

# **SCARAB**

**A COLT WILDER ADVENTURE**

**Nathan Karstulovich**

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# Chapter 1 – Surf's Up

## **Byron Bay, Australia - November 2018**

“Wow, that was wild, Wilder!” called the girl with the dripping shoulder length red hair from her seated position, legs hanging over the sides of her surfboard.

Colt Wilder held up his right hand, thumb and baby finger sticking into the air, other three fingers tucked into his fist, in a hang-ten salute. “You know it!” he called back.

Colt Wilder was everything his name suggested. He was strong, an unintentional leader and a peacemaker. He was also always looking for a good time as he travelled the world with his classmates and shipmates.

He was cool as a cucumber, wearing the tip of a goat horn on a leather cord around his neck. At his young age Colt was already a certified scuba diver, a Sail Canada trained sailor certified to the intermediate crew standard, and he was recently certified as a waterfront life guard. To top it off Colt was a yellow-belt student of the Dragon Gem Karate Dojo before embarking on the journey that brought him to the surfing town of Byron Bay.

He and his good friend Summer Bondie were on a year-long school voyage aboard Ariel's Crush. The vessel that the students referred to as AC was a 223 foot sailing ship with classrooms, dorms, a dining hall, activity halls and of course, satellite wi-fi. Colt and Summer had teamed up on a travel industry competition and submitted a project called *99 Reasons to Live*. Their ideas were about the greenest ways to see the world. They won a year aboard the one-of-a-kind boat to sail around the world while completing their eleventh grade courses.

"It's kind of a bummer that we have to leave here tonight," Colt said as he paddled toward Summer. "This place is awesome - a real surfer's paradise."

"No, that's about an hour up the coast!" Summer took this opportunity to jokingly correct him, referring to the

suburb called Surfer's Paradise in Queensland, Australia, just north of Byron Bay.

"Very funny, but really, I love it here. I've never been to a place that is so laid back. Nobody is worried about getting anywhere, it's on the ocean which is always a plus and there always seems to be something to do."

Ariel's Crush had been docked in Byron Bay for five days to allow the students to take in the local culture, do a little land-based learning and just have a chance to enjoy some physical activity. On the first day in Byron, Summer had convinced Colt to try surfing for the first time, not that it took much convincing.

"I surfed in Vancouver with my dad on a trip a few years ago," she had said.

Without hesitation and with the self-assuredness that Summer had come to expect, Colt quickly replied, "I'll be stealing your break by noon!"

Summer rolled her eyes. She had become used to his penchant for showing off. It never bothered her and actually she kind of liked that part of Colt Wilder. Summer was the kind of girl who could take care of herself and she ran in many circles. Her red hair and green eyes made her stand-out from others, while her

adventurous spirit made people want to be around her. That was the draw for Colt when they first met in elementary school. He had worked very hard to get the teacher to sit him beside Summer. They became instant friends and then partners-in-crime on every possible project. Colt also liked that Summer Bondie read everything she could get her hands on. It made it much easier for him to get projects completed when she already knew everything. They had thought about dating once but then decided that the friendship they had was too valuable to mess up. Only Summer's diary knew her true feelings for the young Wilder boy.

"It is a shame," Summer replied to Colt's disappointment in having to leave Byron Bay. "But you know we are heading home for Christmas break and then we'll be heading to the Mediterranean next semester."

"Ya, I know. But it is thirty-five degrees Celsius here and I'm shredding waves like a pro. I look forward to seeing my parents and all, but man, we have it good right now." He paused, looked around and then shouted, "Let's go catch the next bomb before these waves ease up and become ankle busters for the next Barney to ride." Colt talked in surfer slang like he had been riding

waves for ten years. He thought it made him sound cool. Summer just laughed.

Off they paddled, catching as many waves as they could. Summer tried to hang-ten but bailed out. Colt showed off hanging ten on his board then paddling out to catch another curl and ride in the tube. Summer caught up and the two of them rode as many waves as they could until lunchtime.

They pulled their boards out of the water and Colt said, "See ya Byron," talking to the town itself. Then he turned to Summer and said, "I guess we'll be on the road."

Summer, pulling from her vast knowledge of movie quotes replied, "Roads? Where we're going, we don't need roads."