The Dancing Boar Tavern

***Setting:***

The “Dancing Boar” tavern at night. Sunday, May 19, 1743.

***Point of View:***

Follow Hazel into the tavern. She is talking to the reader. Then, switch to Piggie at the table.

***Reason:***

Introduce the main characters and the treasure hunt. Introduce the treasure. Introduce the map (clues are in the past tense).

***Outline:***

Hazel is running late. Enters the tavern and joins the meeting.

Show Piggie. Fireplace, mane, shadows waving, small stuffed animal size of a small dog. Eating and drinking Kool-Aid.

Hazel. Cat. Green eyes and dilute calico fur. Long haired.

Bones, Paul, Rock. Called to a meeting.

The map. Bacher’s treasure map. Going after the treasure. Some doubts raised. First time the characters have seen it.

Discussion of the treasure and Piggie/Hazel’s dad getting the map. The map has “how to” clues on it that must be followed to the letter. The first clue is the starting date: four weeks from tomorrow. Sunday, June 16, 1743, at 7:42AM sharp.

Discussion of perils involved.

The reward. Piggie and Hazel only want the small bag of black pearls. The rest of the gold and silver will be divided up among the four crew members. What each crew member brings to the voyage.

The fourth is someone named “Anne”. The map says we will find her in Tortuga. The map doesn’t say how. The map says she is a lore specialist and will help solve the mysteries of the sea.

The map clues are given in past-tense, almost like a journal of what happened, even though it hasn’t yet.

We don’t know John’s identity yet. We don’t know the full details of the map.

***Scene:***

# Scraps

“Call me Hazel.” POV Hazel. Walks through the town to the inn describing it for us. Piggie has called a gathering tonight. I’m running late — had to work late at the peer helping the fishermen bring their catch to dock. I get paid in fish heads! And it was a big tuna catch tonight! Couldn’t pas that up. Sun has set. Describe the Inn. Not really the right image “bouncing Boar”. Place is too old to bounce. Dark and dusty. Lanterns dot the wall. Glass domes (find right word) are smoked from the years barely cast light onto the tables beneath them. At those tables, laughs and food. Other tables dark with shadows like the hidden figures around them. Best to steer clear of those. I nod at the bartender. He motions his head toward the back and hands me a lit lantern. And there is Piggie Fire Mane at a large wooden table in the back. A large fireplace roars and flickers. Piggie. Shadows of mane flickering on the wall. Plates of food. Grabs a half-eaten loaf of bread and tears a huge hunk off it and downs it. Followed by a large tanker of drink. Grape Koolaid runs out the side of his mouth and down his stained shirt. I set the lantern on the table and <examine> the others seated. I know Jim Packard, the store owner. A tall, skinny man with thick glasses and long bony fingers deftly working the knife and fork to cut a potato on his plate. I guess he closed the shop early tonight. A squat hairy-armed fat man, William Pratt. Chewing, turkey leg in hand, mouth open. He works on the docks mending nets and fishing gear. Tosses the bone onto the plate and nods at me. And two men I didn’t know. Now that I can see them better, one is older with a long mustache that curls into loops at the ends. A black hat pulled down almost over his eyes. The other a young man — more of a boy, really. Fidgeting nervously in his seat pulling at the top button of his shirt. “Ah! Here is me First Mate, Miss Hazel. I believe you know everyone except Malcom and his son, John. Malcom is the banker who advanced us a load for this adventure. He was none too eager at first. But when I told him about the map, he was so excited he even wanted to join us.. He promises his son is a hard worker and a good ship-hand.” Malcom twisted the ends of his mustache “And what about this map?” Piggie unrolls the map onto the table, and I set the lantern in the middle. “This be” the map to Captain Red Backer’s fabled treasure. My uncle Ron was Backer’s ship cook, and he was there the night the crew mutinied. See, Old Orville and my uncle were buds, you see. The way to a captain’s heart is through his stomach, and uncle Ron cooked a mighty tasty corn pudding. Uncle Ron had just brought in the covered dish of pudding when the crew began Breaking into the captains chambers. Orville folded up his map and slipped it under the cover of the corn pudding. While the crew beat up the captain, uncle Ron retreated into the kitchen with the map hidden in the dishes. Old Backer’s treasure. Two large chests filled with bags of gold and silver. Just a glance at the treasure is said to drive a man wild with greed. Many have searched for the chests ... 15 years with no sign. Wherever Backer hid it, he hid it well. Uncle Ron passed away six months ago in <select a place>. He had few possessions. A large black kettle with a lid on it he willed to me. I stuck it in the cupboard and nearly forgot about it until one night Miss Hazel and I got a hankering for popcorn. I took down the kettle to make it, and when I took the lid off, there was the map stowed inside. Why didn’t he ever go after the treasure? I can’t say. He was old and his mind had deteriorated. Maybe he forgot where the map was. Or maybe he wanted his only nephew to have it. “You’ve got the map ... what do you need with us?” Asked <who> “Aye. I’ve got the map” but getting to the treasure is no easy feat. It’ll take a strong ship and a determined crew. <Piggie points around the table>. Miss Hazel and I can’t do it alone. Rumored to be hidden in the Devil’s Maw ... a patch of razor sharp islands. We’ll have to sail through pirate infested waters. The kracken ... lay out all the struggles they will face. This map shows a safe path into the Maw to Backer’s treasure. “That’s quite a risk. What’s in it for us?” Asked <who> “Aye ... what’s in it for you.” Piggie leans back. Here is me offer. In one of those two chests is a small black bag containing Captain Backer’s prize treasure — the famed “Blue Pearls” of legend. Hazel and I want only the bag of pearls. The rest of the treasure — all the gold and silver — ye can split evenly amongst yer selves. Discussion. Malcom bows out “more gold for you all” and leaves. Everyone else is in. Much drinking of Koolaid and laughing getting louder. Making plans. When do we leave? We sail day after tomorrow at sunrise on a rented ship The Flying Pig. The party leaves. John meets a man in the shadows outside the inn. “You think the map is real? The dark man asks. Secret plans. I’ll be right behind you all the way. You know what to do. Man curls his mustache

The Dancing Boar

It was dark and musty in the Dancing Boar Tavern. The light from the fire danced on his red mane, casting shadows like trees on the wall. "Wait. Did you dye your hair for this story?" Hazel asked. Piggie looked up from the computer. "I did. It's my story, and I can tell it the way I want. Would you like a new color?" "No ... normal old gray is fine." Hazel sat beside him, licking her normal old gray hair.

McCracken enters the pub

John McKraken is McCracken is supposed to have a peg leg. I need to work that in at the beginning. That's why he doesn't just steal the map and go after it himself ... let Piggie do the work.

A man in all black stood outside the entrance to the Dancing Boar tavern. He was a tall, hulking man, but he cowered into his coat and pulled his hat down to look as small and inconspicuous as possible. He glanced up at the tavern sign and frowned. On the sign above, a plump pig danced gaily. This place was many things to many people but rarely was there happy dancing. He shifted his gaze left and right without moving his head — checking to see if anyone was watching. Then he ducked into the tavern.

He paused momentarily by the large bar, waiting for his vision to adjust to the dark. An old, haggard bar wench pushed past him, grabbed four mugs of drinks from the bar, and sloshed back into the mist of the room. A six-foot fireplace roared in the back wall of the tavern. The man in black pushed into the room and weaved towards the back.

Bright oil lamps hanging from the ceiling lit a large table near the middle of the room. Six young adults drank, ate, and laughed as he passed. Beyond that, a man and woman huddled together at a small round table. They whispered and flirted with each other in the dim candlelight. And beyond that, on the fringes of the room, shady customers sat in complete darkness, silence. What foul deeds and deals were being discussed at those tables, he wondered. That was definitely the section where he belonged.

He chose a small table against a wall close enough to see the fireplace but not close enough for it to expose him. He sat down and adjusted his chair for a clear view of the fireplace. Not the fireplace, but the long table in front of it.

The bar wench approached and set a lit candle in front of him. “What’ll it be?” She asked. For a second, his black-bearded face was visible. He wore a jagged scar above his left eye. He wore a black eye patch over his right eye. He ducked from view beneath his hat. A black gloved hand darted from his coat and pinched the flame out with a quick sizzle.

"Ale," he barked. And he stared again -- not at the fireplace or the long table or even the pitiful band of pirates sitting around it. His gaze fixed on the brown and tattered treasure map rolled up against a stack of their empty dinner plates.

Introductions

I want to re-work this so the reader meets the monstrous shadow of Piggie first -- daunting and frightening. Then, work into his real physical description.

He would tell you: my body is a long, brown, furry tube with a gray face on one end and a white "wash with care" tag at the other for my tail. I have a white and black snout with just a hint of pink. I am a full eight-and-a-half inches long if I stretch way out, but on all fours, I am barely half that tall. I have black and brown button eyes. I have four dark brown legs, each capped with black feet/hands; I have no toes or fingers, so they are the same thing for me. I have a pure black patch of hair on top of my head. That's my mane. My granddad was pure Razor-Back.

"Brandy, fetch another round!" Captain Piggie sat at the head of the table near the fireplace. He lifted his wooden tankard with both hands and drained its remaining contents mostly into his mouth, but a stream of grape Koolaid spilled around the corners of his mouth, down his chin, and onto his already-stained shirt. With a belch and a sigh, he slammed the mug back onto the table with all the might his little two-inch arms could muster.

The flickering flames in the fireplace behind Captain Piggie cast his six-foot shadow across the far wall. The roaring fire flickered behind him, and the hairs of Piggie's shadow mane danced on the wall like monstrous black snakes. As the flames waved, so did his shadow's spiked mane.

"Thank you all for coming. Most of you know each other, but young Paul here just joined the crew. His dad, John McKraken, isMcCracken, isMcCracken, is funding our journey for one share of the treasure. John insisted we take Paul with us to look after his interests. We'll need a fresh pair of young legs on this adventure -- none of us are getting any younger, eh? Paul, this is Hazel, my sister and first mate. Her mom -- our mom -- rescued me as a newborn orphan piglet and raised me as one of her own. But that's a tale for another time."

Work in Hazel's description: long-haired gray dilute calico with green eyes and a furry white tummy I don't recommend trying to rub unless you are wearing armor gloves.

Hazel held out her paw with razor-sharp claws fully extended. She smiled and retracted the claws and reached to shake Paul's hand.

"Welcome aboard," she said.

"And this," Piggie gestured to the tall thin man on his left, "is Bill McGee. Everyone just calls him "Bones" because, well, he's tall and thin and kind of bony.

Bones held out a pasty white hand with long, bony fingers. He nodded at Paul and tipped his long, thin nose down as a greeting. Small black eyes, thin black hair. You get the idea. Basically, Mr. Burns from the Simpsons. He's the shop owner giving and is giving us a nice discount on supplies in return for his share of the treasure.

"The muscular mountain sitting next to you is Chip Mullins. We just call him Rock because, well, that's sort of what he is. He works on the docks moving heavy cargo on and off the ships as they come and go. He's as strong as four regular men but only costs us one share of treasure!"

Rock reached out a massive hand that swallowed Paul's own. He smiled and gave the hand a not-so-gentle squeeze, and said, "Nice to meet you." Paul smiled back and rubbed his aching hand secretly under the table.

The treasure map

Maggie clears the dinner plates from the table and Piggie carefully unrolls the map before them.

"This is it, maties. This is the map I told you about. This is Captain Bacher's fabled treasure map. Captain Bacher was a ruthless pirate. Rumor was he hid his treasure on a remote island before he died." [We'll tease out this story a little over the next few chapters before traveling through time and living it.]

"You mean before his crew killed him!" Rock slammed a fist on the table.

"Yes, that's how the story goes. Treasure hunters have been looking for his legendary riches for 50 years. Nobody found the treasure ... many never found their way home. The treasure, legend says, is protected by traps and curses"

"And the ghosts of all them treasure hunters!" Rock again.

"So the story goes." Piggie continued, "But this here is the one and only map he ever made to remind him how to get past those traps to his treasure!."

"How did you come by this," Paul asked.

"Well, now," Piggie leaned back in his chair, "Captain Bacher and his crew rolled into port in Juarez, where my Pappa Red ran a restaurant. They liked his food so much that they enlisted him (enslaved, really) for the remainder of that last fateful voyage. A week later, Pappa Red swims ashore in Cuba with this map, a broken wooden spoon, and this".

Piggie looks around, leans into the table, and slowly pulls a silver necklace from his shirt. At the end of the necklace is a small, intricately carved silver key.

"Only the one who has this key can open the treasure!"

"So the story goes," Paul says sarcastically.

Piggie tucked the key back into his shirt collar.

The deal

"And here is my offer -- mine and Hazel's. You will be the finest crew ever to sail the seas. Follow my orders, and we'll find Bacher's treasure. You all know the story: it's said to be a single oversized chest filled to the top with silver and gold. And at the very top of that pile of loot is one small bag of black pearls ... the richest, darkest pearls ever seen. That bag of pearls is all I want -- all Hazel and I want. The rest of the treasure is all yours to divide in equal shares. Oh, and minus the share we give to Paul's dad in payment for our ship. Now. What do you say?"

"That's really all you want?" Paul asked, "Just a bag of pearls? And we divide up all that gold and silver? And your first mate is good with that?"

Hazel nodded.

"So what say you? Who’s in?"

There was a tense moment of silence as everyone looked at his neighbor. Bones, a man of few words all night, was first to speak.

"As this story goes ... I'm in," he placed his right palm on the table.

One by one, the other hands joined his on the table. Paul's hand was the last.

I need to work in the man in black smiling a wicked smile and putting his hand silently on his own table.

How do I feel about this chapter? There are lots of "to be done" notes throughout, and I refuse to read back over it now for fear of giving up in disgust. I don't want to will be more of that in chapters to come. And of course we relive the past in the time travel event. I need to work on the dialog and the "he said, she said" and descriptive narrative sprinkled in with the dialog. The map is just HALF OF A MAP. That needs to fleshed out here along with the notes and the last note "get 2nd half of map".

 "Only with the spring tides." Either leave now or wait till next year.

The Treasure Hunters

The story begins at the Dancing Boar, a restaurant/pub in a harbor town in the Caribbean circa 1700. We follow a shady man into the pub one night. He's all in black with an oversized coat and hat. He wears an eye patch. He limps on his peg-leg. This is the bad guy, John McKracken who seeks the treasure too.

Piggie and Hazel are sitting at a large table. The man sits out of sight but within hearing range.

We meet the rest of the crew as they join Piggie and Hazel. We meet Chip "Rock" Mullins, a stout

man who works the docks (picture a short Dave Bautista). He is the muscle for the crew. Paul McKracken is with him. He's a young redhedded kid. Paul joined Rock on the docks a few months back. He is still green, but eager.

Next joins Billy "Bones" McGee. He is older and skinny with a pointed nose and bony fingers (thus the nickname). Picture Montgomery Burns from the Simpson. Bones runs the harbor supply store, and will furnish much of the food and gear they need for the two month adventure (round trip).