

# X MARKS THE SPOT

We often make things more complicated than they need to be - especially in matters of faith. This sketch highlights the importance of keeping it simple.

- **CAP'N DAVY** (a pirate captain – with an exaggerated Long John Silver accent.)
- **DEAD-EYE DAI** (A Welsh pirate with an eye patch.)
- **MAD MICK** (a lovable, thick thug.)
- **CABIN BOY**

**SCENE:** An island beach with a pair of palm trees. There is a pile of sand centre-front.

**COSTUME:** Traditional pirate attire - knotted shirts, bright bandanas, gold ear-rings, tattoos. The captain could wear a frock-coat and a tri-corn hat. A stuffed parrot (or other bird?) on his shoulder would add to the comic effect.

*CAPTAIN enters*

**CAPTAIN** Ahar! We be here at last. Five long months we've been at sea, looking for this 'ere island. Now we can start looking for the treasure. Where's that scurvy crew o' mine?

*DEAD-EYE DAI and MAD MICK enter*

**CAPTAIN** Ahar! It's Dead-eye Dai ...

**DAI** I've beached the boats, look you.

**MICK** And I've booted the beach. Now I'm looking for a tourist to mug!

**CAPTAIN** ... and Mad Mick.

*CABIN-BOY enters, laden with a coil of rope, a spade, a pick-axe and various other bits of equipment.*

**CAPTAIN** Ahar, Jim lad.

*Aside to audience*

**CABIN-BOY** My name's Christopher.

**CAPTAIN** Now we're all assembled, let's get on with the business.

**DAI** Order! Order!

**CAPTAIN** Thank-you Dai.

**MICK** Shall I nut 'im for you, Cap'n Davy?

*Reaching inside coat to bring out faded map.*

**CAPTAIN** We have this 'ere treasure map what was given me by Old Jake as he lay a-dying - his throat cut by a fanatical, piratical outlaw.

**MICK** I fought it was me what done 'im in, Cap'n.

*Ignoring Mick*

**CAPTAIN** Inscribed around the edge of this 'ere map is a piece of doggerel.

*Reaching for map*

**MICK** Never mind, Cap'n. I'll clean it off for you.

*Rotates map to read verse*      **CAPTAIN**      It says - "I'll give you a clue, but not a lot; dig two feet down, X marks the spot."

**DAI**      It's not exactly Dylan Thomas.

**CAPTAIN**      Gather round, me hearties! Listen here. These words have a very deep significance. 'Cos I 'appen to know that Old Jake, what buried this treasure ... *(pauses for dramatic effect)* ... had a wooden leg.

*Profound - then stupid*      **MICK**      Very deep, Cap'n. About how deep would you say?

*Laughing*      **CAPTAIN**      Well, not two feet down, that's for certain. 'Cos with a wooden leg he didn't have two feet!

**DAI**      Speaking for myself, and I confess I find it hard to speak for anyone else, not being a ventriloquist, I don't mind telling you that I don't think it makes any difference WHERE you dig. What matters is that you are sincere in your digging. We can all find treasure, in a manner of speaking, if we dig with commitment, look you.

**CABIN-BOY**      That doesn't make sense.

**DAI**      Ah, but you see: the treasure is not in the finding ... but in the digging. Where we dig is of no consequence. Some may prefer the rigorous discipline of pick-axing rock. Others would rather languish in the sheltered clime of a sun-kissed, sandy beach. What's important is not WHERE ... but HOW you dig. Sincerity ... that's the thing.

**MICK**      If he keeps prattling on, I'm gonna be digging something for 'im ... six feet long and six feet deep! And I mean that most sincerely, folks.

**CAPTAIN**      Avast! Let's stay hearty, shipmates!

**MICK**      Look 'ere, Captain. I don't believe there is any treasure.

**CABIN-BOY**      But what about the map?

**MICK**      And what about it? It's just an invention to keep us pirates off the high seas doing what we ought to be doing - cutting throats ... walking planks ... looting ... shooting ... pillaging ...

*Despairing*

**CABIN-BOY** I believe the map.

**CAPTAIN** Good on yer, Jim-lad.

**CABIN-BOY** Christopher's a nice name.

**DAI** But there's no cross on it, you see. So it obviously means that you can put your own cross wherever you like.

**CABIN-BOY** Perhaps there was a cross on it and it got rubbed off.

**MICK** Or covered in doggerel.

**DAI** Think on it, lad. Why use a cross? Because it's made up of two lines. Two lines representing divergent points of view. But they come together, look you, signifying that there is truth in all points of view. So, you see, we are not actually looking for a cross. The cross is just a symbol ...

*As DAI has been rambling on, the CAPTAIN tries to interrupt him.*

*Breaks into song - to the tune of "Greensleeves"*

**CAPTAIN** Dai ... Dai ... Dead-eye Dai ...

**MICK** I'll name that tune in five. "Di-di-dead-eye-dead-eye-di-di-di"

**CAPTAIN** Jim-lad. (*CABIN BOY sighs to audience*) Allow your cap'n to enlighten you with his wisdom. You see, a sea-dog like myself learns a good deal over the years. That X on the map probably don't mean an X in real life. What it prob'ly means is some other shape ... LIKE an X, but NOT an X. So if we waste our time looking for X's we're never gonna find that there treasure.

**CABIN-BOY** So what should we be looking for, Captain?

**CAPTAIN** Ahar, Jim-lad. You listen to this old salt and I'll tell 'ee. What letter is LIKE an X though it's NOT an X? Tell me that.

**CABIN-BOY** Y?

**CAPTAIN** Don't ask why. Just tell me.

**CABIN-BOY** A Y Captain. A Y is a bit like an X.

**CAPTAIN** Think again, Jim-lad.

**CABIN-BOY** A V?

**CAPTAIN** No!

**CABIN-BOY** A K?  
**CAPTAIN** No!  
**CABIN-BOY** W?  
**CAPTAIN** Wrong again, lad. Listen 'ere. What we should be looking for ... is a Q. Right then! All hands spread out and look for a Q.

*They mill around a little, searching. CABIN-BOY looks despairing and puzzled. As if by chance, all characters come to stand in a line, all facing stage left.*

*Dancing around in jubilation.* **MICK** I've found it Cap'n. I've found the Q! I've found the Q!  
**CAPTAIN** Where? I can't see it.  
**MICK** Right here, Cap'n. You're at the head of the queue, and I'm here at the end of the queue, so the treasure must be right here, underneath our feet all the time.

*The CAPTAIN hits MAD MICK.*

**CABIN-BOY** Look, Captain! There on the sand! Where the shadows of the palm-trees fall. It's a cross!  
**CAPTAIN** Aarh! That's as may be .... but, mark my words, it's not as simple as that.

*CABIN-BOY bends to dig in sand - unearthing a large wooden X – which he holds aloft.*

**CABIN-BOY** Captain! Look! Here in the sand. Just where the shadows cross. It's a cross! "X marks the spot"!

*There is a moment of suspense as MAD MICK and DEAD-EYE DAI look to the CAPTAIN. A smile crosses his face, then he bursts into laughter. MICK and DAI join in the hearty laughter.*

**CAPTAIN** Never mind, Jim-lad. You can't help being young. But take it from your old cap'n; you've a lot to learn yet.  
**CABIN-BOY** But, Captain, it's a cross! Just like it says.  
**CAPTAIN** Aarh! It be that an 'all. But where were it, lad?  
**CABIN-BOY** Just here, Captain. Just under the sand - held in place with a piece of rock.  
**CAPTAIN** As easy as that, huh? Well, I've been hunting treasure now these past forty years an' I ain't never found no treasure that easy.

**DAI** That's because you haven't found any treasure at all.

*Glares at DAI*

**CAPTAIN** Mark my words. If the treasure was that easy to find, it would have been found by now. It ain't even worth the digging. Come on, crew! This has been a wasted journey.

*Turn and leave, singing.*

**CAPTAIN & MICK & DAI** "Fifteen men on a dead man's chest, yo-ho-ho and a bottle of coke!"

*CABIN BOY kneels and digs in the sand. He quickly discovers a sparkling necklace and a golden crown.*

*Calling after departing crew*

**CABIN-BOY** Captain! Captain! Dai! Mick!

*From offstage, singing.*

**CAPTAIN & MICK & DAI** "Ho-ho-ho and the boy is a fool!"

*The CABIN-BOY stuffs the treasure inside his shirt, shrugs his shoulders and reaches down into the sand for another handful. The lights dim.*