

The Treasure Punt #2

The pirates of *The Bountiful*, ably led by Captain Blackbird, were perplexed. ‘How can we find the treasure,’ their captain had asked, ‘when we don’t know where to look?’ Truth be told, none of them really knew an adequate answer. This prompted the more extroverted amongst them, particularly sailor Samuel, to strategically respond with another question, rather than appear ignorant or foolish.

“I’d like to suggest,” Samuel offered diplomatically, “that before we explore the Captain’s key question, we answer another, and that is, what indeed is treasure?”

Blackbird heaved heavily, blowing his smoky breath out of the corner of his mouth, like a resting dragon. Samuel hastened to complete his argument, before he too might face a similar fate to his friend Simon, now busy below deck sandpapering the plank which would soon transport him across a teary threshold.

“Knowing what it is we’re looking for, might suggest some clues as to its whereabouts,” said Samuel sagely. “If it’s a woman you want, you won’t look on *The Bountiful*, now will you?”

All the other simple sailors laughed in agreement, and even Blackbird seemed captivated with Sam’s earthy logic.

“So, what is it we’re really looking for?” Samuel continued, encouraged at the turn the conversation was taking. “Is it gold?” he asked huskily and lustfully, and the sailors, to a man, chanted in one unified voice in response.

“Gold, it is!” shouted the sailors.

“Is it diamonds?” Samuel continued, relishing in the power of his rhetorical speech.

“Diamonds, it is!”

“Is it rubies, pearls, emeralds and other jewels?”

When the sailors tried to repeat, in a unified way, the response to this third question, as they had for the others, some got tongue-tied, but the message was clear. Gold, diamonds, rubies, pearls, emeralds, and other jewels too numerous to mention, these were the treasures they hunted.

The mere mention of such specific treasures set Blackbird’s pulse a racing, and small droplets of sweat could be seen upon his bleary cheeks and chequered forehead.

“That’s settled then,” the good captain concluded triumphantly. “The treasures we seek are rarities, and rarities are always hidden. Right! So, me hearties, we need to look in the hiding places!”

“I know just where to start,” said simple sailor Samuel, and all the other sailors, including Captain Blackbird, gaped in astonishment.

“It’s not North, oh no no no!” Samuel added, and the sailors nodded in agreement.

“It’s not South, oh no no no!” he continued, and again the sailors signalled their acceptance.

“It’s not East, oh no no no!” cried Samuel with ever more relish, a direction to which the sailors clearly concurred.

“Then it must be in the bleeding West,” concluded Blackbird, who was not Captain of *The Bountiful* for nothing, rolling his one eye.

“It’s not the West, oh no no no!” concluded Sam, in contradiction of his captain.

There emerged a collective groan from the seafarers, and Blackbird lurched thunderously forward, leaning on his one good leg, swiping his hook-arm across the face of the Coxswain, but thankfully missing!

“Samuel, you’ll soon be joining Simon on the plank,” ordered Blackbird, on catching his breath, and signalling for his first-mate Long John Platinum to capture his tormentor.

“Men, men, be patient,” Sam implored. “It’s not North, it’s not South, it’s not East, and it’s not West. On the contrary, treasure can be found in all directions!”

So the sailors stood in stony silence, reflecting on hidden treasures and their hiding places.