



# *Protectors Of The Crown*

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Action/adventure

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## Protectors of the Crown

Once upon a time, there was an ordinary man in an ordinary bar. The man raised his bottle, inclining the bartender for another round.

“Another round? You must have the Golden Crown to have pockets this deep,” said the bartender.

“The Golden Crown?” replied the man looking quite confused.

“Get outta here! You telling me you have never heard of the legends?” the Bartender exclaimed.

“Can’t say I have,” muttered the man as he finished up his drink.

“Well, the legends say the Golden Crown is the most sacred treasure in the world. It gives its holder all the power and money they could dream of. It is supposedly a very big deal among the pirates, but none yield it,”

“Who has had it in years past?”

“Rumor is one of the most prestigious rulers in the eastern land, Alex Bermuda, had it before his recent death,”

“Alex Bermuda huh? I wonder where he stashed this jewel away,”

Tony Bermuda collapsed in his bed at a time far too late for his standards. After raiding the small island of Athenosis, the Embarker was finally able to set sail for new land. The haul was mediocre at best, leaving everyone in sour moods. Tony never understood why the whole crew was unable to sleep until the ship disembarked as it led to late nights like this. Just as his thoughts were transforming into dreams, a loud bang on his cabin door woke him and all five crew members crammed in the small room.

“ARRR TONY? YOU IN HERE?” shrieked the loud voice coming from the cabin. Tony cringed as he recognized

the oblivious voice immediately.

“Yes Liam. What do you want?” replied Tony as quiet as he possibly could. Liam was his favorite crew member, but his lack of intelligence often frustrated him.

“Sorry for the interruption mates, but this is super important. Captain Jones would like to speak with Tony this moment,” said Liam as he skimmed the room quickly with his eyes.. Tony waddled out of bed and exited the cabin with Liam. Together, they walked to the front of the ship. They found Captain Jones sitting on the edge of the boat, examining the horizon carefully.

“Good evening Captain!” roared Liam, causing the Captain to quickly turn around.

“Liam mate, you can’t just scare a man like that. Go away before the plank decides your next,” Captain Jones said.

Liam flinched and quickly said, “Very sorry Captain! I best be going now.” With that, Liam took off at light speed into the darkness of the ship.

“Now that we got that out of the way, “ the captain continued, “I have been informed that a very sacred treasure is located on a small island nearby. We aren’t the only ones who know as Thunder and his fleet are already heading down there. Usually, this would be enough to prevent us from going as Thunder can have no mercy towards his competition. However, this treasure is supposedly the Golden Crown.”

Tony felt his heart jump out of his chest. How could this happen? Did his father hide it where he told him? Would Captain Jones make him tell the location? Did he know at all?

“Are you all right there boy? You look like you have just seen the devil,” chuckled the captain.

“Oh — yeah I’m fine. Just can’t believe there is a chance for the Golden Crown to be in our hands,” Tony responded trying to recollect himself.

“It’s a hard thing to believe. Anyways, we have to assemble an immediate raid on the Golden Crown before Thunder and his fleet can get there. The island the crown is said to be located on is called Kanen,” the Captain continued. Tony felt his heart skip another beat when he realized they were spot on with the location.

“Tony, I am telling you this because I want you to help me organize the raid. Thunder is apparently just coming off a raid much farther north to Kanen so we have enough time to get there first. We should bring a full crew, and search the entire island as fast as possible. This allows us to get in and out without confrontation. Any concerns?” asked the Captain. Tony got the impression the Captain couldn’t care less about what he had to say.

“Sounds good. We should be ready by tomorrow midday,” said Tony trying to keep his voice steady.

“Get some shut-eye and prepare for the greatest expedition the world has ever seen,” bellowed Captain Jones with pure excitement shining from his eyes. Tony proceeded to do just that, without the sleeping part.

Tony rose out of bed feeling more confident. For the remaining hours he had before the ship reached Kanen, he was able to devise a plan to keep the Crown safe while keeping his reputation intact. The Golden Crown can't be found by luck. The only way you can find it is if you know how. So if Tony just played dumb during the whole expedition, the Crown would remain unfound like his dad wanted. The only problem was running into —

“Tony. It's time to go,” Liam whispered as he entered the cabin. After gathering the crew, the crew split up into search groups. Tony grouped with Liam and a quiet fellow named Yolk. Yolk mostly kept to himself and had reputation of being unlikeable among the crew. However, Tony began to question this reputation throughout the hours of searching. As Tony purposely guided his group to random locations, Yolk didn't question or make Tony's job harder. He wasn't like the other pirates that were searching frantically as if they would get the Crown upon finding it. Yolk knew that the most valuable treasures always went to the higher ranks. As Tony continued to lead his crew into the strangest of locations, a loud scream stunned the whole island. A man emerged from the forest with his shirt ripped off his chest and blood covering it instead. The man looked as if he had just escaped death, and Tony vaguely recognized him as a face from his fleet.

“TONY! Captain Jones needs to see you immediately,” exclaimed the man with a twitch of insanity.

“Why? What's going on?” asked Tony.

“Thunder and 11 ships have arrived on the island. They are currently taking hostages and killing off our crew. You have to meet the captain just north of this forest,” the man begged.

Tony was confused on why the captain wanted to see him at a time like this. Despite his concerned, his crew proceeded with the man to meet with the captain. Traveling through the woods, it didn't seem like the island was in the midst of a war. It was almost too quiet. After 10 minutes of jogging, they finally reached the captain near the coastline.

“Captain! Captain! What is the situation?” frantically asked Liam.

“To be honest with you guys, it ain't good. We have intel that Thunder knows where the Crown is. Apparently he traced down the old owner and traced it back to the great Alex Bermuda,” said the captain. Tony felt his breath speed up. How could Thunder know his dad owned the Crown? His father had told him to never tell a soul its location, but certainly his father would rather his own son possess the crown than Thunder! However, if Tony possessed the crown, would it take over its life and cause great destruction like it did to his father? It

didn't matter. It was time for him to take actions into his own hands.

"I know where the crown is," Tony said.

Running through the forest, Thunder couldn't help but smile. After far too long, the Crown would be his. Not a single soul was on the island, and every second passed with him nearing his final destination. His plan was almost complete.

Tony and the remaining crew had finally arrived at the bunker. The bunker was located underneath Alex Bermuda's hideout, and the only way to enter was to break the most complex lock ever created. Only Tony and his father knew the combination, but it would still take him some time to break it.

"Yolk and Liam, while Tony breaks the lock, both of you get back to the ship and get ready to sail," yelled the captain.

"Aye, Aye, Captain!" Liam roared. Yolk didn't seem to happy with the call but followed Liam anyway. A couple more frantic minutes passed and Tony finally broke the lock. The metal door opened, revealing the bunker and its glory. Most importantly, the Golden Crown.

Thunder stood in shock. A couple seconds passed before he snapped out of it and quickly stabbed the man next to him. "What a fool," Thunder whispered to the man with his eyes flashing. He slowly walked to the crown and grabbed it with both hands. Finally, the Crown was his.

"Captain Jones? Why?" muttered Tony as he felt the most unbearable pain of his life.

"Lot's of reasons far too complex for a mere pirate to understand. I must thank you though for leading me down the path to the most famous treasure of all," chuckled Thunder.

"What type of monster are you?" winced Tony. Thunder couldn't help but chuckle.

"Haven't worked it out yet have you? Very well. I am the one you have feared for years. I am Thunder. The most terrifying fleet on the seas? That would be you and the whole crew. You see, we couldn't just tell you who we were during the recruitment to the ship. You wouldn't have joined us if we did. We knew you were the key to The Crown, so we had to play you just right. But ——" The bunker doors smashed to a close, and alarms starting flaring. Thunder frantically searched for a way out. Tony was laying on the ground, with the bunker's central remote in his fingertips. How could some of his closest friends been backstabbing him the whole time? Never in his life, had Tony felt betrayal like this. Was Liam really an evil pirate? Eyes closed, he knew to himself

he did the right thing.

“DETONATION IN 55 SECONDS.”

“YOU IDIOT!” Thunder shrieked. “Taking me down with you?” Thunder grabbed Tony off the floor, and threw him towards the bunker door. Tony smashed against the metal door and fell to the ground.

“DETONATION IN 30 SECONDS.”

Tony closed his eyes once again, bracing himself for the end. Suddenly, the bunker door opened with Yolk springing into action to stab Thunder and Liam holding the lock that was just cracked in his hands.

“DETONATION IN 10 SECONDS.”

“TONY LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! EVERYBODY RUN!” Tony mustered all the strength he had and sprinted out the bunker as it exploded with his friends he knew he could trust.”

The seas were calm and the wind breezed the small sailboat Tony had found.

“Liam, how did you open that lock?” asked Tony as he laughed.

“Dunno. My mother always said I got a good memory and I watched you do it the first time,” responded Liam.

“Don't give me the credit though cause Yolk was the one who wanted to go back and check on you.”

“I knew that Captain Jones had something sketchy about him,” Yolk muttered. Tony stared at the sky, hoping the Golden Crown was finally something in the past. The three remaining crew members sailed off into the abyss having no idea where they were off to next.

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