



CHAPTER 1

60 MINUTES TO GO

“You are trapped. You have one hour to solve the puzzles and find a way out or you will remain locked in here forever. So, think carefully — it’s time for you to... learn your lesson.”

Paige shivered. Even though she knew this was a game, that the words were just a recording, it still felt creepy to be locked in a room with no way out. They couldn’t even communicate with the outside world. The man who’d greeted them was dressed like an old-fashioned teacher. He wore a black gown and one of those flat, black hats with a tassel on. His face was hidden by a

black mask. He'd said they had to store all their stuff, phones included, in a locker before they were allowed in.

"I can't believe we've come to school on a Saturday," said Dan, looking around them.

It wasn't really a school, of course, but the place had been decorated to look like a classroom, complete with desks and a big whiteboard on one wall. It wasn't a very realistic classroom, though; it had a strange mix of equipment. There were large, complicated books on subjects like chemistry, but then there was a jolly ABC poster more suited to a reception class. And no classroom they'd ever known — and they were Year 12s now — had contained a treadmill, an old-fashioned wall telephone or a safe with a combination lock.

"Yeah, I reckon the theme's a mistake," said Trip. "Who wants to go to school when they don't have to? And you have to pay — how much?"