

POJO AND THE CHEST OF DREAMS



Written by Tonya Meers and Natasha Dennis

Illustrated by Chantal Bourgonje

Early Years Edition



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*To our family for all their support and Sam for
being our inspiration.*



Pojo and Sam snuggled up to each other as they did every night. Pojo's paws began to itch and he knew that meant the start of a new adventure.

After a few minutes, Sam turned over and released Pojo from his grip. As soon as Pojo knew Sam was asleep he crept down to the edge of the bed and slid onto a beanbag.

Pojo was still dressed in the pirate outfit that Sam had put on him for their game that afternoon. Pojo climbed into Sam's little blue boat that was still in the middle of the bedroom floor and put up the flag with the skull and cross-bones on it, that they had made earlier. He started to rock the boat pretending to be on the ocean waves. Suddenly Pojo found himself in the middle of a storm at sea.

“I don’t like this!” he cried.

As the storm calmed down Pojo shivered. He didn’t know where he was. He noticed that his boat was starting to sink. He looked around him and saw a big ship on the horizon with a broken mast. He could see people on the deck so he waved to them.

Captain Goodheart was up on deck looking at his broken mast. Meanwhile Stan, his first mate, was looking through the spyglass. He spotted Pojo in his boat waving at them.

“Look Cap’n I can see a pirate out there,





in a small boat and he's waving at us."

"Let me look, well I'll be blowed Stan you're right! Poor devil looks a bit wet, let's go and rescue him."

The Good Fortune pulled up alongside Pojo.

"Well what do we 'ave 'ere, you alright lad?" asked Captain Goodheart.

"I don't know where I am, do you?"

"Aye I do that, but you best climb aboard and we'll get you dried off. Now how did ye get yerself out 'ere in that small boat?"

"Well I get these itchy paws, so I got into my boat and here I am."

"Aye, I'm always itching to get off dry land. Just as well you found us then!" replied Goodheart. "Now, let me introduce ourselves. I'm Captain Goodheart and this is me ship The Good Fortune. This 'ere is Sicknote Stan on

account of ‘im always feeling seasick and that there’s Pete the Parrot, I rescued ‘im from me old arch enemy Blackeye, and he’s a much nicer parrot these days.”

“Pieces of eight, pieces of eight, nice to meet you,” squawked Pete.

“Where are you going?” asked Pojo.

“We’re off to the Isle of Plenty to find the Chest of Dreams.”

“What’s the Chest of Dreams?”

“Well legend has it that if a good person finds the chest they will be able to grant the dreams and wishes of those who have been good. But, if the chest is found by a bad person then they don’t get anything.”

“Can I come only there’s something I’d like to wish for?” asked Pojo.

“Of course ye can lad. Now every good pirate needs a nickname, so what’s your

name?” asked Goodheart.

“Pojo.”

“Well what about Pojo Paws as you’re a little dog. You can be me first mate, Stan ‘ere won’t mind, it’s not a job he likes, he’s hopeless at reading a map on account of the fact e’s usually got his ‘ead over the side.”

“That sounds important, what do I have to do?”

“Well you need to shimmy up that there riggin’ to the crow’s nest and keep lookout for other pirates or any more storms, both can be just as dangerous,” replied Goodheart.

“Other pirates?”

“Aye,” replied Goodheart, “y’see we’s the good pirates and there’s not many of us around. Whatever I find out at sea goes to the poor or the less well off. Right then me hearties, stand to attention,”

commanded Goodheart.

They all stood in line and shouted “Aye, Aye Cap’n.”

“Right Paws up the riggin’ and fix that sail, Stan.....Stan....oh not again.”

“Sorry Cap’n,” said Stan, wiping his mouth on his sleeve.

“How long ‘till we get to the Isle of Plenty?” asked Pojo.

“Bout a couple of hours I’d say,” replied Goodheart.

“So let’s get this ship looking spick and span. C’mon crew jump to it.”

A little while later Pojo was up in the crow’s nest keeping watch when he spotted an island.



“Land ahoy!” shouted Pojo.
The Captain looked through his spyglass.
“Aye you’re right Paws, that’s the Isle of
Plenty alright, splice the mainsail.”



Once they reached the island, they
dropped anchor and rowed ashore in
Pojo’s small boat. Once they got to shore
Goodheart got out his map and compass.

“Right then crew,” he said scratching
his head, “I think the treasure is buried
smack bang in the middle of this island,
but it’s not a straight run though. First we

need to find north.” Goodheart moved his compass around, “Aah there it is right, 10 paces that way.”

So they all marched 10 paces forward.

“Now we need to go 10 paces to the west.”

They all counted 10 paces to the left.

“Now another 10 paces north and finally 20 paces to the east. Right I think this is the spot,” said Goodheart.

“Oh you mean this spot with the X marked on the tree,” laughed Pojo.

“Yes, yes alright, less of your cheek Paws, or there will be no dinner for you,” said Goodheart, slightly flustered.

So they started to dig.....and dig.....and dig.

They were digging for a good 10 minutes when Pojo scratched against something solid. “I think I’ve found it Cap’n,”

shouted Pojo triumphantly.

With that they dug a bit more until they uncovered the chest. Pojo and Stan lifted it out of the hole. The captain brushed the sand away and found a message on the top of the box.

To the finder of this chest,
if you have been good your dreams will
come true.

If you have been bad there will only be
trouble for you.

Hold the lamp to make a wish and say
'Finicky fish, finicky fish, finicky fish.'

“Right crew let’s get this chest back to the ship and get away from here before anyone else comes along.”

Goodheart had just turned around, when.....

“Avast what do we have ere. Not so fast

I'll be taking that. I knew if anyone was going to find the Chest of Dreams you would Goodheart," said Blackeye.

"Well Blackeye, I wondered when ye might turn up," said Goodheart.

"Who's that?" whispered Pojo to Stan.

"Blackeye," replied Stan, "now there's going to be trouble."

"Aye a little bird told me you'd be here," said Blackeye.

"That darn parrot, I knew he was up to



something,” replied Goodheart, “I see you’ve still got your motley crew with you,” said Goodheart. With that Blackeye’s crew came out from



behind him. Menacing Matilda stood by Blackeye with her legs astride and arms

crossed in front of her chest looking mean and moody. Bucktooth Billy came wandering around looking for something to eat and sucking on the gap where his teeth should have been and Bruce the bulldog growled at them menacingly.

“Well it’s no good you getting your hands on the chest Blackeye, it won’t work for you it only works if you’ve been good,” said Goodheart.

“Well let’s see shall we?” replied Blackeye. With that they opened the chest and jewels glittered inside.

“Wow!” said Matilda. “These would look great on me captain.” She put her hand in to pull out a handful of jewels but they turned into a handful of sand.

“How did that happen?” she cried, her bottom lip wobbling.

“Let me try,” said Blackeye, he dipped his



hand in but all he got was a handful of slugs. “Grrrr.”

Goodheart laughed, “Well it was obvious you lot were never going to get anything out of this chest because you haven’t got a good bone in your bodies.”

“Oh and you think your lot can do any better do you?” challenged Blackeye.

“Well let’s see shall we?” replied



Goodheart. “Stan why don’t you give it a go?”

Stan picked up a lamp with a green jewelled lid, nothing happened. He closed his eyes and made his wish and said, “Finicky fish, finicky fish, finicky fish.” The lamp rattled and shook and Stan felt his tummy tingle.

“I feel loads better Captain,” said Stan.

“It looks like there’s no point in you even bothering to try to get hold of this chest Blackeye as it’s obvious your lot won’t get anything out of it.”

While all this was going on Pojo had an idea and snuck off leaving the others arguing over the chest.

Pojo went back to the boat closely followed by Pete the Parrot, he untied Blackeye’s small boat and pushed it off so it drifted out to sea.

Pojo went back in his boat to The Good Fortune. He found some sweets in the cupboard as well as sausages, a rope and a fishing net that Goodheart kept in the galley.

He rowed back to the island and found Blackeye and his crew still trying to make their wishes work, without success.

Goodheart saw Pojo come back and he could tell by his face that he was up to something.

While Goodheart and Blackeye were bickering, Pojo laid the net on the floor and tied the edges with the rope. He laid the sweets and sausages in the middle of the net. As they came back they heard Blackeye telling Bucktooth Billy that he had to try to make a wish and to see what happened.

Bucktooth Billy, not wanting to upset Blackeye, did what he was told. He desperately wanted some new teeth because he regretted eating all those sweets and not looking after them properly. He picked up the lamp and to everyone's surprise, nothing happened to it. Then he closed his eyes and made his

wish and said, “Finicky fish, finicky fish, finnicki fish.” He felt the lamp shake and his mouth tingle. He opened his eyes and ran his tongue around his new teeth. He couldn’t believe it and neither could the others.



“Aha, it looks like not all of your crew are as ‘orrible as you Blackeye.”

“Why don’t you come and join our crew Billy?”

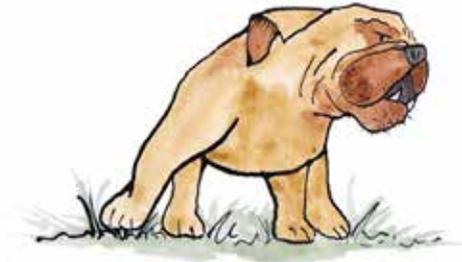
Billy looked at Blackeye and then Goodheart, not really sure what to do.

Blackeye tried to make a grab for him but he ran to Goodheart and they grabbed him out of Blackeye’s reach. Goodheart saw Pojo beckoning them. Goodheart, Stan and Billy tried to work their way back towards them.

“Don’t think you’re going to get away with Billy that easily,” said Blackeye. “After them crew!”

Goodheart, Stan and Billy made a dash for it closely followed by Blackeye, Matilda and Bruce. But it was too late. Bruce the bulldog was already on the

net eating the sausages. Pete the parrot squawked, “It’s a trap, it’s a trap”. As soon as Blackeye and Matilda were on it Pojo gave it one big pull and caught the lot of them.



“Well done Pojo,” said Goodheart. “Now lets tie ‘em up, get the chest and get off this island.”

Blackeye and his crew were shouting and wriggling but the more they wriggled the tighter the net got. Pojo and Stan locked the chest and carried it back to their ship leaving Blackeye and his crew shouting and hollering.

“Now Billy what are we going to do with you?” said Goodheart.

“I’ll do anything to help Captain Goodheart but please don’t make me go back to Blackeye.”

“The chest doesn’t lie so you’ve obviously got caught up with a bad crowd.”

“That’s what me mam always said,” replied Billy.

Back on The Good Fortune Goodheart said, “Now what about you Paws. What’s your wish?”

“Well Cap’n I’ve had a fantastic adventure with you all but I would really like to get back to my friend Sam.”

“Very well Pojo, We’ll miss you but if that’s what you need to do.”

Pojo gave everyone a big hug, picked up the lamp and said, “Finicky fish, finicky fish, finicky fish”. He closed his eyes and

made his wish. When he opened them he found himself back in his boat in Sam's bedroom. Sam was still fast asleep so Pojo got back on the bed and settled down for the rest of the night.

The End



Meet Pojo on the first of his travels as he attempts to find the Chest of Dreams.



On the way he encounters storms and pirates, but can he get back before Sam wakes up?



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