The Flying Pig

***Setting:***

On the busy docks loading the ship. Saturday, June 15, 1743.

***Point of View:***

Piggie

***Reason:***

Introduce all the strange things the map calls for.

***Outline:***

* Barrel of Flour (with a frowny face)
* Dingy filled with rotting apples … extra smelly
* Five liters of rum
* Used the key the first time
* Used the crystal key

Paul secretly jots the list on a small slip of paper while Hazel is dancing. He ties it to Booty's leg and says "Find John". Booty flies off.

Everyone is sleeping on the ship, but Paul wants one last home-cooked meal. His loss, they tell him. Piggie is a legendary cook. His send-off meals are not to be missed. Paul bows out. He stowes his gear and heads out.

***Scene:***

# Scraps

Midday at the docks where the Flying Pig is docked. The crew is loading supplies. Piggie is checking off some strange things. The mystical clues on the map have a checklist. The items are referenced at specific places along the voyage. No idea how they will be used.

Piggie has a checklist of items that are being loaded on the ship. There are some strange items. Piggie explains to Paul that the map references these items at different points, like "use dinghy of apples" and "barrel of flour." The corner of the map has a shopping list. Bones comes aboard with his violin, and Piggie checks it off.

The docks were busy at midday the next day. The Grouper boats had returned with their morning catches, and fishermen set up along the piers beside their ships to clean and sell the fresh fish. The town merchants sold their wares from booths and small shops packed along the docks. Peddlers weaved through the crowd, pushing hand-made pewter jewelry or hand-carved wooden crosses. Pick-pockets, often in the guise of needy children, lifted coins from distracted folks. Buying, selling, stealing, or watching -- the harbor was the place to be.

Piggie stood on the slip where their ship, The Flying Pig, was berthed. He cradled a clipboard in one arm and checked items off with a pencil. The crew was busy loading supplies onto the ship. Well, everyone except Hazel. She worked her furry charms and big, green eyes on nearby fishermen, hoping for some tasty scraps.

Paul McKracken joined Piggie on the slip. A giant, colorful, brightly feathered bird hopped from Paul's shoulder to the top of his head.

"This is my parrot, Booty. Booty, say hi to Captain Piggie!"

"Rarrrk! All aboard, all aboard!" Booty screeched as her head bobbed up and down. Booty turned to the side and watched Piggie with one big eye.

Rock squeezed between the two of them carrying a massive barrel under one arm. "One barrel of white flour", he announced. Piggie checked the item off his list and nodded him on. Rock carried the barrel down the gangway onto the ship and disappeared into the ship's hold.

"A barrel of flour?" Paul asked. "Do we need that much?"

"I'm not entirely sure, lad. But look here."

Piggie tucked the checklist under his arm and pulled the rolled treasure map from his coat. In the bright of the day and this close, Paul could get a good look at it.

The map was drawn on a large square piece of paper now faded and yellow with age. A large island had been drawn in black ink in the lower left corner. It was labeled "Tortuga". A sailing ship was drawn next to it. Paul knew that was their starting point. He had never heard of Tortuga.

A black dotted line started at the front of the ship and weaved around oddly shaped islands and coordinate marks to the right side of the map, where it vanished off the edge of the paper. The map was jagged on that side. Paul realized that the entire side of the map had been torn away. How much of the map were they missing?

"All this black ink ... that's Captain Bacher's work," Piggie explained. "But all this blue writing ... somebody else added that much later."

In several places, a blue dotted line branched away momentarily from Bacher's path to other islands sketched hastily in blue. There were short blue sentences scattered all along the dotted lines.

"I've studied these notes for months. My grandpa said these are hints that were already on the map when he got it. He didn't know who added them or what they meant. Like here -- CREEPER POWDER ... and here LAVENDER SLEEP. What do they mean?"

Paul scanned the map, and his eyes flew wide. He pointed to a spot on the map that said BARREL OF FLOUR.

"Yes. The map says that at this point in our journey, we will need a barrel of flour. I can't imagine why, but you can believe we'll take one!"

"What's this one," Paul pointed, "DINGHY OF ROTTEN APPLES."

"I'm guessing it is just what it says: an entire raft filled with rotten apples. I have no idea what we'll use it for, but there is the dinghy tied to the side of the Flying Pig. The apples are on the way." Piggie crained his head and scanned the plaza.

"You are missing part of the map ... where is the rest of it?"

"Look up here where the trail leaves the map. The hints take us off the regular path to a tiny island it calls TIME WELL and below that it says REST OF MAP. That's where we'll find the rest of the map."

Paul looked at him skeptically and said "Wow, that's a big leap of faith! Let's hope you are right."

A long note from a violin sounded from the plaza behind them. It broke into a fast, happy tune with a cheer from the shoppers gathering around the player. Piggie and Paul followed the song to a circle of clapping shoppers. Within the circle, Bones McGhee slashed a fiddlestick across the strings of his violin. At his feet, Hazel danced on her back legs flipping in the air and swaying this way and that. The audience laughed and clapped along. Many began to toss coins into a hat on the ground beside Bones.

With four short notes, the song was done. The crowd clapped and cheered, and Bones and Hazel bowed before them -- Hazel back on all fours with her front legs stretched forward. The crowd slowly dispersed as Bones and Hazel, carrying the hat in her mouth, made their way to Piggie.

Piggie tried to wrinkle his smile into a frown and laugh into a stern tone, "This is no time for dancing! We're on a tight schedule here!"

Bones took the hat from Hazel with a nod.

"What can I say?" she asked. "I'm a sucker for a dance!" She weaved around Bones' legs and vanished back towards the shop.

"I wanted to make sure the instrument was in working order." Bones explained. "Are you sure you want me to bring it with us?"

"Quite sure, matie. It's very important!"

Bones picked up his sea bag and headed to the docks. Piggie looked at Paul, opened the map, and pointed to a blue circle on the dotted path halfway across the map -- to the one word written there: VIOLIN. Paul started to ask something, but Piggie just shrugged.

From the other end of the docks, from the direction of the town, groans and jeers rose from the shoppers. They parted as a young boy pulled a large wagon past them.

"Ah!" Piggie exclaimed, "That must be our apples."

The boy recognized Piggie and pulled the wagon to him. The foul stench rising from the wagon made Paul's eyes water and his nose sting. Paul put a hand over his nose and mouth. The wagon was filled to the top with apples in various states of decay. As the wagon jerked to a stop, a mushy apple rolled off the top of the pile and splatted on the ground with a gooey thud. Piggie picked up the apple and tossed it back onto the wagon.

"You did good, boy! Just what I asked for. Did you have any trouble getting them?"

"Are you kidding? Nobody wants rotten apples. Old man Calvin paid me a copper to clean out the barrels in his store room. He gave me another to rake the rotten ones from his orchard. He said I was already dirty and all." The boy slowly held out a muddy hand.

Piggie reached into his coat and pulled out two flashing silver coins. The boy's eyes grew big, and Piggie placed one of the coins in his hand. "As we agreed, one silver coin for a load of rotten apples. I'll give you the other one if you unload these smellies into that dinghy on the side of my ship there."

"Are you serious? Whatever you say, mister. It's your nose." The boy grabbed the second coin from Piggie's outstretched hand and tugged the cart toward the docks.

When the boy and cart were out of earshot, Paul said, "I wouldn't unload those for ten silver coins!".

"Which is why," Piggie smiled, "I'm paying YOU with a share of treasure! Give him a hand, mate. There's a shovel in the dinghy."

Paul sighed, and Booty squawked. Piggie checked "apples" off the list.

The crew of the Flying Pig was exhausted when the sun began to sink over the hills beyond the harbor. All the supplies, including the apples, were aboard. Rock and Paul stretched a sail over the dinghy and tied it up nicely. The apples continued to rot beneath it, but the smell was greatly subdued.

While the crew stowed the last of their gear, Piggie headed to the ship's galley to cook them a feast of sausage and corn fritters. But Paul wanted to check in with his dad one last time. Booty stayed for the fritters, but Paul headed through the plaza to the bank.

When Paul entered the office, John McCracken stood behind his desk, hands clasped behind his back, staring out the window at the ships in the harbor.

"We are all packed and ready, sir," Paul spoke first and sat in a chair by the desk. "They are eating on the ship, but I wanted one last home-cooked meal before the voyage."

John turned to face his son. "You might regret that. They say Captain Piggie is an amazing cook -- like his grandfather before him. I think you'll find the food on that ship is the only good thing about this adventure. Except for the treasure, of course."

John limped to the desk and pulled the strap to unhinge his peg leg. He slumped into his chair, dropped his black hat on the desk, and ran his fingers through his long black hair.

"Did you get a look at the map? Where does the trail begin?"

"Our first stop is Tortuga."

"Of course! That wretched place was a fitting haunt for the likes of Captain Bacher."

John leaned in and turned his one eye to his son.

"Let's just skip to the end. Where does X mark the spot?"

"They only have part of the map. The final part of the map is torn away. Piggie claims he'll get the last half along the way."

John leaned back in the chair and frowned. "Of course. That Bacher was a sneaky old pirate. Who knows what secrets Piggie got from his granddad before he died? That's why we don't just take the map from them now! Let those fools do all the work and dig up that treasure. Then I'll take -- I mean "we" will take it from them and leave them on some remote island where Piggie can cook their tasty meals for the remainder of their years."

John leaned forward again. The scar over his left eye turned white with his anger.

"You know my granddad was on that ship that last night, too. Unlike Piggie's granddad, mine -- ours -- had served Bacher as first mate for ten years. He fought alongside Bacher and helped him gather all that famous treasure. But he never saw a piece of it. Not one coin.

"That treasure is rightfully mine -- I mean ours, son. It will not end up with the grandson of a cook." He slammed a black-gloved fist on the desk.

They sat in silence for a moment. The outburst had vented some of John's anger. The scar faded back to a dull red as John calmed down. Finally, John spoke.

"Now, son. Tell me all about this map."