soothing background melody. She stood for a moment humming the tune whilst taking in the beautifully renovated interior. The floor, covered in a deep maroon carpet tinged with gold, had a stylish look about it. Tables and chairs set up for the evening meal, were scattered strategically about.

To the left of the entrance was a stage overlooking a walnut stained dance floor. At the centre front was a microphone on a boom stand; either side were large amps. In the stages left corner, a metre back from the edge, was an all in one DJ's keyboard, and backing track music system. To the right of the entrance, an open plan area with comfortable lounge chairs and low tables adjoined a sliding door, which opened onto a balcony. Floor to ceiling tinted windows were either side of the dining room. Toward the bow, in the right corner was a bar; to the left, past viewing windows were a buffet table and Bain Maria in front of the Galley. She walked toward the viewing windows where the barman and kitchen hand she'd employed the previous week stood gazing at the river ahead.

"Nice view boys," Kristy called. Startled by her unexpected arrival, they spun, then smiled when they saw her.

Jordie, the taller of the two, stood 183 cm. He had strong chiseled features and pleasant smile; 'handsome in a rugged sort of way,' Kristy thought. His dark fringe dropped across his forehead like a rolling wave, giving him a 1960's rock n roller appearance. He looked sharp in his barman's uniform; black trousers, red waiters jacket, white shirt and bow tie. The shorter Mitch, stood 165 cm; Kristy's height. He had a cheerful oval shaped face and ginger frizzy hair that quivered above his head, looking as if it were permanently electrified. He was dressed in kitchen hand whites. Kristy was glad that she had given them the jobs. For the past week since they started they had been efficient, eager and full of life. If it hadn't been for their help with organizing the dining room and Galley supplies she would have been stressed out to the max. Her problem was, Julio the Spanish Chef she had hired, should have started a week before the trip began, but emailed he'd be running late. He finally arrived the previous night smelling suspiciously of alcohol, and once shown to his cabin locked himself in. Frequent banging on his door that morning finally woke him, and he assured her that he would be in the Galley by the afternoon. When Kristy reached the boys, she asked if the new Chef had arrived; both shook their head, saying that hadn't

seen him. Pissed off with Julio's obvious disregard for punctuality, she about to go and hunt him up when the door slammed open. Julio charged through in a flurry.

"You're late!" Kristy snapped, "Its five o'clock and we have forty passengers to cater for by eight,"

Julio saw the look of scorn on Kristy's face. He stopped abruptly, causing his overweight body to wobble beneath his Chefs Uniform; his double chin rolled in time with the soothing background melody. However, years of being a Master Chef had made him immune to reprimands. He dismissed her scowl with a wave of the hand, strode across the dining room, and stopped before her. Then in a voice which carried a hint of broken Spanish and good dose of smugness stated, "No problema señorita Kristy... I 'ave arrived,"

The look on Kristy's face suggested she was having none of his posturing; so to avoid further confrontation, Julio quickly turned his attention to Jordie & Mitch, "and these are my asistentes,"

Because of the boys presences, and her professional etiquette, Kristy held back giving him an earful. She put on a tense smile and grudgingly introduced him.

After the introductions, Julio uttered a pompous, "Gracias," then addressed Jordie, "And you are my Cockatail barman,"

Jordie nodded and smiled.

"Excelente', I am experto in vino and cocktails. Certain foods requires zee right beverage to complimentió it. I'm sure you will be outstanding," he turned his head slightly and looked down at Mitch, "that means liddle Mitchio must be my *Chef de partie*,"

Mitch, thinking that sounded impressive sent him a broad grin followed by an eager, "Yes sir,"

Julio liking his enthusiasm added, "You can also be zee *drinks el Garzón* when not assisting me," he turned toward Kristy, gave her a curt bow, then placed his arm over Mitch's shoulders and guided him toward the Galley, "tonight, Mitchio we will treat our guests' to an arrangement of cold meats and salads. It will be an easy and light meal..."

## ***Chapter Two,***

Jordie was at the bar studying cocktail recipes on his laptop, which he had brought up from his cabin earlier. Excited with his new job, he had intentions of making the most of the opportunity.

He decided his first cocktail would be an abbreviation of one he found on the internet, which he named, ‘Tangy Fizz’

He wrote it on the cocktail specials board, then filled a tall glass with crushed ice before getting the ingredients for a taste tester. “First a splash of orange juice... a good portion of vodka... maybe a touch more vodka, a drop of Galliano... some sweet bubbly Champagne,” he grabbed a mini bottle, popped the cork then poured it in, “and finished with a twist of lime for added tanginess,”

He admired his creation; lifted the glass, sipped, then coughed, “mmm, tangy... maybe too much Vodka,” he placed the glass to one side.

At 6pm the passengers started to wander in for pre-dinner drinks; Mitch came over from the Galley to get a bottle of Champagne for Julio. ‘To keep zee energies flowing,’ Julio had winked.

With the sudden rush of customers, Jordie asked Mitch if he could stay and help, Mitch nodded and jumped behind the bar. As the last of the passengers grabbed their drinks, Kristy entered the dining room. Accompanying her was a softly curved, eye-catching woman in her mid-thirties. Her hair was blonde and gently curled, and spilled onto her shoulders, highlighting her charming and captivating face. A hot pink and yellow sundress hugged her body, emphasising her subtle curves.

Her name was May-lee; an independent woman of the world, who treated life’s journey as a voyage of discovery; a celebration of fine foods, show biz and Champagne. An admired Cabaret singer and dancer, May-lee had left Rivers Landing at an early age to travel the globe. She had entertained privileged audiences from Sydney’s Opera house, the sun soaked Riviera and her favored Spanish Isles. She had had a request from her darling niece Kristy to entertain on Maddy to help build tourism in her beloved river towns. A request she happily agreed.

As the girls approached, Jordie was unable to take his eyes off May-lee; and a sudden tingling sensation swept over him.

When the girls arrived, they sat on high stools at the bar. May-lee crossed her legs; the sundress parted and slipped down exposing a shapely thigh. Jordie’s eyes



followed. She noticed his gaze, smiled, then turned her attention to the cocktail specials board.

“The tangy fizz sounds exotic, we’ll pamper our tastebuds with two of those delights,” she whispered.

Jordie obliged, confidently showing off his talents as a barman; making sure not to overdo the vodka. He placed the drinks onto the bar with all the trimmings; tiny colourful umbrella, cherries and long straw. May-lee picked up her glass and had a leisurely sip, “mmm, what a marvellous cocktail... exquisitely yummy, and sharp... like the barman,” she praised and sent him a wink.

Jordie’s face reddened; Kristy giggled at her aunties teasing then introduced her. “I’d like you to meet my beautiful aunt, the world renowned Cabaret singer and dancer... May-lee,”

Mitch sent May-lee a smile and told her his name. Jordie shot his arm across the bar and clutched her hand. When she gave a light squeeze, he had a rapid heart flutter, but recovered enough to tell her his.

“Jordieeee... such a dynamic name,” she crooned.

A goofy grin crossed his face at her praise, “Why thank you *Maay-laady*,” he chuckled then performed a posing bow.

May-lee smiled at his attempted gallantry and humour. Mitch sniggered and thought, ‘what a tosser,’

“Auntie arrived this morning... she’s our star attraction,”

“I’m delighted, anything for my favourite niece... besides I have a feeling it may be an interesting trip,” she sent Jordie another wink.

After chatting for a bit, May-lee suggested that she and Kristy retire to their cabins to dress for the welcome aboard dinner.

When the girls left Mitch nudged Jordie and chuckled, “*Maay-laady*,” how cool are you,”

### ***Chapter Three***

At eight pm Captain escorted May-lee into the dining room for the welcome aboard dinner. He was a small framed man in his mid-forties, who looked refined in a Captain's cap, pristine white naval officers' uniform, and neatly trimmed ginger beard. She was a picture of elegance in a mango coloured evening gown.

At the Galley doorway, an excited Julio watched May-lee's entrance, and tingling sensations swept his body at the sight of her radiance.

"*Ooh, tanta belleza... such beauty,*" he mumbled then raised a glass of champagne and had a sip to steady his nerves.

He couldn't wait to go to the Captain's table and introduce himself. Due to him not arriving until the previous evening and needing to rest up, he had not yet had the opportunity.

"But tonight I will 'ave zee privilege," he murmured and had another sip of Champagne.

Julio first glimpsed May-lee when she had performed at a restaurant he had been cooking at in Spain some months ago. Her songbird voice had drifted into the kitchen as he prepared his specialty dish *Paella*. Listening to her singing whilst creating his cuisines was the most fabulous night of cooking he'd ever had. To his delight she had ordered his *Paella*, and complimented to the maître d as too how delicious it was. However he had not had the opportunity to meet her. By the time he had finished his cooking duties she had departed. And alas, she had left Spain. By chance he came across Kristy's web page. When he saw May-lee would be entertaining onboard Maddy, he immediately applied for the position of Chef,

'Ooh how sweet it will be to meet zee famous and *élégante* Mayo-lee,'

Mitch stood at the buffet table preparing for his *drinks el Garzón* duties, with serving tray in hand and a uniform the same as Jordie's. He was greeting the passengers as they helped themselves to an array of cold meats and salads, when Kristy entered. She was tastefully dressed in a low cut, dazzling violet evening gown; her auburn hair curled down onto her shoulders. She paused for a moment; her sparkling emerald eyes caught his, she sent him a wink, then continued toward the Captain's table positioned against the viewing windows.

Seeing Kristy in all of her loveliness, brought a spring to Mitch's step as he began waiting on the tables with enthusiasm.

After taking his first drinks order he strode to the bar. When he arrived he did a couple of sharp hip moves, grabbed the tangy fizz he'd left behind it and had a gulp.

"Easy on that," Jordie told him.

"Life is good," Mitch laughed then placed the drinks onto his tray and returned the table, bopping to the beat of the music that drifted through the PA system.

Everything ran smooth until Julio came from the Galley looking slightly drunk.

Mitch greeted him with a grin, but Julio rushed past and strode toward the Captains table repeatedly clicking his fingers. "Speed, speed, Mitchio, zee customers are waiting."

On his arrival Julio bowed and gave May-lee an adoring smile. "Julio De la Cruz at your servicié señorita Mayo-lee... I have been an admirer of yours for sooo long," he took her hand, kissed it, and whispered, "When I discovered you were entertaining on Maddy, I dropped everythin to honour you with my cuisine,"

May-lee smiled up at him, "I am glad to meet you Julio, and I must say your reputation precedes you,"

Julio gave a delighted chuckle at her compliment. May-lee continued, "Would you care to join us?"

Julio glanced toward Captain who nodded, and he sat at a seat beside May-lee.

As the evening drifted on the thirst of the passengers had increased. Mitch felt the pressure, but kept smiling as he took orders and served them with efficiency. However, the pressure of waiting on the tables, and Julio ordering him to speed up whenever Mitch passed by, became unbearable. He returned to the bar for an order, reached behind and grabbed the tangy fizz and guzzled.

"Ease up you moron," Jordie growled, "What's got into you,"

"Julio is trying to impress May-lee at my bloody expense," Mitch snapped and slammed the glass down. Jordie placed the drinks onto the serving tray, Mitch picked it up and strode back to the dining room floor.

When Mitch finished the order, he spotted Julio waving his hand.

‘Shit,’ he thought and turned his head attempting to avoid eye contact. But a couple of sharp finger clicks, followed by two rapid fired Garzón’s to gain his attention changed that. Mitch reluctantly wandered over.

“Champagne Mitchio... for my *belleza* Mayo-lee,” Julio ordered then turned and spoke softly to May-lee. “A sparking delicacy to titillate you voluptuous lips,”

“Why thank you Julio, you are so galante’,” May-lee smiled.

‘What a bloody tosser’, Mitch thought as he charged back to the bar, “old blubber guts is gonna cop it,” he snapped, then gave Jordie the order.

“Don’t take any notice of him,” Jordie placed the Champagne onto the bar.

Mitch let out a low growl, picked up the bottle, marched back to the table and stood between May-lee & Julio, with his back to the viewing windows. He grabbed the cork and twisted. It didn’t budge.

‘Shit, how do I get this thing off?’ he muttered, then gave Kristy a pitiful smile and made another meager attempt. Kristy watched his struggle, and a slight sympathy mixed with an urge to giggle swept her. She reached over the table, “would you like me to do it Mitch?”

“I’ll be right,” he told her, not wanting to look like a boob.

Julio became agitated. He stood up, grabbed the bottle, pushed Mitch to one side, and beamed at the girls. “An experto is required... you place zee thumbs like sooo.”

He clasped the bottles neck with both hands, positioned his thumbs either side of the cork and added pressure. The cork moved slowly up, up, up, then... Pop! It shot out; the champagne frothed over the bottles mouth and ran down the neck.

Julio smiled triumphantly and bent slightly to fill May-lee’s glass, as the cork continued on, spinning through the air. It ricocheted off an imitation crystal ball that hung above the dance floor and shot back toward May-lee.

Mitch spotting it, dove across the table, caught the cork, then in one motion did a forward roll and landed beside Kristy. The dining room erupted in applause.

May-lee, unruffled by the near miss, laughed and joined the clapping; Mitch turned to face the cheering crowd and casually took a bow.

After the incident, Captain, realizing Julio may be more than a tad drunk suggested he retire to his cabin.

But Julio was reluctant to leave his Mayo-lee.

However, with May-lee's encouragement, and her promise of a glass of champagne on the upper sundeck the following day, he reluctantly staggered off.

Kristy walked to the stage, "Ladies and gentlemen, thanks to Mitch we have avoided a mishap to the lovely May-lee. However, she has informed me it won't stop her serenading us as we cruise along and admire the glorious sunset, before mooring in a secluded spot for our first night.

The passengers were unfazed, for Christmas Eve had brought both a touch of serenity, and a bit of excitement, on their first night onboard Maddy.

## ***Chapter Four, Christmas Morning,***

Because of Julio's antics the previous night, and not sure as to how well he handled hangovers, Mitch was in no hurry to go to the Galley. Instead, he stood on Maddy's bow admiring the grey mist that lay over the water; giving it a mystic and somewhat comforting look. But there was little comfort for the thousands of bugs fluttering amongst it. Quick moving ducks, with their eager ducklings hot on their heels relentlessly pursued them; not wanting to miss their morning feast. Mitch chuckled at the sight, enjoying his moment of solitude until the blast of Maddy's whistle brought him back to reality. He grudgingly turned toward the aft and headed for the Galley.

He walked along the deck until he reached a narrow passageway that separated the decks main wall, and a wooden trestle casing, which housed a huge paddlewheel. He stopped for a moment and watched the large paddles churn through the water as Maddy moved off the riverbank. He continued on past the gangplank until he came to stairs that lead to the second deck, climbed up onto the centre railed terrace and entered the hallway.

When Mitch arrived at the Galley, Julio was standing at an aluminum island bench preparing the pork for Christmas lunch.

"Good morning Chef," he said warily.

"Mitchio," Julio boomed and sent him a broad smile. "You are just in time to help prepare our Christmas feast?"

Mitch was surprised at his chirpiness, it was as though the previous night had never happened.

"Smell zee air Mitchio, smell zee love, ooh la la I am so happy," Julio sang, then added, "You did well my boy, you saved my *belleza* Mayo-Lee from a terrible mizhap,"

Mitch grinned at his bizarre theatrics, and thought a moonstruck Chef speaking crappy Spanish, what else could anyone wish for on Christmas morning?

"Come closer Mitchio, I will show you how to prepare my magnifico roasta' Pork,"

Mitch stepped over to the bench and Julio continued, "First, you cover zee flesh with fragranced oil, in this case hazelnut and citrus marinade," he picked up a small jug and drizzled marinade over a large leg of pork, "Then we massage to tenderise and

enhance zee aromas,” he placed the jug to one side then rubbed softly with a far off gaze in his eyes, as he imagined the look on his *belleza* Mayo-Lees face, when the flavours tantalized her *délicate* tastebuds. “Once zee massage is *competió*, we apply low oven heat, to slowly cook it to *magnifico perfecto*.” He gave Mitch a wink then placed the pork into the oven. “Zee juices will trickle down from zee flesh to create a *delicio* sabroso salsa,”

‘Sabroso salsa, what the hell is that?’ Mitch thought and decided if he was going to learn how to cook with Julio, he’d better brush up on some Spanish.

Julio gave a chuckle then added, “Accompanying zee roasta will be taters baked to a crisp golden brown, as well as my *delicio* Mornay of *vegétales*. Then it will be time for zee steamed Christmas pudding infused with Galliano and floating in a soft brandy custard,” he put all fingers to his mouth and smacked his lips. “Deleite’,”

Mitch smiled, it all sounded good, and then. ‘What the hell, I’ll put up with Julio’s mood swings if he teaches me how to cook,’

“Now we shall prepare a delightful breakfast for our guests,” Julio said, “but first I need some Galliano and brandy,”

When Jordie arrived in the dining room, a happy Julio greeted him.

“And what breakfast treat does zee Cockatail barman have for our guests?”

“I’ve decided on eggnog, made with coconut milk and peppermint schnapps, topped with a dollop of cream and cinnamon sprinkled on top,” Jordie smiled.

“Deleite’,” Julio laughed then charged back to the Galley and preparations for breakfast began.

The passengers entered the dining room to the delightful aroma of *Florentino el’ tocino*... poached eggs on steamed spinach with a creamy hollandaise sauce; plus crispy bacon and grilled seasoned tomatoes. Accompanying them were Julio’s Spanish breakfast specialty Magdalena’s... *lemon-flavoured cupcakes*.

With the food placed in the Bain Maria, Julio & Mitch served the passengers as they filed along the buffet table.

Kristy arrived dressed as Santa’s helper in a pink mini dress, red tights, and a green elf’s hat with bells on top. Everyone gave her an, ‘isn’t she sweet,’ round of applause. She shook her head to jingle the bells, then skipped onto the stage and stood behind

the DJ' keyboard. May-lee followed, looking stunning in a tight clinging red dress with delicate white lining, and a Santa's hat on top of her golden locks. She gave everybody a wave, then glided onto the stage, took the microphone from the boom stand, and stood beside a Christmas tree that Kristy had set up overnight. Jordie, who was placing glasses of eggnog from a serving tray onto the tables, looked up at her and felt a tingle electrify his body, 'God she's a beauty,'

Kristy spoke into her microphone, "Ladies and gentlemen, may I introduce Saint Nicola... I'm afraid her father Nicholas has been snowed in so Nicola is his replacement,"

"Ho, ho, ho," May-lee purred.

Light laughter filled the dining room and Jordie's heart fluttered so hard he nearly had a stroke.

Kristy pressed a button on the DJ's backing track system and light music drifted from the speakers. May-lee began singing traditional Carols as the first Christmas on Maddy began.

May-lee's soft voice filtered through the PA and up into the wheelhouse speakers. Captain hummed along as he admired the river's ever-changing landscape, something he had never tired of in his years travelling the Murray River. He was glad Kristy had convinced him to renovate Maddy, and confident that everything she had planned would be a success.

Hearing the sweet melody of May-lee's voice brought her sister Madison; Kristy's mother, to his mind. Although May-lee was the younger more talented; and as some said, most beautiful, it was Madison who he had fallen for. Because of May-lee's talent, she had been accepted into a music academy in Melbourne. From there she travelled overseas to hone her singing skills. Captain, knowing Madison pined for her younger sister did all he could to comfort her. Eventually he plucked up the courage to ask her to marry him. She had accepted and soon after, Kristy was born and life for him was perfect. After Kristy's birth he applied for naval officer training and they had travelled the world with his career. On his discharge, they returned to Rivers Landing. Believing that tourism would be the lifeblood of the river towns he commissioned a Paddleboat to be built.

However, having lived the highlife of travelling with the Navy, Madison seemed disheartened to be trapped once again in a small country town.



Captain thought that when she saw the benefits of raising Kristy in the tranquility of Rivers Landing, she would change her mind and settle down. It wasn't to be, ultimately the need for freedom overwhelmed her and she finally left... to find herself. She had wanted to take Kristy but she wouldn't leave her father, and since her mother's departure had coped remarkably well. They had no contact from Madison, except cards for Kristy's birthdays and Christmas'. He still missed her, but he had Kristy, and that was enough.

Jordie entering the wheelhouse snapped Captain from his reverie. He greeted him with a smile. "How's it going lad?"

"Good Captain,"

As Maddy moved slowly along, they chatted about the upcoming events and the Murray Rivers history, of how the lock systems held the water back, to help the towns along the River thrive. Jordie nodded with interest as he listened to Captain, who turned his attention to the workings of the wheelhouse. He explained the purpose of each switch that covered the wood crafted control panel.

"Everything is computerised," Captain told him then stepped back from the large wooden spoke steering wheel. "Have a go lad; but keep her steady at five knots,"

"Thanks Captain," Jordie smiled and grabbed the spokes with a sense of importance, glad to have an opportunity to operate the majestic vessel. The gentle movement of the water and chugging of the paddlewheels had a calming effect, and a pleasant feeling of well-being swept him.

He was standing in the wheelhouse of a Paddleboat. Realizing a dream he never thought he'd have, and gaining a memory that would last a lifetime.

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