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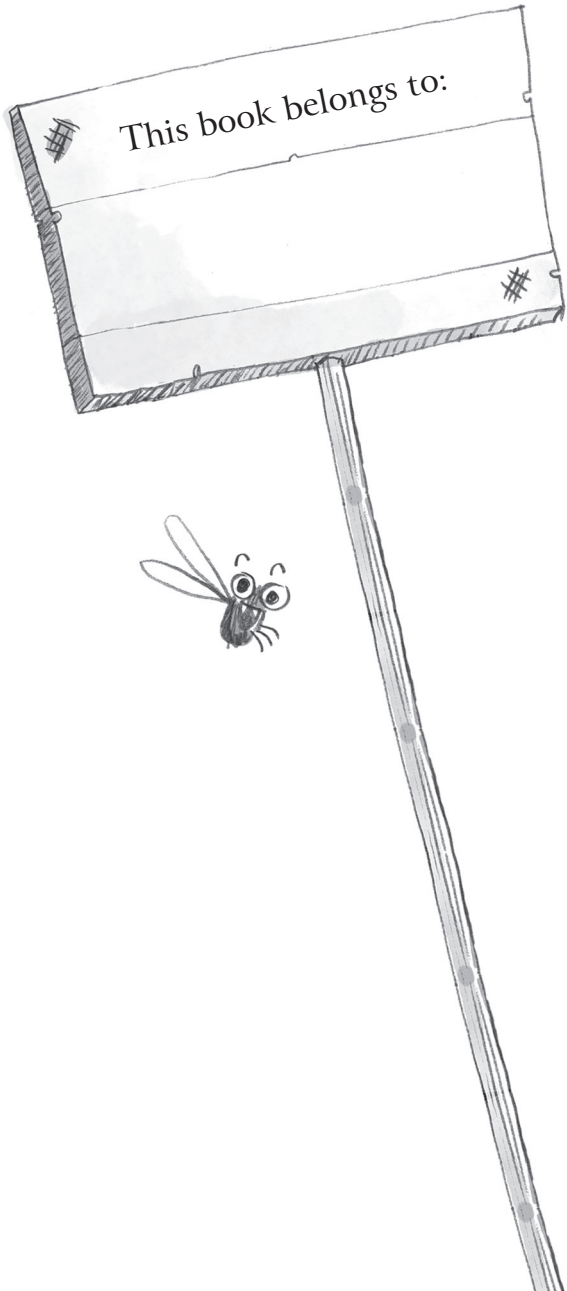
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This book belongs to:


THE CREW OF THE
PATCH
CUTLASS
CAPTAIN HALIBUT
CANNONBALL


GOLDEN EARRING
MONTY
GINGER
BUTCH


CURSED
N
S
THIS WAY
SWAMP of DOOM
HERE BE TREASURE!
SKULL MOUNTAIN


TREASURE
JUNGLE of TERROR!
VIPER ROCK
EXTREMELY DANGEROUS RIVER
DANGER



It was a sunny morning on board the *Golden Earring* and Patch the pirate puss was patrolling the ship, sniffing the salty sea air.

There was Cutlass the green pirate parrot, thinking up brilliant new jokes.

There was Monty the annoying ship's monkey, picking his fleas and eating bananas.

And there was Captain Halibut, working hard as usual . . . Oh. Wait, no, he wasn't. He was putting his foot up and snoozing in a deckchair.

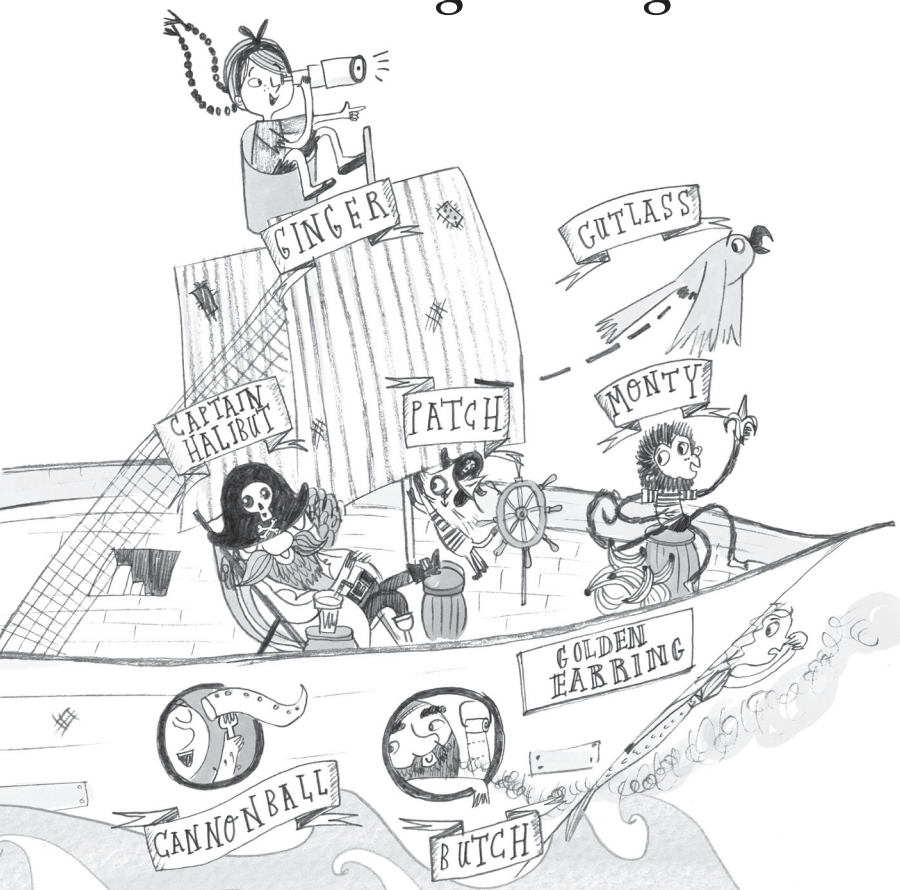
Patch gave her claws a sneaky sharpening on

the mast while he wasn't looking.

'Tum-te-tum,' she hummed under her breath.

Around the other side of the ship, a

disgusting stink



wafted out from the galley kitchen where the ship's cook, Cannonball, was making his famous tentacle stew. Famously BAD, that is. Patch hurried quickly through the pong, eyes watering. ***Yuck.***

An even more revolting smell wafted out from the ship's toilet where Butch . . . well, actually, let's not go into details about what Butch was doing.

'Pooh,' muttered Patch, wrinkling her nose and walking even faster.

Exactly.

Meanwhile, Ginger was in the crow's nest. She was the only pirate brave enough to climb all the way up there. 'Eleven o'clock and all's well, me hearties,' she called down.

Arrrr, this is the life, thought Patch, settling down in a warm spot of sunshine for a cosy cat-nap. The ship was peaceful. Everything was calm. *Shush . . . shush . . .* sighed the sea against the sides of the ship and, for once, even the screeching seagulls fell silent.

Then the trouble started.

BANG! went the kitchen door, swinging open as Cannonball staggered out. He was carrying an enormous pot, piled so high with potatoes that he couldn't see over the top of them.

'Ginger!' he yelled. 'Where is she? Ginger, I've got a job for you!'

'Ahoy!' Ginger replied cheerfully, scrambling down the rigging. 'On my way, Cannonball.'

Patch opened her one green eye and spied Monty, who was chortling naughtily as he chucked a banana skin in front of the cook.

'Uh-oh!' she cried, jumping up at once. But she was too late.

Cannonball stepped on the banana skin and his feet skidded out from under him. ***Wheeeeee!*** 'Whoooaaa!' he shouted.



THUMP!

'Oof!' went the cook, landing splat on his back.

CLANG! went the pot as it dropped from his hands.

THUD THUD THUD THUD THUDDETY THUD went the potatoes rolling and bowling all over the deck.









As the wave of spuds thundered straight at her,

Patch leapt out the way, her paws outstretched.

'Meooow!' she cried in alarm.

‘Watch out!’ squawked Cutlass.

‘Wahhhh!’ yelped Ginger, swerving to dodge the flying cat. But she swerved a bit too far, and . . .

SPLOSH! Ginger plunged headfirst into the sea, splattering the snoozing captain with cold, salty water.

‘What the . . . ?’ spluttered Captain Halibut, falling out of his deckchair.

‘HELP!’ wailed Ginger from the water, arms flailing.

‘PIRATE OVERBOARD!’ screeched Cutlass, flying around in circles. ‘GINGER OVERBOARD!’

Unfortunately, none of the pirates understood parrot language. They didn’t speak cat or

monkey either. While this meant that Patch, Cutlass and Monty could say anything they liked about the crew without them knowing, it also meant that sometimes – like now! – it wasn't very easy to alert the pirates to danger.

Hearing the racket, Butch charged out from the toilet, still pulling up his pants.

'NOBODY PANIC!' he bellowed. But then he saw his shipmate struggling in the sea and clapped his hands to his face. 'HELP! SHE'S GOING TO DROWN!' he shrieked.

Cannonball sat up and rubbed his round, shiny head. 'My potatoes . . .' he moaned.

'Devil's dogfish,' growled Captain Halibut, stamping to the side of the ship. *Stamp-clonk, stamp-clonk* went the sound of his wooden leg.

‘What’s all the rumpus?’

‘I’m . . . *blub-blub-blub* . . . sinking!’ gulped Ginger, thrashing about below.

Honestly, thought Patch, strolling across the deck towards a large coil of rope. *Sometimes pirates are soooo useless!* She shoved at the rope with her paws, sending one end snaking over the side of the ship.

‘Ahoy, Cutlass!’ she yelled, and the parrot flapped across the ship, grabbed the rope in his beak and swooped down with it to Ginger.

Then he fluttered back to high-five Patch, claw to paw.

Patch smiled. ‘Easy-peasy!’

‘Heave! Heave! Heave!’ grunted Butch, doing his best to haul Ginger out of the sea.

'*Coo-ee!* Let me help!' came a voice. Patch peered overboard to see a mermaid who'd just popped up in the sea nearby.

'**Hurrrggh-ha!**' And with her mighty mermaid muscles she gave Ginger a powerful push.



‘**Whoaaa!**’ yelled Ginger, flying through the air. She fell onto the deck, dripping wet and puffing like a puffer fish. ‘Phew. Thanks, Shelly!’ she called to the friendly mermaid, who gave her a cheerful wave in return. Then Ginger shook herself dry, sneezed some seaweed out of her nose and held up a green glass bottle with a cork in one end.

‘Guys, look what I found,’ she said with a watery grin.

‘Is it rum?’ asked Cannonball hopefully.

Ginger yanked out the cork with her teeth and peered into the bottle.

‘There’s some paper inside,’ she said, pulling it out carefully. ‘Ooh!’ she exclaimed, dropping the bottle as she unrolled a

weathered old scroll. 'It's a map!'

Patch pricked up her ears at Ginger's excited voice. *A map? Cool!*

Ginger peered at the parchment, scratching her head. 'Cuh-cuh-CUSTARD, tuh-tuh-TREATS map!' she spelled out, then beamed. 'Oh yay, I love custard!'

Cutlass landed on a nearby cannon. 'I say, I say, I say: what's yellow and stupid?' he squawked to Patch.



'I know what's *green* and stupid,' called Monty nastily, dangling upside down from the rigging and

showing everyone his horrid pink monkey bottom.

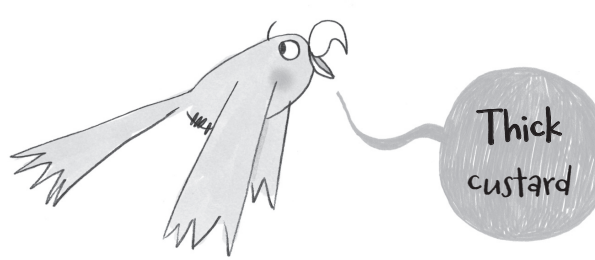
The other two ignored him.

'*Thick* custard,' Cutlass laughed to Patch. 'Get it, matey? **Thick** custard!'

Captain Halibut snatched the map from Ginger.

'I'll have that,' he snapped, then gave one of his legendary nostril-quivering snorts as he read the map. 'It doesn't say ***custard treats***, you deep-sea dimwit, it says ***cursed treasure***!'

'Talking of thick . . .' Patch whispered to Cutlass.



‘Whoops,’ said Ginger, looking disappointed. ‘I fancied a custard treat.’

Captain Halibut did *not* look disappointed. His moustache was practically waggling with joy. ‘Who cares about custard when this is a *treasure* map?’ he cheered. ‘Goody gumdrops! Butch, steer the ship starboard and bring her about immediately. Keep your eyes peeled for an island. We’re going treasure hunting!’



Butch didn’t move – apart from his big burly knees, which were knocking together with fright. ‘But, C-c-captain . . . what about the c-c-curse?’ he said, his voice going wibbly-wobbly. ‘C-c-cursed treasure sounds d-d-dangerous.’

‘Codswallop,’ scoffed the captain. ‘If there’s

treasure for the taking, then I'm the pirate to pilfer it. Hard starboard, I say – and see to it smartly. **Heave ho!**'

