

Have you heard about the \$2 million of treasure hidden in the Rocky Mountains? One man put it there. Thousands of people are trying to find it.

Every year, thousands of people look in the Rocky Mountains in the US for \$2 million of treasure. The treasure belongs to Forrest Fenn. He has collected art for his whole life. In 2010, when he was 80, he went into the Rocky Mountains by car and then on foot. He put the treasure somewhere in the woods. So that's one clue about where it is: an old man can walk there with a heavy box.

But the nine most important clues are in a poem (available to read on his website). They are much more difficult to understand. Treasure hunters look at every word in the poem and they look for extra clues in Forrest's two books about his life.

Here is one part to start with:

*Begin it where warm waters stop
And take it in the canyon down,
Not far, but too far to walk.
Put in below the home of Brown.*

'Warm waters' and 'the home of Brown' are probably important clues. Warm and cold water could be two rivers. Brown might be a person because names usually start with a capital letter. So, maybe you have to look for people called Brown who live in the Rocky Mountains. Unfortunately, a lot of people have the surname Brown!

The only way to test your ideas is to try and find the treasure. Forrest says people should wait until spring because winter weather is dangerous. He also says people shouldn't go alone. But not everyone listens. Three people have gone missing while they were looking for the treasure. The police want Forrest to take the treasure and put a photo of himself with the box on the internet. They think the treasure hunters will stop looking and no more people will die.

But Forrest says no. He thinks people spend too much time inside their houses and offices on their computers and phones. He wants families to learn about nature and have adventures together.

His plan is working. Some treasure hunters have looked for the box many times. Marti and her daughter Libbi travel from their home in Georgia to look in Montana. Libbi says, 'I was really afraid of bears around every corner for the first two years, but you slowly become less afraid of animals. I love seeing so many animals up close, camping in the mountains and crossing rivers. It's all so exciting, even if we never find the treasure.'

But there are people who think the whole thing is a trick. Some say maybe Forrest had a box of treasure, but they don't believe he put it in the mountains. Others say he took the box back years ago. They say maybe he just likes knowing people are talking about him. But many of the people who say it's a trick often still go to the Rocky Mountains to test their ideas. Of course, maybe someone has already found the treasure but they didn't tell anyone. But that won't stop more people going to look for the treasure this spring. Are you interested in the treasure hunt?

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