

MUDDOCH

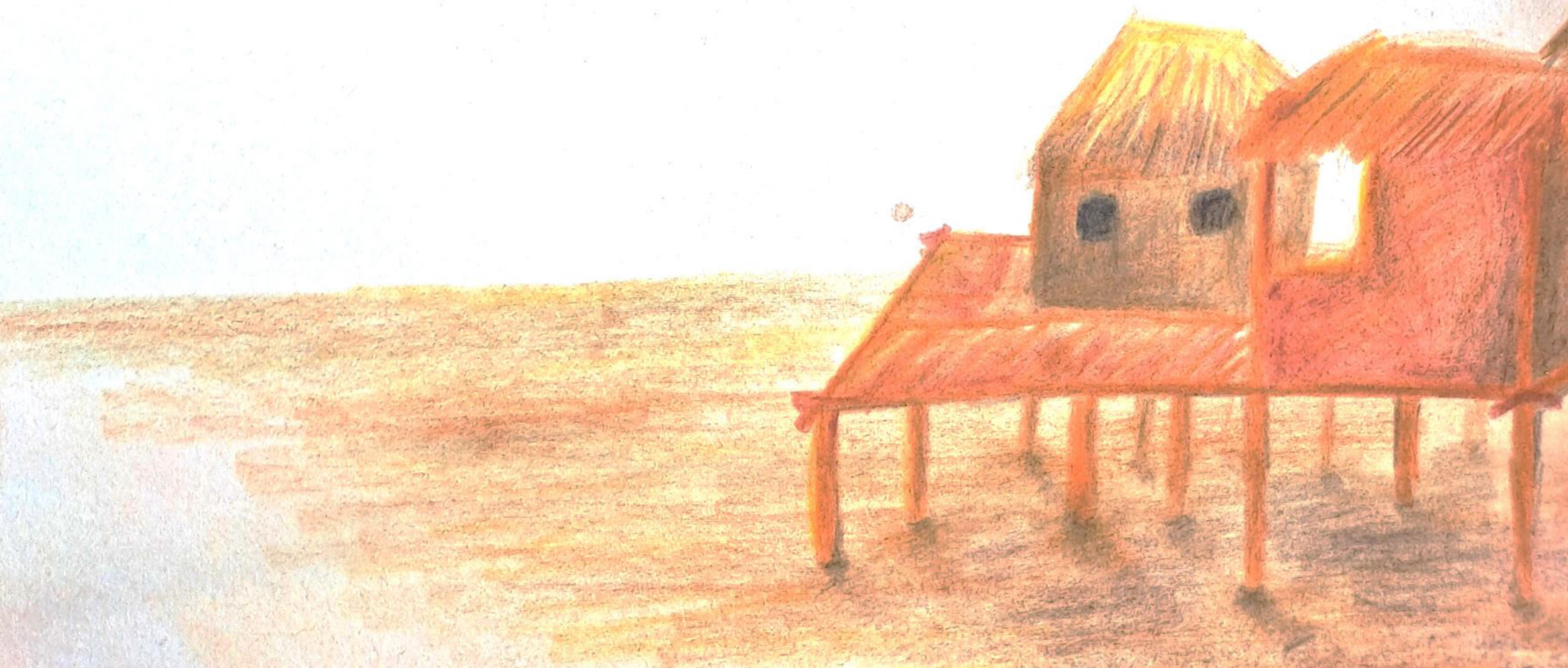
The dry season is always the hardest season for the mud trolls. The mud they love and adore struggles to keep soft while the sun hangs longer in the sky. Though the dry season only usually lasts 6-8 weeks, by the end of it the mud trolls are often desperate for its return.

The mud flats dry up into cracked hard desert like plains, with only a few dug out swamp holes the community maintain for bathing.

The trolls themselves start to get embarrassed by their mud layers flaking off, and everyone tries to stay in the shade to avoid this happening.

But when the Muddoch rains do come, there is a festivity to welcome them return of the mud, and this is the festival of Muddoch.

The first rains don't often come in drizzle and drips, they usually come as black clouds and claps of thunder.



The mud trolls love these storms, (though they don't love rain its self.) When they see the first dark cloud approaching, they whoop and holler and cheer then lay food and gifts for the storms on their walkways. Then as loudly and as sweetly as they can they sing the rain song. They believe this encourage the storms to stay longer over their village and not past them by.

But as soon as the first drop falls, they all run inside their huts, eager to avoid the rain. They peer out at the crashing torrents. With each thunder clap they cheer and dance; and when the storm has passed, they wait a few moments while the rain is cleaned by the earth,, then hey run out and start stamping in the puddles to work the hard earth into mud again.

Once the mud is finally pliable, to celebrate they take big lumps of clay and mould gargoyles with it on posts and trees. This is their version of decoration. A celebration of their beloved mud. They sculpt new crockery, and patch up their houses, and collectively they build a big sculpture to thank the mud for returning.

That evening they have a feast and the biggest mud fight imaginable, the mud fight goes on all through the night, until the sun begins to rise the next day. Should a mud troll get tired and go to bed early... Well, they are most likely to be woken up to a big splat of mud on their face and roaring giggles from their friends and family.

When the sun does rise they each eat breakfast in their own homes and snuggle down for a much needed rest.