

### **BOY**

Tell you what: You say "sorry" so easy, like the rough patch's smoothed over, no hard feelings and everything's fixed. Well, no. There's dark ... a mass of darkness in the world, and if you get trapped in the cave like us, it beats you down. "Sorry" can't fix it. Better to say nothing than sorry. (hearing his mother's song, far away) When it's night, and I'm too scared to sleep, I look through the cracks- y'know?-between the wood nailed over the window, and I see all those little stars that I can't reach, and I think that in a hundred years, or two or three hundred maybe, boys'll be free and life'll be so beautiful that nobody'll ever say "sorry" again- 'cuz nobody'll have to. I think about that a lot.

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### **MRS. BUMBRAKE**

First class ain't what it used to be. 'Course, back in my salad days, I was a green girl bringing up brats in a big, breezy brownstone in Brighton. That was a tight spot, too, and hell on the household help. Especially the kitchen boy-a lovely island lad who worked wonders with a cannelloni, plus a pasta fazool to make you drool. But oh, it made the master mad how the mistress moaned fer'is manicotti. He beat the boy something brutal, but the boy didn't say boo. Point is- we must button our beaks and be brave like that boy, or my name's not Betty Bumbrake. Now, you might well be afraid you'll never clap eyes on your father again, and it cuts me to the core, but never show that sorry Slank the slightest sniff of fear. There are men who can smell it on you, Molly, and they make you pay...(breaks down blubbing)

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### **STACHE**

I see.(then, to Aster)Perchance you think a treasure trunk sans treasure has put my piratical drawers in a twist? How wrong you are. Yes, I'd hope to be hip-deep in diamonds, but they're a poor substitute for what I really crave a bona fide hero to help me feel whole. For without a hero, what am I? Half villain; a pirate in part; ruthless, but toothless. And then I saw heroic old you, and I thought, "Maybe? Can it be? Is he the one I've waited for? Would he, for example, give up something precious for the daughter he loves?" But atlas, he gives up sand. Now, let's see: hero with treasure, very good. Hero with no treasure...doable. No hero and a trunk full o' sand? Not s' much(suddenly monstrous) NOW, WHERE'S MY TREASURE?!?

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## **SMEE**

(to Stache) Rest yerself a while. Smee'll track yer treasure solo. Hmm. We could lure 'em Cap'n! Lure 'em yes, down here to the beach. In which case, we shall need—A magnet! A really big one. That'll attract 'em! (Smacks himself on the head) Stupid idea, Smee. Stupid, stupid!(A distant ROAR. Smee looks down at his stomach) Tweren't I, Cap'n. (See giant Croc) Oh Captain? Captain Stache!!???!! Aghhh! He's chewing all the scenery, sir. Abandon Scene! Abandon Scene! (runs off)

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## **PETER**

(dreaming) That you, Molly? I'm Coming! Wait for me!(bolts upright, awake) Molly, Wait! (Realizes, alarmed) No, not s'posed to sleep! S'posed to be guarding the trunk, not- What if she came and- I DID WHAT YOU SAID, MOL—dragged it right up a mountain! (silence) Nope, no Molly (blinded by the glare) So. . . bright. Holy- know what that is? That must be the sun! I'm feeling you, sun! (realizing how much he can see) And check- it-out!!! Space. Light . Air. I'm finally FREE! And I'm gonna have . . . freedoms! Whatever I want. (A yellow bird enters and alights on his shoulder!) Whoa. Hey bird, wassup? Me? Well, let's see. . . Saved the world. Got a name. Not too shabby. I just—I wonder if Teddy and Prentiss made it off the ship before it sank. I mean, how weird would it be if they—(a chill up his spine, looks up) Please let them be okay. (scared now, a lost boy) Bird, we should make a pact. I don't leave you, you don't leave me. Deal? (bird flies off.) No! Come back! I don't wanna be alone! COME BACK!

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## **STACHE**

I'm a romantic! There's a poet in these pirate veins, and so I plug into the muse. (holds his hand out to Smee for a manicure) But what to do? Which style to use? Iambic? Box office poison. Haiku? Over my dead granny. (suddenly vicious to Smee) Mind the cuticle, Smee! (Eureka!) Hoopah! Got it! (a steely glare at Aster)  
A pirate with scads of panache  
Wants the key to the trunk with the cash.  
Now, here's some advice:  
Tho' I seem to be nice –  
I'LL CUT YOU!!! Slit you up one side 'n' down the other so ye can watch yer own stomach flop around on the deck. (Aster doesn't flinch) I say, Smee- you did explain to my lord that I'm a bloodthirsty outlaw?

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### **MOLLY**

You stop that right now. I won't answer any such question. You're leaning toward the sentimental and that's all well and good for a boy, but the fact is we girls can't afford to be sentimental. We must instead be strong. And when I marry, I shall make it very clear to this person – that sentimentality is not on the calendar. He will have to lump it or leave it. And if he should leave, I'll stay a spinster and pin my hair back and volunteer weekends at the hospital. And I will love words for their own sake, like "hyacinth" and "Piccadilly" and "onyx." And I'll have a good old dog, and think what I like, and be a part of a different sort of family, with friends, you know? – who understand that things are only worth what you're willing to give up for them.

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### **TEACHER**

Well, well. . . nice of you to drop in. I'm Teacher—that's what I'm called. And yes, I speak English. I know your name is Peter. I know a lot of things. You don't need a raft to get home, and you don't need the Wasp. All you need is starstuff. Listen to Teacher. When you rode the trunk to this island, seawater seeped inside. Then the starstuff in the trunk enchanted the water. The the water enchanted the fish in the wake of the trunk. Then the waves washed the water right into this grotto, where I was swimmin'. The starstuff'll change you, too. It makes you what you want to be. Sky's the limit. You could even fly yourself home maybe, just like you dreamed. See? You're changing already, Peter Pan. Shouldn't you be on your way? Molly's going to beat you to that trunk.

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### **PRENTISS**

Wait a minute, wait a minute, I'm the leader, and I say we got some things. The leader has to be boy. It doesn't matter how old you are! This is Ted, but I call him Tubby, 'cuz he's food obsessed. (to Ted) Yeah, you are! D'you write poems about pie? Hide beans in your blanket? Faint at the merest whisper of—(to Molly) get this— (back to Ted) sticky pudding? (watches Ted faint at the sound) Like I said, food obsessed. I'm Prentiss. I'm in charge here. Don't take him (about boy) personally. He's rude to everybody. It's why he gets beatings and why he's got no friends. He doesn't have a name. Been orphan'd too long to remember. Grempink calls him. . . mule! (laughs cruelly then grabs his stomach in hunger) (to Molly) Ok, You can be like temporary leader—but only 'til we eat.

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## **TED**

Your neck-thing is glowing. . .and ringing. Yes it is! (in response to Molly) Sticky Pudding! (practically fainting, then recovering himself) Tell me again what was it called, what we ate? (making a mental note to remember) Pork chops, pork salad, and pork belly pie. Mmmmmm "Pork"---beautiful word. Your neck thing! It's ringing again! (Sees a flying cat) Ahhhh! Slank's Cat! It's FLYING!! (in response to Molly again) Sticky Pudding!. . . A bedtime story? What's that? Hard to have a bedtime when you don't have a bed. (Shrugs and settles down to listen to Molly's story before falling asleep) (sleepily) Mmmmmm. . . . Pork.

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## **FIGHTING PRAWN**

We Mollusks are no savages. I know where savagery is, boy. When I was young man, English landed here, took me to your island in chains. Many long years I serve as kitchen slave in Not-So-Great Britain. Until by kindness of fate a shipwreck brought me back to Mollusk Island. In your language, my name is Fighting Prawn. This is my son, Hawking Clam.

## **BOY/MOLLY SCENE**

*MOLLY turns to find the BOY on the deck behind her.*

**Molly:** Sorry, what? Um.get below, boy. If Slank sees you on deck, he'll rear up like the-

**Boy:** You were talking to your neck-thing.

**Molly:** No, I wasn't.

**Boy:** I know what I saw.

**Molly:** Well, there was ... there was a porpoise swimming alongside the ship, and it was making those funny noises that porpoises make, and I thought I'd make some funny noises too, that's all.

**Boy:** So you were talking to a fish.

**Molly:** Porpoises are not fish. They're mammals, just like you. Or Germans.

**Boy:** Then how come your neck-thing glows and rings all by itself?

**Molly:** *(not very convincing)* It's for swimming. I'm a good swimmer. It's a swimming medal.

**Boy:** Right. Swimming. Sure. And what's starstuff?

**Molly:** Decision. I'm going to trust you.

**Boy:** Why? I'm just a boy.

**Molly:** I know. Pity. *(remembers the boy's "sorry" manifesto, looks at the sky)* You like to look at the stars? Well, there they are-

**Boy:** There's so many ...

**Molly:** They look safe, don't they, sparkling up there like diamonds.

**Boy:** I like when they shoot across the sky! Shooom!

**Molly:** *(suddenly very like her father)* Sometimes pieces of them fall to earth- little bits that look like sand. Can you keep a secret?

**Boy:** I can.

**Molly:** Those little bits are starstuff. The trunk in Slank's cabin is full of it. *(grabs her amulet)* There's some in here too, in case I'm ever in trouble.

**Boy:** (*tries to touch the amulet*) Starstuff?? Lemme see!!

**Molly:** NO!! (*pulls the amulet away*) It changes people if they touch it.

**Boy:** How?

**Molly:** Different ways- depending on what they want to be.

**Boy:** So if somebody gets their hands on this starstuff and-

**Molly:-** and they're evil and greedy like Genghis Khan, or they're hungry for world domination like Caesar or Napoleon or, you know, Ayn Rand -

**Boy:** Who's that?

**Molly:** Uch, didn't you learn anything at that orphanage?

**Boy:** Was kinda busy trying not to die.

**Molly:** Oh.

**Boy:** So if starstuff's so dangerous, why're you after it?

**Molly:** I'm a Starcatcher. We have special powers that we use in secret - to keep starstuff away from tyrants who try to rule the world.

**Boy:** You mean, like Queen Victoria?

**Molly:** God Save Her. And no, that's different. She doesn't need starstuff to rule the world. She's British.

**Boy:** So you're a- what is it?

**Molly:** Starcatcher. There's only six and a half of us on the planet.

**Boy:** Six and a half?

**Molly:** I'm still an apprentice.

**Boy:** Okay, so prove it. Molly: What?

**Boy:** Go on, amaze me with your special powers.

**Molly:** It's not a magic show. I'm not like some magician guy.

**Boy:** Well, I mean if you can't actually do anything ...

**Molly:** Fine, whatever. (then) To have faith is to have wings.

*MOLLY clasps the amulet tightly. closes her eyes, and floats.*

## **STACHE/SMEE SCENE**

**Stache:** Set me down, you dozy prat. I can't go another step.

**Smee:** That trunk is hard to find, Cap'n.

**Stache:** So it is. Elusive as the melody in a Philip Glass opera.

**Smee:** Rest yourself a while. Smee'll track yer treasure solo.

**Stache:** Negaroni. We'll trick the pewling spawn and make e'm bring it hither. But how to do it? How to smoke 'em out-

**Smee:** We could lure 'em, Cap'n!

**Stache:** Lure 'em, y'say?

**Smee:** (*smacks himself on the head*) Stupid idea, Smee. Stupid, stupid!

**Stache:** Lure 'em, yes. Down here to the butch.

**Smee:** Beach.

**Stache:** Beach. In which case, we shall need-

**Smee:** A magnet. A really big one. That'll attract 'em!

**Stache:** Smee, Smee . . . I know your heart's in the right place, but - (*A distant ROAR.*) Smee, you've been hitting the three-bean couscous again.

**Smee:** 'Tweren't ,I Cap'n.

**Stache:** Wait! I have it!

**Smee:** (*sees something shocking overhead*) Oh, Captain?

**Stache:** Lucky for me you saved your ukulele!

**Smee:** Captain Stache!!!!

**Stache:** A siren's song is what we need, Smee, and you're going to be the luscious siren - (*sees Mister Grin*) WHOA! BIG CROC! (*runs off*)

**Smee:** He's chewing all the scenery, sir.

**Stache:** (*runs on*) Not in my scene, he ain't! (*to Miser Grin*) Spare me the theatrics, y' reptilian ham! (*Mister Grin roars monstrously!*) Abandon spleen!



**Smee:** Scene!

**Stache:** Scene!

**Smee, Stache:** Abandon scene!

*STACHE and SMEE run off.*