

Before Travelocity
By Jerry Peterson
www.jerrypetersonbooks.com

“So, Chris, if I give you a couple boats, you’re not going to sail off the edge of the world, are you?”

“No, King, our destination is just a week or two over the horizon there.” Columbus pointed off toward the sunrise.

“And what’s in it for me?”

“Spice. We corner the trade.”

“Black pepper and cinnamon?”

“And marjoram and thyme.”

“Well, the queen will go for that stuff. She’s real handy in the kitchen. But as for me, how about you bring back a couple buckets of gold?” Ferdinand elbowed Columbus. “Of course, we won’t tell the queen about this.”

“My silence is assured.”

“Now on the matter of naming rights, assuming you’re the first person to get to wherever it is you’re going, what are you going to call this place?”

“Columbia has a nice ring to it.”

“Chris, that’s not gonna fly.”

“Ferdinandland?”

“Heeeey, I knew you were a smart one.”

The men stopped in their stroll along the beach, stopped within sight of a three-masted warship.

“That’s for me?” Columbus asked.

“That’s mine. Yours isn’t near as big. The economy’s tight, Chris. I’m really having to pinch pennies here. But I can give you three.”

“Three? Wonderful.”

Ferdinand waved at someone on the rear deck of the man-of-war, who waved at someone beyond the view from the beach. In a moment, three Sunfish class sailing vessels came bobbing around the King’s yacht.

“There they are,” Ferdinand said with a world-warming grin. “Like ’em? The La Nina, the Pinata, and the Santa Harmonica.”