



Chapter 3

The Quest

Just as Dex hops on to the ship, Big Dan gets back from his visit to the shops. All his men are glad that Big Dan is back.

“Where were you?” asks Josh.

Josh is the deckman on the ship. He is a kid. So he has to do all the jobs the rest of the men do not want to do. He mops the deck and rubs the rust off the mast.

Big Dan is just to Josh and sticks up for him. He gets Josh hand me down things so Josh does not have to spend his cash.

Dex trusts Josh. He thinks Josh and Big Dan are the best men on the ship.

“Men, I did it!” yells Big Dan. “Check what I got!”

The ship hands rush to check. Big Dan lifts up his hand.

“Is that a map in your hand?” asks Josh.

Big Dan nods. “It is not just a map. It is THE MAP! The map for the Gold of Black Rock Hill!”

“What?” Josh gasps in shock. “But that chest of gold was lost for so long!”

“A lot of men were lost in quests to get their hands on that chest,” says a

ship hand. “How will we get it when lots of men have not?” he asks.

“Those men did not have this map!” Big Dan says. “That is why they got lost. With this, we will get to that chest!”

“How did you get this map?” asks Josh.

“I got it from an old bandit on land,” Big Dan says. “He sells crafts in his gift shop by the docks.”

A fat man next to Big Dan says, “A map from a bandit? How can you trust this man?”

“This must be a rip-off,” yells a thin man from the back. “If it is not, why did he not dig for the chest himself?”

“I get it,” says Big Dan. “But let me tell you why I trust this bandit with all I got. I was just a kid as old as Josh when I met this man. He let me stay with him in his hut. I did not have a thing to pay him with. He did not have much, but he still lent me the cash to get Brisk. He thinks of me as a son.”

His men nod.

“I got him help when he was ill,” he adds. “He has no kids to pass on the map to. So he let me have it as a gift for helping him. He thinks we can get to it. My gut says we got a shot at this as well.”

“So, who will go on a quest with me to get the Gold of Black Rock Hill?” asks Big Dan.

The men lift their fists. They chant and yell. They want to get rich.

“O.K., then!” says Big Dan. “We are on our way!”