

Pirate Family Smith

by Jonny Zucker and Brett Gowlett



Pirate Family Smith

Chapter 1

“YOU MUST HAVE GOT THE NUMBERS WRONG!” roared Pirate Smith, his eyes alight with anger, his long moustache trembling with rage. He had stopped on the shelf of rocks high above the bay and was tapping the stones with his shovel. They stood firm – no secret doors, no hidden panels.



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His son, Bo, turned red, trying in his mind to remember the sequence of numbers the mysterious wrinkly woman in the top hat had told him.

“A treasure chest lies hidden in the rocks above Pebble Cove,” she'd said. “If you give me two gold coins, I'll tell you how to find it. You'll either find the Elixir of Life inside it or a huge stash of jewels.”

The Elixir of Life was a drink that made you live forever. Every self-respecting pirate wanted to get their hands on it. Mind you, a stash of jewels was also pretty good.

“Don't worry,” said Vera Smith, the boy's mother and a superb pirate herself. “I also heard the numbers, remember?”

Bo shrugged his shoulders. All he wanted was to be a great pirate like his parents but so far he hadn't quite got the hang of it. His eye patch kept falling down over his nose, his parrot, Jeff, didn't say anything other than “Toffee apples” and when he shouted “ATTACK THOSE VILLAINS!” it didn't sound scary, it sounded like a mouse sneezing.

“Don't you two forget that the King of Moonshine himself sent us on this mission and we agreed to split the spoils half and half with him,” said Pirate Smith.

“It's three more steps forward, then seven to the left,” said Vera.

Like a line of penguins, the three Smiths followed these instructions.

Luckily, Bo's family had got to the wrinkly top-hatted woman before their fiercest enemy, a foul pirate called Purple Beard. If he'd got to her before them, they'd have never heard the end of it; that scoundrel was the pirate world's number one boaster.

“Now five steps to the right and eleven to the left and we should be there.”

After following these instructions, Pirate Smith whacked a rock with his shovel. The sound of an echo shot back. “AH HA!” he roared. “There's a hole beneath here. I think we may have struck gold!”

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Bo felt excitement speeding through him. There'd probably be all sorts of diamonds and rubies and pearls inside the treasure chest that lay buried beneath them. Even after giving half to the King, they'd still be rich! They'd replace their ship, *The Dusty Brig* with one that was even faster and more powerful. Bo might even get an eye patch that fitted him.

"Well come on then!" shouted Pirate Smith. "Let's get to that treasure!"

Bo and Vera took their shovels out from their knapsacks and the three of them started digging into the rocks.

It was hard work and after an hour of backbreaking toil, they'd removed a first layer of rocks but had found nothing. However, a few minutes after attacking a second layer, Bo's shovel came into contact with something other than rock.

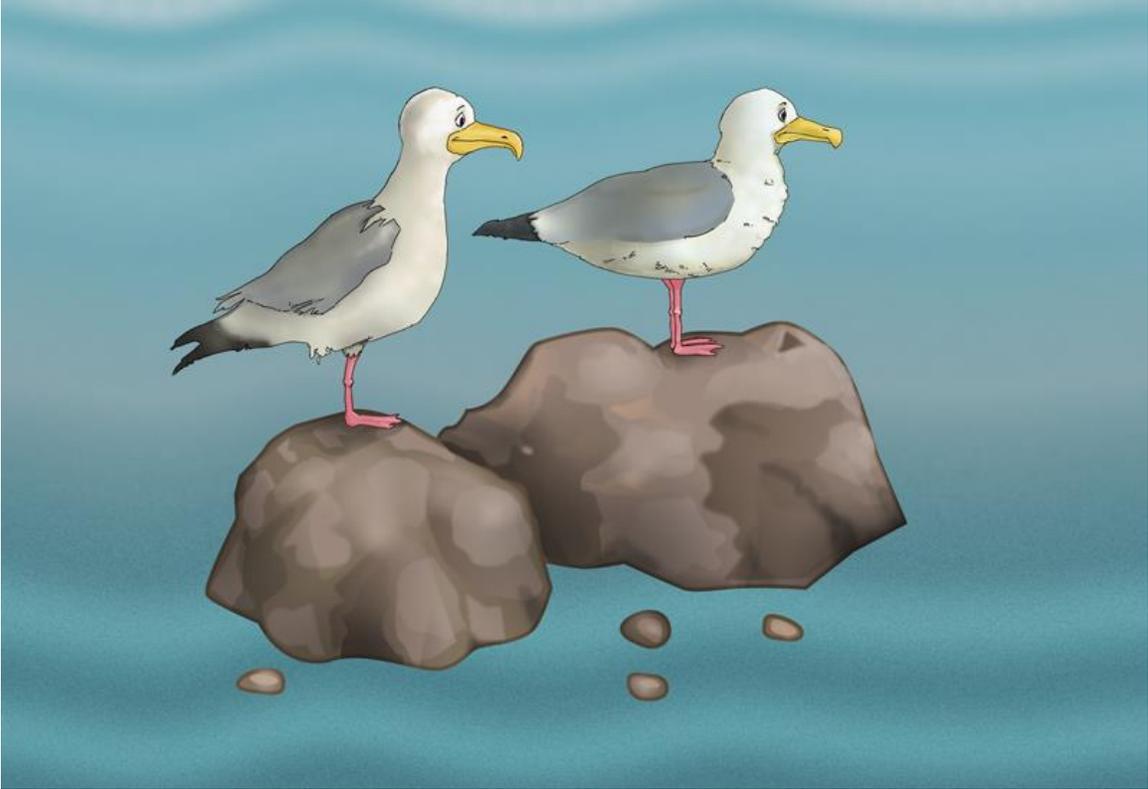
"It's wood!" he shouted, "take a look!"

He and his parents peered into the hole they'd made.

"By Jove!" cried Vera. "He's right. It must be the top of the treasure chest!"

A couple of seagulls with grey beaks landed on the rocks a short distance away, interested to see what these three excited humans were up to.

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“Let’s dig it out and get back to *The Dusty Brig!*” shouted Pirate Smith.

The Smiths started acting like crazy toddlers unwrapping a giant birthday present, tearing away bits of rock with their hands until they had freed the chest and lifted it right out of the hole. It was huge and heavy. There was a shape of a star on the centre of its lid

Bo couldn’t believe it. There must be mountains of gems inside it. The Smith family’s life was about to change forever.

But when Pirate Smith tried to lift the lid, he couldn’t. Its clasp was locked firm. And when he tried to open it at the back, he also couldn’t. He looked for any kind of opening on the sides but there were none. He pulled the clasp, pushed it and twisted it but without luck.

Bo felt a pang of disappointment.

“Don’t worry, young man,” said Vera, placing an arm round her son’s shoulders. “We’ll take it back to *The Dusty Brig* and open it there.”

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"Fine idea," nodded Pirate Smith.

Bo felt a bit better.

The three of them lifted up the chest, Pirate Smith at the front, Vera at the back and Bo at the side. It was even heavier than it looked. They started walking along the rocks.

But they hadn't gone more than thirty feet when a loud explosion ripped through the air and a huge cannonball thudded just behind them, sending shards of rock flying everywhere. They were lucky not to be hit. A second later, another cannonball followed, this one landing even nearer to them and the treasure chest.



"WE'RE BEING ATTACKED!" screamed Pirate Smith. "RUN!!!"