

# STROKE

I don't think anyone on the whole of Campbell Island in New Zealand expected anything bad to happen on this perfect day. I could feel the warm sun beating on my bare back and the cool but warm ocean current wisping away underneath me as I dive back down from the surface and speed down the check out the wildlife under the sea, we are diving 2ks out of campbell island's saratoga beach where the water is light blue and the sand is white and bright yellow. It is the first Saturday in January and school is finished for the week so Ethan, Austin and I decided to spear some fish for dinner but got nothing so we dry off for the long walk home

Ethan is tall for his age (15) with blonde hair medium athletic build and bright blue eyes.

Austin is tall and skinny he's (17) with blonde sandy hair and brown eyes.

And people describe me as the exact same everything as ethan but taller by roughly 1-2 millimetres or less. Us three boys have been thinking of something to do all day besides playing fortnite on the Ps4 all morning, when Ethans Friend Elijah who we invited down for 3 weeks for a holiday with his whanau(family in maori) from Wanaka on the nt island of the mainland in New Zealand. Comes in and says "hey what up bros?", in his sick Maori accent which we are learning slowly. Elijah has brown hair and hazel eyes finished with a large plump build and dark brown skin from playing his Xbox one out in the sun with no shirt on for too long. "Hi, what are you here for?", Austin asks. "I just heard on the news that they are sending three people down in a couple of months in the mariana trench for and experiment do see how the human body cooperates with a new pill they designed that keeps you alive in low and high altitudes like down at the bottom of the ocean or up in the himalayas",

"Cool" Austin said

"Fascinating" ethan said "but why does this concern us?"

"because they are going to send three experienced divers down there and if you're up for the job it the government pays you 30 million Australian dollars in cash straight up", Elijah explained Well we could use 30mil to build on our property," Ethan said with and ear to ear grin creeping across his face

"What are we waiting for than? Let's go fly ourselves to the mariana islands

**1 month later**

"All passengers arriving for flight 138755 please make your way towards interval passage 6 for 1045am take off, thank you for your patience. Also the coffee machine is ready and pouring fast so if your planning on heading up to terminal 3 grab yourself one of our famous barista made coffees for just \$4.50. Thank you for choosing wellington airlines, have a nice flight"

"What number was that?", asked priscila Austins mum.

"It was either 138755 or 136755 so let's go anyway."

I could see the fish dart away from the surface as our 3m tinny pulled up alongside small jetty built on top of a small section of the reef around the mariana islands and within seconds we are in the water and swimming around taking in our surroundings and getting a feel for the ocean current. Austen puts his head above the water and takes in a breath of air before saying, "all good I think we can get going now"

"Yes get going before midday and be safe", cried Ethan and my mum, Lucy.

We've been traveling for about 3 hours now as we sift through the seaweed and appear at the entrance to the mariana trench.

"all good", I say to Ethan and Austin through my built in mic, as we descend into the dark hole of the Mariana trench. I can feel the slow moving and swirling of the ocean current as it curls around us. I can see the fish dart away from our torch beams as we approach a green seaweed ledge there's something on this ledge that gives me the creeps says Austin. We touch down on the ledge fine but Out of the corner of my eye I see Ethan miss the landing with his feet and smash into rocky part of the ledge and go floppy and limp.

Austin turned and dived down to find him but I grabbed him by the neck and screamed at him through our mics "he's gone! You'll die if you chase after him alone! We'll go together I choked

"We've been swimming for over 2 hours again don't you think this proves that the pills work?" complained Austin.

"I thought it was you who wanted to come down and save Ethan." "plus we should be a couple hundred metres away from the bottom so... yeah, lets just keep going

"Have you tried your mic?" asked Astin to see if ethan answers"

"I was just about to do that so i'll do it now", I barked back releasing that i should have done that ages ago. "Ethan come in, do you read me?"

"Y-e-s i c-a-n j-u-s-t h-e-a-r y-o-u..." ethan croaked I made it to the bottom but im really bruised and hurt come down here now, hurry" "I can see you can you guys see me I'm on that rock over to your left!"

"Yes I can see you! Jeez you don't look to good i'll radio the control and tell them what happened so this is using up our 1 call we can make to them", I said

"Guys you're forgetting something", Ethan croaked as we got winched up by a barge on the surface

"What?", Austin and I both said in union

"We just dove the mariana trench!"