

The Treasure Seekers

You still can't believe it. There you had sat in the office of the curator of the San Diego Museum of Spanish and American history, and in a matter of a few minutes, had received the proverbial pink slip, unceremoniously ending your ten years of devoted research and work for one of the oldest archaeological institutions in the country. In one swift swing of the fiscal axe, the National Endowment of the Arts had pulled its grant, sending you to join the ranks of the unemployed. For a decade you had dutifully translated ancient manuscripts, painstakingly solicited and purchased countless invaluable artifacts, and patiently guided endless tours of regiments of Japanese tourists, snapping their flash cameras with impunity - all as the self-appointed Grand Protector and Purveyor of Spanish antiquity. And for what? A slap on the back, a heartfelt thanks for a job well-done and two weeks of severance pay after eking out a miserable existence of poor wages and long hours in the name of some dead concept called history.

Thus it was that after an obligatory bout of drowning your sorrows that evening, you found yourself hungover and penniless the next day, lumbering your way through the hallowed halls of the museum, cardboard box in hand, intent on cleaning out your desk. But a haphazard twist of fate was soon to change everything . . .

Seeing his office light on , you stopped to bid adieu to your faithful ally and mentor, Professor Archimedes de Buona fortuna. The eccentric but erudite professor had been a fixture in the museum for years, and his research skills and expertise in 16th century Spanish explorers had brought the museum worldwide acclaim. But when you opened his office door to commiserate, the scene that met your eyes was so gruesome and terrifying that only a muffled grunt escaped your lips. For there, sprawled on the marble floor in a puddle of water was the limp figure of the Professor, fresh blood trickling from his fingernails, his eyes staring vacantly through a pair of crushed spectacles. The only sound was the light mechanical slapping of a tape reel in the background that, unheeded, had played to its end. For years it had been the Professor's preferred method of documenting his findings. Now all that remained of this great mind was a dishevelled heap that pointed in the direction of an envelope that lay partially concealed under an old armoire.

Regaining your composure, you pick up the envelope and rewind and play back the tape.

1. A decade of glory will not pay,
For the humiliation you suffered yesterday,
And now sweet vengeance has no pleasure,
Like the rich payback of buried treasure,
And though pirates did take over his ship,
In a geode Balboa left you a tip,
A few blocks north on First in the open air,
Is the man to whom you'll chant the prayer,
Start with " We are the kings of antiquity,
World explorers are our specialty,
Until the NEA pulled our grant,
Our future lies in Balboa's chant"
You should find the second part,
In the ship's logs that he did chart,
Three golden crowns you should each wear,
Or information your contact won't share,
For only Balboa's words will open the rock,
Therein a map's location you can unlock.

2. The geode its secret does reveal,
South down First you must now steal,
And near where it becomes Camino Del Mar,
Is an old notorious pirates' bar,
Where peglegged bandits did celebrate,
The taking of poor Balboa's frieght,
Almost four hundred years ago they did toast,
This maritime heist just off the coast,
But while they pillaged in their greed,
Did their search to blueprints lead?
Balboa was forced to walk the plank,
While flasks of rum these pirates drank.

3. The pirates set sail upon quaffing their thirst,
But in southern gale winds were soon immersed,
The storm blew them past a piney beach,
But a safe landing was not within reach,
They tried to cable in early "Morse",
But the raging waves took on deadly force,

As the ill-fated brigands watched in disbelief,
The Esmeralda crashed on a barrier reef,
And many drunk seamen soon became prey,
To the appetite of one large moray,
A map and the treasure sank across from the lairs,
Of the ravenous eels with their cold-blooded stares.

4. Two hardy pirates were able to swim to shore,
And escape the carnage of the oceanfloor,
Among them was Blackbeard who toted the chest,
Brimming with Balboa's bejeweled bequest,
And the map was saved by Hobbs, his cohort,
They both drifted ashore to LaJolla port,
And there charted the points of a particular cave,
A few paces short of a watery grave,
There the booty was secretly stored,
The charted points they did record.
Your pocket Atlas will surely advise,
Of what your latitudes and longitudes comprise,
The first letter of the country on which each point
does fall,
When spelled in sequence will let you scrawl,
The name of two streets that intersect,
Look in a cave south from where they connect,
A quick beach stroll won't make this too hard,
To the place near where a pirate stands guard.

5. Though the pirates' share of bars of gold,
Has been stolen by one more bold,
The first map of three was left,
By someone obviously much less deft,
Track now the Commander's ancestry,
La Jolla to Mission is your guarantee,
Then Grandly drive to N.. Mission Bay,
Under the Corn Stalk Dome you'll find your prey,
And please bring no attention to your find,
For the Germans are not far behind,
One of your team should be enough,
To avoid any security guff.

6. No prospect would you more dislike,
Than treasure enriching the Fourth Reich,
Well, stop whining and be quick to heed,
The path of the Germans' momentary lead,
They've sent the loot to be soon shipped,
On a red wagon that's equipped,

With a horse drawn carriage that seems all show,
And owned by a company that's in the know,
A small fortune sits inside the depot,
From the wagon you've not far to go.

7. You've exchanged your golden stash,
For a little petty cash,
And though it is a healthy taste,
Its greater source must still be chased,
For two questions still exist,
Upon two maps you must insist,
To find where lies the real McCoy,
To a park you must deploy,
Named in honor of your hero's success,
His Pacific discovery did impress,
For their your enemies booked a plane,
Go south on five and on them you'll gain,
At an exit northbound you should Park and fly,
With a presidential turn, you're on standby,
Pan American will fly you to the place,
A mock airfield with so much space.

8. To Calcutta the Nazi's did cruise,
Chagrined they were at your last ruse,
For now with two of the Balboa maps in hand,
It's time to prepare for your last stand,
Head back down Park and think of a song,
"Where we've been waiting for you to go" all along,
Not too far from a station your eyes will twinkle,
And see in your search its final wrinkle,
And in a drawer near its logical place,
A third map will bring you a happy face.

9. If you thought there was much pleasure,
In the search for buried treasure,
Than I would suggest that you toast,
The tribulations of Smith off the Florida coast,
He lost a wife and son to the stormy sea,
For you it's simply a Baha spree,
Some 70 miles you must still endure,
The first priority's your car to insure,

Go south on the five to the San Ysidro exit,
A right to Oscar Padilla will be your ticket,
And once you pay your premium,
Through your map and instructions you should quickly
thumb,

If you say you're a rallier he'll give you a guide,
And please make sure to have a safe ride,
Follow the signs and slow to the curves,
Or the Federales will get on your nerves,
Should this happen in spite of all,
A little bribery won't appall,
A quick twenty will usually do the trick,
Unless you prefer a cell with walls thick,
And when you find your burial site,
Put the maps together in the light,
For somewhere on this vacation lot,
Balboa's X does mark the spot.

HOTLINE :

LITTLE CLUES

1. The tape:

(voice of old man): Saturday , 5:23 A.M. I have just stumbled upon a manuscript of great historical importance. My tests reveal this partially burned document I have discovered in our archives to be not only authentic 17th century papyrus manufactured in the New World, as the grain clearly indicates, but very possibly to be what remains of the logs of the fated Esmeralda brig commanded by Vasco Nunez de Balboa on his last mission in the Pacific before his ship mysteriously disappeared off the coast of modern day California in the year 1618 A.D. Ahh, time for my morning Cuervo. A gulp, a slurp off of a lime, a burp. 5:42 A.M.: Hijole! The logs seem to reflect an attack by pirates as Balboa was recording a find somewhere off the coast. Could this be the Lost City of Gold. But that was Coronado, aaiiee, my memory is betraying me. No, No! I remember Balboa was to sail to San Francisco and return with a ship so laden with treasure that Spain's coffers would be brimming with gold and it would become the might of the Mediterranean. But it seems that our little compadre was about to take the gold for himself. He hid it so well no archaeologist has ever uncovered a trace as to its location. Well, what do you want, with our stingy governments today? They fund Mapplethorpe marricones but the idiotic NEA cannot get off its culo to research true historical masterpieces. Ahhh, no problem, I will soon retire on my miserable little pension in my cabana by the sea, tequila, mujeres con tetes mass grandes . Heh, heh. 6:01 A.M. Seems like our little Vasquito was not so stupido after all. Not like Cabeza de Vaca, who couldn't sail his way out of a toilet. He made three maps of the burial site, none by itself could show the destination. A pretty shrewd man, setting aside his fourteen siphilis infections by Aztec women. I guess he was lucky to have a Pinche left after all that.. But what was is these talk of all these geodes? Sounds like a bowel movement. Gees, speakin' of which, I've got to stop eating all those frijoles. What is a geode? Why did he have to write his fuckin' ship's logs in english? Aaah, because he did not want his own men to be able to read them!, Geode? Wait, a collector called me about a geode last week . . .

Door opens and closes. Two men's voices are heard in German accents. I believe you must be the famous professor Buona fortuna? Ya?

Prof.: Do you have an appointment? I told the secretary I was not to have any visitors? One voice: Oh, my dear prof, these is not a social call. We understand you may have some important information regarding an old Spanish document of some value to shall we say interested parties willing to pay comfortable compensation, shall we say? A little note from a Sanish explorer of the seventeenth century. Prof: I have nothing of the sort, you snotnosed Kraut. You and your dreams of a Fourth Reich, Do you not remember the lessons of Cortez? Or the fate of Magellan at the hands of the rebellious natives? Or Isabella's flatulence? It alone was responsible for the black plague! Voice:

Klaus, why don't you subdue this hysterical little Mexican before he has, a cardiac. Prof: Caramba! Get your stinking pasty hands off of me you oversexed gorilla. Voice: Now, you are going to tell us, my wise old professor, about a certain document that will tell our nice Gestapo about where to find three maps? Klaus, perhaps you could persuade the prof. to talk? slaps are heard, each followed by cries of pain and gasps. Prof: I'll never tell you anything! you depository of horse excrement! That an iguana should one day devour your cojones as you drown in a vat of llama phlegm! Voice: hmmm. Drown. Prof. you really are full of insight. Klaus, why don't you get the bucket and give our outspoken man a littre drink? Prof: I'm not thirsty! Voice: Oh, I most certainly hope you are, Herr Professor. Prof: No, No! A sequence of dunks, and Where can I find the map? Please tell me where that map is? Last dunk. Tell me where that lab is!. Prof: Lab, What lab? Voice: Oh, wrong road rally. Prof., I guarantee you that this process can be very painful. As my ancestors said, we have ways of making you talk. Or was it, what we have here is a failure to communicate? Oh, wrong movie. Prof: I will never tell you. I will never sell the secrets of history to a bunch of anal, pigfaced Spanish expletive . . .like yourselves! Voice: I think he's had quite enough to drink, don't you Klaus? Breaks Tequila bottle. Prof: Nooo! It was my only 1896 bottle from Chihuahua! The worm was still alive! A squash is heard. Voice: Not anymore, Herr professor! Klaus, do you think Mr. Buonafortuna needs a manicure? Prof: audibly worn down. Noo. Noo. Shrieks are heard. Tell us, Herr prof where are the maps? Prof: I would rather scrape coarse sandpaper on my butt and sit in a tub of jalapeno juice !!! Alright, Professor. You have really tried my patience. It is now time for the ultimate agony. Prof: a pox of Montezuma's revenge upon your descendants!!! Klaus, why don't we try what always seems to work?

Ya. Thank you, Klaus. A Captain and Tenille song plays, The prof. is in considerable agony. Tell us where the Maps of Balboa are? Prof. Aaaiieeee! I can't take it. His Name is Joseph. Voice: Where is Joseph? Professor hesitates. Record plays again. Prof. whimpers in background. O.K. He's at the Seaside Fair in Encintas. Voice: Which booth? Prof. hesitates. Record plays again. Prof. Nooo! The . . . third booth on the left. Voice: Thank you so much, Herr professor. You have been most cooperative. We might even spare you your life. Klaus, why don't we leave the Prof. here, tied up in his chair so he doesn't report this to the wrong authorities. Prof. Oh, thank you. Thank you. Voice: No, that's ok Klaus leave the boombox here. Prof. But . . . you said . . . you said you'd spare my life!! Voice: I lied. Captain and Tenille starts playing again. The prof. screams and wails in anguish as he dies from a cardiac...

. . .

2. In geode:

Brigantines have attacked broadside!
In a main sail than one map I'll hide,
The other two are concealed as well,
Together the three great treasures will tell,
Oh how I long to drink by a fire,
And from this seafaring business soon retire.

3. In sail of model boat at Brigantine bar:

The first map which in the main was curled,
Fell into the pirates' laps when the sails unfurled,
Departing they tried to fill in the gaps,
Left by the absence of two other maps,
A reversal of roles caused them to ask for help,
When the ship became mired in La Jolla Shores kelp.
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4. In Scripps behind Reversal of Sex Poster in front of eels

Your scuba diving gives you short shrift,
Not even the boat's remains are adrift,
But Hobbs and Blackbeard at least did leave,
A way for the treasure yet to retrieve,
Guesswork here will only deceive,
And shortcuts are for the very naive,
The current did drag them a few miles down,
From where the Esmeralda ran aground.

LAT / LONG LAT / LONG LAT / LONG
18.15N 77.30W 9.00N 39.00E 62.00N 10.00E

LAT / LONG LAT / LONG LAT / LONG

28.00N 84.00E 52.30N 1.30W 46.00N 25.30E

LAT / LONG	LAT / LONG	LAT / LONG
35.00N 105.00E	22.00N 58.00E	28.00N 3.00E

LAT / LONG	LAT / LONG
40.00N 4.00W	15.00N 100.00E

5. In La Jolla "Hobbs" cave

With the first leg of your mission done,
A third of the battle has now been won,
But where could the other maps possibly be,
In the wreck did they float off to sea?
And what of Hobbs and Blackbeard you ask,
Human greed did take them to task,
Blackbeard killed Hobbs in his sleep,
Dreaming of all riches himself to keep,
And the Spanish Armada captured the Beard,
For acts of piracy the plank he cleared,
But not before confessing his best,
To where the Esmeralda came to rest,
Commander Bahia of the Spanish fleet,
Salvaged the ship from its watery seat,
And found a map still intact,
In a galley cabinet that was compact,
He knew not what to make of Balboa's lore,
So it made its way through generations of yore,
It ended up in a bag of cement,

On golf course construction it was spent,
Tunnel now to a diminutive sport,
At the Mission Bay Golf Resort.

6. In Corn Stalk Dome

The neo-Nazi's were just here,
You never thought they'd persevere,
Now with the second map in hand,
'Tis the treasure's secret they command,
They also knew where the ship's gold was stored,
With the animal next door they found it on board,
Their mission takes them to Highway eight,
And then East to five and south they'll skate,
On Old Town Ave. they'll take another left,
Unless of Balboa's cache they be bereft,
For there in the square across from the Bazaar,
The chest of Balboa sits ajar.

7. On lid of treasure chest at Wells Fargo

Your New Age Gestapo is about to travel,
Across the world so it can unravel,
Balboa's secret three-part riddle,
Now is not the time to diddle,
They left their car to stop and rest,
Their 1917 Willy's Overland will attest,
In a gascan they left map two,
Next to the Baron's plane your search you'll renew,
But with this map you draw a blank,
So make sure to fill up your gas tank,
A yellow pump near a convertible will do,
And be careful not to lose your clue,
Though in this place you've had to search twice,
One fuselaged animal would be nice.

8. In gascan (map two) of Willy's Overland at Aerospace
across from Red Baron plane; Second part on magnet in

compartment of yellow gaspump:

You've all the gas that it will take,
To finish your search, for Balboa's sake,
Your appetite should now be sated,
For the Esmeralda was renovated,
Commander Bahia sold it to a Calcutta line,
But now it floats in the San Diego brine,
Off Harbor drive it is afloat,
On the pride of India you'll surely gloat.

1,

Balboa's secret three-part riddle,
Now is not the time to diddle,
They left their car to stop and rest,
Their 1917 Willy's Overland will attest,
In a gascan they left map two,
Next to the Baron