

Shipwreck Study Guide

Shipwreck by Gordon Korman

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Plot Summary

Shipwreck by Gordon Korman is the first of the 'Island' series. This first book in the series introduces the adolescents who are part of an ongoing program called Charting a New Course (CNC) in which troubled youth sent to sea for a month to learn skills such as cooperation, teamwork, and encourage friendship and camaraderie. On July 11th they cast off from the marina in Guam with a total of eight on board including Captain Cascadden and first mate, Mr. Radford.

The crew consists of Luke Haggerty, Will and Lyssa Greenfield, Charla Swann, Ian Sikorsky and J. J. Lane. Luke Haggerty was caught with a gun in his locker at school and given a choice to either join the CNC program or spend time in jail for a felony conviction. Will and Lyssa Greenfield are siblings whose constant fighting and violent behavior towards each other left their parents with little choice but to find a way to teach them the value of cooperation. Charla Swann is a young, athletic girl who excels in several areas but who cannot avoid the pressure put on her by her father to win herself a scholarship. Ian Sikorsky's parents felt he spent too much time in front of the television and required socialization skills in order to survive. and J.J. Lane suffered from neglect from his movie star father who was absent so often that J.J. tried more and more desperately to get his attention, finally driving his father's car through the front door of an art gallery.

In the beginning, the adolescent crew learn how to raise and lower sails and receive instruction on a variety of related science-based subjects including how to identify schools of fish, whale watching, wave heights, water temperatures, and how to index these to their location using handheld GPS. They are required to keep logs of their experiences on board as well. Only three days into their month-long trip, they encounter a storm that while at first seems relatively harmless, grows into a gale that seems to have a life of its own. At it's worst, bad judgement by one youth causes an accident that sweeps Captain Cascadden off the deck and into the ocean. The first mate Mr. Radford deserts the ship in the middle of the night two days later, leaving the six young and inexperienced crew members to fend for themselves. A collection of mistakes hasten the sinking of the Phoenix, leaving the four surviving youth clinging to a cabin top which is all that remains of the schooner. Unconscious and nearing death, their raft floats to an island where they awake to a heavy storm. This then truly forces them to cooperate in order to survive.



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The schooner called Phoenix is fighting her way through thirty foot swells when suddenly the mainsail goes up. It is mayhem on deck when the next wave catches the Phoenix broadside. When the body hit the water, the howling gale was all that could be heard.

Luke is in the head when Radford tells him to hustle himself. Radford shows him to his quarters which amount to a section of hallway with a bunk bed and shelving built into the walls. Lights are out at 2200, Luke is told and that is a mere fifteen minutes away. A head of sandy hair pokes out and asks Luke what time it is. They discuss briefly the events that got each of them there before the lights blink and go out. Will asks Luke why he was sentenced to the CNC (Charting a New Course) but Luke is evasive.

Prologue: Saturday, July 15, 2010 hours and Chapter One: Sunday, July 9, 2140 hours Analysis

The Phoenix was managing to hold her own through thirty foot swells until someone raised the mainsail and on Saturday, July 15, 2010, a body is swept overboard with hardly a sound heard over the gale.

Radford calls everyone that he curses 'Archie' and that is one of the first things Luke learns about him. They arrive at the marina and board the schooner, Phoenix where Luke has been sentenced to 30 days of confinement. Luke hardly has time to hit the head before Radford is hurrying him to his quarters which amount to a bunk and a dresser built into the bulkhead. On the way, he reminds Luke that to leave the valve open after using the facilities would sink them all. Luke's fears of dying on board during this month are all reactivated once again. Radford leads him to a section of hallway, announcing it is his quarters. He meets Will Greenfield who admits that he and his sister

are on board because they are fighting all the time. Luke recalls the judge as he sentenced him to CNC and introduces himself as a convicted felon. When lights go out, Luke still hasn't told Will what he did.



Chapters Two and Three: Monday, July 10, 2010, 0820 to 1805 hours

Chapters Two and Three: Monday, July 10, 2010, 0820 to 1805 hours Summary

Captain James Cascadden addresses the three youths already on board the Phoenix, and tells them that their history is not his concern. In fact, he tells them that the slate is clean, and now they are nothing more than his crew. Together, they will serve the vessel and sail off into adventure. Luke mutters under his breath and Radford tells him to be quiet while the Captain is talking. Luke and Will's first adventure is to swab the deck. Will and his sister face off, Lyssa swinging a mop at her brother's head and barely missing before Radford intervenes. Since floor space was at a premium aboard the Phoenix, the job of mopping is mercifully short. This is followed by lunch and dishes. Then Captain Cascadden takes them all to the airport where he questions them as to what the most important instrument is in the cockpit. None of them guess the blower switch and he explains its importance. They pick up two of the last three crew members - Charla Swann and Ian Sikorsky who seems unable to part with his laptop for even a month and then wait for the final crewman to arrive.

J.J. Lane touches down in a private jet, accompanied by traveling companion Dan Rapaport. Son to famous movie star Jonathan Lane, J.J. is one of the newest Hollywood brat children, and after several stunts of increasing stupidity, he is sent to spend a month on the Phoenix. When he discovers that he will be without most of his luggage for the month, he refuses to go but Dan is prepared for that eventuality. He simply tells J.J. that his credit cards and phone have been deactivated and that he will not bring him back until the month is up. With that said, Radford arrives and Dan leaves.

Chapters Two and Three: Monday, July 10, 2010, 0820 to 1805 hours Analysis

Three youths have already assembled aboard the Phoenix, and Captain Cascadden is not interested in where they came from or why they are there. The only thing he cares about is where they go from this point in time. He tells them that they will learn to work together. The Captain is a mild mannered man, quite unlike his first mate and cook, Mr. Radford. He is short, and his instructions border on abusive as he tells the new crewmen how little they are worth and how small they are in the grand scheme of life. Luke and Will are instructed to swab the deck, which is followed by lunch and a trip to pick up the final three members of their crew. Charla and Ian arrive by plane and Ian struggles with the idea that he is unable to bring his laptop along. Radford enjoys telling him that he can consider himself unplugged for the next thirty days.

The last to arrive does so by Lear Jet. J.J. Lane is the son of actor Jonathan Lane and is a spoiled Hollywood brat by any definition. He has supplied liquor to high school students, given film from a party his father threw to the media and driven his father's Harley into an art gallery. After leaving tread marks across a painting, it was decided that J.J. needed some time to reflect on his behavior. Dan Rapaport almost feels sorry for him when he recognizes Radford, but then he remembers the Picasso with tread marks, and boards the Lear jet for home, leaving J.J. to Radford.



Chapter Four: Tuesday, July 11, 2010, 0730 hours and Chapter Five: Wednesday, July 12, 1100 hours

Chapter Four: Tuesday, July 11, 2010, 0730 hours and Chapter Five: Wednesday, July 12, 1100 hours Summary

Back at the Phoenix, Radford begins the process of casting off, telling the new crew what they need to do, and calling out to the Captain when they are clear of the dock. The Phoenix heads out of the harbor and as it does, J.J. does his best to talk the Captain into putting him on a plane home, telling him this was all a mistake, his father was an important man and how J.J. was certain it would be worth his while if they would just put him on a plane for the U.S. The Captain assures him they are in the U.S. and his father paid good money to have him take this trip. There was no getting out of it. Radford is already barking orders. Will and Charla haul up the mainsail while Luke and Ian tackle the foresail. Will is already frustrated to see that his sister Lyssa and J.J. have been given the task of raising the smaller and lighter staysail closer to the bow. The wind catches the mainsail half open, pulling it out of Will's hands and giving him the first of many rope burns. Radford helps Luke and Ian, and soon the sails are all up and full. The new crew is already exhausted. Then their true education begins as Radford explains how things work. Luke isn't paying close enough attention as the block swings around and catches Luke right in the face, causing Radford to laugh out loud. Lyssa is the first to experience seasickness.

The next day they are given time off to enjoy a swim. Lyssa is the first one in, exclaiming how warm it is and Will and Luke are close behind her. They call out to Ian to join them, but he heads for the sleeping quarters instead. Charla enters the water by way of a perfect jackknife that even has the Captain applauding, revealing that she is on the dive team. She is also in track and field, but admits to preferring gymnastics. A comment from Luke that she is the perfect kid sends her back on board angry. J.J. calls down moments later from high up in the mainsails' rigging. Captain Cascadden calls out for him to come down, but J.J. pretends he can't hear him. Radford is called, and tries to stop J.J. but before he can say too much, J.J. leaves the rigging, swinging out on a loose rope and drops into the water. Radford is in right after him, and enraged, drags him back on board. His stunt causes them all to lose their swim time.



Chapter Four: Tuesday, July 11, 2010, 0730 hours and Chapter Five: Wednesday, July 12, 1100 hours Analysis

Luke recognizes the majesty of the Phoenix as it heads out of the harbor, but all J.J. can think about is getting back to the States - the real States, he insisted when the Captain informed him that they were still in the states in Guam. Will has already begun to pray and promise - willing to put out any deal in order to avoid this deal. They begin to raise the sails and Will gets his first rope burn, praying the trip is over fast while his sister Lyssa is smiling and seems to be having the time of her life already. Will is incensed every time he looks at her, already fitting it and making friends just like she did everywhere else. It seems so unfair to him that for her this would be like a vacation while he struggled with all of it. It was her fault they were even there in his mind. She was the one who usually lost her temper. He remembers the incident that his mother referred to as the final straw. Tears come unexpectedly as Guam slowly disappears. He runs for the privacy of the companionway, but runs into Luke who is as angry as he is upset, calling Radford 'Rat Face'. Will realizes he isn't the only one who is unhappy. He begs for a sign that things will be okay, and sees a strange look come over Lyssa as she races for the side and is violently ill.

The next morning, they have an opportunity to go for a swim. Lyssa, Will and Luke waste no time getting in, but Ian declines, heading below. Luke comments that Ian must have forgotten to download his personality before boarding, and wonders why he was on board at all. Charla joins them, revealing a skill for diving and swimming that impresses everyone. Will asks, learning that not only is she on the dive team, but in track and field and gymnastics as well. Luke accuses her of being the perfect kid, asking if she was signed up because she was too good, but that doesn't go over well. Charla's smile leaves as she does, after telling them she isn't that good. Luke has no idea what he's said to upset her. Charla knows they have no idea what it's like. They all come from money and their parents didn't have to work several jobs to keep them afloat. They could enjoy sports without constantly being reminded that it is up to them to be the best because it will be their ticket to the Olympics. At only twelve, Charla just wants to be an adolescent for a while but it is a luxury they cannot afford. The stress of the situation is likely what caused the episode that sent her to the emergency room, the doctor informed her parents. J.J. uses a loose rope from high in the mainsail to swing out and drop into the water, despite the Captain and Radford telling him not to. It is a stunt that costs them all the rest of their swim time as Radford drags him back on board and gives him a lesson in the definition of mutiny. Charla can't help but notice that Radford appears to get meaner the farther from shore they get. She fears it will be a long month.



Chapter Six: Thursday, July 13, 2235 hours and Chapter Seven: Friday, July 14, 0610 hours

Chapter Six: Thursday, July 13, 2235 hours and Chapter Seven: Friday, July 14, 0610 hours Summary

When Luke and the others weren't working on the sails which constantly required raising, lowering, letting in or out, or trimming, they were subjected to an education in science. They learned about different schools of fish, plankton, and whale watching along with math involving waves and temperatures. They were all supposed to keep log books as well. Captain Cascadden tells him an old sailor's legend about the bright halo around the moon and how it represented a coming storm. By counting the stars inside it, you could tell how many days away the storm was. A hundred years before, it was considered science, he tells him. J.J. reveals who his father is, surprising his crew mates and while they discuss how much leverage he must have as a result, they can hear muffled cries from Ian who is rocking back and forth on his bunk, miserably.

The next morning, they wake to the sound of four life jackets hitting the deck beside them. The Captain tells them to be extra careful on deck, and to have a hearty breakfast. Eight foot waves pitch the boat around and Radford appears to be enjoying himself. They tack back and forth, beating to windward to avoid sailing into the wind, meaning that the sails are in a constant state of change. Their hands are raw by lunch, and seasickness is making the rounds. The waves reach fifteen feet in height, and when Ian decides to ride the storm out strapped to his bunk, he discovers ankle deep water below. It doesn't take long to trace the water source to the bathroom where earlier Luke had been seasick in private and had forgotten to close the valve after he was done. The Captain took it much better than Radford did, and Luke, knowing he was responsible, offers to pump out the bathroom rather than admit that he was responsible.

Chapter Six: Thursday, July 13, 2235 hours and Chapter Seven: Friday, July 14, 0610 hours Analysis

Luke could have complained about many things where life on the ship was concerned, but boredom wasn't one of them. When they weren't working with the sails, they were learning about the science and math that went with sailing and the sea. They were required to keep logs, but Luke couldn't think of anything to write even though the Captain assures him that he'll be rereading it for years to come. The moon is encircled with two stars and the Captain tells Luke that a hundred years ago sailors took that to mean a storm would come in two days. Luke tells J.J. they won't swim the next day, and J.J. loudly suggests that one of the girls should give him a foot massage. Radford



shows up immediately, and promises him that if he hears an invitation like that again, he'll go into the water with an anchor in his pants. J.J. reveals his father's identity, but is angry that his status can't get him off the boat. Ian succumbs to misery, sobbing on his bunk while the others try to calm him down. They ask why he was forced to join them, and Ian reveals it was because he watched television.

When the life jackets are tossed below, Will fears that the boat is sinking at first, but Radford reassures them. Once they are on, they go topside to find Lyssa vomiting over the side. She is too weak to even respond to the barb Will throws out. By lunchtime, everyone has given in to seasickness but Luke is determined not to show weakness. He stumbles into the tiny head to be sick in private, and then carefully washes away all traces. Forgetting to close the valve behind him, the ocean begins to intrude and by the time Ian retreats to his bunk to ride out the storm in miserable privacy, there is water ankle deep in the companionway. Afraid they are sinking, he shrieks for help. Radford is livid that someone forgot to close the valve, and is ready for someone's head on a pike, but the Captain just laughs and insists he has no desire to know who is responsible. They begin the job of pumping the water out, Luke offering to do the worst job to assuage his guilt somewhat.



Chapters Eight and Nine: Saturday, July 15, 0650 to 1750 hours

Chapters Eight and Nine: Saturday, July 15, 0650 to 1750 hours Summary

When J.J. wakes the next morning, the sun is already streaming in, and it is almost seven. He hears the Captain suggest that Radford let them sleep, and they chuckle about how much easier it will be for them to handle the sails on their own. He sneaks up to have a look and sees both the Captain and Radford in the cockpit, and the mainsail rising mechanically on its own. His exclamation of surprise wakes the others and J.J. thinks they should retaliate, but Luke insists that where they are is still better than the cell that waits for him otherwise, and warns J.J. not to mess it up for him. The day before, Will had worn his life jacket backwards for the whole day, and as punishment, Radford orders him to take it off and put it back on correctly ten times in front of everyone else. He had completed six times when Radford corrects him again, and starts his count over. He watches as Lyssa stands at the wheel, taking instruction from Captain Cascadden. She looks over the gauges and asks the Captain what it means when the barometer is falling so fast that she can see it moving. The Captain says little as he scans the sky.

Later that day, the waves get even higher. Radford tells them to keep life jackets on at all times, make sure safety lines are hooked up, and not to be embarrassed to crawl if need be. Resembling cliffs, the waves come at them, turning the Phoenix into a roller coaster ride. He orders them to batten everything down, but J.J. argues, convinced they can outrun the storm. When Radford orders all hands below, no one argues. J.J. has other ideas, and makes his way to the mainsail, holding on with one hand and undoing lines with the other. Luke remembers J.J.'s idea of putting up the sail to outrun the storm with the wind, and horrified, he heads back up. He manages to get back to the instrument panel, determined to push the button to raise the sail, but Luke tackles him first. Radford tries to break them up and when the Captain undoes his safety harness to intervene, the ship lurches and he inadvertently hits the button himself, sending the sail upward. He helps J.J. secure his safety line before hitting the button a second time to lower the sail, but the wind is too strong. Even Radford is unable to bring the sail down on his own, and Captain Cascadden goes out to help, ordering J.J. to take the helm. A forty foot wave crashes over the high side and the mainmast snaps. The broken piece hits Cascadden across his shoulders and sweeps him off the deck and into the sea.



Chapters Eight and Nine: Saturday, July 15, 0650 to 1750 hours Analysis

When J.J. discovers that the sails can be raised and lowered mechanically the next morning, he is angry and vengeful. Realizing that all the work they've been doing is for nothing, he tries to think of a way to get even. Luke quickly steps up and warns J.J. not to mess things up for him, as his next stop is jail. Will gets a lesson in how to correctly don a life jacket after wearing his backwards for all of the previous day. He watches Lyssa, humiliated, as she gets a lesson in how to pilot the schooner from Captain Cascadden. She draws his attention to the falling barometer, and asks him what the meaning is, but the Captain doesn't answer her.

The storm's intensity increases and finally Radford orders them all below. No one argues. Luke realizes J.J. isn't with them, and his earlier conversation with him rings in his ears. J.J. was convinced that by simply raising the mainsail they could use the wind to outrun the storm. J.J. manages to undo the lines of the mainsail, and as he launches himself for the button to raise it, Luke tackles him. Radford tries to separate them, and the Captain unties himself to help. At that moment, the ship lurches, and seeking a handhold, he accidentally hits the mechanical winch control himself. The sail goes up slowly. Cascadden goes out to help

Radford lower the sail, but a rogue wave crashes over the deck, breaking the mainsail's mast. The broken end sweeps the Captain into the sea while horrified, Luke looks on, unable to help. For a moment, the gunwale, and Luke along with it, are under water as well.



Chapter Ten: Saturday, July 15, 2015 hours

Chapter Ten: Saturday, July 15, 2015 hours Summary

As Luke is underwater, time seems to slow. He is convinced the ship is sinking and as his mind works through the lack of options, the ship rights itself and he sees stars again. J.J. is still clinging to the wheel, amid torn canvas and rigging. Luke asks if he's found the Captain, but J.J. hasn't left the post assigned to him. Radford tosses life preservers into the ocean, calling out for the Skipper and when Luke tells him that the mast hit him, Radford grabs the wheel, announcing they are turning around. The engine sputters and dies, and won't restart. Luke opens the hatch and sees the engine is under three feet of water. As J.J. asks whether this means the whole boat is flooded, Charla comes up from the main cabin and confirms it. The electric bilge pump is also dead and Radford yells at them to man the pumps. J.J. never stops calling for the Captain, but there is no answer. It is hours before the wind finally relents, the waves ease and the lightning stops. Radford orders them to get some sleep, and no one asks about the Captain now. They already know his fate.

Chapter Ten: Saturday, July 15, 2015 hours Analysis

Luke can't help but be struck by the irony of his situation. He had come aboard the Phoenix to avoid a jail sentence and had managed to give himself a death sentence instead. Despite this certainty that he would drown, underwater was peaceful and quiet, and he tries to calculate his odds of survival as a lone swimmer in a vast ocean. Then the ship rights itself and he can see stars, and J.J. still holding the wheel, terrified. He is sobbing and repeating "I'm sorry" again and again. Radford quickly tosses out preservers, but when Luke tells him that the Captain had been hit by the mast, and may be unconscious, Radford already knows the truth. Still, he takes the wheel and guns the throttle, intending to turn the boat around to search, but the engine dies. Two to three feet of water stand in the engine room and in the main cabin, Charla adds as she comes up. They man the pumps for hours that seem like years, and finally the storm abates. Radford sends them to bed and no one asks about the Captain. They already know.



Chapter Eleven: Sunday, July 16, 0825 hours

Chapter Eleven: Sunday, July 16, 0825 hours Summary

When Luke wakes, it takes a moment before it all comes back. Then he unhooks himself. The four of them get up and noting the increasing amount of water, go on deck. The Phoenix is a mess of tangled rigging and pieces of mast. The radio antenna is gone, and most of the equipment is smashed. Lyssa and Charla are working the pump in the engine room while Radford mans the one draining the galley and main cabin. They all stop when the boys arrive, and Radford glares at J.J. when he asks about the Captain. He tells them a submarine would be necessary to find him, and adds that one day he'd be interested to know why they were fighting and almost killed them all - succeeding in killing the Captain. Rapaport's words at the airport ring in J.J.'s ears prophetically. 'You're going to kill somebody one of these days', he had said. Luke blurts out that he had merely tried to stop J.J. from raising the sail and Lyssa suggests they focus on survival instead. They are four hundred and eighty miles east-northeast of Guam, according to their GPS. No signal for help had been sent, and they were not expected anywhere for three weeks. They had no electricity to keep food refrigerated, no drinking water, and limited medical supplies. Will asks if they are going to die, and Radford admits that they are in big trouble. They had to pump for their lives, clear the foresail to move, and lighten the ship to avoid sinking. The girls begin throwing everything non essential overboard while Radford, Will and Ian work to clear the mast and rigging. They eat as much of the perishable stores as possible for lunch and as they do, Radford slips into the water to check the waterline. He tells them they need to dump more. They toss the fridge, the generator, and cut loose the three anchors before J.J. drags a large yellow suitcase on deck. Before Radford can stop him, he opens the latch and the case bursts open, revealing the lifeboat inside. When it finishes opening, an eight foot raft with sun canopy, first aid kit, signal flares and seating for ten sits on the deck. J.J. doesn't understand why Radford is so upset until Radford explains that it can't simply be deflated and packed up again. The rest of the day is tough. Radford is angry, taking it out on everyone around him, but by late afternoon, he became quiet and sullen. At dinner, Radford wouldn't even eat with them, and by the end of the day, they are finally ready to raise the foresail. Luke tries to get his attention, but is ignored. Ian tries to get Radford's attention and accidentally calls him Rat Face. His expression is livid at first, but before he says anything, he calms himself and instead just sends them to bed, telling them he is proud of them.

Chapter Eleven: Sunday, July 16, 0825 hours Analysis

Luke wakes slowly, the memory of the previous day coming back to him. The four boys had shared the two top bunks the night before as the lower bunks were under water.



J.J. is muttering 'man overboard' in his sleep and the image of Cascadden going under the foaming water forces itself back into Luke's mind. He unhooks himself, elbowing J.J. and waking him. Will wonders if the water level is rising, and J.J. notices that the storm has passed and the sea is calm. They go on deck. J.J. voices his opinion that they should be looking for the Captain, but Radford suggests that the only way to do that now would be in a submarine. The comment makes Luke angry, but not nearly as much as Radford is. He swears that one day they'll get to the bottom of who was responsible for initiating the fight that got the Captain killed and nearly the rest of them as well. Luke isn't happy about sharing the blame for the disaster, especially since he had tried to stop it from happening, and J.J. insists he was only trying to help. Lyssa steps in and suggests they concentrate on the issues at hand and Radford calmly lays out the situation for them. There is little to be positive about, and they quietly go about accomplishing the tasks he lays out for them. The day is spent pumping out water, lightening their load and clearing the foresail. Lunch is the hotdogs that have thawed without electricity and melting ice cream. Then J.J. makes his second large mistake. He opens the latch on the life raft suitcase, and it expands on the deck. Radford is livid. He can't believe that it always seems to be J.J. that causes trouble and resists the temptation to lighten the boat further by pitching him overboard. After that, Radford is in a foul mood. He even barks at Lyssa which gives Will a small amount of satisfaction, followed by a helping of guilt. When the EPIRB cuts out, Radford reveals that the life boat has its own EPIRB and J.J. gloats about how his mistake didn't seem so bad now. Instead of getting angry, he becomes silent. It was almost as though he had been turned off, uncommunicative, and unresponsive. He was almost more fearful this way, Will decides. When Ian approaches him and calls him Mr. Rat-face an audible gasp could be heard from the others. One look at Luke's face reveals his mistake and Luke quickly tries to distract him, but instead of being angry, his tone is light and easy when he finally speaks, suggesting they get some sleep. He tells them they did a good job and accomplished a lot in a tough situation. He was proud of them. Will didn't burst out laughing until he was well into the cabin.



Chapters Twelve and Thirteen: Monday, July 17, 0645 hours to 1440 hours

Chapters Twelve and Thirteen: Monday, July 17, 0645 hours to 1440 hours Summary

Lyssa wakes Will the next morning to tell him that Radford is gone. He left while they were sleeping, taking the twelve foot wooden dingy and most of their food. At first they don't understand why he would leave the safety of the schooner for a twelve foot dingy, but then they realize the truth. They are sinking, and Radford has abandoned them. Luke remembers the previous day and how Radford had suddenly gone silent. That was when he had made his decision to leave them. They realize that they have few choices. They have to continue to pump, and buy themselves as much time as possible. Lyssa believes she can dry out the engine and reassemble it so that it starts. J.J. refuses to participate. Instead, he spreads a towel on the top of the cabin and proceeds to work on his tan, ignoring the others and their dire circumstances.

Ian goes below to look for maps or charts that might help them to navigate. The deck slopes heavily towards the bow while they concentrate all of their energy on clearing the water out of the engine compartment. Charla climbed to the top of the mast to search for signs of other ships, prepared to fire a signal flare if she saw one. Lyssa works with a snorkel, beginning the process of taking the engine apart, while Will mans the pump. Ian returns without maps, but he has found their personal file and Luke is surprised at the depth of the information they have on him. They each go through their files, some more willing to share information about their histories than others. Charla prefers to keep hers private and J.J. finally just flings them into the sea. Then he finally decides to help them.

Chapters Twelve and Thirteen: Monday, July 17, 0645 hours to 1440 hours Analysis

Luke and the rest of the crew can hardly believe that Radford would leave them. He not only takes the wooden dingy, but a great deal of their food stores and it doesn't take long before they realize that he's left them because the schooner is sinking. Even when they pumped all day, by night, the Phoenix took in even more water. Panic is just beneath the surface as they consider their predicament. They have no idea where they are, have few sailing skills beyond what they've learned in the last two days, little food, no working engine, and the main mast is gone. Ian believes it is all his fault for calling Radford 'Rat-face' by accident, but Luke calms him down. Even Will is fighting to keep himself under control. Luke takes the initiative and suggests they pump to extend their time afloat and Lyssa offers to attempt to dry out and fix the engine. J.J. believes they are wasting their time. He is convinced that the Captain and Radford are on board another ship near by, watching their progress and monitoring their ability to work



together as a team. He is convinced that if they come close to being in danger, someone will be right there to save them. He decides to work on his tan while the others work at their survival.

They decide to follow a compass heading of west-southwest since Radford had given their last position as east-northeast of Guam. Still, Luke isn't convinced that they are going in the right direction. Ian lectures them on the dangers of panic, having seen it on the discovery channel. It is one of the first things he has volunteered to the group. He reveals he is on the Phoenix for watching too much television. Luke makes the decision to concentrate their energies on pumping out the engine compartment so that Lyssa can hopefully fix the engine. The downside is that the ship is dangerously unbalanced, and reminds Luke of the Titanic, ready to slip beneath the waves. Will mans the pumps, nagging Lyssa as to whether she is sure of what she is doing, and Ian discovers the files on each of them, given to the Captain before they left Guam. Reading his, Luke discovers for the first time that his parents actually believed him. It is a revelation. J.J. goes through some of the others, and tempers flare when he tries to read Charla's. Finally, they throw the files overboard to avoid further confrontations. Afterward, claiming he is bored, J.J. agrees to help them.



Chapter Fourteen: Monday, July 17, 1640 hours

Chapter Fourteen: Monday, July 17, 1640 hours Summary

The bow of the Phoenix continues to sink and now even the upper bunks are under water. Luke and Will discuss the possibility that the CNC is actually just testing them. Luke blames their entire predicament on J.J. Lyssa manages to get the engine back together again after drying it out piece by piece. She is ready to test fire it when Luke reminds her that the Captain told them never to do so without the blower. Lyssa is reluctant to use it. She is concerned that if they start the blower, they might drain the only charge left in the battery before they get the engine started. She tells them they will improvise, and gives Luke and Will beach towels, telling them to stand over the hatch and fan them when she gives the go ahead. Lyssa attempts to start the engine and it almost starts. She tries again, and this time it turns over. She pushes the throttle forward and it coughs and dies. Lyssa continues to try to restart it, and finally comments that the carburetor is probably flooded. A short time later, Lyssa is ready to try again, but Will complains that his arms hurt from fanning. A gust of wind takes the towel from his hand and it floats down over the open hatch. Unaware of what has happened, Lyssa presses the starter button. A spark ignites the fumes and a huge explosion follows. The galley and main cabin disappear in the blast and the force sends Luke, Lyssa and Will into the water. Luke surfaces to discover a firestorm and has to submerge again. Ian and J.J. are knocked off their feet on the foredeck and though they use an extinguisher, they make no progress towards putting it out. Charla is knocked off the foremast and the fire soon spreads to the rigging and sheets. They realize they have no choice but to abandon the Phoenix.

Chapter Fourteen: Monday, July 17, 1640 hours Analysis

Luke second guesses himself over and over, wondering if he made the right decision. He knows they have to have the engine dried out, as without it there is no hope. Still, as the ship sinks lower and lower, he can't help thinking about the Titanic and wondering if he will cause the same to happen with the Phoenix. Will teases Lyssa about the two beach towels full of parts from the engine, but she is so preoccupied with the order in which she has to reassemble the engine that she doesn't even respond. They all still struggle with the notion that Radford left them to fend for themselves. They can't believe that they meant so little to him. When Lyssa is finished, she is ready for a trial run. She explains why she doesn't want to start the electric blower fan, despite the warning from Captain Cascadden. She manages to get the motor running, but can't keep it going. The carburetor is flooded and when Lyssa fixes that, she presses the start button, but the



boys aren't fanning the fumes away, and one of the beach towels is covering the hatch. The explosion catches them all off guard, pitching half of them into the water, and blowing the main cabin and galley right off the boat. It quickly becomes apparent that nothing they can do will put out the raging fire. The remaining crew is forced to abandon ship as well.



Chapter Fifteen: Monday, July 17, 1825 hours

Chapter Fifteen: Monday, July 17, 1825 hours Summary

Luke drifts further and further from the Phoenix. He hears a voice calling him in the gloom, and he calls out to Will but gets no answer. On his way to Will, he finds a six foot piece of the top of the cabin. He pulls himself onto it after dunking it under water to put out the smoldering coals. He calls out to Will and then to the others. Then he sees the arm flailing and tries to paddle the cabin top to him, but makes no headway. Instead, he knows he will have to swim for it. Will is about fifty feet away, but though it's an almost impossible distance, when he hears Will calling out that he can't hold on much longer, he has no choice. He finally reaches him and begins to haul him back to the cabin top Red Cross style. He asks Will if he can see it, but Will says it is too dark, sounding sleepy and out of it. Finally, they reach the top, and Luke pushes Will onto it before climbing on himself. Paddling with the plank Will had been clinging to, Luke maneuvers alongside the boat searching for the others. Finally, they see a piece of canvas in the water. Luke tells Ian to let go of the sail, but Ian insists they need it. Ian has no idea where the others are either. Slowly, they watch as the Phoenix is swallowed by the sea. Just before it goes under, something dives off the foremast. The dive is so graceful, they all know immediately that it is Charla. As they try to haul her on board the cabin top, it overbalances and puts them all in the water. The cabin top won't hold their combined weight. Luke tells the others to climb on and he'll hang off the side. He suggests they switch every couple of hours. He calls out to Lyssa and J.J. who are still missing, but there is no answer.

Chapter Fifteen: Monday, July 17, 1825 hours Analysis

Panic and shock sets in and Luke seems unable to do anything beyond paddling in the water like a child, despite his Red Cross training. He can hear Will calling him, but can't find him at first. He manages to find the top of the cabin, and climbs aboard, gasping for breath. Will is losing his sense of direction and mental capacity. Luke knows he has to do something or Will is going to die. He makes the decision to leave the cabin top, and swim to Will even though he is not faring much better. He almost begins to panic when he loses sight of the makeshift raft and still can't find Will, but then he finally sees him. Telling himself that they'll find their way back to the cabin top, he grabs Will Red Cross style and starts out in the direction he came. Will is just short of losing consciousness. Luke's body is cramping, and he hurts from head to toe. He almost gives up, but then Will spots it. Luke helps Will get on and climbs on after him. The next one to join them is Ian, who drags a canvas sail along with him. They almost tip when they haul him on top. The ship begins to go under, and as it slowly sinks beneath the waves, Charla executes a flawless dive from the foremast. She swims over to them, showing better form than



any of them so far. Luke smiles, commenting that perhaps they can tie her to the raft and have her tow them home. The makeshift raft won't hold all four of them, so Luke offers to take the first shift in the water. He recommends that they change every two hours, and Charla is aghast. She is afraid they'll be shark bait. The gasoline burns itself out and they are in darkness.



Chapter Sixteen: Tuesday, July 18, 0700 hours

Chapter Sixteen: Tuesday, July 18, 0700 hours Summary

By morning, there is no trace of the Phoenix, or of Lyssa and J.J. Will and Ian are asleep on the makeshift raft while Charla scans the waters hoping for a sign of any kind. At seven she wakes Will to tell him it is his turn as shark bait. They had been taking turns every two hours throughout the night. As the morning progresses, the heat intensifies and Ian explains the reason he dragged the canvas sail along with him. Soaking it in the water first, they could pull it over themselves to provide relief from the sun. He also had a hat which Ian explained would be used to collect rain as it was rubber and wouldn't leak. Charla is amazed, but Ian tells her that thirst and sunburn make the difference between those who survive and those who don't after a shipwreck. He has learned it from

Discovery channel. Will can't help but hope that Lyssa thought of something along those lines. He remembers the last thing he said to her, and no one can comfort him. He can't stop thinking about all the times he'd wished he'd been an only child. For the hundredth time since the Phoenix left Guam, he begins a prayer but stops himself, realizing how empty and meaningless it all seemed. Finally, he settles on a prayer that he knows he may never get to make good on. He promises the powers that be that if Lyssa is okay, he'll never be mean to her again.

Chapter Sixteen: Tuesday, July 18, 0700 hours Analysis

The survivors are exhausted by morning, sleeping side by side on the makeshift raft. Will can hardly believe it is his turn already when Lyssa wakes him. They make the switch carefully. When the heat becomes unbearable, Ian pulls the piece of canvas over them, keeping them cool with the wet sail. By dipping it in the water, they are able to keep from overheating. Ian also held onto a rubber hat to collect drinking water. Charla is amazed that Ian managed to think of these things while standing in the middle of a burning ship. It is just one more example of how watching the Discovery channel proves invaluable to them. Now, the information he has absorbed is likely to be what saves them all. Will is disconsolate. He keeps remembering the last words he had with Lyssa, and the many times he thought that he should have been an only child. At that moment, he would have given anything to find her okay. He wanted nothing more than to have her back and after thinking about it, he vows that if he has the chance to fix things with Lyssa, he would never be mean to her again.



Chapter Seventeen: Wednesday, July 19, 0300 hours

Chapter Seventeen: Wednesday, July 19, 0300 hours Summary

Night time was the hardest. Will asks what time it is, interested only in seeing the light from Ian's National Geographic watch. Surprisingly, it still works. He tells the rest of the group that every time he falls asleep, he dreams that he is blind and the light from the watch is comforting. The temperature never goes lower than seventy degrees, but it still feels bone chilling cold after a day on the raft. They try again to find an arrangement where they can all be on the raft, but after being dunked several times in the process, they give up and go back to keeping three riders at a time. There were fins in the water on occasion, but Ian assures them they belong to dolphins. On the second day, thirst set in. Without rain, the rubber hat was no help to them although Ian seems sure it will. None of them have eaten in forty-eight hours and in addition to the lack of sleep, they are beginning to ache inside and out. Their lips were cracked and their throats burned. They cheer when the clouds appear, but the downpour doesn't follow it. That night, Luke wakes to the sound of drinking and opens his eyes to see Will hanging over the side of the raft and drinking directly from the sea. Luke pulls his face out of the water, but Will insists it will be okay. He says he has figured out why they never found J.J. or Lyssa. He's convinced that they have already been rescued and are waiting somewhere with the Captain and Radford, monitoring their behavior. He insists that they haven't been saved yet because they are okay. Luke realizes that there is only one explanation for his behavior. Will is beginning to lose his grip on reality, and Luke wonders how long it will be before it happens to the rest of them.

Chapter Seventeen: Wednesday, July 19, 0300 hours Analysis

Without a moon, it is so dark that they can hardly see each other. Ian is frightened by a recurring dream he is having about being blind. Luke is increasingly impatient with his requests to use the light on the National Geographic watch as a night light, reminding him that they are not at the Hilton. Will tries to roll over and accidentally knees Charla who reacts in shock and elbows him in the ribs. The raft dunks Ian underwater. By taking turns as shark bait, they are always wet. Luke didn't mind his time in the water, especially in the dark because the ocean stayed warmer when the air was cool. Ian is an endless source of information that sometimes exceeds their needs. He describes the strength and abilities of the great white shark, and the pack hunters that tiger sharks are. Finally, feeling like a worm on a hook, Charla asks him to stop at least until he is the one dangling from the edge of the raft. Thirst and hunger are becoming unbearable by the second day. Though clouds appear at one point, they deliver rain a quarter of a



mile away without drawing near. It is just short of torture for the group. Luke is horrified when he wakes to discover Will hanging over the edge of the raft and drinking his fill. He manages to stop him, but Will is hallucinating as well, convinced that they are being watched as J.J. suggested earlier. He says that the only reason they haven't been rescued is the fact that so far, they are managing to do okay. Will pities him, and wonders how long it will be before the rest of them are similarly affected.



Chapter Eighteen: Thursday, July 20, 1645 hours

Chapter Eighteen: Thursday, July 20, 1645 hours Summary

When it finally rains, they are so unprepared that they spill most of the water that they collect back into the sea. Drinking the sea water gives Will dry heaves and the shakes. When he tries to stand, he tumbles off the raft and into the ocean. They manage to collect only a couple of mouthfuls of water each and Will is so nauseous that he can't even keep that down. Minutes, hours, and days pass with boredom setting in. When only a short time ago, all he could think of was rescue, now Luke hardly thinks about it at all. Will hardly speaks at all now and when he does, it is often more gibberish than anything else. When they tell him it is his turn to be shark bait, he talks about Lyssa and the chess club. By mutual but unspoken agreement, they drop him from rotation in the water. It seems likely that Will won't survive much longer.

At first, Charla exercises while in the water, but her energy and ambition are gone now and all she can do is cling to the raft. Ian is the only one still talking and he fills their time with a monologue of ocean facts, gleaned from his time in front of the television. Luke finally asks him to stop, and embarrassed, he admits he talks too much. When Luke apologizes, Ian begins talking about how big blue whales are, directing their attention to the one close to them in the water, describing a twenty foot spout that only he can see. He asks Ian what the warning signs were if a person wasn't going to make it. Ian cites sleeping excessively, slow and lazy like behavior and hallucinations, describing the spout again.

Chapter Eighteen: Thursday, July 20, 1645 hours Analysis

Overwhelming boredom soon overshadows all else. Will becomes sick and when it finally rains, they collect so little that Luke is disgusted, claiming he'd rather have nothing than just enough to remind him of how thirsty he was. When Will spits up his small share, the others are in pure agony just thinking of the waste. Finally, boredom weighs on Luke until even he sinks into a weak and sleepy fog. Where in the beginning he could think of nothing but rescue, now he found he hardly cared at all. Will had stopped talking almost entirely, answering direct questions only half the time. It becomes clear that if they spend much more time at sea, Will is not going to survive. Only Ian seems compelled to talk, and he continues a one man monologue about the ocean and every fact he had gleaned about it from television. When Luke suggests he give it a rest for a while, Ian is embarrassed, and admits that he can be boring. Luke is immediately sorry and acknowledges that if it weren't for Ian, they'd all be dead. Ian

resumes, talking about whales now and directing their attention to one that only he is able to see near by. Luke questions him regarding the signs that someone shipwrecked may not survive, and Ian tells him that lethargy, hallucinations and excessive sleeping are signs of trouble.



Chapter Nineteen: Sunday, July 23, 1320 hours

Chapter Nineteen: Sunday, July 23, 1320 hours Summary

Luke can feel the sun even through closed eyes, and can tell he is sunburned. He tries to tell the others that he needs the canvas moved his way, but can't seem to connect his mouth to his mind. He can't remember how long he's been shark bait, but it feels as though it is days. He wants to tell Charla it is her turn, but his voice won't cooperate. It doesn't matter anyway as the other three are unconscious. Will had been the first to succumb, but the following day, Charla and Ian joined him. He has been hallucinating and the bird on Ian's head must be one more, he decides, as was the seaweed that wrapped itself around him. He closes his eyes, and has a small glimpse of his parents and when he opens them, he notices a fin in the water. Luke holds his breath as it approaches, and feels a bump, waiting for the bite that follows. Then he looks down and sees a bottle nose dolphin. He is aware of the pounding surf, and when his feet suddenly hit a sandy bottom, his instincts take over. He pushes the raft with all his might until it becomes lodged in the sand and he can move it no further.

Chapter Nineteen: Sunday, July 23, 1320 hours Analysis

Luke is in the water and feels like he has been there for days. His mind and mouth no longer work together, and he wishes he could sleep for a while, but the others are unconscious. He feels worst of all for Ian who was in the position only because he watched too much television. Now, he lay unconscious with a bird on his head. Luke realizes that it must be another hallucination, acknowledging that he has been having them. He has clear memories of things he hasn't seen, and remembers how Ian had seen the whale before losing consciousness.

When he sees the bird on Ian's head, he is sure it is nothing more than another hallucination. The fin in the water is a bit more persistent, and he tries to warn the others about the shark, but his mouth still won't work. When the raft is bumped, he is sure that he is about to die, but looking down into the water, he sees it is a dolphin. He remembers Ian telling them about how dolphins had helped shipwrecked victims in the past, and when his feet touch the sand, he instinctively pushes the cabin top as hard as he can until it is wedged in the sand so hard that it won't move.



Chapter Twenty: Sunday, July 23, 1555 hours

Chapter Twenty: Sunday, July 23, 1555 hours Summary

Luke gradually becomes aware of the fact that it is pouring. He stands too fast, and falls back down into the surf. Charla, Ian and Will are still unconscious and the hat sits between them, filled with water. He crawls over and sticks his face into the hat, slurping water that has never tasted better. It takes great effort for him to stop. He takes the hat carefully and pours liquid into Will's mouth, but Will chokes, still unable to keep anything down. Next, he moistens Charla's lips and her eyes and mouth open at the same time. She drinks at his instruction, almost choking herself, but not spilling a drop. They attend to Ian together, and he quickly regains consciousness as well, but Will remains unchanged. Luke spills water on his face, and forces some into his mouth but there is still no response. They try everything they can think of to revive him, but without result. Ian comments on how lucky they are to have found an island in the middle of the ocean and Luke quickly corrects him, telling him about the dolphins. Ian is sure he was merely hallucinating, and each one of them has a different memory of how they came to be on the beach. Charla is convinced they swam to it, remembering distinctly how they lined up on one side of the raft and kicked and Ian is sure that a hot wind blew them into the island's shore. The hat is filled once more, and Luke drinks a toast to them, and to those who didn't make it. Now, the castaways had more pressing needs to attend to. They needed food, shelter, and they needed to find a way to help Will. They make plans to explore the island that saved their lives.

Chapter Twenty: Sunday, July 23, 1555 hours Analysis

Luke dreams of jackhammers and wakes to rain. He sits up feeling confused and sees palm trees and sand. He drinks greedily, and it takes a sincere effort to pull himself away. The water was hard to pull away from. As carefully as he can, he holds the hat to Will's mouth but he is unable to keep it down. Next he made his way to Charla. Together they tended to Ian who quickly helps himself to as much water as he can keep down. Charla is still disoriented and worried about Will who she knows hasn't moved in days. Luke and the others do everything they can think of to rouse Will, but nothing works. Ian cites the Learning Channel as he explains that Will could wake any minute, or never wake again, and is embarrassed by Luke's look of anger.

Ian knows there is no way that they are on continental land, and surmises that they are on an island. He describes their good fortune as a miracle, saying that the likelihood of finding an island in the Pacific was as likely as two bullets hitting each other head on. Luke insists that luck had nothing to do with it. He tries to tell them about the dolphins, but each survivor has a different version of how they survived. Ian thinks a great wind



blew them ashore while Charla is convinced that they all climbed into the water and kicked until they were on the island. He uses the rubber hat to toast themselves and to toast those who were no longer with them. Then the castaways turned their concentration to the matter of survival.



Characters

Luke Haggerty

Luke is a thirteen-year-old young man who makes the decision to join the schooner, Phoenix, as an alternative to a jail sentence. He is lucky that his charge is a first offense, but since the offense involved a firearm in a school locker, the judge is inclined to take the incident seriously. As such, he is committed to a month of work as a crew member in a program called Charting a New Course (CNC) in the waters of the Pacific. They were to assemble at the marina in Guam and Luke is met on arrival at the airport by Mr. Radford, the first mate, who immediately calls him, and every other male he meets, Archie. Luke is so embarrassed by the felony conviction that after correcting Radford once about his name, he realizes that there is no point and stays silent.

Luke joins five other adolescents on the Phoenix and when all are aboard they set sail, threading their way through the other boats in the marina and heading out into the Pacific. It is immediately apparent that this will be no pleasure cruise for Luke and the others. Radford has them working the sails in the first few minutes, teaching them how to raise them to collect the wind. It is difficult work, and the effort leaves blisters behind on more than one crew member. They quickly learn that teamwork is an important part of the experience of CNC. Another thing that bonds the young crew almost immediately is their feelings where Mr. Radford is concerned. The first mate is gruff and insensitive, and cares little for how they feel. He seems to delight in their pain and discomfort, enjoying the incidents that cause them. When Luke is hit in the face by a swinging block, Radford's reaction has Luke renaming him Rat-face.

Luke is determined not to let Radford get the better of him. When all the others are getting seasick in the storm, Luke hides the fact that he is feeling ill. He locks himself in the head when he throws up, and then conscientiously cleans up after himself, removing all traces that he was ill. Unfortunately, he forgets to close the valve that opens them to the sea and before long, the water is getting deep below. When the water is discovered, Luke volunteers for the worst part of the cleanup, hoping his part in creating the mess is never discovered. Luke is determined to make his time aboard the Phoenix work. He didn't want to go to jail, and knowing that it is the only alternative to his time on board the schooner, he is determined not to let any of the others ruin things for him either. When J.J. takes matters into his own hands and tries to raise the mainsail during the worst of the storm, Luke tackles him, knowing that if J.J. is successful, he will endanger all of their lives. The Captain inadvertently hits the control himself and the sail rises. It is the beginning of the end of the Phoenix and the Captain, who is swept out to sea when the mainsail snaps and takes him off the deck. Luke manages to assemble three of the other crew members after the schooner sinks, and is the last one still conscious when the makeshift raft they are on reaches the island.



Will Greenfield

Will and his sister Lyssa are both sent to experience a month long course aboard the Phoenix in order to learn the value of working cooperatively. Up until this point, they have fought constantly and with increasing violence. Their last altercation hospitalizes both of them, and the police how attend make it clear to their parents that something must be done before someone is killed.

Will is Lyssa's direct opposite. He has a round face and his gaze seldom leaves the deck or the job at hand. He shares everything with his sister Lyssa, despite their surface animosity. Will is freckled and not as good looking as his sister. He resents that his sister has always seemed to get more attention, more accolades, more brains and better looks than he was endowed with. In fact, Will has often assured the Gods that he would have been much better off as an only child.

When Will and Lyssa begin their month long adventure in the Pacific, he is disgusted, but not surprised to find that his sister is enjoying herself. While he is miserable, and working harder than he dreamed possible, she is given the easier jobs including raising the smaller and lighter sails as compared to his struggles with the mainsail. While Will struggles to don his life jacket correctly for the fourth time, Lyssa is at the wheel chatting happily with the Captain. Not for the first time, or the last, Will wishes he was an only child. Later, when the Phoenix sinks, she is one of two crew members who are not accounted for, and presumed drowned. Will is filled with remorse for all the terrible things he has thought about his sister and remembers his last words to her - 'Aw, Lyss, you broke it' as she struggles to rebuild the ship's engine. Guilt has him praying again - this time that he has an opportunity to make it up to her.

Charla Swann

Tall, thin as a rail and graceful, Charla has a serious and no-nonsense approach. Her hair is described as plain and her clothes are simple. Her overall appearance seemed to be put together with efficiency in mind rather than fashion. At the age of twelve, Charla is on the dive team, the track and field team, and enjoys gymnastics. Her parents struggle to make ends meet and her father never stops reminding her that sports are her ticket out of there and to the Olympics. Working three jobs to keep them afloat, nothing is more important to her father than this goal, and he constantly complains that Charla is spreading herself too thin. Charla resents the pressure and wishes she could just afford to enjoy the sports she likes rather than be pushed to excel at everything, taking the fun out of them entirely. In fact, the pressure is so extreme that one day her mind and body rebel, and she finds herself in the hospital.

Though not well heeled financially, her parents manage to put together the money necessary to send her for a month on the Phoenix. Charla is embarrassed by her breakdown, and is resentful when J.J. finds their personal files in the Captain's office and begins to read them and make comments.



Charla is the last one to join them on the raft. She is feared lost at first, but when the Phoenix slips beneath the waves, she executes a flawless dive from a masthead and swims to them gracefully. She takes her two hour turns in the water every six hours like the rest, in the beginning using it as an opportunity to exercise, but that soon wears thin as hunger and dehydration set in. Soon, she is as weak as the rest, and barely hanging on. When the raft finally reaches the island, she is convinced that they got there by jointly swimming and pushing the raft ashore ahead of them.

Ian Sikorsky

Ian has a slight frame, sad eyes and seems lost without his laptop. His parents send him for a month aboard the Phoenix to separate him from the television and his laptop for thirty days. Ian is shy, and reserved at first, speaking little and offering little in the way of opinions or suggestions. When the others are given time off to swim in the warm waters, he declines, retreating below by himself. All of this changes when the Phoenix is damaged. Suddenly, Ian becomes a font of information. He remembers facts with encyclopedic accuracy, citing ocean dangers and physical responses to dehydration and exposure.

Ian reveals his resourcefulness when he swims to the raft with a rubber hat and a piece of a canvas sail. Claiming to have learned from a show about shipwrecks, he instructs them to wet the sail and cover themselves with it to escape the heat of the day time sun, and tells them that the rubber hat will be used to collect water during the next storm for drinking. Then he spends the next few days regaling them with a variety of facts learned from National Geographic and Discovery Channels regarding all manner of relevant survival issues.

At one point, his continual monologue gets on Luke's nerves and he suggests that Ian give it a rest, but when Ian is immediately chastened and apologizes for talking too much, Luke takes back his criticism. He reminds himself that without Ian's knowledge, they would likely not have survived as long as they already had. Ian is the second one to succumb to heat, dehydration and hunger, hallucinating that whales were swimming near by. He is later convinced that they arrived on the island as the result of a terrific wind that blew their raft in that direction.

J.J. Lane

A Hollywood brat who arrives to do his stint on the Phoenix in a jet, J.J. needs a hard dose of reality. In an effort to get his father's attention, he begins by bringing a case of champagne to his eighth grade dance at high school, then sells a video of a pool party his father threw to Entertainment Tonight. When both of these issues are effectively covered up, he graduates to shoplifting on Rodeo Drive, and most recently drives his father's Harley through the plate glass window of an art gallery. This stunt is the one which earns him a place on the Phoenix for a month to cool off and get out of the public eye.



J.J. is used to doing as he pleases. He is a spoiled young man who comes from money. When he first goes aboard the Phoenix, he tries to convince the Captain that his presence is a huge mistake, and offers Cascadden money to put him on a plane home. The Captain assures him that his father paid good money to get him aboard. J.J. believes that he can help them ride out the storm by simply putting up the mainsail, but when he unties it, he sets off a chain of events that eventually sinks the schooner, and takes the Captain's life, along with his own, Lyssa's and likely Radford's as well. J.J. has lived so much of his life in Hollywood that he later becomes convinced that the sinking of the Phoenix is all part of a movie. In fact he is so sure that this is all part of an elaborate plot that he suntans himself on deck while the others try to sort out the dilemma they are faced with. J.J. is one of the two crew members that does not manage to make his way to the raft after the Phoenix sinks.

Lyssa Greenfield

Sister to Will, Lyssa is skinny and has an angular face. Her eyes are bright and appear to be filled with friendly interest in everything that is going on around her. Lyssa is a good looking girl and usually seen as the sweet one. She is a straight A student, which only serves to aggravate her older brother more. They fight with such increasing ferocity that their parents are faced with no choice but to take drastic measures. They enroll both of their children in the CNC program in the hopes that they will learn the value of teamwork and camaraderie.

Mr. Radford

Radford is the first Mate and ship's cook on the Phoenix. He is tough as nails and has little sympathy or empathy for the youth who are a part of the CNC program. Radford calls all of the males that irritate him 'Archie' and females 'Veronica' derogatorily. He enjoys pushing the adolescents on board, including needling them at their worst. When all on board are suffering seasickness, he gleefully presents them with a breakfast of champions. Radford has little patience, and his tolerance decreases even more when the Captain is swept off the deck of the ship, never to be seen again. Radford spends another two days trying to get the Phoenix under way again, but is unsuccessful. When the crew goes to sleep after a long day of pumping, he slips away, taking a large store of their food and the wooden dingy.

Captain James Cascadden

James Cascadden has a leathery face, rugged and rough looking. He is six foot five inches tall which forces him to duck through Phoenix's hatches and companionways. Despite that, he still manages to appear graceful on board. James is over sixty years of age and has a rich, bassoon toned voice to go with penetrating eyes. He is a confident sailor, and knows the Phoenix intimately. He is sure of her abilities and has no fear when they find themselves in the midst of a storm which increases in ferocity. When J.J.



unties the mainsail, sure that by raising the sail they can simply use the wind to escape the storm, the Captain accidentally hits the button which raises it. When it becomes stuck and has to be manually lowered, he joins Radford on deck. The mainsail snaps and the broken half sweeps him off the deck.

Dan Rapaport

Dan is the traveling companion and wet nurse to J.J. Lane on behalf of J.J.'s father, Johnathan Lane. He is the one who delivers J.J. to Guam to begin his month long stint on the Phoenix to keep him away from the media for a while.

Reese

Reese is the boy who hid his gun in Luke's locker at school, allowing him to be arrested and charged for its possession.



Objects/Places

Guam

This is the location where all six youth assemble and prepare to board the Phoenix.

Phoenix

This is the schooner used for CNC (Charting a New Course).

Williston Juvenile Detention Facility

This is the facility to which Luke would have to have gone had it not been for the CNC program.

EPIRB

This is the Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon on board the schooner and on the life raft.

Nix

This is the only letters left on the cabin top the survivors use as a raft.

Island

This is the place that the survivors end up after the Phoenix sinks.

Cabin top.

This is the piece of the schooner, Phoenix, that the survivors use as a raft.

Rubber hat.

This is the one of two items that Ian brings to the raft when the Phoenix sinks.

Canvas sail.

This is the second item that Ian brings to the raft to be used as a sunshade.

Discovery Channel

This is the source of a fountain of knowledge that Ian gleans and helps the crew members to survive.



Themes

Teamwork

The Island series written by Gordon Korman begins with Shipwreck. This story introduces the six adolescents who are enrolled in the CNC program. Charting a New Course is designed to take at risk youths out of their environments and teach them the skills of cooperation and teamwork. The course is a month long session in the Pacific Ocean and the adolescents who are enrolled begin to bond almost immediately against a common enemy - the ship's first mate and cook, Mr. Radford. His abrasive character gives them a focus for their distrust, anger, and separation issues while allowing them to form a cohesive group with a common adversary.

The program is a combination of hard work, science and math, and oceanic studies that give each crew member a chance to excel individually and as part of a group effort. The participants are expected to work hard for which they are well fed, and are given the experience of a lifetime. On board the Phoenix there are no class distinctions, no financial considerations, and no important rivalries. The close quarters keep the participants from being able to withdraw into themselves such as Ian would most like to do; the work is often too difficult for one person to accomplish alone (raising and lowering the sails by hand for example), forcing them to work cooperatively which is an issue for Will and Lyssa; the trip is long enough to form new friendships and interrupt those left behind that might not have been beneficial such as Luke's friendship with Reese; and the danger is sufficient to eventually convince J.J. that all the world is not a stage and if they do not find a way to work together, they may not survive.

The Value of Family

Will and Lyssa Greenfield are a brother and sister who have yet to learn the value of family, and the importance of the bond that keeps a family together. Will has been jealous of his sister for some time. Part of that could be attributed to the fact that Will was the older child. He began life with his parents all to himself. Then Lyssa had come along, sweet and cuddly, requiring the undivided attention of his mother and Will discovered that he was resentful of her good looks, charm and the constant attention she got. As Lyssa got older, it only got worse. She was a straight A student while Will struggled in school; she had the good looks in the family while Will was a freckle-faced older brother who constantly heard that as he was older, he should know better. The animosity between them grew. What began as snide comments and sniping between them soon graduated to pushing, shoving, hitting and other forms of battle. When a recent argument became so violent that both Will and Lyssa woke up in the Emergency room, something had to be done. The police had to write a special report that cleared their parents of any possible child abuse and before the children were released to their custody, the police sat their parents down and warned them. If this behavior continued unchecked, it was more than likely that one would kill the other before too much more



time passed. A decision was made to send them on the CNC adventure together in the hopes that they would discover the bond that was missing.

It began much the way it was at home for them. Lyssa and Will sniped back and forth, each taking issue with the other. Will spent half his time resenting her and the other half muttering that he should have been an only child. All of that changed when Lyssa couldn't be found after the Phoenix sank. Suddenly Will realizes how unfair he was where she was concerned and would give anything to have the chance to tell her how sorry he was. It is ironic that he must first lose her to appreciate her and the value of family.

Knowledge Is Power

Ian comes to the CNC because his parents believe that he spends far too much time in front of either the television or his computer. As a result, he has become withdrawn and antisocial. His parents believe that some time away from his electronic world will help him to make friends and learn to work as part of a team. Ian joins the group, but does so in an isolated way. He is invited to join the others for a recreational swim on the second day, and declines, preferring to spend the time below decks on his own instead. He is uncommunicative, and reserved, saying little beyond what is absolutely necessary to get through one day and into the next.

Everything changes for Ian when they realize that they are stranded aboard the Phoenix on their own. Suddenly, all of the time spent watching channels such as Discovery and the National Geographic channel play an important role in their ability to survive. Ian is knowledgeable on every subject from surviving a shipwreck to dangers they might face in the ocean. He gives them their best chance of survival by keeping his head and grabbing a rubber hat and a section of canvas sail. The sail, he explains, can be moistened and then drawn over them to keep them from direct exposure to the sun and the rubber hat can be used to collect rain water for drinking. Not only does Ian draw on the knowledge he has gleaned from hours upon hours of television, but he also keeps up a monologue of interesting facts and figures while the four survivors are afloat in the ocean, distracting them from their possible fate and entertaining them at the same time. Ian's largest failing, according to his parents, ironically turns out to be the thing that is most likely to save the group of survivors from certain death after the Phoenix sinks in the Pacific. His knowledge is power.

Style

Point of View

Shipwreck by Gordon Korman is written from a first-person perspective that switches from one narrator to another. This style of writing allows the reader to understand the feelings and thoughts of a cross section of the characters instead of just one. The first person narrative is exemplified by phrases involving first-person singulars such as 'I' and first-person plurals such as 'we'. In this way, Korman allows the reader to experience the point of view of more than just the main character. The type of point of view employed by Korman is especially effective in this story because it allows the reader to understand the thoughts and feelings of the crew as they struggle to survive after the sinking of the Phoenix. It also gives the reader insight into the emotional strength and character of those who survive.

Korman introduces Luke Haggerty first and gives the reader some insight as to how he feels about the adventure he is about to embark on. While it appears that Luke is the main character, it soon becomes apparent that he is part of a group bound together by circumstance and sentence. Each of the adolescents that are on board the Phoenix are there for reasons that vary. Luke is part of the program as an alternative to a jail sentence for having been caught with a gun in his locker at school; Lyssa and Will are on board to learn the value of working together; Ian is taking the trip to give him an alternative point of view than what the computer or television can offer; Charla is part of this adventure to give her a break from the pressures her father put on her to succeed in a sport so that a scholarship can be gained; and J.J. is part of the program to provide an alternative to the attention seeking behavior he has been displaying and keep him out of trouble and the media for at least thirty days.

Setting

Shipwreck takes place primarily on board the schooner called the Phoenix. The adolescent passengers assemble to board her in Guam. From there, they are to spend thirty days out in the Pacific ocean with Captain Cascadden and first mate, Mr. Radford. The trip is part of a program called Charting a New Course (CNC) where adolescents who are struggling for one reason or another are given an opportunity to grow, bond with others, and learn the value of teamwork. Within a few days, what begins as a kind of working vacation turns into a nightmare of survival as the Captain is swept off the deck and within two days, the first mate deserts the six crew members, leaving them to fend for themselves on a sinking ship.

The young crew does what they can, but a mistake costs them what little time they had left aboard the Phoenix, and it sinks, leaving them adrift in the Pacific ocean with little more than a rubber hat to collect rainwater and a canvas sail to escape from the sun under. Crammed on the cabin top, the four survivors spend a harrowing time, taking



turns in the water as the cabin top will only accommodate three. They suffer dehydration, exposure, and hunger as they float without hope until they find themselves on the shore of a small island somewhere in the Pacific ocean.

Language and Meaning

Shipwreck - Book one of the Island series written by Gordon Korman is written using common and current English language and phrasing. Sentence structure is uncomplicated and straightforward, using language common to the current day and time. In order to lend authenticity to the story, Korman uses nautical expressions and terms such as his references to the variety of sails used on the schooner and to the equipment on board the Phoenix. The six adolescents aboard are taught the differences between the sails and how to raise and lower them. They begin to learn how to identify their global position. Indexing water temperatures and wave heights add to the authenticity of this story, as do the rules they are taught which include the fact that the engine should never be started unless the blower fan is activated first to disperse the fumes from the engine compartment.

The Captain and Radford teach them how to store lines and ropes in coils to keep them from tangling and to tie down the sails during a storm. The young crew is worked hard, well fed, and begins to learn the value of teamwork. All of this becomes especially important when they find themselves adrift in the Pacific ocean with nothing but the cabin top to use as a makeshift raft. Korman uses a good blend of nautical terms to give the story an authentic feel, and when the four survivors are adrift in the ocean, Ian is a fountain of useful information that he gleaned from watching Discovery Channel and National Geographic.

Structure

Book One: Shipwreck of the Island series by Gordon Korman is the first of a series. It is comprised of one hundred and thirty pages that are divided into twenty chapters. The chapters vary in length, some of the as short as two or three pages, and others as long as twelve pages. Most however are shorter in length. Each chapter has a date and time reference which gives the reader an idea of the period of time in which the events occur. This is especially relevant when the survivors are afloat on their makeshift raft. The story is prefaced by a prologue which is just over one page in length and gives the reader a glimpse of the disaster to come. The first chapter goes back in time by six days from the prologue. From the first to the third chapter, the reader is introduced to all of the characters in this book of the series. They are comprised of the six adolescents that have been signed onto the program called 'Charting a New Course' (CNC); the first mate, Mr. Radford and Captain Cascadden.

The fourth and fifth chapters give the reader an idea of the general character of those on board. They also hint at the coming conflict that will arise as a result of a general lack of respect for authority. By chapter six, life on board is taking shape and the reader is



beginning to understand the structure that is intended by the CNC program. In chapter seven, a storm begins that has most of the passengers seasick. It increases in strength through to chapter eight, and six days from their departure, the Phoenix is in desperate trouble. Chapters eight and nine document the struggle faced by Radford and the six adolescents after the Captain is lost at sea after an incident that occurs during the storm. The crew discovers that Radford has left them to fend for themselves in chapter twelve and in chapter fifteen, the survivors watch as the Phoenix sinks out of sight. The remaining five chapters document their survival and discovery of an island that they manage to find.



Quotes

"That'll be my next felony, if I ever get my hands on the kid who put that gun in my locker." (Chapter 1, p. 7).

"If you forget everything else you learn here, remember this one thing." (Chapter 3, Pg. 13).

"If you don't do something about these two, they're going to kill each other." (Chapter 4, p. 24).

"I don't like the CNC, but it's better than jail - land that's where I go if I don't complete this trip!" (Chapter 8, p. 47).

"My dear, last time was a lap around the duck pond compared with what the next few hours might bring us." (Chapter 9, p. 50).

"To look for the Captain, you don't use a boat; you use a submarine." (Chapter 11, p. 64).

"Someday I want to sit down with you and your friend Richie Rich and find out why you needed to play WWF in a full gale." (Chapter 11, p. 65).

"If we make it to some port and tell the story of how he deserted us, he's in big trouble." (Chapter 12, p. 78).

"I hope you can look at this stuff and see a motor, because all I see is a huge pile of junk." (Chapter 14, p.. 89).

"Style counts for nothing when you're being rescued." (Chapter 15, p. 104).

"Aw, Lyss, I knew you'd bust it." (Chapter 16, p. 109).

"I don't want to hear another word about it until you're hanging down here like a worm on a hook." (Chapter, p. 112).

"In that show about shipwrecks, what were the warning signs?" (Chapter 18, p. 119).

"He's definitely alive, but there's no telling when he'll snap out of it." (Chapter 20, p. 127).

"I think maybe we're all right - inside our minds." (Chapter 20, p. 128).



Topics for Discussion

What are the reasons that each of the six youth have been sent to the Phoenix for a month? What is the program called? What is the aim of the program? What would have been the alternative for most of the young adults in this story?

How do the six young adults respond to their new home for thirty days? What is their initial reaction? Who appears least likely to cope well with the coming four weeks and why? Who is the only one who seems to be enjoying the adventure from the start? What effect does this have and why?

What are some of the things that Radford and Cascadden teach their young crew about sailing? What specific lessons do they learn about sailing in high winds? Who among the young crew believes they know a better way to get through a storm? Who is determined not to reveal seasickness and why?

What are the main differences between Captain Cascadden and Mr. Radford? What incident exemplifies this difference? Who is responsible for it? What instruction was ignored that caused the incident? How does the person responsible make up for it?

Who ruins the swimming break that they are given? Why? How does this event foreshadow the events to come? What factor is consistent in this character's behavior? Why?

Who is responsible for the demise of the Phoenix? What happens to the Captain? How does that affect the mood of the others? Why are they unable to rescue him?

When does Radford's demeanor change? In what way does it change? What do the others realize is the reason for this change? When do they understand it's implications? Where is Radford when the ship sinks?

What causes the Phoenix to sink? What event is the catalyst to this disaster? Who is the first to discover the cabin top? What is the significance of this piece of the schooner? Who is the next to be found? How many crew members manage to make it to the raft?

What problem exists that causes the survivors to rotate the time they spend on the raft? Who's idea is it to do this? What schedule do they work out? What do they call the odd person out and why?

Who is likely responsible for the survival of the crew members on the raft? What items does this character contribute to their survival? Where does the information come from that keeps them alive? What is ironic about the information they have, considering the situation they are in?



Who is the first to begin showing signs of dehydration? What are these signs? Which members on the raft exhibit signs and what are these signs specifically? How long does it take before unconsciousness sets in? What saves the raft group?