

Chapter 1

Atticus Van Tasticus Gets Boiled Alive?



'Buttfaaaaaace!'

called Atticus Van Tasticus.

Hunched over his treasure map, Atticus used his finger to follow the dotted line, mumbling absently to himself, 'Across an ocean, to a mysterious island, and on again.



What a fantasticus journey ahead.'

He looked across the deck of *The Grandnan* and smiled at the thought of it.

'ButtFaaAAAce!'

he hollered again.

'Cap'n?' said First Mate, leaping to his side. 'What is it, sir? Can I be of help to yers?' She was craning around Atticus, trying to get a look at the map.



'Maybe, Mate,' said Atticus. 'It's about this Map of Half Maps, and since Buttface was the one who put it together from the other

half maps, I was thinking he'd be best to tell me more about it.'

First Mate leaned in and squinted, before standing up so she could squint from a fresh angle. 'HMMMMMM. Mmmhmmmm.' she said.

Atticus looked from First Mate to the map and back again. When she let out a long and knowing *aaah-ha!*, Atticus jumped in, 'Yes, yes? Do you see it, too?'

'I *want* to see it, Cap'n, I do. But I ain't sure what you're lookin' for.'

First Mate stood tall, put her head back and yelled.

'BUUUUTFAAAAAACE!'

The sound of running echoed through the ship, then Buttface arrived carrying a canvas, some brushes and his paints.

'Sorry, Captain Atticus. Please forgive me. I was trying to capture the sea, just as it is.' He held up his latest painting.

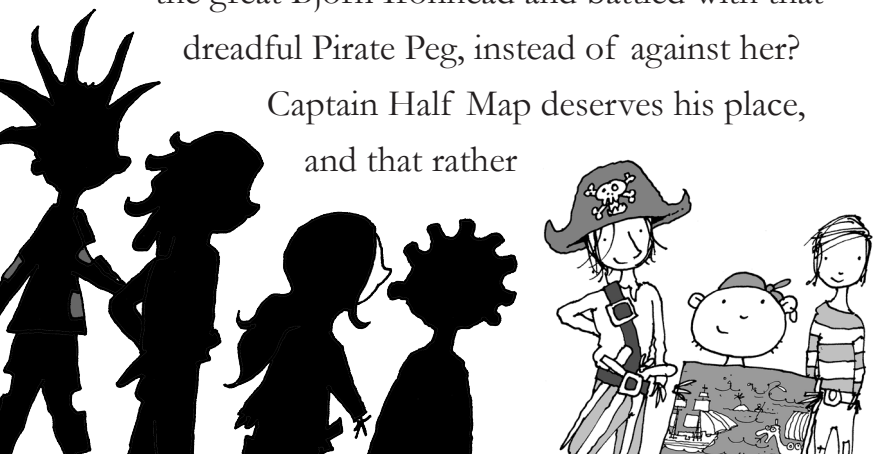


‘I thought to meself, once the sea is right, I can put you, our glorious ship and the rest of us here, see?’ He pointed with the end of his brush. ‘It will serve as a memento of the day we set sail with the world’s greatest treasure map in our grasp and our future firmly in front of us. Maybe even a nod to what we’ve been through, Captain. A perseveration of history, perhaps? What do you think?’

‘It’s brilliant, that’s what I think, Buttface. How thoughtful. Would you add the Vikings and Pirate Peg as well?’

Buttface fairly puffed up with pride, his great round face flushed with joy. ‘But, of course. Who could forget how you overcame the great Bjorn Ironhead and battled with that dreadful Pirate Peg, instead of against her?’

Captain Half Map deserves his place,
and that rather



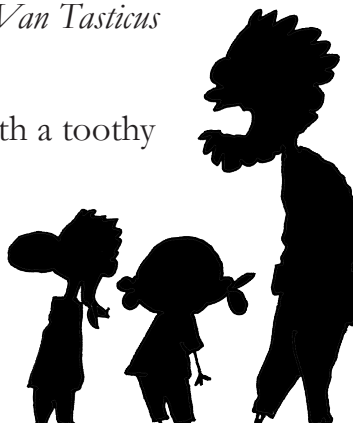
stupid Captain Trumptee as well. I've even left a space for the fog.' He was all jazzed up. 'You know, Captain, I was going to call it – oh, it doesn't matter.' He put his head down and shuffled his feet.

'But it *does* matter, Buttface,' said Atticus, nodding furiously along with First Mate. 'Tell us. What were you going to call this masterpiece?'

Buttface tossed his head a bit and straightened his pirate scarf. 'Well, um – for this painting I like the sound of, *Atticus Van Tasticus and the Treasure of Treasures.*'

'Buttface, I love it,' said Atticus raising his eyebrows. 'Seriously, it's fantastic. So clever. So arty and farty. Have you thought about any alternatives? Maybe, um, *Atticus Van Tasticus and the Race to Treasure Island?*'

'I like that,' said First Mate with a toothy grin. 'That is the perfect title, 'cos that's what we's doin.'



But, if I could be so bold, Buttface. Would the great artist consider, *Atticus Van Tasticus and the Triumphant Treasure Hunt?*'

Buttface eeked, just a bit.

'I think that's beautiful,' said Princess, as other members of the crew gathered and nodded. 'Wow, I'd love a painting called exactly that – unless it was called *Atticus Van Tasticus and the Ship of Jewels?* That would work, wouldn't it? The Ship of Jewels, as in, we have a ship of jewels after we get the treasure?'

There were nods all round.

'How's about, *Atticus Van Tasticus and the Treasure Adventure?*'

'*Atticus Van Tasticus and the Temple of Doom?*'

That sounds like we're all going to diiiiiieeee!' blurted Harry.



‘Atticus Van Tasticus and the Pewter Cup of Fire.’

‘How Good is Treasure Huntin’ with Atticus Van Tasticus?’

‘That’s the wrong way, Warren,’

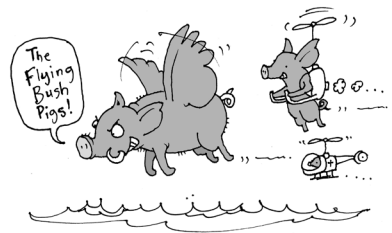
‘Atticus Van Tasticus and the Fight of Fights?’

‘Atticus Van Tasticus Gets Boiled Alive!’

‘Eeeewwwww’

‘Atticus Van Tasticus and the Attack of the Bush Pigs.’

‘Or, Atticus Van Tasticus and the Treasure of Treasures . . .’



Yeah!!!

‘Tell me, Buttface,’ said Atticus, taking a deep breath before pointing at the map. ‘In your version of the map of half maps, why have you made the seas so rough over here?’



In this part, we're rippin' along on our fancy keel above a sea that's fair and true. But it seems that where we're headed, the sea's more stormy.'

The sea ain't flat
said the Cap
in the hat?

'*Atticus Van Tasticus and the Stormy Seas!*' blurted Slapfoot. 'That's a fantastic title.'

'Aye, it is,' said Buttfacet. 'But yes, them seas do look stormy, Captain. I might have forgotten to write that bit on the map. This bit, what looks all smooth, is where the ship is now. That should say *smooth seas*. But the bit that looks rougher, that's *stormy seas*.'

Buttfacet leaned over the map and in the most beautiful, lyrical writing added two words:



Stormy Seas

‘That’s better,’ he whispered. ‘I should have put that there before. Sorry, Captain.’

From above, in the crow’s nest, Stinkeye let out a little yelp. ‘Captain,’ he squeaked. ‘Ah, Captain. You might want to see this.’

