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**STARLIGHT'S AND MOONSHINE'S  
HUGE PIRATE ADVENTURE  
Story Two – Buried Treasure**



With holes in the balloons from the pirates' pistol shots, Starlight's ship was unable to stay in the air and was going down. Starlight had managed to steer out of range of the guns, but this had taken her ship away from the sea. It was now floating over Candycane Island and coming very close to the trees below. "The coast is just ahead, and what looks like a beach," called Moonshine, "Try to land there."

"I am trying, Moonshine," said Starlight, gritting her teeth to help with concentration, "But we are at the mercy of the wind now. I just hope it stays strong enough to blow us there."

They almost didn't make it, the underside of the ship brushing the tops of the last of the trees as they floated over them; but eventually they managed to land in the water close to the beach. "Well done, Starlight," said Moonshine with a big sigh, "You saved us again."

"We're not out of trouble yet, my friend," she said. "The pirates know where we are likely to be and they'll come after us. I'm going to drive up the beach and into the trees. With luck, we can hide the ship in them."

Joshua, Lucy and Danny watched Starlight's ship rolling up the beach and through a break in the trees. Soon enough, however, they could go no further. "Let's hope the trees are tall enough to hide the ship," said Lucy.

"But what are they going to do now?" asked Danny. "They can't drive back to the sea because the pirates will be waiting; and the balloons are wrecked, so they can't fly out of trouble."

"You're right about staying away from the sea," said Joshua, "But I think we can help them repair the balloons. Come with me, Danny." Then he added: "You stay reading the comic, Lucy, in case something happens."

Danny and his grandfather went out to the garden shed. It didn't take long for Joshua to find what was needed, after which they returned to the house. He placed a roll of plastic tape on the table and explained: "I use this to repair all sorts of things. I'm sure it will fix the holes in the balloons." To show how it worked, he cut a short strip of tape from the roll and stuck it on a tea towel. "I don't know what the balloons are made of; but, as you can see, it will stick to most things. Now," he added, "We have to get it to Captain Starlight."

"I'll go," said Danny eagerly.

"That might be a problem," Lucy advised. "They left the ship to go in search of a rubber tree. Captain Starlight said they could use the gum from it to fix the holes in the balloons. They've gone quite a way already... Uh-oh. They've just dived down behind a bush." She pointed to the picture in the comic.

Peering through the leaves, Moonshine was whispering: "Why are pirates digging a hole in the middle of the island?"

"To bury Nuff-Nuff's money, I'd say," Starlight whispered back. "It must be in those sacks. Maybe Candycane Island is where they bury their treasure. If we wait until they've finished and left, we can dig up Nuff-Nuff's money and take it back to the ship and..."

Starlight stopped speaking when there was the sound of a snapping twig and a rustle of leaves, followed by a gruff voice: "Shiver me timbers! What have we here?" Two pirates stepped out of the bushes. Both had pistols levelled at Starlight and Moonshine. One of them ordered: "Up, you two! Captain Dervish might like the pleasure of your company."

This was the last picture on that page of the comic; so Lucy turned to the next page, then stared in horror at what she saw. There were no more pictures, just words:

**Will our heroes manage to escape from the pirates?  
Or is this Starlight's and Moonshine's last adventure ever?  
Find out in next week's comic. Whatever you do, DON'T MISS IT!**

Danny was up out of his chair and diving for the pile of comics beside the one that they had been reading – the one that had finished in the middle of the story. "We have to find the next one quickly!" he said almost breathlessly.

"Take it easy, Danny," said his grandfather, "You might tear them. I'm pretty certain it will be there. Let me look." Fortunately, it was; at least, it seemed to be, judging by the words on the front cover; more or less the same as on the final page of the one they had been reading. When Joshua opened it, however, there were no pictures, only blank squares. Hurriedly, he looked at another of the comics on the pile, then another. "They're all blank!" Joshua declared. "Starlight's and Moonshine's adventures stopped suddenly when they were captured by the pirates in the comic we've just read. Unless we can find a way to make the story continue, this really could be the end of Starlight and Moonshine!"

## Parley

"I did it before," insisted Danny, "And I know I can do it again. If I put my hand on the first blank square, I can wish for a picture that will make the story start again."

"But what picture do we need?" asked Lucy, still worried.

"Easy," said Danny. "It will be a picture of Captain Starlight and Colonel Moonshine flying away in their ship with Lord Nuff-Nuff's money that they've taken back from the pirates."

"It can't work like that, Danny," said Joshua.

"No," put in Lucy, "It has to be something that fits in with the story – the next part of it, not something way off in the future."

"A future that may never happen if we don't get it right," added Joshua. "We have to think this out carefully, and I believe we have time. The story stopped when Starlight and Moonshine were captured by the pirates; and I'm pretty sure that's where it will stay until Danny wishes the next picture. Let's put our thinking-caps on and figure out how to save our heroes."

It was later on and the sun was going down. They did have half a plan, and Joshua's grandchildren were working through it as he kept a keen eye on the comic to make sure no new pictures started appearing that Danny hadn't wished for. First they turned back to the part in the comic where Starlight and Moonshine had left to search for a rubber tree. At that point, of course, there was no-one aboard the ship, but Lucy and Danny had their special way of getting there. Holding their cookies, together they called out: "Moonberry Pie!" In an instant they were

tasting sweet berries, flying through the rainbow sky into comic-book world; and the very next second were standing on the deck of Captain Starlight's ship.

The idea was for the two of them to fix the holes in the ship's balloons with the sticky tape; then their grandfather had told them to drop the rope ladder over the side, plus three ropes. "For tying to the bags with Lord Nuff-Nuff's money in," he had explained. When Lucy had asked why the pirates would give up the money, Joshua had said: "Because I am going to make them an offer they can't refuse."

As Joshua was also hoping, the story hadn't started up again; and when Lucy and Danny Moonberry-Pie'd back to their grandfather's kitchen, there were no new pictures in the comic. "Now we are ready for the next part," said Joshua. "It's over to you, Danny. I've been thinking, and I'd like the new picture to be of the clearing where the pirates are digging the hole." He noticed Danny's hand moving over the comic and held it back. "Not so hasty, Danny. There's more, and it all has to be right. The instant you have made the next picture, I want you both to Moonberry-Pie back to the ship, blow up the balloons, float it over the clearing and hold it there."

"What about the pirates?" asked Lucy, "Won't they shoot at us?"

"I have an idea about that," explained Joshua, "And if I'm right, I think I can give you time to get away with Starlight, Moonshine and Nuff-Nuff's money. Now, no more talk – that part's my job. Are you ready?"

Starlight and Moonshine had been brought into the clearing. "Give them the shovels," ordered Captain Dervish, "They can do the digging." He paused to cast a wicked sneer at his men. "And once they have, we'll bury them in the hole with Nuff-Nuff's money. They can look after it for him." The pirates all started laughing at this, but they fell silent as something peculiar suddenly happened.

Joshua had Moonberry-Pie'd to the clearing and was standing before them. It didn't take the pirates long to recover from the shock of seeing someone appear out of nowhere. With their guns trained on him, it seemed that Joshua's days were numbered. Raising his hands in the air, he said one word: "Parley."

The pirates froze on the spot. Only the Captain moved – a single step towards Joshua. "What?"

"I demand a parley, Captain," said Joshua, "The right to speak without fear of attack. If you value your own rules, you will grant me time to parley."

The pirate Captain was clearly not happy; but, as Joshua had reminded him, under the rule of parley, all he could do was talk and listen. "Very well," he growled, "You have the right. Make it quick, and when you've done I can shoot you..." He broke off speaking as a dark shadow fell on the clearing from the sky. It was cast by Starlight's ship with Danny at the helm and Lucy peering down over the side. The pirate Captain raised his pistol and aimed it at the ship.

"We are still under the terms of Parley, Captain," warned Joshua sternly, "I haven't said my piece yet." Reluctantly, the Captain lowered his pistol and snarled at Joshua who went on to say: "I am willing to make a bargain with you."

Joshua went on to outline what he wanted, after which the Captain said: "Let me see if I've got this right – I let your friends leave unharmed so they can take Nuff-Nuff's money back to him. In return, I get to keep the rest of my treasure. That doesn't sound like much of a bargain to me; but I do have one of my own: I keep the money, my treasure, and I bury the lot of you in the hole with it."

"I suppose you could do that," said Joshua quite calmly, "But then I would have to tell Prince Jocula about you."

Captain Dervish laughed. "Jocula? He doesn't have friends, not even you; and he wouldn't bother rescuing any of you – he's too mean."

“He is also very greedy,” said Joshua. “When he knows you have a great stash of treasure and I tell him where to find it, he’ll be coming after you. And, as he has more men and ships than you, I doubt you’ll stand much of a chance.”

That wicked smile broke across Captain Dervish’s face again. “You’re forgetting one thing: Jocula is in Darkmire, and you are here.”

Joshua gave him his own smile. “And you are forgetting how I came to be here. I can be gone just as quickly. Then you can be pretty sure what happens next.” He waited for the Captain to think over what he had said, before asking: “Do we have a deal?”

Although it was a nervous time, the next part went smoothly. Soon enough, Nuff-Nuff’s money was onboard the ship along with Starlight and Moonshine. Captain Starlight took over from Danny at the wheel while Moonshine blew up the balloons. As the ship began to float higher, Lucy was leaning over the side calling down: “Take special care Granddad. We’ll see you back at Gumbyland.”

As Starlight’s ship began moving away, the pirates raised their pistols to aim at it. “Parley!” barked Joshua harshly, “I haven’t finished speaking yet.”

Captain Dervish waved for his men to lower their guns. “Let them go,” he ordered. “As for you...” He turned to glare at Joshua. “...I’ve had enough of your parleying.” He snapped his fingers. “Take him!”

Two pirates rushed forward and grabbed Joshua. Slipping a hand into his pocket, he said: “Before you shoot me, will you grant me a dying wish?”

Dervish frowned. “Depends what it is,” he grumbled.

Joshua showed him the cookie he was now holding. “One last taste of my favourite biscuit,” he said with a grin. “I do so love...” The next words he shouted loudly: “**Moonberry-Pie!**”

Whisked instantly back to his kitchen, Joshua chuckled to himself as he looked at the comic picture of the stunned pirates, all wondering what had happened to the amazing appearing and disappearing man. The next picture was of the dining room in Gumbyland Manor, and there was Danny with Starlight, Moonshine and Nuff-Nuff. Pretty sure where Lucy and Henshaw were, Joshua couldn’t wait to join them; so he simply Moonberry-Pie’d there.

“That was a bit hairy,” said Danny when his grandfather arrived.

Just then, Lucy and Henshaw came in with a steaming Moonberry Pie that they had baked as a celebration for a job well done. Lucy sat next to her grandfather and asked: “How did you know about that parley thing?”

“I heard it used in a pirate movie I saw once,” explained Joshua.

“But that wasn’t real, Granddad,” said Lucy, “Movies are just stories. What if it hadn’t worked?”

“But it did,” Joshua reminded her. “I knew it would because I believed.”

“And if you believe,” added Danny, “Truly believe, everything works.”

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have been on holiday, but they are back next month