

## The Treasure Punt #23

It was an on-going tale of woe. When rumours of the sinking of The Hercules, the world's largest freighter, laden with a month's worth of Rustenburg's A-grade platinum, were heard by Captain Blackbird of The Bountiful, not the planet's greatest treasure hunter, he and his many simple sailor pirates pulled together as one to be the first on the scene. Blackbird invoked his many decades worth of treasure hunting experience to make a beeline from False Bay to Patagonia, where tonnes of rich-ripe Platinum pickings could be plucked like a fowl's feathers from the sea floor.

The Bountiful was steered on the most direct, though also far the most risky course across the southern Atlantic. Crew were immediately deployed on two-shift, twelve hour rosters, with all leave applications refused, and even the sick, lame and lazy were roused from their lacklustre listlessness to pull their respective weights. Rusty old sextants were re-discovered in the bilges, to augment Blackbird's steering from the stars, and two rows of oarsmen were set to work rowing madly when the winds dropped and the boat was becalmed. Rum was rationed for interests of productivity gains, and eventually, for the second half of the journey, all of the pirates, except the officers, were tea-totalling tipplers, more sober than on the days they were born.

"C'mon my mateys, I promise all of yer a blisteringly big bonus when our work is done," Blackbird shouted inspirationally from the crow's nest, before swigging on a flagon.

So The Bountiful sailed ever closer to the winds, and the oarsmen rowed harder and faster, even under sail, and a hull-straining forty knot speed was achieved, the ocean-crossing Cape to Rio record under threat.

But when ten day later The Bountiful veritably swished and surfed into the midnight black Patagonian waters, there was disappointment and despair. Blackbird's nemesis Rosy Riproaring, fair pirate of the northern Atlantic, was already there! So too was Jack Sparrow and a fleet of Caribbean pirate ships, as was Hu Flun Dun, fearsome foe from North Korea, and Matilda the Greatest, all the way from Hobart. What rubbed even more salt in Blackbird's wounded pride was that even Captain Toby Tenyeni, Captain of The Kleptomaniac, a South African black economic empowered pirate boat sponsored by Police sunglasses, had beaten The Bountiful to Patagonia from the Cape of Storms.

"Dastardly darn damns, "Blackbird blurted colourfully in the expurgated version of The Treasure Punt.

"How'd yer do it, you limpid lassie?" he screamed over the rising tide to Rosy Riproaring, but she was too busy with her I-Pad to bother connecting with an old-school enemy.

"What's yer secret?" Blackbird challenged Jack Sparrow, who glanced over, but immediately punched furiously into his Blackberry Torch.

"Hu Flun Dun, yer measly little yellow bunny!" Blackbird insulted, "How'd a cranky commie boat hear of this capitalist cargo?"

Hu Flun Dun didn't even turn his gaze away from his Samsung tablet.

"Hey, Waltzing Matilda, help me out with some south-to-south fair trade," Blackbird implored, running out of options, but the buxom Aussie was much more interested in the pressing matters of her I-Phone.

It was hard for Blackbird to engage with Toby Tenyeni after their recent punch-up at the Godzilla fancy-dress party in Simonstown, but in search of at least some intelligence, he relented.

“Toby Tenyeni, me old chum, and that’s no shark bait,” called Blackbird, though his spirits were waning, “please help a previously advantaged pirate out.”

Toby Tenyeni peeked over the rim of his dark spectacles, despite the pumpkin hour, and then turned away, more intent on admiring his personal profile appearing on his jewel-encrusted Diamond Crypto Smartphone, which he had recently purchased for the mere snip of eight hundred and twenty-seven thousand pound sterling, thereby dispensing forever with his more common-man black HTC Wildfire.

As fast as there had previously appeared sudden abundance, an immediate paucity of platinum in Patagonia was clearly apparent, and a dejected Blackbird set The Bountiful back on an eastern course.

In the early hours Captain Blackbird was plagued by the most frightening nightmares. In the first a huge book kept slapping our illiterate pirate hero hard in the face, this way and that, leaving his cheeks with tremendous welts and bruises. Then in the second bad dream, Blackbird was tormented by a terrible tinnitus, with ten thousand canaries relentlessly twittering and tweeting in his ears. In the last nightmare Blackbird’s torso was tied as a missing link in a huge metal anchor chain, his body stretching and tightening as the huge weight was lowered to the seabed.

Blackbird awoke fitfully and frantically invoked the urgent help of One-Eyed Dick, one of The Bountiful’s full-time galley-hands, but also the boat’s one and only pseudo-psychologist.

“I know exactly what these dreams mean!” One-Eyed Dick enthused. “The old days are gone. You’ve got to get connected to the social networks. Facebook! Twitter! LinkedIn! A modern pirate knows that’s how to be the first to the treasure.”

**Treasure Hunting Tip:** Traditional recruitment methods, often slow and laborious, are being overrun by leveraging the power of social networks. Where speed to the market is a clear competitive advantage, winning recruiters are keyed-in and sprinting to the social networks as the fastest way to find the treasure.

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