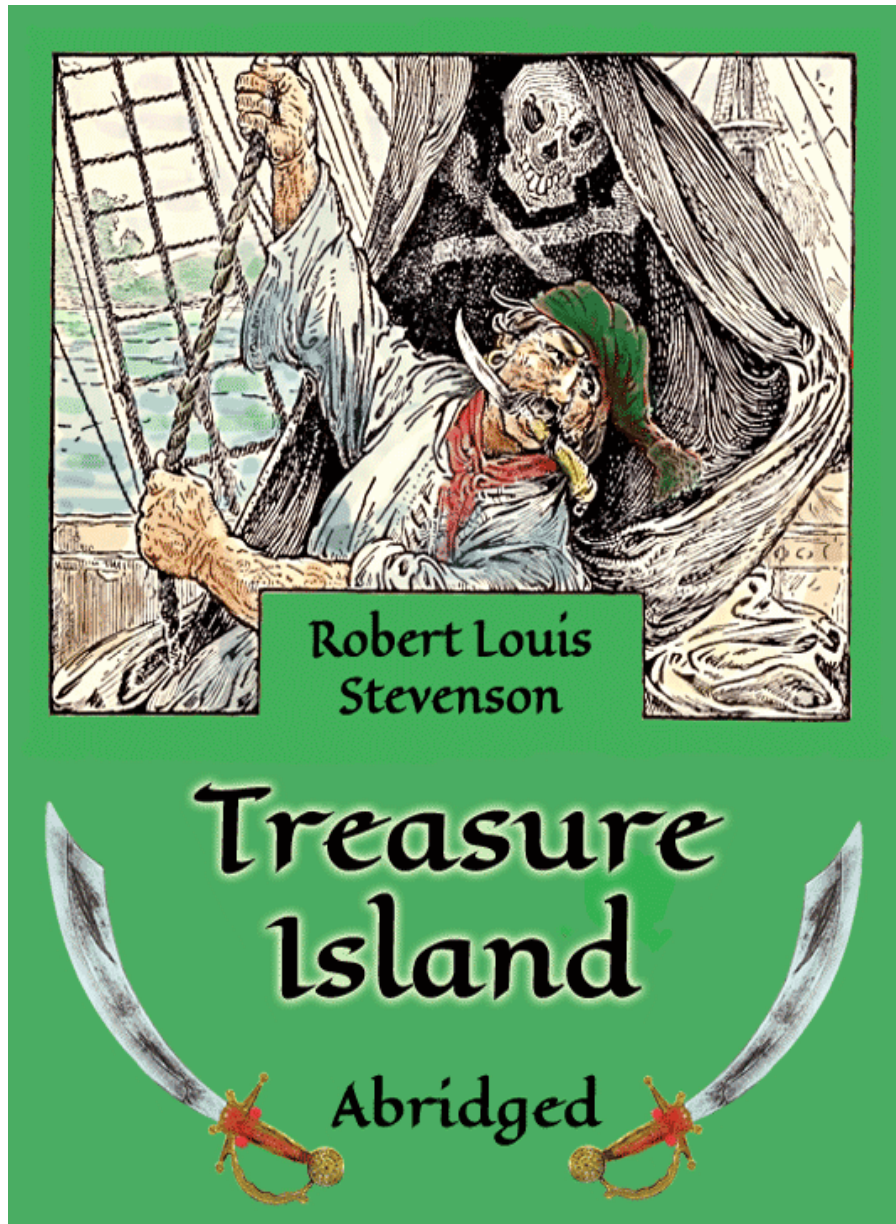




Treasure Island
Abridged

Robert Louis Stevenson

Edited by Emma Laybourn
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TREASURE ISLAND

PART ONE

Chapter 1 The Old Buccaneer

Squire Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and other gentlemen have asked me to write down the whole story of Treasure Island, from beginning to end, keeping nothing back but how to find the island, because there is still treasure there. So I take up my pen in this year 17—, and go back to the time when my father kept the Admiral Benbow inn, and the old seaman with the sabre-cut first took up his lodging under our roof.

I remember him as if it were yesterday. He came plodding to the inn door, his sea-chest carried behind him in a hand-barrow: a tall, strong, heavy, nut-brown man, his tarred pigtail falling over the shoulder of his soiled blue coat, his hands ragged and scarred, with black, broken nails; and the sabre-cut across one cheek was a dirty white. I remember him looking round the cove and sea-shore and whistling to himself, and then breaking out in that old song that he sang so often afterwards:

*“Fifteen men on the dead man’s chest—
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!”*

He had a high, old, tottering voice. Then he rapped on the door with a stick, and when my father appeared, he called roughly for a glass of rum. He drank it slowly, looking around at the cliffs and up at our signboard.

“This is a handy cove,” says he at length; “and a pleasant grog-shop. Much company here, mate?”

My father told him no, very little company, unfortunately.

“Well, then,” said he, “this is the place for me. Here you, matey,” he cried to the man who trundled the barrow; “bring up my chest. I’ll stay here a bit,” he continued. “I’m a plain man; rum and bacon and eggs is what I want, and to watch ships off that headland. You must call me captain.” And he threw down three or four gold pieces on the threshold. “You can tell me when I’ve worked through that,” says he, looking as fierce as a commander.

And indeed, bad as his clothes were, and coarsely though he spoke, he did not look like an ordinary sailor, but seemed like a ship’s mate or a skipper accustomed to be obeyed. The man who pushed the barrow told us the mail-coach had set him down the morning before at the Royal George, and that he had inquired what inns there were along the coast. Hearing ours well spoken of, I suppose, he had chosen to stay there. And that was all we could learn about our guest.

He was a very silent man. All day he hung around the cove or on the cliffs with a brass telescope; all evening he sat in a corner of the parlour by the fire, and

drank rum and water. Mostly he would not speak when spoken to, only look up sudden and fierce, and blow through his nose like a fog-horn; and we soon learned to leave him alone.

Every day when he came back from his stroll he would ask if any seafaring men had gone by. At first we thought he wished for company of his own kind, but eventually we realised he wanted to avoid them. Whenever a sailor did put up at the Admiral Benbow, he would look in at him through the curtained door before he entered the parlour; and he was always as silent as a mouse when such a man was present.

I knew his secret and shared his alarms. He had taken me aside one day and promised me a silver fourpenny piece every month if I would keep an eye open for “a seafaring man with one leg” and let him know the moment he appeared. Often when the first of the month came round and I asked for my wage, he would only blow through his nose at me and stare at me, but before the week was out he would bring me my fourpenny piece, and repeat his orders to look out for “the seafaring man with one leg.”

How that person haunted my dreams! On stormy nights, when the wind shook the house and the surf roared along the cove and up the cliffs, I would see him in a thousand diabolical forms. Now the leg would be cut off at the knee, now at the hip; now he was a monstrous creature with one leg in the middle of his body. To see him leap and run and pursue me over hedge and ditch was the worst of nightmares.

But though I was so terrified by the idea of the sailor with one leg, I was less afraid of the captain himself than anybody else was. On some nights he took too much rum and water; and then he would sometimes sit and sing his wicked, old, wild sea-shanties; but sometimes he would call for glasses all round and force the trembling company to listen to his stories or join in his singing.

Often I have heard the house shaking with “*Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum,*” all the neighbours joining in for dear life, with the fear of death upon them, and each singing louder than the other to avoid being noticed. For he would slap his hand on the table for silence, or fly up in anger if he thought the company was not following his story. He would not allow anyone to leave the inn till he had drunk himself sleepy and reeled off to bed.

His stories were what frightened people worst of all. Dreadful stories they were – about hanging, and walking the plank, and storms at sea, and wild deeds on the Spanish Main. By his own account he must have lived among the wickedest men that ever sailed the sea, and his language shocked our plain country people almost as much as the crimes that he described.

My father was always saying the inn would be ruined, because people were so afraid of him; but I really believe his presence did us good. People were frightened, but they rather liked it; it was a fine excitement in a quiet country life, and some of the younger men pretended to admire him, calling him a “true sea-dog” and a “real old salt”.

In one way, indeed, he almost ruined us – for he kept staying week after week, and month after month, until all the money had been long gone, but my father never plucked up the courage to ask for more. If ever he mentioned it, the captain

blew through his nose as loud as a roar, and stared my poor father out of the room. I am sure the terror this caused my father hastened his early death.

The captain never made any change in his clothes. When one of the corners of his cocked hat fell down, he let it hang from that day forth. I remember that his coat, which he patched himself, was nothing but patches by the end. He never wrote or received a letter, and he never spoke with the neighbours except when drunk. None of us had ever seen his great sea-chest open.

He was only once crossed. By this time my poor father was far gone in the illness that took him off. Dr. Livesey came one afternoon to see him, took a bit of dinner from my mother, and went into the parlour to smoke a pipe. I followed him in, and I remember the contrast between the neat, bright doctor, with his pleasant manners, and that filthy, heavy, bleared scarecrow of a pirate, far gone in rum, sitting with his arms on the table.

Suddenly the captain began to pipe up his eternal song:

"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—

Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!

Drink and the devil had done for the rest—

Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"

At first I had supposed "the dead man's chest" to be that big box of his upstairs. But by this time we had all ceased to pay any attention to the song; it was new to nobody but Dr. Livesey.

The doctor did not enjoy it, for he looked up quite angrily before he went on talking to old Taylor about his rheumatism. In the meantime, the captain flapped his hand upon the table in a way we all knew to mean silence. All the voices stopped at once except Dr. Livesey's; he went on speaking clear and kindly.

The captain glared at him, flapped his hand again, glared still harder, and at last broke out with a villainous oath. "Silence, there, between decks!"

"Were you addressing me, sir?" says the doctor.

The ruffian told him, with another oath, that he was.

"I have only one thing to say to you, sir," replies the doctor, "that if you keep on drinking rum, the world will soon be quit of a very dirty scoundrel!"

The old fellow's fury was awful. He sprang to his feet, pulled out a clasp-knife, and balancing it open on the palm of his hand, threatened to pin the doctor to the wall.

The doctor never even moved. He spoke to him in the same tone of voice, perfectly calm and steady: "If you do not put that knife this instant in your pocket, I promise you shall hang at the next assizes."

Then followed a battle of looks between them, but the captain soon put away his weapon, and sat down again, grumbling.

"And now, sir," continued the doctor, "you may be sure I'll have an eye upon you day and night. I'm not only a doctor; I'm a magistrate; and if I catch a breath of complaint against you, I'll have you hunted down and routed out of here."

Soon afterwards, Dr. Livesey's horse was brought to the door and he rode away. The captain held his peace that evening, and for many evenings to come.

Chapter 2

Black Dog Appears and Disappears

It was not long after this that there occurred the first of the mysterious events that rid us of the captain – though not, as you will see, of his affairs.

It was a bitter cold winter, with long, hard frosts and heavy gales; and it was plain that my poor father was unlikely to see the spring. He sank daily, and my mother and I were kept busy, without paying much attention to our unpleasant guest.

It was one frosty January morning, very early – the sun still low over the sea and only touching the hilltop. The captain had set out down the beach, his cutlass swinging under his old blue coat, his brass telescope under his arm, his hat tilted back upon his head. I remember his breath hanging like smoke as he strode off, and the last sound I heard of him was a loud snort of indignation.

Well, mother was upstairs with father, and I was laying the breakfast-table, when the parlour door opened and a strange man stepped in. He was a pale creature, missing two fingers from his left hand, and though he wore a cutlass, he did not look much like a fighter. I always had my eye open for seafaring men – whether with one leg or two – and this one puzzled me. He was not like a sailor, yet he had a smack of the sea about him.

I asked him what he would like, and he said rum; but as I was going out to fetch it, he sat down and motioned me to draw near. I paused.

“Come here, sonny,” says he.

I took a step nearer.

“Is this here table for my mate Bill?” he asked with a leer.

I told him I did not know his mate Bill, and this table was for a person whom we called the captain.

“Well,” said he, “my mate Bill would be called the captain, as like as not. He has a cut on one cheek and a mighty pleasant way with him, particularly in drink, has my mate Bill. Now, is my mate Bill in this here house?”

I told him he was out walking.

“Which way is he gone, sonny?”

I told him.

“Ah,” said he, “seeing me’ll be as good as drink to my mate Bill.”

The expression on his face was not pleasant. But it was no business of mine; and besides, it was difficult to know what to do. The stranger kept hanging about just inside the inn door, peering round the corner like a cat waiting for a mouse. Once I stepped out into the road, but he immediately called me back. When I did not obey quick enough, a horrible change came over his face, and he ordered me in with an oath that made me jump.

Then he returned to his former manner, half fawning, half sneering. Patting me on the shoulder, he told me I was a good boy.

“I have a son of my own,” said he, “just like you, and he’s the pride of my ’eart. But the great thing for boys is discipline, sonny. Now, if you had sailed along of

Bill, you wouldn't have needed to be spoke to twice. Sure enough, here's my mate Bill, with a spy-glass under his arm, bless his old 'eart. You and me'll just go back into the parlour, sonny, and get behind the door, and we'll give Bill a little surprise."

So saying, the stranger backed along with me into the parlour corner so that we were both hidden by the open door. I was very uneasy and alarmed, as you may imagine, and it added to my fears to see that the stranger was frightened himself. He loosened his cutlass in its sheath; and while we were waiting he kept swallowing as if he had a lump in the throat.

At last in strode the captain, slammed the door behind him, and marched straight across the room to where his breakfast awaited him.

"Bill," said the stranger in a voice that I thought he tried to make bold and big.

The captain spun round to face us; he looked pale, like a man who sees a ghost, or something worse; and I felt sorry to see him suddenly turn so old and sick.

"Come, Bill, you know me; you know an old shipmate, Bill," said the stranger.

The captain made a sort of gasp.

"Black Dog!" said he.

"Who else?" returned the other, more at his ease now. "Black Dog, come for to see his old shipmate Billy, at the Admiral Benbow inn."

"So you've run me down," said the captain. "Well, speak up; what is it?"

"I'll have a glass of rum from this dear child here," returned Black Dog, "and we'll sit down and talk like old shipmates."

When I returned with the rum, they were seated on either side of the captain's breakfast-table – Black Dog next to the door so as to have one eye on his old shipmate, and one eye, I thought, on his means of retreat.

He bade me go and leave the door wide open. So I left them together and retired into the bar.

For a long time I could hear nothing but a low muttering; but at last the voices began to grow higher, and I could pick up a word or two, mostly oaths, from the captain.

"No, no, no!" he cried. And, "If it comes to the gallows, hang all, say I."

Then there was a sudden tremendous explosion of oaths and crashes as the chair and table went over. A clash of steel followed, and then a cry of pain.

The next instant I saw Black Dog in full flight, and the captain hotly pursuing, both with drawn cutlasses, and Black Dog streaming blood from the left shoulder. Just at the door the captain slashed at the fleeing man with a last tremendous cut, which would have split him in two had the blow not caught on our big signboard.

That blow was the last of the battle. Once out on the road, Black Dog, in spite of his wound, ran so fast he disappeared over the edge of the hill in half a minute. The captain stood staring at the signboard like a bewildered man. Then he rubbed his face and turned back into the house.

"Jim," says he, "rum." As he spoke, he reeled a little, and leaned against the wall.

"Are you hurt?" cried I.

"Rum," he repeated. "I must get away from here. Rum!"

I ran to fetch it, but then I heard a loud fall in the parlour. Running back in, I saw the captain lying full length upon the floor.

At the same instant my mother, alarmed by the cries, came hurrying downstairs. Between us we raised the captain's head. He was breathing very loud and hard, but his eyes were closed and his face was a horrible colour.

"Deary me," cried my mother, "and your poor father sick!"

We had no idea how to help the captain, and thought he had got his death-blow in the scuffle with the stranger. I tried to put the rum down his throat, but his teeth were tightly shut. It was a happy relief for us when the door opened and Doctor Livesey came in, on his visit to my father.

"Oh, doctor," we cried, "what shall we do? Where is he wounded?"

"Wounded? Fiddle-sticks!" said the doctor. "No more wounded than you or I. The man has had a stroke. Now, Mrs. Hawkins, you run upstairs to your husband and tell him nothing about it. I must do my best to save this fellow's worthless life. Jim, get me a basin."

The doctor ripped the captain's sleeve and exposed his great sinewy arm, which was tattooed in several places. "*Here's luck,*" "*A fair wind,*" and "*Billy Bones his fancy,*" were very neatly and clearly drawn on the forearm; and up near the shoulder there was a sketch of a gallows and a man hanging from it.

"Prophetic," said the doctor, touching this picture. "And now, Master Billy Bones, if that be your name, we'll have a look at the colour of your blood. Jim, are you afraid of blood?"

"No, sir," said I.

"Well, you hold the basin." With that he took his lancet and opened a vein.

Eventually the captain opened his eyes and looked mistily about him. He recognized the doctor with a frown; then his glance fell upon me, and he looked relieved. But suddenly his colour changed, and he tried to raise himself, crying, "Where's Black Dog?"

"There is no Black Dog here," said the doctor. "You have been drinking rum; you have had a stroke, and I have just, very much against my will, dragged you out of the grave. Now, Mr. Bones—"

"That's not my name," he interrupted.

"Much I care," returned the doctor. "What I have to say is this; one glass of rum won't kill you, but if you keep on taking rum, you'll die – do you understand? Come, now. I'll help you to your bed."

Between us, we managed to hoist him upstairs, and laid him on his bed, where his head fell back on the pillow as if he were fainting.

"Now, mind," said the doctor, "rum for you is death."

And with that he went off to see my father, taking me with him.

Once he had closed the door, he said, "I have drawn blood enough to keep him quiet awhile; he should lie for a week where he is. But another stroke would kill him."

Chapter 3

The Black Spot

About noon I took the captain some cooling drinks and medicines. He was lying as we had left him, and he seemed both weak and excited.

"Jim," he said, "you know I've always been good to you. Never a month but I've given you a silver fourpenny. And now you see, mate, I'm pretty low, and deserted by all; and Jim, you'll bring me one noggin of rum, won't you, matey?"

"The doctor—" I began.

But he broke in cursing the doctor. "Doctors is all swabs," he said; "and that doctor, what do he know about seafaring men? I been in places hot as pitch, and mates dropping with fever, and the blessed land a-heaving with earthquakes – what do the doctor know of lands like that? – and I lived on rum, I tell you. If I can't have my rum now, my blood'll be on your hands, Jim. Look, Jim, how my fingers fidgets," he pleaded. "I can't keep 'em still. If I don't have a dram o' rum, I'll have the horrors; I already seen old Flint in the corner there; if I get the horrors, I'll get violent. Your doctor hisself said one glass wouldn't hurt me. I'll give you a golden guinea for a noggin, Jim."

He was growing more and more excited, and this alarmed me because my father needed quiet. Besides, I was reassured by the doctor's words, and rather offended by the offer of a bribe.

"I want none of your money," said I, "except what you owe my father. I'll get you one glass, and no more."

When I brought it to him, he seized it greedily and gulped it down.

"Aye, aye," said he, "that's better. Now, matey, did that doctor say how long I was to lie here?"

"A week at least," said I.

"Thunder!" he cried. "A week! I can't do that; they'd have the black spot on me by then. The lubbers is trying to find me this moment; lubbers as couldn't keep what they got, and want to grab what's mine. Is that seamanly behaviour, now, I want to know? But I'll trick 'em again. I'm not afraid of 'em, matey; I'll diddle 'em again."

While he was speaking, he rose from the bed with great difficulty, holding my shoulder with a grip that almost made me cry out, and moving his legs like dead weights. His voice was weak. When he was sitting on the edge of the bed, he paused.

"That doctor's done me," he murmured. "My ears is singing. Lay me back."

And he fell back again to his former place, where he lay silent for a while.

"Jim," he said at length, "you saw that seafaring man today?"

"Black Dog?" I asked.

"Ah! Black Dog," says he. "He's a bad 'un; but there's worse that sent him. Now, if I can't get away, and they give me the black spot, it's my old sea-chest they're after. You get on a horse and go to that doctor swab, and tell him to fetch magistrates and such, and he'll catch 'em at the Admiral Benbow – all old Flint's

crew, man and boy, all that's left. I was old Flint's first mate, I was, and I'm the only one as knows the place. He gave it me at Savannah, when he lay a-dying. But you won't tell the doctor unless they get the black spot on me, or unless you see that Black Dog again, or a seafaring man with one leg, Jim – him above all."

"But what is the black spot, captain?" I asked.

"That's a summons, mate. But you keep your eye open, Jim, and I'll share with you equals."

He wandered a little longer, his voice growing weaker. Soon after I had given him his medicine, he fell into a heavy sleep, in which I left him.

My poor father died that evening, which put all other matters on one side. Our distress, the neighbours' visits, the arranging of the funeral, and all the work of the inn kept me so busy that I had scarcely time to think of the captain.

He got downstairs next morning, to be sure, and had his meals as usual, though he ate little and drank more rum, I am afraid, for he helped himself from the bar, scowling and blowing through his nose, and no one dared stop him. On the night before the funeral he was as drunk as ever, and it was shocking to hear him singing away at his ugly old sea-song; but we were all afraid of him.

But the captain seemed to be growing weaker. He clambered up and down stairs, holding on to the walls for support, and breathing hard like a man on a steep mountain. He never spoke to me particularly, and I believe he had forgotten what he had told me; but his temper was more violent than ever. He had an alarming way of drawing his cutlass and laying it before him on the table.

Yet he seemed to be wandering in his thoughts. Once, for instance, to our wonder, he piped up a kind of country love-song that he must have learned in his youth before he had gone to sea.

So things passed until the day after my father's funeral, at about three o'clock on a bitter, foggy afternoon. I was standing at the door, full of sad thoughts about my father, when I saw someone coming slowly along the road. He was plainly blind, for he tapped the road before him with a stick and wore a green shade over his eyes and nose. He was hunched, and wore a huge old tattered sea-cloak with a hood that made him look deformed.

He stopped, and raising his voice in an odd sing-song, spoke out.

"Will any kind friend tell a poor blind man, who has lost the precious sight of his eyes in the defence of his country, where he may now be?"

"You are at the Admiral Benbow," said I.

"I hear a young voice," said he. "Will you give me your hand, my kind young friend, and lead me in?"

I held out my hand, and the horrible soft-spoken creature instantly gripped it like a vice. I was so startled that I struggled to withdraw, but the blind man pulled me close up to him.

"Now, boy," he said, "take me to the captain."

"Sir," said I, "upon my word I dare not."

"Take me straight in or I'll break your arm." And he gave my arm a wrench that made me cry out.

"Sir," said I, "it is for your safety I mean. The captain sits with a drawn cutlass."

"Come, now, march!" I never heard a voice so cruel and cold as that blind man's. I obeyed, walking in towards the parlour, where our sick old buccaneer was sitting, dazed with rum. The blind man leant heavily on me, holding me in one iron fist.

"Lead me straight up to him, and when I'm in view, cry out, 'Here's a friend for you, Bill.' If you don't, I'll do *this*," and with that he gave me a twitch so painful that I thought would faint. I was so utterly terrified of the blind beggar that I forgot my terror of the captain, and as I opened the parlour door, I cried out the words he had ordered in a trembling voice.

The poor captain raised his eyes in terror and in mortal sickness. He had not enough strength to stand up.

"Now, Bill, sit where you are," said the beggar. "I can't see, but I can hear a finger stirring. Hold out your left hand. Boy, take his left hand by the wrist and bring it near me."

I obeyed, and I saw him pass something from his hand into the captain's hand, which closed upon it.

"Now that's done," said the blind man; and he suddenly left hold of me, and nimbly skipped out of the parlour and into the road, where I could hear his stick go tap-tap-tapping into the distance.

It was some time before either I or the captain seemed to gather our senses. Then I released his wrist, and he looked at his palm.

"Ten o'clock!" he cried. "Six hours. We'll do them yet," and he sprang to his feet.

Even as he did so, he reeled, put a hand to his throat, stood swaying for a moment – and then, with a peculiar sound, fell face first to the floor.

I ran over at once, calling to my mother. But all was in vain. The captain had been struck dead by a stroke.

It is a curious thing, for I had never liked the man, though I had begun to pity him – but when I saw that he was dead, I burst into a flood of tears. It was the second death I had known, and the sorrow of the first was still fresh in my heart.

Chapter 4

The Sea-chest

Of course, I told my mother all I knew. At once we saw that we were in a difficult and dangerous position. Some of the captain's money – if he had any – was certainly due to us, but his shipmates, especially the two I had seen, Black Dog and the blind beggar, would not be willing to give up their booty in payment of the dead man's debts. I thought of riding off to get Doctor Livesey, but that would have left my mother alone and unprotected.

Yet it seemed impossible for either of us to remain in the house; the very ticking of the clock filled us with alarm. The neighbourhood seemed haunted by approaching footsteps; and between the dead body of the captain on the parlour floor and the thought of that detestable blind beggar waiting nearby, I was nearly out of my skin with terror.

At last we decided to go out together and seek help in the neighbouring hamlet. No sooner said than done. We ran out in the gathering evening and the frosty fog.

The hamlet lay not far away on the other side of the next cove. It did not take long to reach it. We sometimes stopped to listen, but there was no unusual sound – nothing but the low wash of the waves.

The houses were already candle-lit when we reached the hamlet, and I was greatly cheered to see the yellow glow in the windows; but as it turned out, that was the only help we got there. You would have thought those men would have been ashamed of themselves; for none would return with us to the Admiral Benbow. The more we told them of our troubles, the more they refused. The name of Captain Flint, though it was strange to me, was well known there and terrified them.

Some men who had been working in the fields remembered seeing several strangers on the road, and had assumed them to be smugglers; and one at least had seen a small sailing ship. Anyone who was a comrade of the captain's frightened them to death. While several men were willing to ride to Dr. Livesey's, not one would help us to defend the inn.

Then my mother made a speech. "If none of you dare," she said, "Jim and I dare. Back we will go, the way we came, and small thanks to you big, hulking, chicken-hearted men. We'll have that chest open, if we die for it. And I'll thank you for that bag, Mrs. Crossley, to bring back our lawful money in."

They all protested at our foolhardiness, but even then not one would go home with us. They gave me a loaded pistol in case we were attacked; while one lad was to ride off to the doctor's in search of armed assistance.

My heart was beating hard when we two set forth in the cold night. A full moon was beginning to rise and peered redly through the upper edges of the fog. This increased our haste, for the moonlight would soon make everything as bright as day, and expose us to any watchers. We slipped along the hedges, noiseless and

swift, and did not see or hear anything alarming till, to our relief, the door of the Admiral Benbow had closed behind us.

I bolted the door at once, and we stood and panted for a moment in the dark, alone in the house with the dead captain's body. Then my mother got a candle, and we went into the parlour. He lay as we had left him, on his back, with his eyes open and one arm stretched out.

"Pull down the blind, Jim," whispered my mother; "they might come and watch from outside." When I had done so, she said, with a kind of sob, "We have to get the key off that body; but I'm not going to touch it!"

I went down on my knees at once. On the floor close to his hand there was a little circle of paper, blackened on one side. I had no doubt that this was the black spot; and picking it up, I found written on the other side: "You have till ten tonight."

"He had till ten, Mother," said I; and just as I said it, our old clock began striking. The sudden noise startled us, but the news was good, for it was only six.

"Now, Jim," she said, "that key."

I felt in his pockets. All I found were a few small coins, a thimble, some thread and needles, a piece of tobacco, his big knife with the crooked handle, a pocket compass, and a tinder box. I began to despair.

"Perhaps it's round his neck," suggested my mother.

Overcoming a strong repugnance, I tore open his shirt at the neck – and there, sure enough, hanging on a bit of tarry string, we found the key. At this triumph we were filled with hope, and hurried upstairs to the little room where he had slept and where his box had stood since the day of his arrival.

On the outside it was like any other seaman's chest, the initial "B" burned on the lid with a hot poker, and the corners somewhat smashed as if by long, rough usage. My mother swiftly turned the key and threw back the lid.

A strong smell of tobacco and tar rose from the interior. On the top lay a suit of very good clothes, carefully brushed and folded. They had never been worn, my mother said.

Under that, the miscellany began – a quadrant for measuring the positions of the sun and stars, a tin drinking cup, several sticks of tobacco, two very handsome pistols, a piece of a silver bar, an old Spanish watch and some other foreign trinkets, a pair of compasses, and five or six curious West Indian shells. I have often wondered since why he carried these shells with him in his wandering, hunted life.

We had found nothing of any value but the silver and the trinkets, and we did not want either of those. Underneath there was an old cloak, whitened with sea-salt. My mother pulled it up impatiently: and there before us lay the last things in the chest – a bundle tied up in oilcloth, and a canvas bag that jingled with gold.

"I'll show these rogues that I'm an honest woman," said my mother. "I'll have what's due to me, and not a penny over. Hold Mrs. Crossley's bag." And she began to count out the amount of the captain's bill from the sailor's bag and put it into the one that I was holding.

It was a long, difficult business, for the coins were of all countries and sizes – doubloons, gold louis, guineas, pieces of eight, and others all shaken together. My mother only knew the value of the guineas, so those were what she counted out.

When we were about half-way through, I suddenly put my hand upon her arm. I had heard in the silent frosty air a sound that brought my heart into my mouth – the tap-tapping of the blind man's stick upon the frozen road. It drew nearer and nearer, while we sat holding our breath.

Then it struck sharp on the inn door, and we could hear the handle being turned and the bolt rattling; and then there was a long silence. At last the tapping began again, and, to our relief, died slowly away.

"Mother," said I, "take it all and let's be going," for I was sure the bolted door must have seemed suspicious to the blind man and that the whole rats' nest of pirates would soon be on us.

But my mother, frightened as she was, would not take a fraction more nor less than was due to her. It was not yet seven o'clock, she said, and she would have her money; and she was still arguing with me when a low whistle sounded, a good way off upon the hill. That was enough for both of us.

"I'll take what I have," she said, jumping to her feet.

"And I'll take this to square the bill," said I, picking up the oilskin packet.

We groped downstairs, opened the door and retreated – not a moment too soon. The fog was rapidly dispersing. The moon shone clear, although a thin veil of fog still hung around the tavern door to conceal the first steps of our escape.

But we had to come out of the fog into the moonlight. Now we heard the sound of running footsteps, and as we looked back, we saw the light of a lantern tossing to and fro and rapidly advancing.

"My dear," said my mother suddenly, "take the money and run on. I am going to faint."

This was certainly the end for both of us, I thought. How I cursed the cowardice of our neighbours; how I blamed my poor mother for her honesty and her greed! We were just at the little bridge; and I helped her, tottering, to the edge of the bank, where she gave a sigh and fainted on my shoulder. I don't know how I found the strength, but I managed to drag her down the bank and a little way under the arch. I could not move her any further, for the bridge was too low for me to do more than crawl beneath it.

So there we had to stay – my mother almost entirely exposed, and both of us within earshot of the inn.

Chapter 5

The Last of the Blind Man

My curiosity was stronger than my fear. So I crept up the bank again; sheltering behind a bush, I could see the road before our door. Almost at once my enemies began to arrive, seven or eight of them, running hard, a man with the lantern some paces in front. Three men ran together, hand in hand; and I saw that the middle man of this trio was the blind beggar.

Then I heard his voice.

“Down with the door!” he cried.

“Aye, aye, sir!” they answered, and rushed upon the Admiral Benbow. I could see them pause, and heard them talk in lower tones, as if they were surprised to find the door open. But then the blind man again shouted, in a louder voice, full of eagerness and rage.

“In, in, in!”

Five of them obeyed at once. Two stayed on the road with the formidable beggar. There was a cry of surprise from the house, and then a voice shouted, “Bill’s dead.”

“Search him, you lubbers, and the rest of you get aloft and get the chest,” the blind man cried.

I could hear their feet rattling up our old stairs, so that the house must have shaken. The window of the captain’s room was thrown open with a slam and a jingle of broken glass, and a man leaned out into the moonlight to address the blind beggar on the road below.

“Pew,” he cried, “they’ve been before us. Someone’s turned the chest out.”

“Is it there?” roared Pew.

“The money’s there.”

“Damn the money! Flint’s fist, I mean,” he cried.

“We don’t see it,” returned the man.

“You downstairs – is it on Bill?” cried the blind man.

Another fellow came to the door of the inn. “Bill’s been overhauled already,” said he; “nothin’ left.”

“It’s these people of the inn – it’s that boy. I wish I’d put his eyes out!” cried the blind man, Pew. “Scatter, lads, and find ’em. Find ’em! Rout the house out!” He hit his stick upon the road.

Then there followed a heavy pounding of feet through our old inn, furniture thrown over, doors kicked in, until the men came out again and declared that we were nowhere to be found.

And then the same whistle that had alarmed us earlier was clearly heard, repeated twice. I now learnt that it was a signal to warn the buccaneers of approaching danger.

“There’s Dirk again,” said one. “We’ll have to budge, mates.”

“Budge, you skulk!” cried Pew. “Dirk’s a fool and a coward. They must be close by; they can’t be far. Scatter and look for them, dogs! Oh, shiver my soul, if I only

had eyes! Why are you hanging around, you fools? You could have your hands on thousands, and you stand there skulking. There wasn't one of you dared face Bill, and I did – a blind man! And I'm to lose my chance for you! If you had the pluck of a weevil you would catch them."

"Hang it, Pew, we've got the doubloons!" grumbled one.

"They might have hid the blessed thing," said another. "Take the money, Pew, and don't stand here squalling."

But Pew's anger rose so high that he struck at them blindly, to right and left. They, in their turn, cursed and threatened him, and tried in vain to catch his stick and wrest it from his grasp.

This quarrel was the saving of us, for while it was still raging, another sound came from the hill-top – the tramp of horses galloping. At the same time a pistol-shot rang out from the hedge. That was plainly the last signal of danger, for the buccaneers turned at once and ran in every direction. In half a minute none remained but Pew. They had deserted him, whether in sheer panic or out of revenge I know not; but he remained behind, tapping up and down the road in a frenzy, and groping and calling for his comrades.

"Johnny, Black Dog, Dirk, you won't leave old Pew, mates – not old Pew!"

Then four or five riders came into sight in the moonlight and swept at full gallop down the slope.

Pew turned with a scream, and ran straight for the ditch, into which he rolled. He was on his feet again in a second and made another dash, now utterly bewildered, right under the nearest of the coming horses.

The rider tried to avoid him, but in vain. Down went Pew with a cry that rang into the night; and the hoofs trampled him and passed by. He gently collapsed upon his face and moved no more.

I leaped to my feet and hailed the riders, who were pulling up, horrified at the accident. One was the lad that had gone from the hamlet to Dr. Livesey's; the rest were revenue officers, whom he had met on the way. Some news of the ship had come to Supervisor Dance and set him forth in our direction.

Pew was dead, stone dead. We carried my mother to the hamlet, none the worse for her terror. In the meantime the supervisor and his men rode on swiftly to the ship; but they had to dismount and grope down the cliff, leading their horses, so that by the time they got down to the shore the ship was already sailing away.

When the supervisor hailed it, a voice replied, telling him to keep out of the moonlight or he would get some lead in him. At the same time a bullet whistled close by his arm. Soon after, the ship went round the point and disappeared.

Meanwhile we went into the Admiral Benbow, and you cannot imagine a house in such a state of smash. Though nothing had actually been taken except the captain's money-bag and a little silver from the till, I could see at once that we were ruined.

When Mr. Dance returned, he could not understand it.

"Well, Hawkins, what were they after?"

"Sir, I believe I have the thing in my pocket," I replied; "and to tell you the truth, I should like to get it put somewhere safe. Perhaps Dr. Livesey—"

“Perfectly right,” he interrupted very cheerily, “a gentleman and a magistrate. I’ll ride round there myself and make my report to him or the squire. Master Pew’s dead, after all; and people will blame an officer of his Majesty’s revenue, if they can. If you like, Hawkins, I’ll take you along.”

I thanked him heartily, and told my mother. Then I mounted behind one of the revenue men, and as I clutched his belt, we set out at a bouncing trot to Dr. Livesey’s house.

Chapter 6

The Captain's Papers

We rode hard all the way, and found the house dark. When I jumped down and knocked, the door was opened by the maid.

"Is Dr. Livesey in?" I asked.

No, she said, he had gone to the hall to dine with the squire.

"So there we go, boys," said Mr. Dance.

The distance was short, so this time I did not ride, but ran to the lodge gates and up the long, moonlit avenue to the hall. Here Mr. Dance dismounted, and we were admitted into the house together.

The servant led us down a passage and showed us into a great library, lined with bookcases, where the squire and Dr. Livesey sat on either side of a bright fire.

I had never seen the squire up so close. He was a tall, broad man, with a bluff face, roughened and reddened by his long travels. His eyebrows were very black and mobile, giving him a look of a quick, excitable temper.

"Come in, Mr. Dance," says he, very condescending.

"Good evening, Dance," says the doctor with a nod. "Good evening, friend Jim. What brings you here?"

The supervisor stood up straight and told his story; and the two gentlemen leaned forward in surprise and interest. When they heard how my mother went back to the inn, Dr. Livesey slapped his thigh, and Mr. Trelawney the squire cried "Bravo!" Soon he got up and was striding about the room, as if to listen better.

At last Mr. Dance finished the story.

"Mr. Dance," said the squire, "you are a very noble fellow. And this lad Hawkins is a brave youth, I perceive. Hawkins, will you ring that bell? Mr. Dance must have some ale."

"And so, Jim," said the doctor, "do you have the thing that they were after?"

"Here it is, sir." I gave him the oilskin packet.

The doctor looked at it carefully, as if his fingers were itching to open it; but he put it in his coat pocket.

"Squire," said he, "when Dance has had his ale he must be off, on his Majesty's service; but I mean to keep Jim Hawkins here to sleep at my house, and with your permission, I propose we share our pie with him."

"As you will, Livesey," said the squire; "Hawkins has earned better than pie."

So a big pigeon pie was brought in, and I made a hearty supper, while Mr. Dance left.

"And now, squire," said the doctor. "You have heard of this pirate, Captain Flint, I suppose?"

"Heard of him!" cried the squire. "He was the bloodthirstiest buccaneer that ever sailed. Blackbeard was a child to Flint. The Spaniards were so afraid of him that I tell you, sir, I was sometimes proud he was an Englishman."

"But had he money?" said the doctor.

"Money!" cried the squire. "What were these villains after but money? What do they care for except money? Why else would they risk their rascally lives?"

"That we shall soon know," replied the doctor. "Supposing that I have here in my pocket some clue as to where Flint buried his treasure, will it amount to much?"

"Amount to much, sir!" cried the squire. "If we have that clue, I'll fit out a ship in Bristol dock, take you and Hawkins along, and I'll have that treasure if I search a year."

"Very well," said the doctor. "Now, if Jim is agreeable, we'll open the packet."

He laid the bundle on the table, and cut it open with his medical scissors. It contained a book and a sealed paper.

"First we'll try the book," the doctor said.

The squire and I peered over his shoulder as he opened it. On the first page there were some idle scraps of writing: "*Billy Bones his fancy*"; "*Mr. W. Bones, mate,*" "*No more rum,*" "*Off Palm Key he got it,*" and other unintelligible words. I could not help wondering who it was that had "got it," and what "it" was that he got. A knife in his back most likely.

"Not much information there," said Dr. Livesey as he turned the pages.

Next came a curious series of entries: a list of dates, and sums of money, with a number of crosses between the two. On the 12th of June, 1745, for instance, a sum of seventy pounds had plainly become due to someone, and there was nothing but six crosses to explain the cause. Sometimes a place-name would be added, such as "Off Caraccas," or an entry of latitude and longitude.

The record lasted over twenty years, the amounts of money growing larger as time went on. At the end these words had been written: "Bones, his pile."

"I can't make head or tail of this," said Dr. Livesey.

"It's as clear as day," cried the squire. "This is the black-hearted hound's account-book. The crosses stand for ships or towns that they sank or plundered. The sums are the scoundrel's share, and occasionally he added something clearer. 'Off Caraccas,' means some unhappy ship was boarded off that coast. God help the poor souls that manned her!"

"Right!" said the doctor. "And the amounts increase, as he rose in rank."

"And now," said the squire, "for the other."

The paper had been sealed in several places. The doctor opened the seals with great care; and out fell the map of an island, with latitude and longitude, soundings, names of hills and bays and inlets, and every detail that would be needed to bring a ship to shore there safely. The island was about nine miles long and five across, shaped like a fat dragon standing up. It had two fine land-locked harbours, and a hill in the centre marked "The Spy-glass."

And there were three crosses of red ink – two on the north part of the island, one in the southwest. Beside this last cross, in red, and in a small, neat hand, very different from the captain's shaky handwriting, were these words: "Bulk of treasure here."

Overleaf on the back the same hand had written this:

Tall tree, Spy-glass shoulder, bearing a point to the N. of N.N.E.

Skeleton Island E.S.E. and by E.

Ten feet.

The bar silver is in the north cache; you can find it by the trend of the east hummock, ten fathoms south of the black crag with the face on it.

The arms are easy found, in the sand-hill, N. point of north inlet cape, bearing E. and a quarter N.

J.F.

That was all; but it filled the squire and Dr. Livesey with delight.

“Livesey,” said the squire, “tomorrow I start for Bristol. In three weeks’ time – two weeks – ten days – we’ll have the best ship and the choicest crew in England. Jim Hawkins shall come as cabin-boy. You, Livesey, are ship’s doctor; I am admiral. We’ll take my men Redruth, Joyce, and Hunter. We’ll have favourable winds, a quick passage, and not the least difficulty in finding the spot, and money to roll in ever after.”

“Trelawney,” said the doctor, “I’ll go with you; and I expect Jim will too. There’s only one man I’m afraid of.”

“And who’s that?” cried the squire.

“You,” replied the doctor; “for you cannot hold your tongue. We are not the only men who know about this map. These fellows who attacked the inn tonight are not far off, and are determined to get that money. We must none of us be alone till we get out to sea. Jim and I shall stick together; you take Joyce and Hunter when you ride to Bristol, and none of us must breathe a word of what we’ve found.”

“Livesey,” returned the squire, “you’re right. I’ll be as silent as the grave.”

PART TWO

The Sea-cook

Chapter 7

I Go to Bristol

It was a while before we were ready to go to sea. The doctor had to go to London to find someone to take over his practice; the squire was in Bristol; and I lived at the hall under the charge of old Redruth, the gamekeeper – almost a prisoner, but full of wonderful sea-dreams about strange islands and adventures.

I brooded for hours about the map. In my imagination I explored every acre of its surface, and climbed a thousand times to the top of the hill called the Spy-glass, to see the views. Sometimes the isle was full of dangerous animals, but in all my fancies nothing occurred so strange and tragic as our actual adventures.

So the weeks passed, till one fine day there came a letter addressed to Dr. Livesey. Written on the envelope was: “To be opened, if the doctor is absent, by Tom Redruth or young Hawkins.” On obeying this order, we found this news from the squire:

Old Anchor Inn, Bristol, March 1, 17—.

Dear Livesey,

As I do not know whether you are at the hall or still in London, I am sending this to both places.

The ship is bought and fitted. She lies at anchor, ready for sea. You never imagined a sweeter ship – a child might sail her – two hundred tons; name, Hispaniola.

I got her through my old friend, Blandly. Like everyone in Bristol, he has been most interested in my quest for treasure.

(“Redruth,” said I, interrupting the letter, “Dr. Livesey will not like that. The squire has been talking.” Then I read on:)

Blandly got the Hispaniola for the merest trifle. Some men in Bristol declare that it was his own boat and the price was absurdly high – transparent lies. None of them, however, deny the merits of the ship.

The rigging has been annoyingly slow; but it was the crew that troubled me. I wished for twenty men, but could barely find half a dozen, till the most remarkable stroke of luck brought me the very man that I required.

I was standing on the dock when by chance I got talking to him. I found he was an old sailor, kept a public-house, knew all the seafaring men in Bristol, and wanted a good berth as a cook to get to sea again. He had hobbled down there that morning, he said, to get a smell of the salt air.

I was greatly touched – and, out of pure pity, I engaged him on the spot to be ship’s cook. Long John Silver, he is called, and has lost a leg in his country’s service. Yet he has no pension, Livesey. What an abominable age we live in!

Well, he helped me hire a company of the toughest old salts imaginable – not pretty to look at, but fellows of spirit. I declare we could fight a frigate.

Long John even got rid of two out of the six or seven I had already engaged. He showed me in a moment that they were just fresh-water swabs, of no use in an adventure of importance.

I am in magnificent health and spirits, eating like a bull, sleeping like a tree, yet I shall not enjoy a moment till we are afloat. Seaward, ho! The glory of the sea has turned my head. So now, Livesey, come quickly; do not lose an hour.

Let young Hawkins go to see his mother for one night, with Redruth for a guard; and then both come full speed to Bristol.

John Trelawney

P. S. Blandly found an admirable fellow for captain – a stiff man, but in all other respects a treasure. Long John Silver unearthed a very competent man for a mate, a man named Arrow. I forgot to tell you that Silver is a man of substance; he has a bank account. He leaves his wife, who is a black woman, to manage the inn.

J. T.

You can imagine how excited that letter made me. I was half beside myself with glee; and I despised old Tom Redruth, who could do nothing but grumble. Any of the under-gamekeepers would gladly have changed places with him.

The next morning he and I set out for the Admiral Benbow, and found my mother in good spirits. The squire had had everything repaired and repainted, had added some furniture, and had found her a boy as an apprentice, so that she would have help while I was gone.

On seeing that boy I understood my situation for the first time. Until then I had thought of the adventures before me, not the home that I was leaving; and now, at the sight of this clumsy stranger, who was to stay here in my place, I had my first attack of tears. I am afraid I led that boy a dog’s life, setting him right and putting him down.

The next day, after dinner, Redruth and I were on the road. I said good-bye to Mother and the inn and the cove where I had lived since I was born. I thought of the captain, who had so often strode along the beach with his cocked hat and his old brass telescope. Then we turned the corner and my home was out of sight.

The mail coach picked us up about dusk, at the Royal George. I was wedged in between Redruth and a stout old gentleman, and I must have dozed, and then slept like a log up hill and down dale, until I was awakened at last by a punch in the ribs. I opened my eyes to find that we had stopped beside a large building in a city street, and that it was full daylight.

“Where are we?” I asked.

“Bristol,” said Tom.

Mr. Trelawney was staying at an inn by the docks to superintend the work upon the ship. When we walked there, to my great delight there were a multitude of ships along the quays, of all sizes and rigs and nations. In one, sailors were singing at their work, and in another there were men aloft high over my head, hanging to threads that seemed no thicker than a spider’s.

I saw the most wonderful figureheads, that had been far over the ocean. There were many old sailors, with rings in their ears, and curled whiskers, and tarry pigtails, and a swaggering, clumsy sea-walk; and if I had seen kings I could not have been more delighted.

And I was going to sea myself, bound for an unknown island, to seek for buried treasure!

While I was still in this delightful dream, we arrived at a large inn and met Squire Trelawney, dressed like a sea-officer in stout blue cloth, coming out of the door with a smile on his face and a capital imitation of a sailor’s walk.

“Here you are,” he cried, “and the doctor came last night from London. Bravo! The ship’s company is complete!”

“Oh, sir,” cried I, “when do we sail?”

“Tomorrow!”

Chapter 8

At the Sign of the Spy-glass

After we had breakfasted, the squire gave me a note addressed to John Silver, at the sign of the Spy-glass, and told me I should easily find the place amongst the docks: it was a little tavern with a large brass telescope for a sign. I set off, overjoyed at seeing more ships and seamen, and picked my way through a great crowd of people and carts along the busy dock, until I found the place.

It was a bright little tavern. The sign was newly painted; the windows had neat red curtains; the floor was cleanly sanded. There was an open door on both sides, which made the large, low room well-lit, in spite of clouds of tobacco smoke. The customers were mostly seafaring men, and they talked so loudly that I hung by the door, almost afraid to enter.

As I was waiting, a man came out of a side room. I was sure he must be Long John Silver. His left leg was cut off at the hip, and under his left shoulder he carried a crutch, which he hopped about on like a bird. He was very tall and strong, with a face as big as a ham – plain and pale, but intelligent and smiling. Indeed, he seemed in cheerful spirits, whistling as he moved among the tables, with a merry word or a slap on the shoulder for the more favoured guests.

Now, to tell you the truth, from the very first mention of Long John Silver in the squire's letter I had been afraid that he might prove to be the very one-legged sailor for whom I had watched so long at the inn. But one look at the man before me was enough. After seeing the captain, and Black Dog, and the blind man, Pew, I thought I knew what a buccaneer was like – a very different creature from this clean and pleasant landlord.

So I plucked up my courage, went in and walked right up to him.

"Mr. Silver, sir?" I asked, holding out the note.

"Yes, my lad," said he. "And who may you be?" Then, as he saw the squire's letter, he seemed to give a start. "Oh!" said he loudly, offering me his hand. "You are our new cabin-boy; pleased I am to see you."

And he took my hand in his large firm grasp.

Just then one of the customers at the far side of the inn rose suddenly and made for the door. His hurry attracted my notice, and I recognized him.

"Oh," I cried, "stop him! It's Black Dog!"

"I don't care two coppers who he is," cried Silver. "But he hasn't paid his bill. Harry, run and catch him."

One of the others near the door leaped up and started in pursuit.

"He shall pay his bill," cried Silver; and then asked me, "Who did you say he was? Black what?"

"Dog, sir," said I. "Has Mr. Trelawney not told you of the buccaneers? He was one of them."

"What?" cried Silver. "In my house! Ben, run and help Harry. One of those swabs, was he? Was that you drinking with him, Morgan? Step up here."

The man whom he called Morgan was an old, grey-haired sailor. He came forward pretty sheepishly.

"Now, Morgan," said Long John very sternly, "you never clapped your eyes on that Black – Black Dog before, did you, now?"

"Not I, sir," said Morgan with a salute.

"You didn't know his name, did you?"

"No, sir."

"By the powers, Tom Morgan, it's as good for you!" exclaimed the landlord. "If you had been mixed up with the like of that, you would never have put another foot in my house. What was he saying to you?"

"I don't rightly know, sir," answered Morgan.

"Don't rightly know! Come, now, what was he jawing – voyages, cap'ns, ships? Pipe up! What was it?"

"We was a-talkin' of keel-hauling," answered Morgan.

"Keel-hauling, was you? And a mighty suitable thing, too. Get back to your place, Tom."

As Morgan rolled back to his seat, Silver added to me in a confidential whisper that was very flattering, "He's an honest man, Tom Morgan, on'y stupid. And now, let's see... Black Dog? No, I don't know the name. Yet I kind of think I've seen the swab. He used to come here with a blind beggar."

"That he did," said I. "I knew that blind man too. His name was Pew."

"It was!" cried Silver, now quite excited. "Pew! That were his name. Ah, he looked a shark, he did! If we run down this Black Dog, now, there'll be news for Cap'n Trelawney! Ben's a good runner; he should run him down, by the powers! He talked o' keel-hauling, did he? I'll keel-haul him!"

All the time as he spoke he was stumping up and down the tavern on his crutch, slapping tables with his hand, with a show of excitement that would have convinced an Old Bailey judge or a Bow Street runner. My suspicions had been thoroughly reawakened on finding Black Dog at the Spy-glass, and I watched Long John narrowly. But he was too clever for me, and by the time the two men had come back, out of breath, and confessed that they had lost Black Dog in a crowd, and got scolded for it, I would sworn to the innocence of Long John Silver.

"See here, now, Hawkins," said he, "here's a blessed hard thing on a man like me, now, ain't it? What will Cap'n Trelawney think? Here I have this confounded Black Dog sitting in my own house drinking my rum! And when you comes and tells me of it, I let him give us all the slip! Now, Hawkins, you're a lad, you are, but you're as smart as paint. I see that when you first come in. Now, what could I do, with this crutch I hobble on? When I was a master mariner I'd have come up to him in a brace of shakes, I would; but now—"

All of a sudden, he stopped, and his jaw dropped as though he had remembered something.

"The bill!" he burst out. "Three goes o' rum! Why, shiver my timbers, if I hadn't forgotten the bill!"

And falling on a bench, he laughed until the tears ran down his cheeks. I could not help joining in, and we laughed together.

“Why, what a precious old sea-calf I am!” he said at last, wiping his cheeks. “You and me should get on well, Hawkins, for I should be rated ship’s boy. But come now, this won’t do. Dooty is dooty, messmates. I’ll put on my hat, and step along with you to Cap’n Trelawney, and report this here affair. For mind you, it’s serious, young Hawkins; and neither you nor me’s come out of it with credit. None of the pair of us was smart. But dash my buttons! That was a good un about the bill.”

And he began to laugh again, so heartily that though I did not see the joke, I again joined in his mirth.

On our walk along the quays, he was a most interesting companion, telling me about the different ships that we passed, their rig, tonnage, and nationality, explaining how one was unloading, another taking in cargo, and a third making ready for sea – and every now and then telling me some little anecdote of ships or seamen. I began to see that he was the best possible shipmate.

When we got to the inn, the squire and Dr. Livesey were finishing a jug of ale before going to inspect the ship. Long John told the story with a great deal of spirit and the most perfect truth. “That was how it were, now, weren’t it, Hawkins?” he would say, now and again, and I always nodded.

The two gentlemen regretted that Black Dog had got away, but we all agreed there was nothing to be done. When Long John took up his crutch and departed, the squire shouted after him.

“All hands aboard by four this afternoon!”

“Aye, aye, sir,” cried the cook, in the passage.

“Well, squire,” said Dr. Livesey, “I must say, John Silver suits me. And now Jim may come on board with us, may he not?”

“To be sure he may,” said the squire. “Take your hat, Hawkins, and we’ll go and see the ship.”

Chapter 9

Gunpowder and Arms

The Hispaniola lay some way out. Our little boat went round the sterns of many other ships, and their cables sometimes grated underneath our keel. At last, however, we got alongside. As we stepped aboard we were saluted by the mate, Mr. Arrow, a brown old sailor with earrings and a squint. He and the squire were very friendly, but I soon observed that things were not the same between Mr. Trelawney and the captain.

Captain Smollett was a sharp-looking man who seemed angry with everything on board. We had hardly got down into the cabin before he came to tell us why. He entered the cabin and shut the door behind him.

"Well, Captain Smollett? All well, I hope; all shipshape and seaworthy?"

"Well, sir," said the captain, "I'd better speak plain. I don't like this cruise; I don't like the men; and I don't like my officer."

"Perhaps, sir, you don't like the ship?" inquired the squire, very angry.

"I can't say, sir, not having seen her tried," said the captain.

"Possibly, sir, you may not like your employer, either?" says the squire.

But here Dr. Livesey cut in.

"Wait a bit," said he, "No need for ill feeling. But I'd like the captain to explain. You say you don't like this cruise. Now, why?"

"I was engaged, sir, on what we call sealed orders, to sail this ship wherever the gentleman wants," said the captain. "But now I find that every man before the mast knows more than I do. I don't call that fair, now, do you?"

"No," said Dr. Livesey, "I don't."

"I learn we are going after treasure," said the captain. "Now, treasure is ticklish work; I don't like treasure voyages – above all, when they are secret and when (begging your pardon, Mr. Trelawney) the secret has been told to the parrot."

"Silver's parrot?" asked the squire.

"It's a way of speaking," said the captain. "Blabbed, I mean. It's my belief neither of you gentlemen know what you are doing, but I'll tell you what I think – it's life or death, and a close run."

"I dare say that's true enough," replied Dr. Livesey. "We take the risk, but we are not so ignorant as you believe us. Now, you say you don't like the crew. Are they not good seamen?"

"I don't like them, sir," returned Captain Smollett. "And I think I should have had the choosing of them."

"Perhaps you should," replied the doctor. "My friend should, perhaps, have taken you along with him; but you don't like Mr. Arrow?"

"I don't, sir. I believe he's a good seaman, but he's too free with the crew to be a good officer. A mate should keep himself to himself – he shouldn't drink with the men!"

"Do you mean he drinks?" cried the squire.

"No, sir," replied the captain, "only that he's too familiar."

"Well, captain, what do you want?" asked the doctor.

"Are you determined to go on this cruise?"

"We are," answered the squire.

"Very good," said the captain. "As you've heard me very patiently, hear a few words more. They are putting the gunpowder and the arms in the fore hold. Now, you have a good place under the cabin; why not put them there? First point. Then, you are bringing four of your own people with you, and some of them are to be berthed forward. Why not give them the berths here beside the cabin? Second point."

"Any more?" asked Mr. Trelawney.

"One more," said the captain. "There's been too much blabbing."

"Far too much," agreed the doctor.

"I'll tell you what I've heard," continued Captain Smollett: "that you have a map of an island, that there's crosses on it to show where treasure is, and that the island lies—" And then he named the latitude and longitude exactly.

"I never told that to a soul!" cried the squire.

"The hands know it, sir," returned the captain.

"Livesey, that must have been you or Hawkins," cried the squire.

"It doesn't much matter who it was," replied the doctor. And I could see that he thought it was Mr. Trelawney, because he was so loose a talker; yet in this case I believe the squire was really right and that nobody had told the situation of the island.

"Well, gentlemen," continued the captain, "I don't know who has this map; but it should be kept secret even from me and Mr. Arrow."

"I see," said the doctor. "You wish us to keep this matter secret, and to make a garrison of the rear part of the ship, manned with our own people, and provided with all the arms and gunpowder on board. In other words, you fear a mutiny."

"Sir," said Captain Smollett, "No captain would go to sea at all if he thought that. As for Mr. Arrow, I believe him thoroughly honest; some of the men are the same. But I am responsible for the ship's safety and the life of every man Jack aboard of her. I see things going not quite right. And I ask you to take certain precautions or let me resign my berth. That's all."

"Captain Smollett," began the doctor with a smile. "You'll excuse me, I dare say, but when you came in here, I'll stake my wig, you meant more than this."

"Doctor," said the captain, "you are smart. When I came in here I meant to get discharged. I had not thought that Mr. Trelawney would hear me out."

"No more I would," cried the squire. "Had Livesey not been here I should have told you to go to the devil. As it is, I will do as you desire, but I think the worse of you."

"That's as you please, sir," said the captain. "You'll find I do my duty." And with that he left.

"Trelawney," said the doctor, "I believed you have managed to get two honest men on board with you – that man and John Silver."

"Silver, if you like," cried the squire; "but as for that intolerable humbug, I declare I think his conduct unmanly."

“Well,” says the doctor, “we shall see.”

When we came on deck, the men had already begun to move the arms and gunpowder, while the captain and Mr. Arrow stood by watching.

The new arrangement was to my liking. The whole schooner had been overhauled; six berths had been made astern out of part of the main hold; and this set of cabins was joined to the galley by a passage on the port side. These six berths were originally meant for the captain, Mr. Arrow, Hunter, Joyce, the doctor, and the squire. Now Redruth and I were to get two of them, and Mr. Arrow and the captain were to sleep on deck in the companion, which had room to swing two hammocks. Even the mate seemed pleased with the arrangement; but that is only a guess, for as you shall hear, we did not have him long.

We were all hard at work, changing the gunpowder and the berths, when the last man or two, and Long John Silver, came up in a shore-boat. The cook climbed up the side like a monkey.

“So ho, mates!” says he. “What’s this?”

“We’re a-changing of the powder, Jack,” answers one.

“Why, if we do,” cried Long John, “we’ll miss the morning tide!”

“My orders!” said the captain shortly. “Go below, my man, and make the supper.”

“Aye, aye, sir,” answered the cook, and he disappeared at once in the direction of his galley.

“That’s a good man, captain,” said the doctor.

“Very likely, sir,” replied Captain Smollett. “Easy with that, men!” he told the fellows who were shifting the powder; and then suddenly noticing me, cried, “Here you, ship’s boy! Off with you to the cook and do some work.”

As I was hurrying off I heard him say, quite loudly, to the doctor, “I’ll have no favourites on my ship.” At that, I hated the captain deeply.

Chapter 10

The Voyage

All that night we were in a great bustle getting things stowed on board, and boatfuls of the squire's friends came to wish him a good voyage and a safe return. We never had a night at the Admiral Benbow so busy; and I was dog-tired when, a little before dawn, the boatswain sounded his pipe and the crew went to their places. Although I was so weary, I didn't want to leave the deck, because everything was so new and interesting.

"Now, Barbecue, give us a song," cried one voice.

"The old one," cried another.

"Aye, aye, mates," said Long John, who was standing with his crutch under his arm. At once he broke out singing: "*Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—*"

And then the whole crew chorused:— "*Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!*"

At the third "Ho!" they drove the capstan bars before them, winding up the anchor. Soon it was up and hanging dripping at the bows; then the sails began to fill, and the land to flit by; and the *Hispaniola* had begun her voyage to Treasure Island.

I am not going to relate that voyage in detail. It went well: the ship proved to be a good ship, the crew were capable, and the captain thoroughly understood his business. But before we came to Treasure Island, two or three things had happened.

Mr. Arrow, first of all, turned out even worse than the captain had feared. He had no command over the men, who did what they pleased with him. But that was not the worst of it, for after a day or two at sea he began to appear on deck stuttering and red-cheeked with drunkenness. Time after time he was ordered below in disgrace. Sometimes he fell and cut himself; sometimes he lay all day long in his little bunk; sometimes he would be almost sober and attend to his work passably.

In the meantime, we could never make out where he got the drink. That was the mystery. When we watched him, we could not solve it; and when we asked him, he would only laugh, or deny solemnly that he ever tasted anything but water.

He was not only useless as an officer, but it was plain that at this rate he could easily kill himself outright; so nobody was much surprised when one dark night, with a high sea, he disappeared entirely.

"Overboard!" said the captain. "Well, gentlemen, that saves the trouble of putting him in irons."

But there we were, without a mate; and it was necessary to promote one of the men. The boatswain, Job Anderson, was the likeliest man aboard, and he served in a way as mate. Mr. Trelawney's knowledge made him very useful, for he often took a watch himself in easy weather. And the coxswain, Israel Hands, was a careful, wily, old experienced seaman who could be trusted with almost anything.

He was a great friend of our cook, Long John Silver – or Barbecue, as the men called him.

Aboard ship Long John carried his crutch by a lanyard – a cord around his neck – so he had both hands free. He would wedge the foot of the crutch against a bulkhead, and propped against it, get on with his cooking. He could cross the deck in the worst weather: he had a line or two rigged up to help him across the widest spaces, and he would hand himself across, now using the crutch, now trailing it by the lanyard, as quickly as another man could walk. Yet some of the men who had sailed with him before expressed their pity for him.

“He’s no common man, Barbecue,” said the coxswain to me. “He had good schooling and can speak like a book when he wants; and brave – a lion’s nothing beside Long John! I seen him grapple four men and knock their heads together – and him unarmed.”

All the crew respected and obeyed him. To me he was always kind, and glad to see me in the galley, which he kept as clean as a new pin, the dishes hanging up burnished and his parrot in a cage in one corner.

“Come, Hawkins,” he would say; “come and have a yarn with John. Nobody more welcome than yourself, my son. Sit you down. Here’s Cap’n Flint – I calls my parrot Cap’n Flint, after the famous buccaneer – here’s Cap’n Flint predicting success to our voyage. Wasn’t you, Cap’n?”

And the parrot would say, with great rapidity, “Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!” till John threw his handkerchief over the cage.

“Now, that bird,” he would say, “is maybe two hundred years old, Hawkins. She’s sailed with the great Cap’n England, the pirate. She’s been at Madagascar, and at Malabar, and Surinam, and Providence, and Portobello. She was at the boarding of the Viceroy of the Indies out of Goa, she was; and to look at her you would think she was a babby. But you smelt gunpowder – didn’t you, Cap’n?”

“Stand by to go about,” the parrot would scream, then peck at the bars and swear wickedly.

“There,” John would say, “this poor old innocent bird o’ mine is swearing blue fire, but none the wiser. She would swear the same before the chaplain.” And John would touch his forelock in his solemn way that made me think he was the best of men.

In the meantime, the squire and Captain Smollett were still distant with one another. The squire despised the captain. The captain, on his part, never spoke except when he was spoken to, and then sharp and short and dry, and not a word wasted. He admitted that he seemed to have been wrong about the crew, for all had behaved fairly well. As for the ship, he had taken a downright fancy to her. “But,” he would add, “all I say is, we’re not home again, and I don’t like the cruise.”

The squire, at this, would turn away and march up and down the deck.

“Any more of that man,” he said, “and I shall explode.”

We had some heavy weather, which proved the good qualities of the Hispaniola. Every man on board seemed well content; and it was not surprising, for there was never a ship’s company so spoiled since Noah put to sea. There was

double grog at the least excuse; there was fruit pudding on any man's birthday, and a barrel of apples always ready for anyone to help himself.

"Never knew good come of it yet," the captain said to Dr. Livesey. "Spoil hands, make devils. That's my belief."

But good did come of the apple barrel, as you shall hear – for if it had not been for that, we might all have perished by treachery.

This was how it came about.

We had run up the trade winds, and now we were sailing with a lookout day and night. We thought that during that night, or at latest before noon the next day, we should sight the Treasure Island.

We were heading S.S.W. on a quiet sea. The Hispaniola rolled steadily, dipping her bowsprit now and then with a whiff of spray. Everyone was in the best spirits because we were so near our destination.

Just after sundown, when all my work was over, it occurred to me that I should like an apple. I ran on deck. The watch was looking for the island. The man at the helm was watching the sail and whistling gently to himself, and that was the only sound except the swish of the sea against the sides of the ship.

I got right into the apple barrel, because there was scarcely an apple left; but sitting down there in the dark, what with the sound of the waters and the rocking movement of the ship, I had almost fallen asleep when a heavy man sat down with a thud close by. The barrel shook as he leaned his shoulders against it, and I was just about to jump up when the man began to speak.

It was Silver's voice, and before I had heard a dozen words, I would not have shown myself for all the world. I lay there, trembling and listening in extreme fear and curiosity, for from these dozen words I understood that the lives of all the honest men aboard depended upon me alone.

Chapter 11

What I Heard in the Apple-Barrel

“No, not I,” said Silver. “Flint was cap’n; I was quartermaster, because of my timber leg. The same fight I lost my leg, old Pew lost his deadlights. It was a master surgeon that ampytated me – Latin by the bucket, and what not; but he was hanged like a dog, with the rest, at Corso Castle. That was Roberts’ men, that was. They changed names to their ships – Royal Fortune and so on. Now, what a ship was christened, so let her stay, I says. So it was with the Cassandra, as brought us all safe home from Malabar, after Cap’n England took the Viceroy of the Indies; so it was with the Walrus, Flint’s old ship, as I’ve seen amuck with red blood and fit to sink with gold.”

“Ah!” cried another voice, that of the youngest hand on board, full of admiration. “He was the flower of the flock, was Flint!”

“I sailed with Cap’n England, then with Flint,” said Silver. “That’s my story; and now I’m here on my own account. I laid by nine hundred pound, from England’s pillaging, and two thousand after Flint. That ain’t bad for a man before the mast – all safe in the bank. Where’s all England’s men now? I dunno. Where’s Flint’s? Why, most of ’em aboard here, and glad to get the work – been begging before that, some of ’em. Old Pew, as had lost his sight, spent twelve hundred pound in a year, like a lord. Where is he now? Dead and under hatches; but for two year before that, shiver my timbers, the man was starving! He begged, and stole, and cut throats, and he starved!”

“It ain’t much use, after all,” said the young seaman.

“Tain’t much use for fools,” cried Silver. “You’re young, you are, but you’re as smart as paint. I see that when I set my eyes on you, and I’ll talk to you like a man.”

You may imagine how I felt when I heard this rogue addressing another in the very same words of flattery as he had used to me. I think, if I had been able, that I would have killed him through the barrel. Meantime, he ran on, little supposing he was overheard.

“Here’s the thing about gentlemen of fortune. They lives rough, and they risk hanging, but they eat and drink like fighting-cocks, and when a cruise is done, why, it’s hundreds of pounds in their pockets. Now, most goes on rum and a good fling, and to sea again in their shirts. But that’s not what I do. I puts it all away, some here, some there, none too much anywhere, to avoid suspicion. I’m fifty; once back from this cruise, I’ll set up as a gentleman in earnest. But I’ve lived easy in the meantime, never denied myself nothing my heart desires. And how did I begin? Before the mast, like you!”

“Well,” said the other, “but all the other money’s gone now, ain’t it?”

“My old missis has it. And the Spy-glass Tavern is sold, lease and all; and the old girl’s off to meet me. I would tell you where, for I trust you, but it’d make the mates jealous.”

“And can you trust your missis?” asked the other.

"Gentlemen of fortune," returned the cook, "usually trusts little among themselves, and right they are. But I have a way with me, I have. There was some that was afraid of Pew, and some that was afraid of Flint; but Flint himself was afraid of me. They was the roughest crew afloat, was Flint's; the devil himself would have feared to go to sea with them. Well now, I tell you, I'm not a boasting man, and you seen how easy I keep company, but when I was quartermaster, lambs wasn't the word for Flint's old buccaneers. Ah, you may be sure of yourself in old John's ship."

"Well, I tell you," replied the lad, "I didn't much like the job till I had this talk with you, John; but I'll shake hands on it now."

"You're a brave lad, and smart too," answered Silver, shaking hands so heartily that the barrel shook, "and a finer gentleman of fortune I never clapped my eyes on."

By this time I had begun to understand their meaning. By a "gentleman of fortune" they plainly meant a common pirate, and the scene that I had overheard was the corruption of one of the honest hands – perhaps the last one left aboard. Then Silver gave a little whistle, and a third man strolled up and sat down with them.

"Dick's square," said Silver.

"Oh, I know'd Dick was square," returned the voice of the coxswain, Israel Hands. "He's no fool, is Dick. But look here, Barbecue," he went on, "how long are we a-going to stand off? I've had almost enough o' Cap'n Smollett, by thunder! I want to go into that cabin, I do. I want their pickles and wines, and that."

"Israel," said Silver, "your head ain't strong, nor ever was. But you can hear, I reckon; leastways, your ears is big enough. Now, here's what I say: you'll speak soft and you'll keep sober till I give the word; and you may lay to that, my son."

"Well, I don't say no, do I?" growled the coxswain. "What I say is, when?"

"When! By the powers!" cried Silver. "I'll tell you when. The last moment I can manage, that's when. Here's a first-rate seaman, Cap'n Smollett, sails the blessed ship for us. Here's this squire and doctor with a map – and I don't know where it is, do I? No more do you. Well then, this squire and doctor shall find the stuff, and help us to get it aboard. Then we'll see. If I was sure of all you sons of double Dutchmen, I'd have Cap'n Smollett navigate us half-way home again before I struck."

"Why, we we can navigate, I should think," said the lad Dick.

"We can steer a course, you mean," snapped Silver, "but who's to set one? If I had my way, I'd have Cap'n Smollett work us back into the trade winds at least; then we'd have no blessed miscalculations and live on a spoonful of water a day. But I'll finish with 'em at the island, as soon as the blunt's on board. You're never happy till you're drunk, Israel. Split my sides, I've a sick heart to sail with the likes of you!"

"Easy, Long John," cried Israel. "Who's a-crossin' of you?"

"Why, how many tall ships, think ye, have I seen laid aboard? And how many brisk lads dying at Execution Dock?" cried Silver. "And all for this same hurry. I seen a thing or two at sea, I have. If you would only plan your course, you'd ride in carriages. But not you! You'll have your mouthful of rum tomorrow, and go hang."

"Everybody knowed you was a kind of chaplain, John; but there's others as could steer as well as you," said Israel. "They liked a bit o' fun. They wasn't so high and dry, nohow, but jolly companions every one."

"So?" says Silver. "And where are they now? Pew was that sort, and he died a beggar. Flint was, and he died of rum at Savannah. Ah, they was a sweet crew!"

"But," asked Dick, "when we do lay 'em athwart, what are we to do with 'em?"

"There's the man for me!" cried the cook admiringly. "Well, what do you think? Put 'em ashore like marooned men? That would have been Cap'n England's way. Or cut 'em down? That would have been Flint's, or Billy Bones's."

"Billy was the man for that," said Israel. "Dead men don't bite," says he.

"Right you are," said Silver. "I'm an easy man – but this time it's serious. I give my vote – death. When I'm in Parlyment and riding in my coach, I don't want none of these sea-lawyers in the cabin a-coming home, unlooked for. So I say, wait; but when the time comes, let her rip!"

"John," cries the coxswain, "you're a man!"

"Only one thing I claim," said Silver. "I claim Trelawney. I'll wring his calf's head off his body with these hands. Dick! You just jump up, like a sweet lad, and get me an apple."

You may fancy my terror at this! I should have leaped out and run for it if I had the strength. I heard Dick begin to rise, but then Hands exclaimed, "Oh, stow that, John. Let's have a go of the rum."

"Dick," said Silver, "I trust you. I've a gauge on the keg, mind. There's the key; you fill a pannikin with rum and bring it up."

Terrified as I was, I could not help thinking that this must have been how Mr. Arrow got the drink that destroyed him.

Dick was gone a little while, and during his absence Israel spoke in the cook's ear. I could only catch a word or two, and yet I gathered some important news, for this phrase was audible: "Not another man of them'll join." Hence there were still faithful men on board.

When Dick returned, one after another of the trio took the pannikin and drank – one saying "To luck," another "Here's to old Flint," and Silver saying, "Here's to ourselves."

Just then a brightness fell upon me in the barrel. Looking up, I found the moon had risen and was shining white on the fore-sail; and at the same time the look-out's voice shouted, "Land ho!"

Chapter 12

Council of War

There was a great rush of feet across the deck. I could hear people running up from the cabin and the forecastle. Instantly slipping out of my barrel, I dived behind the fore-sail, doubled back towards the stern, and came out upon the open deck in time to join Hunter and Dr. Livesey in the rush.

A belt of fog had lifted and the moon had appeared. Away to the south-west we saw two low hills, a couple of miles apart; and rising behind one of them a third, higher hill, whose peak was still lost in the fog.

So much I saw, almost in a dream, for I had not yet recovered from my fear. And then I heard Captain Smollett giving orders: the Hispaniola was laid nearer the wind to sail a course that would just clear the island on the east.

"And now, men," said the captain, "has any one of you ever seen that land ahead?"

"I have, sir," said Silver. "I've watered there with a trading vessel."

"The anchorage is on the south, behind an islet, I think?" asked the captain.

"Yes, sir; Skeleton Island they calls it. It were a main place for pirates once. That hill to the north they calls the Foremast Hill, so I've been told. But the main one, with the cloud on it, they calls the Spy-glass, by reason of a lookout they kept there when they was in the anchorage."

"I have a chart here," says Captain Smollett. "See if that's the place."

Long John's eyes burned in his head as he took the chart, but I knew he was doomed to disappointment. This was not the map we'd found in Billy Bones's chest, but a copy, complete in all things except the red crosses and the written notes. Though his annoyance must have been sharp, Silver had the strength of mind to hide it.

"Yes, sir," said he, "this is the spot, to be sure, and very prettily drawed. Who might have done that, I wonder? Aye, here it is: 'Capt. Kidd's Anchorage', just as my shipmate called it. There's a strong current runs along the south, and then away north'ard up the west coast."

"Thank you, my man," says Captain Smollett. "I'll ask you later on to help us. You may go."

I was surprised at the coolness with which John admitted his knowledge of the island, and I was half-frightened when I saw him drawing near to me. He did not know that I had overheard him from the apple barrel, and yet I now had such a horror of his cruelty, duplicity, and power that I could scarce conceal a shudder when he laid his hand upon my arm.

"Ah," says he, "this island is a sweet spot for a lad to get ashore on. You'll bathe, and climb trees, and hunt goats, you will; and you'll get aloft on them hills like a goat yourself. It's a pleasant thing to be young and have ten toes, you may lay to that. When you want to do a bit of exploring, you just ask old John, and he'll make a snack for you to take along."

And clapping me in the friendliest way upon the shoulder, he hobbled off.

Captain Smollett, the squire, and Dr. Livesey were talking together on the quarter-deck, and although I was anxious to tell them my story, I dared not interrupt them openly. While I was still trying to think of some excuse, Dr. Livesey called me over. He wanted me to fetch his pipe; but as soon as I was near enough not to be overheard, I broke in immediately.

“Doctor, let me speak. Get the captain and squire down to the cabin, and then make some pretence to send for me. I have terrible news.”

The doctor’s expression changed, but next moment he mastered himself.

“Thank you, Jim,” said he quite loudly, “that was all I wanted to know,” as if he had asked me a question.

And with that he turned on his heel and rejoined the other two. They spoke together for a little, and though none of them started, or raised his voice, it was plain enough that Dr. Livesey had told them my request; for the next thing that I heard was the captain giving an order to Job Anderson, and all hands were piped on deck.

“My lads,” said Captain Smollett, “I’ve a word to say to you. This land that we have sighted is the place we have been sailing for. Mr. Trelawney, being a very generous gentleman, has just asked me if every man has done his duty, and I was able to tell him that I never ask to see it done better. So he and I and the doctor are going below to the cabin to drink your health and luck, and you’ll have grog served out for you to drink our health and luck. I think it handsome. And if you think as I do, you’ll give a cheer for the gentleman.”

The cheer followed, so hearty that I confess I could hardly believe these same men were plotting for our blood.

“One more cheer for Cap’n Smollett,” cried Long John when the first had subsided. This also was given with a will.

Then the three gentlemen went below, and not long after, word was sent up that Jim Hawkins was wanted in the cabin.

I found them all three seated round the table, with a bottle of Spanish wine and some raisins before them, and the doctor smoking away, with his wig on his lap. That, I knew, was a sign that he was agitated. The stern window was open, for it was a warm night, and you could see the moon shining behind on the ship’s wake.

“Now, Hawkins,” said the squire, “speak up.”

I told the whole of Silver’s conversation. Nobody interrupted me or even moved till I was done, but they kept their eyes upon my face.

“Jim,” said Dr. Livesey, “take a seat.”

And they made me sit down beside them, poured me a glass of wine, filled my hands with raisins, and then all three, one after the other, each with a bow, drank my good health, and their thanks for my luck and courage.

“Now, captain,” said the squire, “you were right, and I was wrong. I admit I am an ass, and I await your orders.”

“No more an ass than I, sir,” returned the captain. “I never heard of a crew that meant to mutiny and showed no signs of it. But this crew beats me.”

“That’s Silver,” said the doctor. “A very remarkable man.”

"He'd look remarkably well hanging from a yard-arm, sir," returned the captain. "But there are three or four points to consider, if I may."

"Speak, captain," says Mr. Trelawney grandly.

"First point," began Mr. Smollett. "We must go on, because we can't turn back. If I gave the word to turn around, they would rise up at once. Second point, we have time before us – at least until this treasure's found. Third point, there are some faithful hands. Now, sir, it's got to come to blows sooner or later, and what I propose is to come to blows when they least expect it. We can count on your own home servants, Mr. Trelawney?"

"As upon myself," declared the squire.

"Three," reckoned the captain; "and ourselves make seven, counting Hawkins here. Now, how about the honest hands?"

"Most likely Trelawney's own men," said the doctor; "those he had found for himself before he met Silver."

"Nay," replied the squire. "Hands was one of mine. And to think that they're all Englishmen!"

"Well, gentlemen," said the captain, "we must wait, and keep a lookout. It's trying, I know. It would be pleasanter to come to blows. But there's no help for it till we know our men. Lay to, and whistle for a wind, that's my view."

"Jim here," said the doctor, "can help us more than anyone. The men are not shy with him, and Jim is a noticing lad."

"Hawkins, I put great faith in you," added the squire.

I felt altogether helpless; and yet, by an odd train of circumstances, it was indeed through me that safety came. In the meantime, there were only seven out of the twenty-six on whom we knew we could rely; and out of these seven one was a boy, so that on our side we had only six grown men to their nineteen.

PART THREE

My Shore Adventure

Chapter 13

How I Began My Shore Adventure

Next morning the appearance of the island was altogether changed. We had sailed far during the night and were now lying becalmed about half a mile from the eastern coast. Grey woods covered a large part of the land, broken up by many tall pine trees out-topping the others – some singly, some in clumps; but the general effect was dull and sad.

The hills ran up clear above the vegetation in spires of naked rock. All were strangely shaped, and the Spy-glass, which was the tallest by three or four hundred feet, was also the strangest, running up sheer from almost every side and then suddenly cut off at the top like a pedestal to put a statue on.

The Hispaniola was rolling in the ocean swell. The booms were tearing at the blocks, the rudder was banging, and the whole ship was creaking, groaning, and jumping. I had to cling tight to the backstay, and the world turned giddily before my eyes. Though I was a good enough sailor when we were moving, this standing still and being rolled about was a thing I never got used to.

Perhaps it was because of this – or perhaps it was the wild and melancholy look of the island, and the surf that we could both see and hear foaming and thundering on the steep beach – at least, although the sun shone bright and hot, and the birds were fishing and crying all around us, and you would have thought anyone would have been glad to get to land after being so long at sea, my heart sank into my boots. From the first look, I hated the very thought of Treasure Island.

We had a dreary morning's work, for there was no wind, and the boats had to be got out and manned, and the ship taken three or four miles round the corner of the island and up the narrow passage to the haven behind the islet, Skeleton Island.

I volunteered for one of the boats. In it the heat was sweltering, and the men grumbled fiercely over their work. Anderson was in command of my boat, and instead of keeping the crew in order, he grumbled as loud as the worst. I thought this was a very bad sign, for until that day the men had gone briskly and willingly about their business; but the sight of the island had relaxed the cords of discipline.

All the way in, Long John stood by the steersman. He knew the passage like the palm of his hand, and never hesitated.

We halted about a third of a mile from each shore, the mainland on one side and Skeleton Island on the other. The plunge of our anchor sent up clouds of birds wheeling and crying over the woods, but in less than a minute they were down again and all was once more silent.

The place was entirely land-locked, buried in woods, the trees coming right down to the shore, and the hilltops standing round at a distance. Two little rivers, or rather two swamps, emptied out into this pond, as you might call it; and the foliage round them had a kind of poisonous brightness.

From the ship we could see nothing of the house or stockade that were on the map, for they were hidden among trees; and if it had not been for the chart, we might have been the first people that had ever anchored there since the island arose out of the seas.

There was not a breath of air moving, nor a sound but the surf booming half a mile away. A peculiar stagnant smell hung over us – a smell of sodden leaves and rotting trees. The doctor sniffed.

“I don’t know about treasure,” he said, “but I’ll stake my wig there’s fever here.”

If the men’s conduct had been alarming in the boat, it became truly threatening when they came aboard. They lay about the deck growling in talk. The slightest order was received with a black look and grudgingly and carelessly obeyed. Even the honest hands must have caught the infection. Mutiny, it was plain, hung over us like a thunder-cloud.

And we were not the only ones who perceived the danger. Long John was hard at work going from group to group, and no man could have set a better example. He was willing and civil, all smiles to everyone. If an order were given, John would be on his crutch in an instant, with the cheeriest “Aye, aye, sir!” in the world; and when there was nothing else to do, he sang one song after another, as if to conceal the discontent of the rest.

Because of Long John’s obvious anxiety, we feared the worst; and we held a council in the cabin.

“Sir,” said the captain, “if I risk another order, the whole ship’ll fall about our ears. Now, we’ve only one man to rely on.”

“And who is that?” asked the squire.

“Silver, sir,” returned the captain; “he’s as anxious as you and I to smother things up. This is a tiff; he’d soon talk ’em out of it if he had the chance, and what I propose to do is to give him the chance. Let’s allow the men an afternoon ashore. If they all go, why, we’ll fight for the ship. If they none of them go, well then, we hold the cabin. If some go, you mark my words, sir, Silver’ll bring ’em aboard again as mild as lambs.”

So it was decided. Loaded pistols were served out to all the men we were sure of. Hunter, Joyce, and Redruth were taken into our confidence and received the news with less surprise than we expected. Then the captain went on deck and addressed the crew.

“My lads,” said he, “we’ve had a hot day and are all tired and out of sorts. A turn ashore’ll hurt nobody. The boats are still in the water; you may go ashore for the afternoon. I’ll fire a gun half an hour before sundown.”

I believe the silly fellows must have thought they would break their shins over treasure as soon as they were on shore, for they all came out of their sulks in a moment and gave a cheer that sent the birds once more flying.

The captain whipped out of sight, leaving Silver to arrange the men, and it was as well he did so. Had he been on deck, he could no longer have pretended not to understand the situation. It was as plain as day. Silver was the captain, and a mighty rebellious crew he had.

At last, however, the group was made up. Six fellows were to stay on board, and the remaining thirteen, including Silver, began to embark.

Then there came into my head the first of the mad notions that helped to save our lives. If six men were left by Silver, it was plain our party could not get control of the ship; but since only six were left, it was equally plain that the cabin party had no present need of my assistance.

It occurred to me at once to go ashore. In a jiffy I had slipped over the side and curled up in the nearest boat, just as she shoved off.

No one took any notice of me, except the bow oar saying, "Is that you, Jim? Keep your head down." But Silver, from the other boat, looked sharply over and called out to know if that were me; and I began to regret what I had done.

The boat I was in, having a head start, shot far ahead of the other. It struck among the shore-side trees, and I caught a branch and swung myself out, plunging into the nearest thicket while Silver and the rest were still a hundred yards behind.

"Jim, Jim!" I heard him shouting.

But I paid no heed; jumping, ducking, and breaking through, I ran straight on till I could run no longer.

Chapter 14

The First Blow

I was so pleased at having given Long John the slip that I began to enjoy myself and look around with some interest.

I had crossed a marshy area full of willows, bulrushes, and odd, swampy trees; and now I came out upon an open piece of undulating, sandy country, dotted with a few pines and a great number of contorted trees like oaks. On the far side of the space stood one of the hills, with two craggy peaks shining vividly in the sun.

I now felt for the first time the joy of exploration. The isle was uninhabited; I had left my shipmates behind, and saw only animals and birds. I saw strange flowering plants, and snakes: one raised his head from a ledge of rock and hissed with a noise like the spinning of a top. Little did I know that the noise was the famous rattle.

Then I came to a long thicket of the oak-like trees – evergreen oaks, I heard them called afterwards – which grew low along the sand like brambles, the boughs curiously twisted. The thicket stretched down to the margin of the reedy fen where the nearest of the little rivers soaked its way into the anchorage. The marsh was steaming in the strong sun, and the outline of the Spy-glass hill trembled through the haze.

All at once there was a bustle among the bulrushes. A wild duck flew up with a quack, then another; and soon a great cloud of birds hung screaming and circling in the air. I judged that some of my shipmates must be drawing near. Soon I heard the distant low tones of a human voice, which grew steadily nearer.

This put me in great fear, and I crawled under cover of the nearest oak and squatted there, as silent as a mouse.

Another voice answered. Then the first voice, which I now recognized as Silver's, ran on for a long while in a stream, now and again interrupted by the other. They were talking earnestly, almost fiercely; but I could not make out the words.

At last the speakers paused. Perhaps they had sat down, for the birds began to grow quieter and to settle again in the swamp.

I began to feel that I was neglecting my business. Since I had been so foolhardy as to come ashore with these desperadoes, the least I could do was to overhear their plans. I ought to get as close to them as I could, under the concealment of the crouching trees.

So, crawling on all fours, I made steadily but slowly towards them, till at last, raising my head to a gap among the leaves, I could see down into a little green dell beside the marsh. There Long John Silver and another of the crew stood in conversation.

The sun beat full upon them. Silver had thrown his hat upon the ground, and his great, smooth face, shining with heat, was lifted to the other man's in a kind of appeal.

"Mate," he was saying, "it's because I thinks gold dust of you – gold dust! If I hadn't took to you, do you think I'd have been here a-warning you? All's up; it's to save your neck that I'm a-speaking, and if the wild uns knew it, where'd I be, Tom, now?"

"Silver," said the other man – who was red in the face, and spoke as hoarsely as a crow, his voice shaking like a taut rope – "Silver," says he, "you're old, and you're honest; and you've money, which lots of poor sailors hasn't; and you're brave, or I'm mistook. And will you let yourself be led away with that mess of swabs? Not you! As sure as God sees me, I'd sooner lose my hand. If I turn against my duty—"

All of a sudden he was interrupted by a noise. I had found one of the honest hands; and at that same moment, I heard another. Far away out in the marsh there arose a sound like a cry of anger, then another; and then one horrid, long-drawn scream.

The rocks of the Spy-glass re-echoed it; the troop of marsh-birds rose again, darkening heaven with a simultaneous whirr; and that death yell kept ringing in my brain, after silence had returned, and only the rustle of the birds and the boom of the distant surf disturbed the languor of the afternoon.

Tom had jumped at the sound, but Silver had not blinked. He stood resting lightly on his crutch, watching his companion like a snake about to spring.

"John!" said the sailor, stretching out his hand.

"Hands off!" cried Silver, leaping back.

"If you like, John Silver," said the other. "It's a black conscience that can make you feared of me. But in heaven's name, what was that?"

"That?" returned Silver, smiling away, but warier than ever, his eye gleaming like a crumb of glass. "Oh, I reckon that'll be Alan."

"Alan!" cried Tom. "Then rest his soul for a true seaman! And as for you, John Silver, you're no mate of mine. If I die like a dog, I'll die in my duty. You've killed Alan, have you? Kill me too, if you can. But I defies you."

And with that, the brave fellow turned his back on the cook and set off walking. With a cry Long John whipped the crutch out of his armpit, and sent it hurtling through the air. It struck poor Tom in the back with stunning violence, right between the shoulders. His hands flew up, he gave a sort of gasp, and fell.

How badly he was injured, I don't know. To judge from the sound, his back might have been broken on the spot. But next moment, Silver, agile as a monkey, was on top of him and had buried his knife up to the hilt in that defenceless body. From my hiding-place I could hear him pant aloud as he struck the blows.

For a little while the whole world swam away from me in a whirling mist; Silver and the birds and the hilltop going round and round before my eyes, and I seemed to hear bells ringing and distant voices shouting in my ear.

When I came to myself, the monster had stood up, his crutch under his arm. Before him Tom lay motionless; but the murderer ignored him, cleaning his blood-stained knife upon a wisp of grass. Everything else was unchanged, the sun still shining mercilessly on the steaming marsh and the tall pinnacle of the mountain. I could scarcely believe that murder had been done and a human life cut cruelly short before my eyes.

Now John brought out a whistle from his pocket and blew it. I could not tell the meaning of the signal, but it instantly awoke my fears. More men would come. I might be discovered. They had already slain two honest people; might not I be next?

Instantly I began to crawl back again, as swiftly and silently as I could. As I did so, I heard shouts between the old buccaneer and his comrades, and this sound lent me wings. As soon as I was clear of the thicket, I ran as I never ran before. I didn't care where, so long as it led me away from the murderers. My fear grew into a kind of frenzy.

What could I do? How should I dare to go down to the boats among those fiends? Would they not wring my neck like a bird's? But if I did not go, would not my absence tell them of my alarm, and my fatal knowledge?

It was all over, I thought. Good-bye to the Hispaniola; good-bye to the squire, the doctor, and the captain! There was nothing left for me but death by starvation or death by the hands of the mutineers.

I thought all this while I was still running. Without noticing, I had drawn near to the foot of the little hill with the two peaks. Here the oaks grew more widely apart, and were taller. Mingled with them were a few pines, some almost seventy feet high. The air smelt fresher.

And here a new alarm brought me to a standstill with a thumping heart.

Chapter 15

The Man of the Island

From the side of the hill, which was steep and stony, a spout of gravel was dislodged and fell rattling through the trees. When I looked that way I saw a figure leap rapidly behind a pine. Whether it was a bear or man or monkey, I could not tell; it seemed dark and shaggy. But the terror of this new apparition brought me to a stop.

I was now, it seemed, cut off on both sides; behind me were the murderers, before me this lurking shape. And immediately I began to prefer the dangers that I knew to those I knew not. Silver himself appeared less terrible than this creature of the woods, and I turned on my heel, and looking sharply behind me, began to return to the boats.

Instantly the figure reappeared, making a wide circuit to head me off. I was tired, and I could see it was in vain for me to try and outrun it. From tree to tree the creature flitted like a deer, running manlike on two legs, but unlike any man that I had ever seen, stooping almost double as it ran. Yet a man it was, that was now obvious.

I began to recall what I had heard of cannibals, and was about to call for help. But the mere fact that he was a man, however wild, reassured me, and my fear of Silver began to revive in proportion.

So I stood still, trying to work out some method of escape; and I remembered my pistol. I was not defenceless. Courage glowed in my heart, and I resolutely faced this man of the island and walked towards him.

He was concealed behind a tree trunk; but he must have been watching me, for as soon as I began to move in his direction he stepped out to meet me. Then he hesitated, drew back, came forward again, and at last, to my wonder and confusion, threw himself on his knees and held out his hands in supplication.

“Who are you?” I asked.

“Ben Gunn,” he answered. His voice sounded hoarse and awkward, like a rusty lock. “I’m poor Ben Gunn, I am; and I haven’t spoke with a Christian these three years.”

I could now see that he was a white man like myself and that his face was pleasing. But his skin was burnt by the sun; his fair eyes looked quite startling in so dark a face. He was more ragged than any beggarman, dressed in a tattered patchwork of old ship’s canvas and sea-cloth. Around his waist he wore an old brass-buckled leather belt.

“Three years!” I cried. “Were you shipwrecked?”

“Nay, mate,” said he; “marooned.”

I knew that meant a horrible punishment common among the buccaneers, in which the offender is given a little gunpowder and shot and left on some desolate island.

“Marooned three years ago,” he continued, “and lived on goats since then, and berries, and oysters. But, mate, my heart is sore for Christian diet. You

mightn't happen to have a piece of cheese about you, now? No? Many's the long night I've dreamed of cheese – toasted, mostly."

"If ever I can get aboard again," said I, "you shall have cheese by the pound."

All this time he had been feeling my jacket, smoothing my hands, looking at my boots, and showing a childish pleasure in the presence of a fellow creature. But at my last words he perked up.

"If ever you can get aboard again?" he repeated. "Why, who's to hinder you?"

"Not you, I know," was my reply.

"And right you was," he cried. "Now what's your name, mate?"

"Jim," I told him.

"Jim, Jim," says he, quite pleased. "Well, now, Jim, I've lived that rough as you'd be ashamed to hear of. Yet I had a pious mother, and I was a civil, pious boy, and could rattle off my prayers. And here's what it's come to, Jim! But it were Providence that put me here. I've thought it all out in this here lonely island, and I'm back on piety. You don't catch me tasting rum, except a thimbleful for luck, of course, the first chance I have. I'm bound I'll be good. And, Jim" – looking round and lowering his voice to a whisper – "I'm rich."

I now felt sure that the poor fellow had gone crazy, and I suppose this must have shown in my face, for he repeated hotly: "Rich! Rich! I says. And I'll tell you what: I'll make a man of you, Jim. Ah, Jim, you'll bless your stars that you was the first that found me!"

Then a sudden shadow came over his face. He tightened his grasp upon my hand and raised a threatening forefinger.

"Now, Jim, you tell me true: that ain't Flint's ship?" he asked.

At this I had a happy inspiration, and I answered him at once.

"No, it's not Flint's ship. Flint is dead; but there are some of Flint's hands aboard – worse luck for the rest of us."

"Not a man with one leg?" he gasped.

"Silver?" I asked.

"Ah, Silver!"

"He's the cook, and the ringleader too."

"If you was sent by Long John," he said, "I'm as good as dead. But where is he?"

In answer I told him the whole story of our voyage and our predicament. He heard me with keen interest, and when I had finished he patted me on the head.

"You're a good lad, Jim," he said. "You're in a stew, ain't you? Well, just put your trust in Ben Gunn. Would you think it likely, now, that your squire would prove generous in case of help?"

I told him the squire was the most generous of men.

"Aye, but you see," returned Ben Gunn, "I didn't mean giving me a job, Jim. What I mean is, would he be likely to pay, say, one thousand pounds out of money that's as good as his already?"

"I am sure he would," said I. "All the hands were going to share."

"And a passage home?" he added with a look of great shrewdness.

"Why," I cried, "the squire's a gentleman. And if we got rid of the others, we should need you to help sail the vessel home."

“Ah,” said he, “so you would. Now, I’ll tell you what. I were in Flint’s ship when he buried the treasure; he and six strong seamen. They was ashore for a week, and the rest of us stayed in the old Walrus. One fine day up went the signal, and here come Flint by himself in a little boat, his head tied up in a blue scarf. But mortal pale he looked. And the six men was all dead – dead and buried. How he done it, we couldn’t work out. It was battle, murder, and sudden death – him against six. Billy Bones was the mate; Long John, he was quartermaster; and they asked Flint where the treasure was. ‘Ah,’ says he, ‘you can go ashore, if you like, and stay,’ he says; ‘but as for the ship, she’ll leave, by thunder!’ That’s what he said.

“Well, I was in another ship three years back, and we sighted this island. ‘Boys,’ said I, ‘here’s Flint’s treasure; let’s land and find it.’ The cap’n was displeased, but my messmates were all of a mind and landed. Twelve days they looked for the treasure, until one fine morning they cursed me and went back aboard. ‘As for you, Benjamin Gunn,’ says they, ‘here’s a musket, and a spade, and pick-axe. You can stay here and find Flint’s money for yourself,’ they says. Well, Jim, three years I’ve been here. Do I look like a man before the mast? No, says you. Nor I weren’t, neither.”

And he winked and pinched me hard.

“Just you mention them words to your squire, Jim,” he went on. “Nor he weren’t, neither – that’s the words. You tell him, three years he were the man of this island; and sometimes he would maybe think upon a prayer (says you), and sometimes he would maybe think of his old mother; but the most part of Gunn’s time was took up with another matter. You tell him that. Then you’ll say: Gunn is a good man, and he puts a precious sight more confidence in a gen’leman born than in these gen’leman of fortune, having been one hisself.”

“Well,” I said, “I don’t understand one word of that. But how am I to get back on board?”

“Ah,” said he, “that’s the hitch, for sure. I’ve got a boat that I made with my two hands. I keep her under the white rock. If the worst come to the worst, we might try that after dark. Hi! What’s that?”

For just then, although it was still an hour to sunset, all the echoes of the island awoke and bellowed to the thunder of a cannon.

“They have begun to fight!” I cried. “Follow me.”

And I began to run towards the ship, my terrors all forgotten, while the marooned man trotted easily beside me.

“Keep left, Jim mate!” says he; “Under the trees with you! There’s where I killed my first goat. They don’t come down here now, for fear of Benjamin Gunn. Ah! And there’s the cetemery”—cemetery, he must have meant. “You see the mounds? I come here and prayed, when I thought a Sunday would be about due. It weren’t a chapel, but it seemed more solemn like.” So he kept talking as we ran.

The cannon-shot was followed after a long interval by a volley of gunfire. There was a pause, and then, a quarter of a mile ahead, I beheld the Union Jack flutter in the air above a wood.

PART FOUR

The Stockade

Chapter 16

Narrative Continued by the Doctor:

How the Ship Was Abandoned

Doctor Livesey's Narrative

It was about half past one when the two gig-boats went ashore from the Hispaniola. The captain, the squire, and I were talking matters over in the cabin. Had there been a breath of wind, we should have fallen on the six mutineers who were left aboard with us, and sailed away to sea. But there was no wind; and then Hunter brought the news that Jim Hawkins had slipped into a boat and gone ashore with the rest.

We were alarmed for Jim's safety. With the men in such an unruly mood, we thought we might never see the lad again. We ran on deck. It was hot, and the stench of the place turned me sick; if ever a man smelt fever, it was in that abominable anchorage. The six scoundrels were sitting grumbling in the forecabin; ashore we could see the two small boats tied up and a man sitting in each. One of them was whistling.

It was decided that Hunter and I should go ashore in quest of information. We took the jolly-boat and pulled straight in towards the stockade shown on the chart. The two men guarding their boats stopped whistling; we could see them discussing what they ought to do. If they had gone and told Silver, all might have turned out differently; but they had their orders, I suppose, to stay where they were.

There was a slight bend in the coast, and I steered round it so that before we landed we had lost sight of them. I jumped out and hurried to the stockade with a pair of pistols.

The stockade was a hundred yards away. It was a stout log-house built on a small hillock, where a spring of water rose up. The log-house would hold forty people at a pinch and had loopholes for musketry on either side. Around it they had cleared a wide space, and there was a fence six feet high, without a door, too strong to pull down easily, but too open to shelter attackers. The people in the log-house could watch them from the shelter and shoot them. With enough food, they might have held the place against a regiment.

What particularly took my fancy was the spring. For though we had a good cabin aboard the Hispaniola, with plenty of arms and ammunition, and food and excellent wines, there had been one thing overlooked – we had no water.

I was thinking about this when there came ringing over the island the cry of a man at the point of death. I was not new to violent death – I have served as a soldier – but my pulse missed a beat. "Jim Hawkins is gone," was my first thought.

It is something to have been an old soldier, but more still to have been a doctor. I returned to the shore and jumped on board the jolly-boat. Luckily Hunter was a good oarsman. We made the water fly, and the boat was soon alongside the Hispaniola and I was aboard.

I found them all shaken, as was natural. The squire was sitting down, as white as a sheet! And one of the six forecastle hands was little better.

"He's new to this work," says Captain Smollett, nodding towards him. "He came close to fainting when he heard the cry. Another nudge and that man would join us."

I told my plan to the captain, and between us we settled on its details.

We put old Redruth in the passage between the cabin and the forecastle, with three or four loaded muskets and a mattress for protection. Hunter brought the jolly-boat round the stern, and Joyce and I set to work loading her with gunpowder, muskets, bags of biscuits, kegs of pork, a cask of brandy, and my invaluable medicine chest.

In the meantime, the squire and the captain stayed on deck. The captain hailed the coxswain, calling out:

"Mr. Hands, here are two of us with a brace of pistols each. If any one of you makes any sort of signal, that man's dead."

They were a good deal taken aback, and after a little consultation they all tumbled down the fore staircase, thinking no doubt to attack us at the rear. But when they saw Redruth waiting for them in the galley, they turned round, and a head popped out again on deck.

"Down, dog!" cries the captain.

And the head popped back in again; and we heard no more, for the time, of these six very faint-hearted seamen.

By this time we had the jolly-boat loaded as much as we dared. Joyce and I got out through the stern-port, and we made for shore again as fast as oars could take us.

This second trip aroused the watchers along the shore. The whistling stopped again; and just before we lost sight of them behind the little point, one of them whipped ashore and disappeared. I had half a mind to change my plan and destroy their boats, but I feared that Silver and the others might be close at hand.

We had soon landed in the same place as before, and began to provision the log-house, tossing our stores over the fence. Then, leaving Joyce to guard them with muskets, Hunter and I returned to the jolly-boat and loaded ourselves up once more. So we kept on till the whole cargo was stowed in the log-house. The other two took up their position inside, and I sculled back to the Hispaniola.

The squire was waiting for me at the stern window. He caught the rope and tied it, and we began to load the boat again as if for our very lives. Pork, powder, and biscuit was the cargo, with a musket and a cutlass for each of us. The rest of the arms and gunpowder we dropped overboard in two fathoms and a half of water, so that we could see the bright steel shining far below on the clean, sandy bottom. None of the men ashore had a musket; and before they could get us within range of their pistols, we thought we should be able to account for half a dozen at least.

By this time the tide was beginning to ebb. Voices were heard faintly hallooing by the small boats; and this warned us to be off. We brought the jolly-boat round so that Captain Smollett could talk to the mutinous hands on board the Hispaniola.

“Now, men,” said he, “do you hear me?”

There was no answer.

“It’s to you I am speaking, Abraham Gray.”

Still no reply.

“Gray,” resumed Mr. Smollett, a little louder, “I am leaving this ship, and I order you to follow your captain. I know you are a good man at heart, and I dare say not one of you is as bad as he makes out. I have my watch here; I give you thirty seconds to join me.”

There was a pause.

“Come, my fine fellow,” continued the captain; “don’t hang about.”

There was a sudden scuffle, a sound of blows, and out burst Abraham Gray with a knife cut on his cheek. He came running to the captain.

“I’m with you, sir,” he said. He and the captain came aboard, and we shoved off.

We were clear out of the ship, but not yet ashore in our stockade.

Chapter 17
Narrative Continued by the Doctor:
The Jolly-boat's Last Trip

This fifth trip was quite different from the others. In the first place, our little boat was gravely overloaded. Five grown men was already more than she was meant to carry – and added to that were the gunpowder, pork, and bread. Several times we shipped water, and my breeches and coat were soaking wet before we had gone a hundred yards. We were afraid to breathe.

In the second place, the ebb tide was running – a strong rippling current flowing westward through the basin, and then down towards the sea. Even the ripples were a danger to our overloaded craft, but the worst of it was that we were swept out of our course and away from the landing-place.

“I cannot keep her heading for the stockade, sir,” said I to the captain. I was steering, while he and Redruth were at the oars. “The tide keeps pulling her. Could you row a little stronger?”

“Not without swamping the boat,” said he. “You must bear up, sir, if you please.”

I tried, but found that the tide kept sweeping us westward until I set her head due east – at right angles to the way we ought to go.

“We’ll never get ashore at this rate,” said I.

“If it’s the only course that we can take, sir, we must take it,” returned the captain. “We must keep upstream. The current must slacken, and then we can dodge back along the shore.”

“The current’s less already, sir,” said Gray; “you can ease her off a bit.”

“Thank you, my man,” said I, for we had all decided to treat him like one of ourselves.

Suddenly the captain spoke up again, and I thought his voice was a little changed.

“The gun!” said he. “Look astern, doctor!”

We had entirely forgotten the long nine-pounder cannon. On the Hispaniola, to our horror, we saw the five rogues busy taking off the cannon’s stout tarpaulin cover. Not only that, but I realised that the cannonballs and powder for the gun had been left on board, where the mutineers could easily take possession of them.

“Israel was Flint’s gunner,” said Gray hoarsely.

By this time we had got out of the current and could keep our course steady, so we headed for the landing-place. But the worst of it was that now we turned our broadside to the Hispaniola and offered a target like a barn door. I could hear as well as see that rascal Israel Hands plumping down a cannonball on the deck.

“Who’s the best shot?” asked the captain.

“Mr. Trelawney,” said I.

“Mr. Trelawney, will you please pick me off one of these men, sir? Hands, if possible,” said the captain.

Trelawney was as cool as steel. He primed his gun, and raised it. We ceased rowing, and leaned over to the other side to keep the boat balanced.

They had swivelled the cannon round, and Hands was exposed. However, we had no luck, for just as Trelawney fired, down he stooped. The bullet whistled over him, and it was one of the other four who fell.

His cry was echoed not only by his companions but by voices from the shore. I saw the other pirates trooping out from among the trees and tumbling into the boats.

"If we can't get ashore," cried the captain, "all's up."

"Only one of the gig-boats is being manned, sir," I said; "the other men are most likely going round by shore to cut us off."

"It's not them I mind," said the captain; "it's the cannonballs. They can hardly miss."

In the meanwhile we had been making headway at a good pace for a boat so overloaded, and were only thirty or forty strokes from shore. The little point had already concealed the gig-boat from our eyes. The ebb-tide, which had so cruelly delayed us, was now delaying our assailants.

The one source of danger was the cannon. The men around it did not delay their shot to look at their fallen comrade, though I could see him trying to crawl away.

"Ready!" cried the squire.

"Hold!" cried the captain, quick as an echo.

And he and Redruth backed with a great heave that sent our stern under water. We heard the noise of the cannon at the same instant of time. This was the first shot that Jim heard, the sound of the squire's gun-shot not having reached him. The ball must have passed over our heads, but the wind of it may have contributed to our disaster.

For the boat sank, quite gently, in three feet of water, leaving the captain and myself on our feet. The other three fell in, and came up again drenched and bubbling.

So far there was no great harm. We could wade ashore in safety. But all our stores were at the bottom, and only two guns out of five remained usable. I had held mine over my head, and the captain had slung his over his shoulder; but the other three had gone down with the boat.

To add to our concern, we heard voices already drawing near us in the woods. We feared being cut off from the stockade in our half-crippled state – and if Hunter and Joyce were attacked, we did not know if they would stand firm. Hunter was steady, but Joyce was a doubtful case – a pleasant, polite man for a valet, but not entirely fitted for a man of war.

With all this in our minds, we waded ashore as fast as we could, leaving behind the poor jolly-boat and a good half of all our gunpowder and provisions.

Chapter 18

Narrative Continued by the Doctor: End of the First Day's Fighting

We hurried across the strip of woodland that divided us from the stockade. At every step the voices of the buccaneers rang nearer. Soon we could hear their footsteps running and the cracking of the branches as they pushed past.

I began to see we should have a fight, and checked my gun.

"Captain," said I, "Trelawney is a dead shot. Give him your gun; his own is useless."

They exchanged guns, and Trelawney, silent and cool, hung back a moment to inspect his. Since Gray was unarmed, I handed him my cutlass. It did our hearts good to see him spit in his hand, and make the blade sing through the air. It was plain that our new hand was worth his salt.

Forty paces further on we came to the edge of the wood and saw the south side of the stockade in front of us. Almost at the same time, seven mutineers, with the boatswain Job Anderson at their head, appeared, shouting, at the southwestern corner.

They paused, taken aback; and before they recovered, not only the squire and I, but Hunter and Joyce from the log-house, had time to fire. The four shots came in rather a scattering volley, but they did the business. One of the enemy fell, and the rest turned and plunged into the trees.

After reloading, we walked down the outside of the fence to see the fallen man. He was stone dead – shot through the heart.

Just at that moment a pistol cracked in the bush, a bullet whistled close past my ear, and poor Tom Redruth stumbled and fell to the ground. Both the squire and I returned the shot, but could see nothing to aim at. We reloaded and turned our attention to poor Tom, who was plainly dying.

However, our return volley had scattered the mutineers once more, for we were able to get the poor old gamekeeper hoisted over the fence without further attack. We carried him, groaning and bleeding, into the log-house.

Poor old fellow, he had not uttered one word of complaint from the very beginning of our troubles till now, when we laid him down. He had followed every order silently, doggedly, and well; he was the oldest of us by twenty years; and now it was he that was to die.

The squire dropped down beside him on his knees and kissed his hand, crying like a child.

"Be I going, doctor?" he asked.

"Tom, my man," said I, "you're going home."

"I wish I'd had a go at them first," he replied.

"Tom," said the squire, "say you forgive me, won't you?"

"Would that be respectful like, from me to you, squire?" was the answer.

"Howsoever, so be it, amen!"

After a short silence, he said he thought somebody might read a prayer. And not long after, without another word, he passed away.

In the meantime the captain, who had previously filled his pockets, produced their contents: the British flag, a Bible, a coil of rope, pen, ink, the log-book, and pounds of tobacco. He had found a longish fir-tree lying felled and trimmed in the enclosure, and with the help of Hunter had set it up at the corner of the log-house. Then, climbing on the roof, he had run up the flag.

This seemed to relieve him mightily. He re-entered the log-house and began counting up the stores. But after Tom had passed away, he came forward with another flag and reverently spread it on the body.

"Don't you take on, sir," he told the squire. "All's well with him; for he's done his duty."

Then he pulled me aside.

"Dr. Livesey," he said, "in how many weeks do you and the squire expect the consort to come after you?"

I told him it was not weeks, but months. If we were not back by the end of August, Blandly was to send a ship to find us.

"It'll be a close thing," returned the captain, scratching his head.

"How do you mean?" I asked.

"It's a pity, sir, we lost that second load," replied the captain. "We have enough powder and shot. But the rations are short, very short indeed."

Just then, with a roar and a whistle, a cannonball passed high above the roof of the log-house and landed beyond us in the wood.

"Oho!" said the captain. "Blaze away! You've little enough gunpowder already, my lads."

A second shot was better aimed. The ball descended inside the stockade, scattering a cloud of sand but doing no further damage.

"Captain," said the squire, "the house is invisible from the ship. It must be the flag they are aiming at. Would it not be wiser to take it down?"

"No, sir, not I!" cried the captain, and I think we all agreed with him; for it showed our enemies that we despised their cannonade.

All through the evening they kept thundering away. Ball after ball flew over or fell short or kicked up the sand in the enclosure. Though one popped in through the roof of the log-house and out again through the floor, we minded it no more than a game of cricket.

"There is one good thing about all this," observed the captain; "the wood in front of us is clear. The tide's out, and our stores should be uncovered. Volunteers to go and bring in pork!"

Gray and Hunter came forward. Well armed, they stole out of the stockade, but it proved a useless mission. The mutineers were bolder than we fancied: for four or five of them were busy carrying off our stores and wading out with them to a gig-boat, which an oarsman was holding steady against the current. Silver was in command in the stern; and every man now had a musket.

The captain sat down to write his log, and listed all the faithful men who had come ashore. Last in the list he wrote: *James Hawkins, cabin-boy* – which me wonder about poor Jim Hawkins' fate.

There was a shout on the land side.

“Doctor! Squire! Captain! Hunter, is that you?” came the cries.

And I ran to the door in time to see Jim Hawkins, safe and sound, come climbing over the stockade.

Chapter 19
Narrative Resumed by Jim Hawkins:
The Garrison in the Stockade

Jim's Narrative

As soon as Ben Gunn saw the flag he stopped, and held me by the arm.

"Now," said he, "there's your friends, sure enough."

"Far more likely it's the mutineers," I answered.

"Never!" he cried. "Silver would fly the Jolly Roger. No, that's your friends, ashore in the old stockade, as was made years ago by Flint. Ah, he was the man, was Flint! His match were never seen. He were afraid of none, not he; on'y Silver."

"Well," said I, "all the more reason that I should hurry and join my friends."

"Nay, mate," returned Ben. "You're a good boy, but you're only a boy. Now, Ben Gunn knows what's what. Rum wouldn't bring me where you're going. But when Ben Gunn is wanted, you know where to find him, Jim. Just where you found him today. And him that comes is to have a white thing in his hand, and he's to come alone. Oh! And you'll say this: 'Ben Gunn has reasons of his own.'"

"Well," said I, "I believe I understand. You have something to propose, and you wish to see the squire or the doctor, and you're to be found where I found you. And now may I go?"

"You won't forget?" he inquired anxiously. "Reasons of his own, says you. Well, then, I reckon you can go, Jim. And if you was to see Silver, you wouldn't sell Ben Gunn? Wild horses wouldn't draw it from you? No, says you. And if them pirates camp ashore, Jim, what would you say but there'd be widows in the morning?"

Here he was interrupted by a loud bang, and a cannonball came tearing through the trees and pitched in the sand a hundred yards away. Each of us took to his heels in a different direction.

For a good hour, frequent bangs shook the island, and cannonballs kept crashing through the woods. I moved from hiding-place to hiding-place, always pursued, so it seemed to me, by these terrifying missiles. But eventually, though I dared not venture towards the stockade, where the cannonballs fell oftenest, I began to pluck up my courage again, and crept down among the trees by the shore.

The sun had just set, the sea breeze was rustling in the woods; the tide was far out, and great tracts of sand lay uncovered. The air was chilly after the heat of the day.

The Hispaniola still lay where she had anchored; but, sure enough, there was the Jolly Roger – the black flag of piracy – flying from her peak. As I looked, another red flash and bang sent the echoes clattering, and one more cannonball whistled through the air. It was the last.

I lay for some time watching the bustle which followed. Men were demolishing the jolly-boat with axes on the beach. Near the mouth of the river, a great fire was glowing among the trees, and between that point and the ship one of the gig-boats kept coming and going. I could hear the men shouting, and their voices suggested they'd been at the rum.

At last I thought I might return towards the stockade. As I rose to my feet, I saw, some distance further down the spit, an isolated rock, high and white. It occurred to me that this might be the white rock of which Ben Gunn had spoken, and where he kept the boat that he had made.

Then I skirted through the woods until I reached the rear of the stockade, and was soon warmly welcomed by my friends.

I had soon told my story, and began to look about me. The log-house was made of trunks of pine – roof, walls, and floor. There was a porch at the door, where the little spring welled up into an artificial basin of a rather odd kind: it was a great ship's iron kettle, sunk into the sand.

There was little else there except a stone slab laid in one corner as a hearth, and an old rusty iron basket for a fireplace.

The slopes had been cleared of timber to build the house, and most of the soil had been washed away; only where a streamlet ran down from the kettle a thick bed of moss and ferns was green among the sand. Very close around the stockade, the wood flourished high and dense.

The cold evening breeze whistled through every chink of the rough building and sprinkled the floor with a rain of fine sand. There was sand in our eyes, sand in our teeth, and sand in our suppers. Our chimney was a square hole in the roof; but most of the smoke stayed inside the house and kept us coughing and rubbing our eyes.

Add to this that poor old Tom Redruth, still unburied, lay along the wall, stiff and stark, under the flag.

If we had been allowed to sit idle, we should all have fallen in the blues, but Captain Smollett would not let us. He divided us into watches: the doctor, Gray and I for one; the squire, Hunter, and Joyce for the other. Tired though we all were, two men were sent out for firewood; two more were set to dig a grave for Redruth; the doctor was named cook; I stood sentry at the door. The captain went from one to another, keeping up our spirits and lending a hand wherever it was wanted.

From time to time the doctor came to the door to rest his eyes in the fresh air, and would speak to me.

"That man Smollett," he said once, "is a better man than I am, Jim."

Another time he came and was silent for a while. Then he looked at me.

"Is this Ben Gunn a man?" he asked.

"I don't know, sir," said I. "I am not sure whether he's sane."

"A man who has been three years biting his nails on a desert island, Jim, can't expect to appear sane. Was it cheese you said he had a fancy for?"

"Yes, sir."

“Well, Jim,” says he, “you’ve seen my snuff-box, haven’t you? And you never saw me take snuff, the reason being that in my snuff-box I carry a piece of Parmesan cheese from Italy. Well, that’s for Ben Gunn!”

Before supper we buried old Tom in the sand and stood round him for a while bare-headed in the breeze. Then, when we had eaten our pork and each had a good stiff glass of brandy grog, the three chiefs got together in a corner to discuss our prospects.

It appears they were at their wits’ end what to do, the stores being so low that we would be starved into surrender long before help came. We had food for ten days at the most.

Our best hope, it was decided, was to kill off the buccaneers. From nineteen men they were already reduced to fifteen; two others were wounded, and the man who had been shot beside the cannon must be severely injured, if not dead. Every time we had a chance to shoot at them, we were to take it, though with extreme care.

And we had two allies – rum and the climate. For we could hear the pirates roaring and singing late into the night; and as for the climate, the doctor staked his wig that, camped in the marsh and with no medicines, half of them would fall ill within a week.

I was dead tired, as you may fancy; and I slept like a log. The rest had long been up and had already breakfasted and increased the pile of firewood when I was wakened by the sound of voices.

“White flag of truce!” I heard someone say; and then, with a cry of surprise, “Silver himself!”

At that, up I jumped, and ran to a loophole in the wall.

Chapter 20

Silver's Embassy

Sure enough, there were two men just outside the stockade, one of them waving a white cloth, while Long John Silver was standing placidly by.

It was still quite early, and the coldest morning that I remember. The sky was bright and cloudless overhead, and the tops of the trees shone rosily in the sun. But where Silver stood, all was still in shadow; they were knee-deep in a low white mist that had crawled out of the swamp. It was plainly a damp, feverish, unhealthy spot.

"Keep indoors, men," said the captain. "Ten to one this is a trick." Then he called out, "Who goes there? Stand, or we fire."

"Flag of truce," cried Silver.

The captain, staying in the porch, turned and spoke to us.

"Dr. Livesey, take the north side, please; Jim, the east; Gray, west. All hands to load muskets. Lively, men, and careful." Then he turned again to the mutineers. "What do you want?" he called.

"Cap'n Silver wants to come on board and make terms."

"Cap'n Silver! Don't know him. Who's he?" cried the captain.

Long John answered. "Me, sir. These poor lads have chosen me cap'n, after your desertion, sir," – emphasising the word *desertion*. "We're willing to submit, if we can come to terms. All I ask is your word, Cap'n Smollett, to let me safe and sound out of this stockade, and one minute to get away before a gun is fired."

"My man," said Captain Smollett, "I have not the slightest desire to talk to you. If you wish to talk to me, you can come. If there's any treachery, it'll be on your side, and the Lord help you."

"A word from you's enough, Cap'n," shouted Long John cheerily. "I know you're a gentleman."

We could see the man who carried the white flag attempting to hold Silver back. But Silver laughed and slapped him on the back as if his alarm was absurd. Then he advanced to the stockade, threw over his crutch, got a leg up, and with great vigour and skill climbed the fence and dropped safely to the other side.

I will confess that I was not the slightest use as sentry; indeed, I had already deserted my loophole and crept up behind the captain, who had sat down on the threshold, with his elbows on his knees, whistling.

Silver had terrible hard work getting up the steep slope of the hill. But at last he arrived in front of the captain, and saluted. He was tricked out in his best – an immense blue coat, thick with brass buttons, hung to his knees, and a fine hat was set on his head.

"You had better sit down," said the captain.

"Ain't you a-going to let me inside, Cap'n?" complained Long John. "It's a cold morning, sir, to sit outside."

"Why, Silver," said the captain, "if you were an honest man, you might have been sitting in your galley. It's your own doing. You're either my ship's cook, or Cap'n Silver, a common mutineer and pirate, and then you can go hang!"

"Well, well, Cap'n," returned the sea-cook, sitting down on the sand, "you'll have to give me a hand up again, that's all. A pretty place you have here. Ah, there's Jim! The top of the morning to you, Jim, and Doctor."

"If you have anything to say, man, say it," said the captain.

"Right you are, Cap'n Smollett," replied Silver. "Well now, that was a good lay of yours last night. Some of your men is handy with a handspike, I don't deny it. And I'll not deny neither but what some of my people was shook – maybe all was shook. But you mark me, Cap'n, it won't do twice, by thunder! We'll ease off a point or so on the rum. Maybe you think we were all drunk. But I was sober, on'y dog tired; and if I'd awoke a second sooner, I'd 'a caught you in the act, I would. He wasn't dead when I got round to him."

"Well?" says Captain Smollett as cool as can be. All that Silver said was a riddle to him, but you would never have guessed it.

As for me, I began to have an inkling what he was talking about. Ben Gunn's last words came to my mind. I began to suppose that he had paid the buccaneers a visit while they all lay drunk around their fire; and I reckoned with glee that we had only fourteen enemies to deal with.

"Well, here it is," said Silver. "We want that treasure, and we'll have it! You'd rather save your lives, I reckon. You have a chart, haven't you? We want your chart. Now, I never meant you no harm, myself."

"That's not true. We know exactly what you meant to do." The captain looked at Silver calmly and began to fill a pipe.

"If Abe Gray said—" Silver broke out.

"Avast there!" cried Mr. Smollett. "Gray told me nothing, and I asked him nothing; and what's more, I would see you and this whole island blown clean out of the water first."

This little whiff of temper seemed to cool Silver down. "Like enough," said he. "And seein' as you're about to take a pipe, Cap'n, I'll do likewise."

He filled a pipe and lighted it; and the two men sat silently smoking for a while, now and then looking each other in the face.

"Now," resumed Silver, "here it is. You give us the chart to get the treasure by, and stop shooting poor seamen and stoving their heads in while asleep. You do that, and we'll offer you a choice. Either you come aboard along of us, once the treasure's shipped, and I'll give you my word of honour to clap you somewhere safe ashore. Otherwise you can stay here. We'll divide stores with you, man for man; and I'll hail the first ship I see, and send 'em here to pick you up. Now, you'll own that's handsome. And I hope" – raising his voice – "that all hands in this house heard my words, for what's spoke to one is spoke to all."

Captain Smollett rose from his seat and knocked out the ashes of his pipe.

"Is that all?" he asked.

"Every last word, by thunder!" answered John. "Refuse that, and you've seen the last of me but musket-balls."

“Very good,” said the captain. “Now hear me. If you’ll come up one by one, unarmed, I promise to clap you all in irons and take you home to a fair trial in England. If you won’t, I’ll see you all to Davy Jones’ locker. You can’t find the treasure. There’s not a man among you fit to sail the ship. You can’t fight us; Gray, there, got away from five of you. Your ship’s in irons, Master Silver; you’re on a lee shore. And they’re the last good words you’ll get from me, for in the name of heaven, I’ll put a bullet in your back next time I meet you. Tramp, my lad. Bundle out of this, please, double quick.”

Silver’s face was a picture. His eyes bulged with anger.

“Give me a hand up!” he cried.

“Not I,” returned the captain.

“Who’ll give me a hand up?” he roared.

Not one of us moved. Growling curses, he crawled along the sand till he got hold of the porch and could hoist himself upon his crutch. Then he spat into the spring.

“There!” he cried. “That’s what I think of ye. Before an hour’s out, I’ll stove in your old house. Laugh, by thunder! Before an hour’s out, ye’ll laugh upon the other side. Them that die’ll be the lucky ones.”

And with a dreadful oath he stumbled off down the sand, was helped across the stockade by the man with the white flag, and disappeared among the trees.

Chapter 21

The Attack

As soon as Silver disappeared, the captain turned towards the house and found none of us at his post but Gray. It was the first time we had ever seen him angry.

"Quarters!" he roared. And then, as we all slunk back to our places, "Gray," he said, "you've stood by your duty like a seaman. Mr. Trelawney, I'm surprised at you, sir. And, Doctor, I thought you were a soldier! If that was how you served, sir, you'd have been better in your berth."

All went back to their posts with red faces, you may be certain.

The captain looked on for a while in silence. Then he spoke.

"My lads," said he, "I've given Silver a broadside. I pitched it in red-hot on purpose; and before the hour's out, as he said, we shall be attacked. We're outnumbered, but we fight in shelter; and a minute ago I should have said we fought with discipline. I've no doubt that we can drub them, if you choose."

On the east and west sides of the log-house, there were only two loopholes; on the south side where the porch was, two again; and on the north side, five. There were twenty muskets for the seven of us; the firewood had been built into four piles, one against each side, to make a sort of table. On each of these tables some ammunition and four loaded muskets were laid ready. In the middle, the cutlasses lay.

"Put out the fire," said the captain; "we mustn't have smoke in our eyes."

The iron fire-basket was carried out by Mr. Trelawney, and the embers smothered with sand.

"Hawkins hasn't had his breakfast. Hawkins, help yourself, and back to your post to eat it," continued Captain Smollett. "Lively, now, my lad. Hunter, serve out a round of brandy to all hands."

While this was going on, the captain told us his plan of defence.

"Doctor, you will take the door. Don't expose yourself; keep within, and fire through the porch. Hunter, take the east side. Joyce, the west. Mr. Trelawney, you are the best shot – you and Gray will take this long north side, with the five loopholes; that's where the danger is. If they can get up close and fire in upon us through our own port-holes, things would look bad. Hawkins, neither you nor I are much account at shooting; we'll stand by to load the guns."

The chill was past. Soon the sun fell with all its force upon the clearing and drank up the mists. The sand was baking; jackets and coats were flung aside, shirts thrown open at the neck and sleeves rolled up; and we stood at our posts in a fever of heat and anxiety.

An hour passed.

"Hang them!" said the captain. "This is as dull as the doldrums. Gray, whistle for a wind."

Joyce said, "If you please, sir, if I see anyone, am I to fire?"

"I told you that!" cried the captain.

"Thank you, sir," returned Joyce quietly.

We were all on the alert, straining ears and eyes – the musketeers with their guns ready, the captain in the middle of the log-house with his mouth very tight and a frown on his face.

Suddenly Joyce whipped up his musket and fired. The report had scarcely died away before it was repeated and repeated from outside, shot behind shot, from every side of the enclosure. Several bullets struck the log-house, but not one entered; and as the smoke cleared away, the stockade and the woods around it looked as quiet and empty as before. Not a bough waved to betray the presence of our foes.

“Did you hit your man?” asked the captain.

“I believe not, sir,” replied Joyce.

“Load his gun, Hawkins. How many would you say there were on your side, doctor?”

“Three shots were fired on this side,” said Dr. Livesey. “I saw three flashes.”

“And how many on yours, Mr. Trelawney?”

This was not so easily answered. Many shots had come from the north – seven, thought the squire, eight or nine according to Gray. From the east and west only a single shot had been fired. It was plain, therefore, that the attack would be mainly from the north.

But Captain Smollett made no change in his arrangements. If the mutineers crossed the stockade, he argued, they would take possession of any unprotected loophole and shoot us down like rats.

Suddenly, with a loud shout, a little crowd of pirates leaped from the woods on the north side and ran straight at the stockade. At the same moment, shots came from the woods, and a rifle ball sang through the doorway and knocked the doctor’s musket into bits.

The pirates swarmed over the fence like monkeys. Squire and Gray fired again and again; three men fell, one forwards into the enclosure, two backwards. But one of these was more frightened than hurt, for he got to his feet again in an instant and disappeared among the trees.

Four had got inside our defences, while from the shelter of the woods seven or eight men kept up a barrage of musket-fire on the log-house.

The four who had got inside the fence ran straight for the building, shouting, and the men among the trees shouted back to encourage them. Several shots were fired, but in such a hurry that not one hit its mark. In a moment, the four pirates had swarmed up the mound and were upon us.

The head of Job Anderson, the boatswain, appeared at the middle loophole.

“At ’em, all hands!” he roared in a voice of thunder.

At the same moment, another pirate grasped Hunter’s musket by the muzzle, wrenched it from his hands, plucked it through the loophole, and with one stunning blow, laid the poor fellow senseless on the floor. Meanwhile a third, running all the way around the house, appeared suddenly in the doorway and attacked the doctor with his cutlass.

Our position was utterly reversed. The log-house was full of smoke from the guns. Cries and confusion, the flashes and reports of pistol-shots, and a loud groan rang in my ears.

“Out, lads, and fight ’em in the open! Cutlasses!” cried the captain.

I snatched a cutlass from the pile, and dashed out of the door into the clear sunlight. Right in front of me, the doctor was pursuing his assailant down the hill, and as I watched, he sent him sprawling on his back with a great slash across the face.

“Round the house, lads! Round the house!” cried the captain; and I perceived a change in his voice.

I obeyed, turned eastwards, and with my cutlass ran round the corner of the house. Next moment I was face to face with Anderson. He roared, and raised his cutlass, which flashed in the sunlight. I had no time to be afraid, but leaped immediately to one side. I lost my footing in the soft sand, and rolled headlong down the slope.

The other mutineers were already climbing up the fence to make an end of us. One man, in a red night-cap, with his cutlass in his mouth, had got upon the top and thrown a leg across. Another was showing his head above the top of the stockade. And yet, in this breath of time, the fight was over.

For Gray, following close behind me, cut down the big boatswain Anderson before he had time to recover from his last blow. Another man was shot at a loophole in the very act of firing into the house, and lay in agony, the pistol smoking in his hand. And the doctor had disposed of a third. Of the four who had got inside the palisade, one only was left: and he, having dropped his cutlass, was now clambering out again with the fear of death upon him.

“Fire from the house!” cried the doctor.

But no shot was fired, and the last man escaped and disappeared with the rest into the wood. In three seconds nothing remained of the attacking party but the five fallen men.

The doctor and Gray and I ran for shelter. The survivors would soon be back where they had left their muskets, and at any moment might start firing.

The house was by this time clear of smoke, and we saw the price that we had paid for victory. Hunter lay beside his loophole, stunned; Joyce had been shot through the head; while the squire was supporting the captain, one as pale as the other.

“The captain’s wounded,” said Mr. Trelawney.

“Have they run?” asked Mr. Smollett.

“All that could,” returned the doctor; “but five of them will never run again.”

“Five!” cried the captain. “Come, that’s better. That leaves us four to nine. That’s better odds than we had at starting. We were seven to nineteen then, or thought we were.”

In fact the mutineers were soon only eight in number, for the man shot by Mr. Trelawney on board the ship died that same evening. But this we did not know till afterwards.

PART FIVE

My Sea Adventure

Chapter 22

How I Began My Sea Adventure

There was no return of the mutineers – not another shot came out of the woods. We had the place to ourselves and could treat the wounded and get dinner. Squire and I cooked outside in spite of the danger, shuddering at the loud groans from the doctor's patients.

Out of the eight men who had fallen in the action, only three were still alive – the pirate who had been shot at the loophole, Hunter, and Captain Smollett; and of these, the first two were as good as dead. Indeed, the mutineer soon died, and Hunter never recovered consciousness. He lingered all day, breathing loudly, but his ribs had been crushed by the blow and his skull fractured in falling. Some time in the following night, he went quietly to his Maker.

As for the captain, his wounds were grievous, but not dangerous. Anderson's shot had broken his shoulder-blade and touched the lung, but not badly; a second shot had only torn some muscles in the calf. He was sure to recover, the doctor said, but in the meantime, and for weeks to come, he must not walk, nor even speak if he could help it.

After dinner the squire and the doctor sat by the captain's side in consultation. Once they had talked, the doctor took up his hat and pistols, strapped on a cutlass, put the chart in his pocket, and with a musket over his shoulder crossed the palisade on the north side and set off briskly through the trees.

Gray and I were sitting together at the far end of the log-house, out of earshot of our officers; and Gray took his pipe out of his mouth, thunder-struck on seeing the doctor leave.

"Why, in the name of Davy Jones," said he, "is Dr. Livesey mad?"

"No," says I. "He's about the least mad of us. If I'm right, he's going to see Ben Gunn."

I was right, as appeared later; but in the meantime, the house being stifling hot and the sand inside the palisade ablaze with midday sun, I began to get another thought into my head – which was not so right. I began to envy the doctor walking in the cool shadow of the woods with the birds about him, while I sat in the heat with so many poor dead bodies lying all around that my disgust of the place was almost as strong as fear.

This disgust and envy kept growing stronger and stronger. At last, when no one was watching, I filled both pockets of my coat with biscuit. I was a fool, if you like, and certainly I was going to do a foolish act; but at least these biscuits would keep me from starving till next day.

Next I took a pair of pistols. I already had a powder-horn and bullets.

As for my scheme, it was not a bad one in itself. I planned to go and find the white rock I had observed last evening, and see whether it was there that Ben

Gunn had hidden his boat. As I was certain that I would not be allowed to leave the enclosure, I decided to slip out when nobody was watching, which was the wrong thing to do. But I was only a boy.

I found an opportunity when the squire and Gray were busy helping the captain with his bandages. The coast was clear. I made a bolt for it over the stockade and into the thickest of the trees, and was out of earshot before my absence was noticed.

This was my second folly, as I left only two uninjured men to guard the house; but it helped to save all of us.

I headed straight for the east coast of the island, hoping to avoid being seen. It was already late in the afternoon, although still warm and sunny. As I threaded the tall woods, I could hear from afar not only the continuous thunder of the surf, but a tossing of foliage and grinding of boughs which told me the sea breeze had set in more strongly than usual.

Soon cool draughts of air began to reach me, and a few steps farther I came into the open, and saw the sea lying blue and sunny to the horizon and the surf tumbling its foam along the beach.

I have never seen the sea quiet round Treasure Island. The sun might blaze overhead, the air be without a breath, but still these great rollers would be running along all the coast, thundering by day and night; and I believe there is scarcely one spot in the island where a man would be out of earshot of their noise.

I walked beside the surf with great enjoyment, till, thinking I had got far enough to the south, I used the cover of some thick bushes to creep warily up the spit.

Behind me was the sea, in front the anchorage. The sea breeze had gone, and great banks of fog were coming in; the anchorage, in the shelter of Skeleton Island, lay as still and leaden as when first we entered it. The Hispaniola was reflected in that unbroken mirror.

Alongside her lay one of the gig-boats, with Silver in the stern. A couple of men were leaning over the bulwarks, one of them with a red cap – the very rogue that I had seen astride the palisade. They were talking and laughing, though at that distance I could hear no words.

Then there began the most horrid, unearthly screaming, which at first startled me badly, until I made out the parrot's bright plumage as she perched upon her master's wrist. Soon afterwards, the boat shoved off and pulled for shore.

At about the same time, the sun had gone down behind the Spy-glass, and the fog was collecting rapidly. It began to grow dark. I must lose no time if I were to find the boat that evening.

The white rock, visible above the brush, was still some eighth of a mile away, and it took me a good while to reach it, crawling through the scrub. Night had almost come when I laid my hand on its rough sides. I found a small hollow of green turf, hidden by banks; and in the centre of the dell, a little tent of goat-skins.

I dropped into the hollow, lifted the side of the tent, and there was Ben Gunn's boat – home-made if ever anything was home-made; a rough, lop-sided framework of tough wood, and stretched over it a covering of goat-skin, with the

hair inside, and a double paddle. The thing was extremely small, even for me, and I can hardly imagine that it could have floated with a full-sized man.

I had not then seen a coracle, such as the ancient Britons made, but I have seen one since, and I can give you no fairer idea of Ben Gunn's boat than by saying it was like the first and the worst coracle ever made by man. But it was exceedingly light and portable.

Well, now that I had found the boat, you would have thought I'd had enough of truantry. But I had another idea: to slip out under cover of the night, cut the *Hispaniola* adrift, and let her go ashore where she fancied. I thought that the mutineers might want to raise her anchor and sail away to sea; and it would be a fine thing to prevent. Now that I had seen how they left their watchmen without a boat, I thought it might be done with little risk.

Down I sat to wait for darkness, and ate my biscuit. It was a foggy night: absolute blackness settled on Treasure Island. When, at last, I shouldered the coracle and groped my way stumblingly out of the hollow, there were only two points visible on the whole anchorage. One was the great fire on shore, where the defeated pirates lay carousing in the swamp.

The other, a mere blur of light upon the darkness, showed the position of the anchored ship. She had swung round with the tide, so her bow was now towards me. The only lights on board were in the cabin, and what I saw was merely a reflection of those rays on the fog.

The ebb tide was still running, and I had to wade through a long belt of swampy sand, sinking several times above my ankles, before I came to the water. Wading a little way in, I set my coracle on the surface.

Chapter 23

The Ebb-tide Runs

The coracle was a very safe boat for a person of my height and weight, both buoyant and clever; but she was the most cross-grained, lop-sided craft to manage. Whatever I did, she always made more leeway than anything else, and turning round and round was the manoeuvre she was best at. Even Ben Gunn himself has admitted that she was “queer to handle till you knew her way.”

Certainly I did not know her way. She turned in every direction but the one I wanted to go in; I should never have reached the ship at all but for the tide. By good fortune, the tide was still sweeping me down; and there lay the Hispaniola right in the way, hardly to be missed.

First she loomed before me like a blot of something even blacker than darkness, then she began to take shape, and the next moment I was alongside her hawser and had laid hold of it.

The hawser – the rope that held her anchor – was as taut as a bowstring. All round the ship’s hull, in the blackness, the rippling current bubbled like a little mountain stream. One cut with my knife and the Hispaniola would go humming down the tide.

So far so good; but it occurred to me that a taut hawser, suddenly cut, is as dangerous as a kicking horse. Ten to one, if I were so foolhardy as to cut the Hispaniola free, I and the coracle would be knocked clean out of the water.

This brought me to a stop. But the light breezes had hauled round into the south-west, and while I was meditating, a puff came, caught the Hispaniola, and forced her up into the current. To my joy, I felt the hawser slacken in my grasp, and the hand which held it dipped for a second under water.

I made my mind up, took out my clasp-knife, opened it with my teeth, and cut one strand of the rope after another, till the vessel swung only by two strands. Then I lay quiet, waiting to sever these when the strain should be once more lightened by a breath of wind.

All this time I had heard the sound of loud voices from the cabin, but my mind had been so entirely taken up with other thoughts that I had scarcely noticed. Now, however, I began to pay more heed.

One voice I recognized as the coxswain’s, Israel Hands. The other was my friend of the red night-cap. Both men were plainly the worse for drink, and while I was listening, one of them, with a drunken cry, opened the window and threw out an empty bottle.

But they were not only tipsy; they were furiously angry. Oaths flew like hailstones, and every now and then there was such an explosion that I thought it was sure to end in blows. But the quarrel passed off and the voices grumbled lower for a while, until the next explosion which in its turn passed away without result.

On shore, I could see the glow of the great camp-fire through the trees. Someone was singing a droning sailor’s song, with a quaver at the end of every

verse, and seemingly no end to it. I had heard it on the voyage more than once and remembered these words:

*“But one man of her crew alive,
What put to sea with seventy-five.”*

I thought it was an appropriate song for a company that had met such cruel losses. But all these buccaneers were as callous as the sea they sailed on.

At last the breeze came; the schooner sidled nearer in the dark; I felt the hawser slacken once more, and I cut the last fibres through.

I was almost instantly swept against the bows of the Hispaniola. At the same time, the ship began to turn upon her heel, spinning slowly, end for end, across the current.

I struggled like a fiend, for I expected every moment to be swamped; and since I could not push the coracle directly off, I now shoved straight astern. At length I was clear of my dangerous neighbour, and just as I gave the last push, my hands came across a light cord that was trailing overboard across the stern. Instantly I grasped it.

It was mere instinct, but once I had it, curiosity began to get the upper hand. I determined I should have one look through the cabin window.

I pulled in hand over hand on the cord, and when I judged myself near enough, rose at great risk to about half my height so that I could see a slice of the interior of the cabin.

By this time the schooner and my coracle were gliding pretty swiftly through the water; indeed, we were already level with the camp-fire. The ship was talking, as sailors say, loudly treading the ripples with an incessant splash; and until I got my eye above the window-sill I could not understand why the watchmen had taken no alarm.

One glance, however, told me why: Hands and his companion were locked together in a deadly wrestle, each with a hand upon the other's throat.

I released the rope and dropped down again, none too soon, for I was nearly overboard. I could see nothing for the moment except these two furious faces swaying together under the smoky lamp. I shut my eyes to let them again grow used to the darkness.

The endless ballad had come to an end at last, and the whole company around the camp-fire broke into the chorus I had heard so often:

*“Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!
Drink and the devil had done for the rest—
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!”*

I was just thinking how busy drink and the devil were at that very moment in the Hispaniola's cabin, when I was surprised by a sudden lurch of the coracle. She seemed to change her course, and the speed had strangely increased.

I opened my eyes. All round me were little ripples, combing over with a sharp, bristling sound, and slightly phosphorescent. The Hispaniola herself, in whose wake I was still being whirled along, seemed to stagger in her course, and I saw her spars toss a little against the blackness of the night. She was wheeling to the southward.

I glanced over my shoulder, and my heart jumped against my ribs. There, right behind me, was the glow of the camp-fire. The current had turned at right angles, sweeping round with it the tall schooner and the little dancing coracle; ever quickening, ever muttering louder, it went spinning through the narrows for the open sea.

Suddenly the ship in front of me gave a violent turn; and there were shouts on board. I could hear feet pounding on the ladder, and I knew that the two drunkards had at last been interrupted in their quarrel and awakened to a sense of their disaster.

I lay down flat in the bottom of my boat and prayed. I was sure we must fall into a bar of raging breakers, where all my troubles would be ended; and I could not bear to look.

So I must have lain for hours, continually beaten to and fro upon the billows, soaked with flying spray, and expecting death at every plunge. Gradually weariness grew upon me. A numb stupor fell upon my mind even in the midst of my terrors, until sleep at last came over me. In my sea-tossed coracle I lay and dreamed of home and the old Admiral Benbow.

Chapter 24

The Cruise of the Coracle

It was broad day when I awoke and found myself at the south-west end of Treasure Island. The sun was up, but was still hidden behind the great bulk of the Spy-glass, which descended almost to the sea in formidable cliffs.

Nearer by was a headland with cliffs forty or fifty feet high, fringed with great masses of fallen rock. I was only a quarter of a mile out, and my first thought was to paddle in and land.

I soon gave up that idea. Among the fallen rocks the breakers spouted and bellowed, with thunderous echoes and heavy flying sprays; and I pictured myself being dashed to death upon the rough shore.

Nor was that all, for crawling on platforms of rock or letting themselves drop into the sea I beheld huge snail-like monsters – about fifty of them, making the rocks echo with their barkings. I have learnt since that they were sea lions, and entirely harmless. But the look of them repelled me from that landing-place. I would rather starve at sea than confront such perils.

But I had a better chance before me. North of the headland, the land runs in a long way, with a long stretch of yellow sand. To the north of that, there is another cape – Cape of the Woods, as it was marked upon the chart – covered in tall green pines which descended to the sea.

I remembered what Silver had said about the current that set northward along the whole west coast. So I decided to save my strength for an attempt to land upon the kindlier-looking Cape of the Woods.

There was a great, smooth swell upon the sea. The wind was blowing steady and gentle from the south, and the billows rose and fell unbroken. Had it been rougher, I must have perished; but as it was, it was surprising how easily and securely my light little boat could ride. Often, as I lay in it, I would see a big blue summit heaving close above me; yet the coracle would only bounce a little, dance over it as if on springs, and then subside into the next trough as lightly as a bird.

After a while I grew very bold and sat up to try my skill at paddling. But even a small shift of the weight will produce violent changes in the behaviour of a coracle. I had hardly moved before the boat, at once giving up her gentle dancing movement, ran straight down a slope of water so steep that it made me giddy, and with a spout of spray, ploughed deep into the side of the next wave.

Drenched and terrified, I fell back instantly into my old position – whereupon the coracle seemed to find her balance again and danced as softly as before among the billows. It was plain she was not to be interfered with. But in that case, what hope had I of reaching land?

I began to be horribly frightened, but I kept my head. First, moving very carefully, I gradually baled out the coracle with my cap; then, raising my head above the boat's edge, I studied how she managed to slip so quietly through the rollers.

Each wave, instead of the big, smooth glossy mountain it looked like from a distance, was more like a range of hills, full of peaks and smooth places and valleys. The coracle, left to herself, turned from side to side, threading her way through the lower parts and avoiding the steep slopes and toppling summits of the wave.

“Well, now,” I thought, “it is plain I must lie where I am and not disturb the balance; but it is plain also that I can put the paddle over the side in smooth places, and give her a shove or two towards land.”

No sooner thought than done. I lay on my elbows in an awkward position, and every now and again gave a weak stroke or two to turn the boat to shore.

It was very tiring, slow work, yet I gained ground. We drew near the Cape of the Woods, and I could see the cool green tree-tops swaying in the breeze. Although I would go past the point, I felt sure I should reach the next headland.

It was high time, for I now began to be tortured with thirst. The glow of the sun, its thousandfold reflection from the waves, and the sea-water that caked my lips with salt, combined to make my throat burn and my brain ache. The sight of the trees almost made me sick with longing, but the current had soon carried me past the point, and as the next reach of sea opened out, I beheld a sight that changed my thoughts.

Right in front of me, not half a mile away, I saw the Hispaniola under sail. I was sure that I would be captured; but I was so distressed by thirst that I scarce knew whether to be glad or sorry at the thought.

But then surprise overcame me. I could do nothing but stare and wonder. The Hispaniola was under her main-sail and two jibs, and the beautiful white canvas shone in the sun like silver. She was taking a course north-west, and I presumed the men on board were going round the island on their way back to the anchorage. But soon she began to fetch more and more to the westward, so that I thought they had seen me and were turning round to chase me.

At last, however, she fell right into the wind's eye, and stood there helpless, with her sails shivering.

“Clumsy fellows,” said I; “they must still be drunk as owls.”

The ship's sails gradually filled again, sailed swiftly for a minute or so, and then were brought up once more to a dead stop in the wind's eye. Again and again was this repeated. To and fro, up and down, north, south, east, and west, the Hispaniola sailed by swoops and dashes, always ending as she had begun, with idly flapping canvas.

It became plain to me that nobody was steering. Where were the men? Either they were dead drunk or had deserted her, I thought. Perhaps if I could get on board I might return the vessel to her captain.

The current was bearing my coracle and the schooner southward at an equal rate. The ship's progress was so wild and intermittent that she was not gaining on me. If I dared sit up and paddle, I was sure that I could overhaul her. The thought of the water tank on board doubled my growing courage.

Up I got, was welcomed almost instantly by another cloud of spray, but this time stuck to my intention to paddle after the unsteered Hispaniola. Once, I shipped so much water that I had to stop and bail, with my heart fluttering like a

bird, but gradually I got the hang of it and guided my coracle among the waves with only an occasional dash of foam in my face.

I was gaining rapidly on the schooner; I could see the brass on the tiller glisten as it banged about, and still no soul appeared upon her decks.

She was headed nearly due south, veering all the time. Each time she fell off course, her sails partly filled, and brought her right to the wind again. This was the worst thing possible for me, for with the canvas cracking like cannon and the blocks trundling and banging on the deck, she still continued to run away from me.

But at last I had my chance. The breeze fell, and as the current gradually turned her, the Hispaniola revolved slowly and at last presented her stern to me, with the cabin window gaping open and the lamp over the table still burning. The main-sail drooped like a banner.

She was stock-still. Redoubling my efforts, I once more gave chase. I was not a hundred yards from her when the wind came again, and she filled her sails and was off, skimming like a swallow.

At first I despaired. Then despair turned to joy – for round she came, till she had covered a half and then two thirds and then three quarters of the distance that separated us. I could see the waves boiling white under her. Immensely tall she looked to me from my low position in the coracle.

And suddenly I had scarce time to think – scarce time to save myself. I was on the summit of one swell when the ship came over the next. The bowsprit was over my head. I sprang to my feet and leaped, stamping the coracle under water. With one hand I caught the jib-boom, while my foot was lodged between the stay and the brace; and as I clung there panting, a dull blow told me that the ship had charged down on the coracle and struck it. I was left on the Hispaniola, without any means of retreat.

Chapter 25

I Strike the Jolly Roger

As I clung on to the bowsprit, the jib-sail flapped and filled, with a bang like a gun. The schooner trembled, and I was nearly tossed into the sea. But next moment, the jib flapped back and hung idle. Now I lost no time. I crawled along the bowsprit, and tumbled head first on to the deck.

I was on the forecastle, and the mainsail concealed part of the deck from me. Not a soul was to be seen. The planks bore the print of many feet, and an empty broken bottle tumbled to and fro like a live thing.

Suddenly the Hispaniola came right into the wind. The jib-sails cracked loudly, the rudder slammed to, the whole ship gave a sickening heave and shudder; and at the same moment the main-boom swung inboard, and revealed the after-deck.

There were the two watchmen: red-cap on his back, as stiff as a spike, with his arms stretched out and his teeth showing through his open lips; and Israel Hands propped against the bulwarks, his chin on his chest, his face yellowy-white.

For a while the ship kept bucking and sidling like a vicious horse, the sails filling, now on one tack, now on another, with the boom swinging to and fro till the mast groaned under the strain. Clouds of spray came over the side as the ship's bows struck the swell.

At every jump of the ship, red-cap slipped to and fro, but neither his attitude nor his fixed grin altered. At every jump too, Hands appeared to slide down upon the deck, his whole body slipping towards the stern, so that his face gradually became hidden from me.

At the same time, I observed splashes of dark blood upon the planks around them. I began to feel sure that they had killed each other in their drunken fury.

But while I was looking and wondering, Israel Hands turned partly round, and writhed with a low, weak moan of pain. It went to my heart until I remembered the talk I had overheard from the apple barrel. Then all pity left me. I walked up to the main-mast.

"Come aboard, Mr. Hands," I said ironically.

He rolled his eyes round heavily, but he was too far gone to express surprise. "Brandy," he muttered.

It occurred to me that there was no time to lose. Dodging the boom as it once more lurched across the deck, I slipped down the stairway into the cabin.

It was a scene of confusion. All the locked places had been broken open in quest of the chart. The floor was thick with mud where ruffians had sat down to drink after wading in the marshes round their camp. The bulkheads bore a pattern of dirty hand-prints. Dozens of empty bottles clinked together in corners as the ship rolled. In the midst of all this the lamp still cast a smoky brownish glow.

I went into the cellar; all the barrels were gone, and a surprising number of the bottles had been drunk and thrown away. Since the mutiny began, not a man of them could ever have been sober.

I found a bottle with some brandy left, for Hands; and for myself I hunted out some biscuit, pickled fruits, a great bunch of raisins, and a piece of cheese. With these I came on deck, put down my own stock behind the rudder well out of the coxswain's reach, went to the water-tank, and had a good deep drink of water; and then gave Hands the brandy.

He too drank deep. "Aye," said he, "by thunder, but I wanted that!"

I sat down in my own corner and begun to eat.

"Much hurt?" I asked him.

He grunted. "If that doctor was aboard, I'd be right enough, but I don't have no luck. As for that swab, he's good and dead," he added, nodding at the man with the red cap. "He warn't no seaman anyhow. And where might you have come from?"

"Well," said I, "I've come aboard to take possession of this ship, Mr. Hands; and you'll please regard me as your captain until further notice."

He looked at me sourly but said nothing. Some of the colour had come back into his cheeks, though he still looked very sick and continued to slip as the ship banged about.

"By the by," I continued, "I can't have these colours up, Mr. Hands; and by your leave, I'll strike 'em. Better none than these."

And again dodging the boom, I ran to the cursed black flag, pulled it down and chucked it overboard.

"God save the king!" said I, waving my cap. "And there's an end to Captain Silver!"

He watched me keenly and slyly, his chin all the while on his chest.

"I reckon, Cap'n Hawkins, you'll want to get ashore now. S'pose we talks," he said at last.

"Why, yes. Say on." And I went back to my meal hungrily.

"This man," he began, nodding feebly at the corpse: "O'Brien were his name – this man and me were meaning for to sail her back. Well, he's dead now, and who's to sail this ship, I don't see. Unless I gives you a hint, you ain't that man. Now, look here, you gives me food and drink and tie my wound up, and I'll tell you how to sail her."

"I'm not going back to Captain Kidd's anchorage," says I. "I mean to get into North Inlet and beach her quietly there."

"To be sure," he cried. "Why, I haven't no choice! North Inlet? I'd help you sail her up to Execution Dock, by thunder! So I would."

So we struck our bargain. In three minutes I had the Hispaniola sailing easily before the wind along the coast of Treasure Island, with good hopes of turning at the northern point and reaching North Inlet before high water, when we might beach her safely and wait till the tide permitted us to land.

Then I lashed the tiller and went below to my own chest, where I got a handkerchief. With this, and with my aid, Hands bound up the great stab he had

received in the thigh, and after he had eaten a little and had a swallow or two more of brandy, he sat up straighter, spoke louder, and looked much better.

The breeze was perfect for us. We skimmed before it like a bird, the coastline flashing by. Soon we were past the high lands and bowling beside low, sandy country, sparsely dotted with dwarf pines; and then we were beyond that and had turned the corner of the north end of the island.

I was greatly elated with my new command, and pleased with the sunshine and the views of the coast. I had plenty of water and good food, and my conscience, which had smitten me hard for my desertion, was quieted by the great conquest I had made.

The only thing that bothered me was the way the coxswain's eyes followed me derisively about the deck, and the odd smile that appeared on his face. It was a weak, haggard old man's smile; but there was, besides that, a shadow of treachery in his expression as he craftily watched, and watched, and watched me at my work.

Chapter 26

Israel Hands

The wind now hauled into the west, so we could run easily from the north-east corner of the island to the mouth of the North Inlet. But as we dared not beach her till the tide had flowed out a good deal farther, time hung on our hands. The coxswain told me how to lay the ship to; after many attempts I succeeded, and we both sat in silence over another meal.

“Cap’n,” said he at length with that same smile, “my old shipmate, O’Brien – s’pose you was to heave him overboard. I ain’t partic’lar as a rule, but I don’t reckon he’s ornamental, do you?”

“I’m not strong enough, and I don’t like the job,” said I.

“This here’s an unlucky ship, Jim,” he went on, blinking. “There’s a power of men been killed in this Hispaniola. I never seen sich dirty luck, not I. This here O’Brien now – he’s dead, ain’t he? Well now, you’re a scholar, as can read: is a dead man dead for good, or do he come alive again?”

“You can kill the body, Mr. Hands, but not the spirit. You must know that already,” I replied.

“Ah!” says he. “Well, that’s unfort’nate. However, spirits don’t count for much, by what I’ve seen. I’ll chance it with the spirits, Jim. And now, I’ll take it kindly if you’d step down into that cabin and get me a – well, shiver my timbers! I can’t hit the name of it; well, you get me a bottle of wine, Jim – this brandy’s too strong for my head.”

Now, the coxswain’s hesitation seemed to be unnatural, and as for his preferring wine to brandy, I didn’t believe it. He wanted me to leave the deck, that was plain; but I could not imagine why. His eyes never met mine; they kept wandering to and fro, now and then with a flitting glance at the dead O’Brien, and he kept smiling in the most guilty, embarrassed manner.

I answered promptly, however, to conceal my suspicions.

“Some wine?” I said. “White or red?”

“It’s about the same to me, shipmate,” he replied; “so long as there’s plenty of it.”

“All right,” I answered. “I’ll bring you port, Mr. Hands. But I’ll have to dig for it.”

With that I scuttled noisily down the stairway. Then I slipped off my shoes, ran quietly along the gallery, mounted the forecastle ladder, and popped my head out at the top. I knew he would not expect to see me there.

My suspicions proved too true. He had risen to his hands and knees, and though his leg obviously hurt him when he moved – for I heard him stifle a groan – yet he managed to pull himself quickly across the deck. In half a minute he had reached the port scuppers; and from a coil of rope he picked out a long knife, stained to the hilt with blood. Hastily concealing it in his jacket, he trundled back again into his old place.

This was all that I needed to know. Israel could move about, he was now armed, and it was plain that I was meant to be the victim. What he would do afterwards – whether he would try to crawl across the island to the camp among the swamps – was, of course, more than I could say.

Yet I felt sure that I could trust him in one point. We both wanted to have the ship safely stranded in a sheltered place, so that she could be got off again with as little danger as possible; and until that was done I guessed that my life would be spared.

While I was thinking this, I was busy. I had crept back to the cabin, slipped once more into my shoes, and laid my hand at random on a bottle of wine. With this I went up on to deck.

Hands lay where I had left him, his eyelids lowered as though he could not bear the light. He looked up, however, at my coming, knocked the neck off the bottle, and took a good swig. Then he lay quiet for a little, until he pulled out a stick of tobacco.

“Cut me some o’ that,” says he, “for I haven’t no knife and no strength either. Ah, Jim, Jim, it’ll likely be my last quid, lad, for I’m for my long home, and no mistake.”

“Well,” said I, “I’ll cut you some tobacco, but if I was you, I would pray like a Christian man.”

“Why?” said he.

“Why?” I cried. “Because you’ve lived in sin and lies and blood; there’s a man you killed lying at your feet, and you ask me why! For God’s mercy, Mr. Hands, that’s why.”

I spoke with heat, thinking of the bloody knife he had hidden in his pocket. He took a draught of the wine and spoke with unusual solemnity.

“For thirty years,” he said, “I’ve sailed the seas and seen good and bad, better and worse. Well, I tell you, I never seen any good come o’ goodness yet. Dead men don’t bite; them’s my views – amen, so be it. And now, you look here,” he added, suddenly changing his tone, “we’ve had about enough of this foolery. The tide’s good now. You just take my orders, Cap’n Hawkins, and we’ll sail in and be done with it.”

We had scarce two miles to run; but the navigation was delicate, the entrance to this northern anchorage being narrow, so that the schooner must be carefully handled to be got in. I think I was a good, prompt subaltern, and I am very sure that Hands was an excellent pilot, for we dodged in, just shaving the banks, with a neatness that was a pleasure to behold.

The land closed around us. The North Inlet was a long, narrow space with wooded shores. Right before us, at the end, we saw the wreck of a ship. It had been a great vessel of three masts but had lain so long exposed to the weather that it was hung about with great webs of dripping seaweed, and on its deck bushes had taken root and were thick with flowers. It was a sad sight, but it showed us that the anchorage was calm.

“Now,” said Hands, “look there; there’s a good place to beach a ship in. Fine flat sand, trees all around.”

“And once beached,” I inquired, “how shall we get her off again?”

“Why, you take a line ashore on the other side at low water, wind it around one of them big pines; bring it back, take a turn around the capstan, and wait for the tide. Come high water, all hands pull upon the line, and off she comes! And now, boy, you stand by. Starboard a little – steady – starboard – larboard a little – steady – steady!”

So he issued his commands, which I breathlessly obeyed, till, all of a sudden, he cried, “Now, my hearty, luff!” I put the helm hard up, and the Hispaniola swung round rapidly and ran for the low, wooded shore.

In the excitement of these last manoeuvres I had not kept up my watch upon the coxswain. I was so interested in waiting for the ship to touch, that I had quite forgotten the peril that hung over my head, and stood craning over the side.

I might have fallen without a struggle, had not a sudden unease made me turn my head. Perhaps I had heard a creak or seen his shadow moving; perhaps it was instinct; but, sure enough, when I looked round, there was Hands, already half-way towards me, with the knife in his right hand.

We must both have cried out aloud, but while mine was the shrill cry of terror, his was a roar of fury. At the same instant, he threw himself forward and I leapt sideways towards the bows. As I did so, I let go of the tiller, which sprang sharp to leeward – and I think this saved my life, for it struck Hands across the chest and stopped him for a moment.

Before he could recover, I was safe out of the corner where he had me trapped. Just past the main-mast I stopped, drew a pistol from my pocket, took a cool aim, and as he was once more coming at me, I pulled the trigger.

The hammer fell, but there followed neither flash nor sound. The gun was made useless with sea-water. I cursed myself for my neglect. Why had I not reprimed and reloaded my only weapons? Then I should not have been a mere fleeing sheep before this butcher.

Wounded as he was, it was amazing how fast he could move, his face red with haste and fury. I had no time to try my other pistol, and indeed I was sure it would be useless. But I knew I must not simply retreat, or he would have me boxed into the bows. If I was caught, the blood-stained dirk would be my last experience. I placed my palms against the main-mast, and waited, every nerve upon the stretch.

He also paused; and a moment or two passed in feints on his part while I dodged him. It was such a game as I had often played at home about the rocks of Black Hill Cove, but never before with such a wildly beating heart as now. Still, it was a boy’s game, and I thought I could hold my own at it against an elderly seaman with a wounded thigh. Indeed my courage had begun to rise.

But suddenly the Hispaniola struck, staggered, ground for an instant in the sand, and then swiftly keeled over to the port side till the deck stood at an angle of forty-five degrees. Water splashed into the scupper holes and pooled between the deck and bulwark.

We were both of us capsized in a second, and both of us rolled, almost together, into the scuppers – the dead red-cap, with his arms still spread out, tumbling stiffly after us. My head came against the coxswain’s foot with a crack

that made my teeth rattle. Even so, I was the first afoot again, for Hands had got tangled with the dead body.

I could not run across the sloping deck; I had to find some new way of escape, and instantly, for my foe was almost touching me. Quick as thought, I sprang into the mizzen shrouds, rattled up the rigging hand over hand, and did not draw a breath till I was seated on the cross-trees of the mast.

I had been saved by being prompt. The knife had struck six inches below me as I climbed upward; and there stood Israel Hands with his mouth open and his face upturned in surprise and disappointment.

Now that I had the chance, I lost no time in repriming my pistol, and then proceeded to recharge the other.

This struck Hands all of a heap. After hesitating, he also hauled himself heavily into the shrouds, and with the knife in his teeth, began slowly and painfully to climb. It cost him no end of time and groans to haul his wounded leg behind him, and I had quietly finished my arrangements before he was half way up.

Then, with a pistol in either hand, I addressed him.

“One more step, Mr. Hands,” said I, “and I’ll blow your brains out! Dead men don’t bite, you know,” I added with a chuckle.

He stopped instantly. I could see by the working of his face that he was trying to think, and the process was so laborious that, in my new-found security, I laughed aloud. At last he took the dagger from his mouth and spoke, his face still showing extreme perplexity.

“Jim,” says he, “I reckon we’re fouled, you and me, and we’ll have to sign a peace. I’d have had you but for that there lurch, but I don’t have no luck, not I.”

I was drinking in his words and smiling away with conceit, when, all of a sudden, back went his right hand over his shoulder. Something sang like an arrow through the air; I felt a blow and then a sharp pang, and there I was pinned by the shoulder to the mast. In the dreadful pain and surprise of the moment – it was not with any conscious aim – both my pistols went off, and tumbled from my hands.

They did not fall alone; with a choked cry, the coxswain loosed his grasp upon the shrouds and plunged head first into the water.

Chapter 27

“Pieces of Eight”

With the ship leaning, the masts hung far out over the water. From my perch on the cross-trees I had nothing below me but the surface of the bay.

Hands, who was not so far up, fell between me and the bulwarks. He rose once to the surface in a lather of foam and blood and then sank again for good. As the water settled, I could see him lying huddled on the clean, bright sand in the shadow of the vessel's sides. A fish or two whipped past his body. Sometimes, by the quivering of the water, he appeared to move a little, as if he were trying to rise. But he was dead enough, being both shot and drowned.

I began to feel sick, faint, and terrified. Hot blood was running over my back and chest. The dagger seemed to burn where it pinned my shoulder to the mast; yet it was not this that distressed me, so much as my horror of falling into that still green water, beside the body of the coxswain.

I clung with both hands till my nails ached, and I shut my eyes as if to cover up the peril. Gradually my pulse quieted, and I was once more in possession of myself.

It was my first thought to pluck out the knife; but either it stuck too hard or my nerve failed me, and I stopped trying, with a violent shudder. Oddly enough, that very shudder did the business. The knife, in fact, had nearly missed me altogether; it held me by a mere pinch of skin, which the shudder tore away. The blood ran down faster, to be sure, but now I was only tacked to the mast by my coat and shirt.

These I tore through with a jerk, and then climbed down to the deck by the starboard shrouds. For nothing in the world would I have again ventured upon the shrouds from which Israel had just fallen.

I went below and did what I could for my wound. It pained me a good deal and bled freely, but it was neither deep nor dangerous, and I could use my arm. Then I looked around. As the ship was now, in a sense, my own, I began to think of clearing away its last passenger – the dead man, O'Brien.

He lay against the bulwarks like some horrible, ungainly, life-size puppet, but how different from life in his colour! I took him by the waist as if he had been a sack of bran, and with one good heave tumbled him overboard. He went in with a resounding plunge; the red cap came off and remained floating on the surface. As the splash subsided, I could see him and Israel lying side by side, both wavering with the tremulous movement of the water, and the quick fishes steering to and fro over them.

I was now alone upon the ship; the tide had just turned. The sun was so close to setting that already the shadow of the pines upon the western shore began to reach across the anchorage and fall in patterns on the deck. The evening breeze had sprung up, and the cordage began to sing softly to itself and the idle sails to rattle to and fro.

This was dangerous. I speedily brought the jibs tumbling to the deck, but the main-sail was a harder matter. Of course, when the schooner had leaned over, the boom had swung out-board, and its far end and a foot or two of sail hung under water. I thought this made it still more dangerous; yet the strain was so heavy that I half feared to meddle.

At last I got my knife and cut the halyards. The peak dropped instantly, a great belly of loose canvas floated broad upon the water, and since I could not budge it, that was the best that I could manage. For the rest, the Hispaniola must trust to luck, like myself.

By this time the whole anchorage had fallen into shadow. The sun's last rays were shining bright as jewels on the wreck. It began to be chill; the tide was rapidly fleeing seaward, the schooner settling more and more on her beam-ends.

I scrambled forward and looked over. It seemed shallow, and holding the cut rope in both hands, I let myself drop softly overboard. The water scarcely reached my waist; the sand was firm and covered with ripple marks. I waded ashore in great spirits, leaving the Hispaniola on her side, with her main-sail trailing on the surface of the bay. The sun went fully down.

At last, I was off the sea, nor had I returned empty-handed. There lay the schooner, ready for our own men to board and get to sea again. I wanted nothing more than to get home to the stockade and boast of my achievements. Possibly I might be blamed a bit for my truantry – but the recapture of the Hispaniola was a decisive answer, and I hoped that even Captain Smollett would admit I had not wasted my time.

So, in excellent spirits, I set off toward my companions. I remembered that the most easterly of the rivers which drained into the anchorage ran from the two-peaked hill on my left, and I went in that direction so that I might cross the stream while it was small. I waded ankle-deep across it.

This brought me near to where I'd met Ben Gunn; and I walked more cautiously, keeping an eye open. It was now dusk, and as I looked at the cleft between the two peaks, I saw a wavering glow against the sky, where I guessed the man of the island was cooking his supper on a fire. I wondered that he should be so careless. For if I could see the glow, might it not reach the eyes of Long John Silver where he camped among the marshes?

Gradually the night grew blacker; it was all I could do to guide myself. The stars were few and pale; and I kept tripping among bushes and rolling into sandy pits.

Suddenly a kind of brightness fell about me. I looked up; a pale glimmer of moonbeams had alighted on the summit of the Spy-glass, and then I saw something broad and silvery moving low behind the trees, and knew the moon had risen.

With this to help me, I travelled more swiftly, sometimes walking, sometimes running impatiently, and drew near to the stockade. Yet, as I approached, I slackened my pace and went more warily. It would be a poor end of my adventures to get shot down by my own friends by mistake.

The moon was climbing higher, its light falling through the more open parts of the wood; and right in front of me a different glow appeared among the trees. It

was red and sometimes darkened, like the smouldering embers of a bonfire. For the life of me I could not think what it might be.

At last I came right down to the borders of the clearing. The western end was steeped in moonshine; the log-house still lay in a black shadow chequered with long silvery streaks of light. On the other side of the house an immense fire had burned itself into red embers. There was not a soul stirring nor a sound except the breeze.

I stopped, with much wonder in my heart, and a little terror also. It had not been our way to build great fires, and I began to fear that something had gone wrong while I was absent.

I stole round by the eastern end, keeping in shadow, and where the darkness was thickest, I crossed the palisade. Then I got upon my hands and knees and crawled towards the corner of the house.

As I drew nearer, my heart was suddenly lightened. It is not a pleasant noise, and I have often complained of it at other times, but just then it was like music to hear my friends snoring together so loud and peaceful in their sleep.

But they kept an infamous bad watch. If it had been Silver and his lads that were now creeping in on them, they would have been dead men. Again I blamed myself for leaving them with so few men to mount guard.

I got to the door and stood up. All was dark within, so that I could see nothing. I could hear the steady drone of the snorers and a small occasional noise, a pecking that I could not account for.

With my arms before me I walked steadily in. I should lie down in my own place (I thought with a silent chuckle) and enjoy their faces when they found me in the morning.

My foot struck something – it was a sleeper's leg; and he turned and groaned, without awaking.

And all of a sudden, a shrill voice broke forth out of the darkness:

"Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!" without pause or change, like the clacking of a tiny mill.

Silver's green parrot, Captain Flint! It was she whom I had heard pecking; it was she who kept a better watch than any human. The sleepers awoke and sprang up; and with a mighty oath, the voice of Silver cried, "Who goes there?"

I turned to run, struck violently against one person, recoiled, and ran full into the arms of a second, who held me tight. I had been captured.

"Bring a torch, Dick," said Silver.

And one of the men brought in a lighted brand.

PART SIX

Captain Silver

Chapter 28

In the Enemy's Camp

The red glare of the torch, lighting up the house, confirmed my worst fears. The pirates had the stores: there was the cask of cognac, there were the pork and bread, and to my horror, not a sign of any prisoner. I could only guess that all had perished, and my heart smote me sorely.

There were only six of the buccaneers left alive. Five of them were on their feet, flushed, suddenly called out of their drunken sleep. The sixth had only risen upon his elbow; he was deadly pale, with a blood-stained bandage round his head. I remembered the man who had been shot and had run back among the woods in the attack: this was he.

The parrot sat preening her plumage on Long John's shoulder. He looked paler and sterner than before. His fine broadcloth suit was much the worse for wear, daubed with clay and torn with the sharp briers of the wood.

"So," said he, "here's Jim Hawkins, shiver my timbers! Dropped in, eh? Well, I take that friendly."

And he sat down on the brandy cask and began to fill a pipe.

"Give me a loan of the torch, Dick," said he; and when he had a good light, "That'll do, lad; and you, gentlemen, at ease! You needn't stand up for Mr. Hawkins. So, Jim, this is a pleasant surprise for poor old John. I saw you were smart when first I set my eyes on you, but this here gets clean away from me, it do."

To all this I made no answer. I stood with my back against the wall, looking Silver in the face, outwardly plucky enough, I hope, but with despair in my heart.

Silver took a puff or two of his pipe and then went on.

"Now, Jim, as you're here," says he, "I'll give you a piece of my mind. I've always liked you, for a lad of spirit, and the picter of my own self when I was young and handsome. I wanted you to join us and take your share, and now, my lad, you've got to. Cap'n Smollett's a fine seaman, but stiff on discipline. Just you keep clear of the cap'n. The doctor himself is gone against you – 'ungrateful scamp' was what he said; and the short and the long of it is that you can't go back to your own lot, for they won't have you; and unless you start a third ship's company all by yourself, you'll have to join with Cap'n Silver."

My friends, then, were still alive. Though I believed Silver when he said they were angry at me for my desertion, I was more relieved than distressed.

"I don't threaten you," continued Silver. "I never seen good come o' threatening. If you like the idea, well, you'll join; and if you don't, Jim, why, you're free to answer no – free and welcome, shipmate. If fairer can be said, shiver my sides!"

"Am I to answer, then?" I asked with a very tremulous voice. Through all this sneering talk, I felt the threat of death that overhung me, and my cheeks burned and my heart beat painfully in my chest.

"Lad," said Silver, "no one's a-pressing of you. Take your bearings. None of us won't hurry you, mate."

"Well," says I, growing a bit bolder, "if I'm to choose, I have a right to know what's what, and why you're here, and where my friends are."

"Wot's wot?" growled one of the buccaneers. "He'd be a lucky one as knowed that!"

"Batten down your hatches till you're spoke to, my friend," cried Silver to him truculently. And then, in more gracious tones, he replied to me. "Yesterday morning, Mr. Hawkins, down came Doctor Livesey with a flag of truce. Says he, 'Cap'n Silver, you're sold out. Ship's gone.' Well, maybe we'd been taking a glass. Leastways, none of us had looked out. We looked out now, and by thunder, the old ship was gone! 'Well,' says the doctor, 'let's bargain.' We bargained, him and I, and here we are: stores, brandy, house, the firewood you was thoughtful enough to cut, and the whole blessed lot. As for them, they've tramped; I don't know where they are."

He drew again at his pipe.

"And lest you should take it into that head of yours," he went on, "that you was included in the treaty, here's what was said: 'How many are you?' says I. 'Four,' says he; 'and one of us wounded. As for that boy, I don't know where he is, confound him,' says he, 'nor I don't much care. We're about sick of him.' These was his words."

"And now I am to choose?"

"And now you are to choose," said Silver.

"Well," said I, "I'm not a fool, and I know what to expect. Let the worst come to the worst, it's little I care. I've seen too many men die since I fell in with you. But there's a thing or two I have to tell you," I said, and by this time I was quite excited; "and the first is this: you're in a bad way – ship lost, treasure lost, men lost, your whole business wrecked; and if you want to know who did it – it was me! I was in the apple barrel the night we sighted land, and I heard every word you said. As for the ship, it was I who cut her cable, and killed the men aboard her, and I brought her where you'll never see her more, not one of you. The laugh's on my side; I've had the top of this business from the first. I no more fear you than I fear a fly. Kill me, if you please, or spare me. But if you spare me, bygones are bygones, and when you fellows are in court for piracy, I'll save you all I can. It's for you to choose. Kill another and do yourselves no good, or spare me and keep a witness to save you from the gallows."

I stopped, for I was out of breath; and to my wonder, not a man of them moved, but all sat staring at me like so many sheep. I broke out again, "And now, Mr. Silver," I said, "I believe you're the best man here, and if things go to the worst, it'll be kind of you to let the doctor know the way I took it."

"I'll bear it in mind," said Silver with a tone so curious that I could not, for the life of me, decide whether he were laughing at me or had been impressed by my courage.

"I'll add to that. It was him that knowed Black Dog!" cried the old mahogany-faced seaman – Morgan by name – whom I had seen in Long John's public-house.

"And, by thunder," added the sea-cook, "it was this same boy that nicked the chart from Billy Bones. First and last, we've broke upon Jim Hawkins!"

"Then here goes!" said Morgan with an oath. And he sprang up, drawing his knife.

"Avast, there!" cried Silver. "Who are you, Tom Morgan? Maybe you thought you was cap'n here! By the powers, I'll teach you better! Cross me, and you'll go to feed the fishes. There's never a man looked me between the eyes and seen a good day a'terwards, Tom Morgan, you may lay to that."

Morgan paused, but a hoarse murmur rose from the others.

"Tom's right," said one.

"I'll be hanged if I'll be hazed by you, John Silver," said another.

"Do any of you gentlemen want to have it out with me?" roared Silver, bending forward from his seat on the keg, with his pipe still glowing in his hand. "Say what you mean; you ain't dumb. Him that wants it shall get it. You know the way; you're all gentlemen o' fortune, by your account. Well, I'm ready. Take a cutlass, him that dares, and I'll see the colour of his inside before this pipe's empty."

Not a man stirred; not a man answered.

"That's your sort, is it?" he added, returning his pipe to his mouth. "Not much worth to fight, you ain't. Per'aps you can understand King George's English. I'm cap'n here by election. I'm cap'n here because I'm the best man by a long sea-mile. If you won't fight, as gentlemen o' fortune should, then, by thunder, you'll obey! I like that boy, now; I never seen a better boy. He's more a man than any of you rats, and what I say is this: you won't lay a hand on him – that's what I say."

There was a long pause. I stood straight up against the wall, my heart still going like a sledge-hammer, but with a ray of hope now shining in my heart. Silver leant back, his arms crossed, his pipe in his mouth, as calm as though he had been in church; yet watching his unruly followers.

They, for their part, drew gradually together towards the far end of the house, and the low hiss of their whispering sounded like a stream. One after another, they would look up towards Long John Silver, and the red light of the torch would fall for a second on their nervous faces.

"You seem to have a lot to say," remarked Silver. "Pipe up and let me hear it."

"Axing your pardon, sir," said one of the men; "you're pretty free with the rules. This crew's dissatisfied; this crew don't like bullying; this crew has its rights; and by your own rules, I take it we can talk together. I ax your pardon, sir, acknowledging you to be captin' at this present; but I claim my right, and steps outside for a council."

And with an elaborate salute, this fellow, a long, ill-looking, yellow-eyed man, stepped coolly to the door and disappeared out of the house. The rest followed him, each saluting as he passed, each adding some apology. "According to rules," said one. "Forecastle council," said Morgan. And so all marched out and left Silver and me alone with the torch.

The sea-cook instantly removed his pipe.

“Now, look you here, Jim Hawkins,” he said in a low whisper, “you’re within half a plank of death, and what’s a long sight worse, of torture. They’re going to throw me off. But, you mark, I stand by you through thick and thin. I didn’t mean to till you spoke up. I was about desperate to lose that much gold. But I see you was the right sort. I says to myself, you stand by Hawkins, and Hawkins’ll stand by you. Back to back, says I. You save your witness, and he’ll save your neck!”

I began dimly to understand.

“You mean all’s lost?” I asked.

“Aye, I do!” he answered. “Ship gone, neck gone – that’s the size of it. As for that lot, they’re outright fools and cowards. I’ll save your life from them if I can. But, see here, Jim – tit for tat – you save Long John from swinging on the gallows.”

I was bewildered at being asked this by him – the ringleader throughout.

“I’ll do what I can,” I said.

“It’s a bargain!” cried Long John. “You speak up plucky, and by thunder, I’ve a chance! I’ve a head on my shoulders, I have, Jim. I’m on squire’s side now. I know you’ve got that ship safe somewheres, though I don’t know how you done it. I know when a game’s up, I do; and I know a lad that’s staunch. Ah, you and me might have done a power of good together!”

He drew some cognac from the cask into a tin cup.

“Will you taste, messmate?” he asked; and when I refused, said, “Well, I’ll take a dram myself, Jim. I need it, for there’s trouble on hand. And talking o’ trouble, why did that doctor give me the chart, Jim?”

My face expressed my genuine wonder at this.

“Ah, well, he did, though,” said he. “And there’s a purpose under that, no doubt, Jim – bad or good.”

And he took another swallow of the brandy, shaking his great fair head like a man who looks forward to the worst.

Chapter 29

The Black Spot Again

The council of buccaneers lasted some time. Then one of them re-entered the house, and with an ironical salute, begged for a moment's loan of the torch. Silver agreed, and he retired again, leaving us together in the dark.

"There's a breeze coming, Jim," said Silver, in a friendly tone.

I turned to the nearest loophole and looked out. The embers of the great fire now burned so low that I understood why the conspirators wanted a torch. They were in a group about half-way down the slope to the stockade; one held the light, while another was on his knees, and I saw the blade of a knife shine in his hand. The rest were all stooping, watching him. I could just make out that he had a book in his other hand, and was wondering how a book had come into their possession when the kneeling figure rose to his feet and the whole group began to move towards the house.

"Here they come," said I.

"Well, let 'em come, lad," said Silver cheerily. "I've still a shot in my locker."

The door opened, and the five men, standing huddled together, pushed one of their number forward. In any other circumstances it would have been comical to see his slow, hesitant advance, holding his closed right hand in front of him.

"Step up, lad," cried Silver. "I won't eat you. Hand it over, lubber. I know the rules; I won't hurt a deputation."

The buccaneer stepped up more briskly, passed something to Silver, and stepped smartly back again to his companions.

Silver looked at what had been given him.

"The black spot! I thought so," he observed. "Where did you get the paper? Why, hello! Look here, this ain't lucky! You've gone and cut this out of a Bible. What fool's cut a Bible?"

"Ah!" said Morgan. "Wot did I say? No good'll come o' that, I said."

"Well, you've about fixed it now," continued Silver. "You'll all swing now, I reckon. What soft-headed lubber had a Bible?"

"It was Dick," said one.

"Dick, was it? Then Dick can start praying," said Silver.

But here the long man with the yellow eyes struck in.

"Belay that talk, John Silver," he said. "This crew has tipped you the black spot; just you turn it over, and see what's wrote there. Then you can talk."

"Thanky, George," replied the sea-cook. "You always was brisk for business. Well, what is it, anyway? Ah! 'Deposed'. That's it, is it? Very pretty wrote, to be sure. Your handwriting, George? Why, you's gettin' quite a leadin' man in this crew. You'll be cap'n next, I shouldn't wonder. Just oblige me with that torch again, will you? This pipe don't draw."

"Come, now," said George, "you don't fool this crew no more. You're over now, and you'll maybe step down off that barrel and help vote."

"I thought you knowed the rules," returned Silver contemptuously. "If you don't, I do; and I wait here – I'm still your cap'n, mind – till you comes out with

your grievances and I reply; in the meantime, your black spot ain't worth a biscuit. After that, we'll see."

"Oh," replied George, "you know what's coming. First, you've made a hash of this cruise – you'll be a bold man to say no to that. Second, you let the enemy out o' this here trap for nothing. Why did they want out? I dunno, but it's pretty plain they wanted it. Third, you wouldn't let us have a go at them. Oh, we see through you, John Silver; you want to play booty, that's what's wrong with you. And then, fourth, there's this here boy."

"Is that all?" asked Silver quietly.

"Enough, too," retorted George. "We'll all swing for your bungling."

"Well now, I'll answer these four points, one after another. I made a hash o' this cruise, did I? Well, you all know what I wanted, and you all know if that had been done, we'd be aboard the Hispaniola this night as ever was, every man of us alive and fit, and full of good plum-duff, and the treasure in her hold, by thunder! Who crossed me? Who forced my hand? Who tipped me the black spot the day we landed and began this dance? Ah, it's a fine dance, and looks mighty like a hornpipe in a rope's end at Execution Dock, it does. But who done it? Why, it was Anderson, and Hands, and you, George Merry! And you're the last of that same meddling crew; and you have the Davy Jones's insolence to stand for cap'n over me – you, that sank the lot of us! By the powers! This tops everything."

Silver paused, and I could see by the faces of George and the others that these words had not been said in vain.

"That's for number one," cried Silver, wiping the sweat from his brow, for he had been talking vehemently. "Why, I'm sick to speak to you. You've neither sense nor memory. Gentlemen o' fortune! I reckon tailors is your trade."

"Go on, John," said Morgan. "Answer the other points."

"Ah, the others!" returned Long John. "They're a nice lot, ain't they? You say this cruise is bungled. By gum, if you could understand how bad it's bungled! We're that near the gibbet that my neck's stiff with thinking on it. You've seen 'em, maybe, hanged in chains, birds around 'em, seamen pointing 'em out as they go down with the tide. 'Who's that?' says one. 'That! Why, that's John Silver. I knowed him well,' says another. And you can hear the chains a-jangle. Now, that's about where we are, thanks to him, and Hands, and Anderson. And if you want to know about number four, and that boy, why, shiver my timbers, isn't he a hostage? Are we a-going to waste a hostage? No, he might be our last chance. Kill that boy? Not me, mates!

"And number three? Ah, well, there's a deal to say to number three. Maybe you don't count it nothing to have a real doctor to see you – you, with your head broke – or you, George Merry, that had the ague fever not six hours ago? And maybe, perhaps, you didn't know there was a consort ship coming either? But there is, and soon; and we'll see who'll be glad to have a hostage. And as for number two, and why I made a bargain – well, you came crawling on your knees to me to make it, you was that downhearted – and you'd have starved if I hadn't. But that's nothing! You look there – that's why!"

And Silver cast upon the floor a paper that I instantly recognized. It was none other than the chart with the three red crosses, that I had found at the bottom of

the captain's chest. Why the doctor had given it to him was more than I could understand.

But the appearance of the chart was incredible to the surviving mutineers. They leaped upon it like cats upon a mouse. It went from hand to hand, one tearing it from another; and from their oaths and cries and childish laughter, you would have thought that they were fingering the very gold.

"Yes," said one, "that's Flint, sure enough. J. F., and a score below."

"Mighty pretty," said George. "But how are we to get away, with no ship?"

Silver suddenly sprang up. "Now I give you warning, George," he cried. "One more word of your sauce, and I'll call you down and fight you. How? You ought to tell me that – you and the rest, that lost me my ship! You can't; you hain't got the invention of a cockroach. But civil you can speak, and shall, George Merry, you may lay to that."

"That's fair enow," said the old man Morgan.

"Fair! I reckon so," said the sea-cook. "You lost the ship; I found the treasure. Who's the better man? And now I resign, by thunder! Elect whom you please to be your cap'n. I'm done with it."

"Silver!" they cried. "Barbecue forever! Barbecue for cap'n!"

"So that's the tune, is it?" cried the cook. "George, I reckon you'll have to wait another turn, friend; and lucky for you that I'm not a revengeful man. And now, shipmates, this black spot? 'Tain't much good now, is it? Dick's crossed his luck and spoiled his Bible, and that's about all."

"It'll still do to swear by, though, won't it?" growled Dick, uneasy at the curse he had brought upon himself.

"A Bible with a bit cut out!" returned Silver derisively. "No. It don't bind no more'n a ballad-book. Here, Jim – here's a cur'osity for you," and he tossed me the paper.

It was around about the size of a crown coin. One side was blank, for it had been the last page of the Bible; the other contained a verse or two of Revelation – including these words, which struck me sharply: "Outside are dogs and murderers." The printed side was blackened with wood ash, which began to come off on my fingers; on the blank side had been written in charcoal the one word "Depposed." I have it beside me at this moment, but not a trace of writing now remains beyond a single scratch.

That was the end of the night's business. Soon after, with a drink all round, we lay down to sleep, and Silver put George Merry up for sentinel and threatened him with death if he should prove unfaithful.

It was long before I could close an eye. Heaven knows I had enough to think about: the man whom I had slain that afternoon, my own perilous position, and the remarkable game that I saw Silver now engaged upon – keeping the mutineers together with one hand and grasping with the other at every means to save his life.

He himself slept peacefully and snored, yet my heart was sore for him, wicked as he was, to think on the dark perils that surrounded us and the shameful gibbet that awaited him.

Chapter 30

On Parole

We were all awakened – even the sentinel sleeping against the door-post – by a clear, hearty voice hailing us from the margin of the wood.

“House, ahoy!” it cried. “Here’s the doctor.”

And the doctor it was. Although I was glad to hear his voice, my gladness was mixed with shame when I remembered my disobedient and stealthy conduct, and saw where it had brought me.

The dawn had hardly come; and when I ran to a loophole and looked out, I saw the doctor standing, like Silver once before, up to the mid-leg in creeping mist.

“Top o’ the morning to you, doctor!” cried Silver, broad awake and beaming. “Bright and early, to be sure. George, shake up your timbers, and help Dr. Livesey over the ship’s side. All a-doin’ well, your patients – all well and merry.”

So he chattered on, standing on the hilltop with his crutch under his elbow, just like the old Long John Silver.

“We’ve quite a surprise for you too, sir,” he continued. “We’ve a little stranger here! A new lodger, sir, and looking fit as a fiddle; slep’ like a supercargo, he did, right alongside John.”

Dr. Livesey was by this time across the stockade and close to the cook, and I could hear the alteration in his voice as he said, “Not Jim?”

“The very same Jim as ever was,” says Silver.

The doctor stopped outright, although he did not speak, and it was some seconds before he seemed able to move on.

“Well, well,” he said at last, “duty first and pleasure afterwards, Silver. Let us see to these patients of yours.”

He entered the house and with one grim nod to me proceeded with his work among the sick. He seemed to feel no fear, though he must have known that his life hung on a hair among these treacherous demons; but he talked to his patients as if he were paying an ordinary professional visit to a quiet English family. His manner, I suppose, reacted on the men, for they behaved to him as if he were still ship’s doctor and they still faithful hands before the mast.

“You’re doing well, my friend,” he said to the fellow with the bandaged head, “though it was a close shave; your head must be as hard as iron. Well, George, how goes it? You’re a pretty colour; why, man, your liver is upside down. Did you take that medicine?”

“Aye, aye, sir, he took it, sure enough,” returned Morgan.

“Because, you see, since I am a mutineers’ doctor, or prison doctor as I prefer to call it,” says Doctor Livesey in his pleasantest way, “I make it a point of honour not to lose a man for King George and the gallows.”

The rogues looked at each other but did not answer.

“Dick don’t feel well, sir,” said one.

"Don't he?" replied the doctor. "Well, step up here, Dick, and let me see your tongue. No, I'm not surprised! Another fever."

"Ah, there," said Morgan, "that comes of spoiling Bibles."

"That comes of being asses," retorted the doctor, "and not having sense enough to know honest air from poison, and the dry land from a vile, pestilent marsh. I think you'll probably all have the deuce to pay before you get that malaria out of your systems. Camp in a bog, would you? Silver, I'm surprised at you. You're less of a fool than many; but you don't appear to have a notion of the rules of health."

Soon he had dosed them, and they had taken his prescriptions more like schoolchildren than blood-thirsty pirates.

"Well, that's done for today," he said. "And now I wish to have a talk with that boy, please." And he nodded his head in my direction carelessly.

George Merry was at the door, spluttering over some bad-tasting medicine; but he swung round and cried "No!" and swore.

Silver struck the barrel with his open hand.

"Si-lence!" he roared and looked about him like a lion. "Doctor," he went on in his usual tones, "I know as how you had a fancy for the boy. We're all humbly grateful for your kindness, and as you see, puts faith in you and takes the drugs like grog. So Hawkins, will you give me your word of honour as a young gentleman not to slip your cable?"

I readily promised not to abscond.

"Then, doctor," said Silver, "you just step outside o' that stockade, and once you're there I'll bring the boy down on the inside, and you can talk through the fence. Good day to you, sir."

An explosion of disapproval broke out as soon as the doctor had left the house. Silver was accused of playing double – of trying to make a separate peace for himself, of sacrificing his accomplices: in other words, of the exact thing that he was doing. It seemed to me so obvious that I could not imagine how he was to turn their anger.

But he was twice the man the rest were, and his last night's victory had given him a huge advantage in their minds. He called them all fools and dolts, said it was necessary I should talk to the doctor, fluttered the chart in their faces, and asked them if they could afford to break the treaty the very day they were to go a-treasure-hunting.

"No, by thunder!" he cried. "We'll break the treaty when the time comes; and till then I'll gammon that doctor, if I have to oil his boots with brandy."

And then he bade them get the fire lit, and stalked out upon his crutch, with his hand on my shoulder.

"Slow, lad, slow," he said. "They might round upon us in a twinkling of an eye if we were seen to hurry."

Very deliberately, then, we advanced across the sand to where the doctor waited on the other side of the stockade. As soon as we were within speaking distance Silver stopped.

"You'll make a note of this, doctor," says he, "and the boy'll tell you how I saved his life, and were deposed for it too, and you may lay to that. Doctor, when

a man's steering as near the wind as me, you wouldn't think it too much, maybe, to give him one good word? You'll please bear in mind it's not my life only now – it's that boy's too. You'll speak me fair, doctor, and give me a bit o' hope to go on, for the sake of mercy."

Silver was a changed man once he was out there and had his back to his friends; his cheeks seemed to have fallen in, his voice trembled; never was a soul more in earnest.

"Why, John, you're not afraid?" asked Dr. Livesey.

"Doctor, I'm no coward, not I! But I'll own up fairly, I've the shakes upon me for the gallows. You're a good man and a true; I never seen a better man! And you'll not forget what I done good, not any more than you'll forget the bad, I know. And I step aside – see here – and leave you and Jim alone. And you'll remember that too!"

So saying, he stepped back a little way, till he was out of earshot, and there sat down upon a tree-stump and began to whistle, spinning round now and again upon his seat, sometimes to watch me and the doctor, and sometimes to watch his unruly ruffians as they rekindled the fire and brought out pork and bread to make the breakfast.

"So, Jim," said the doctor sadly, "here you are. As you have brewed, so shall you drink, my boy. Heaven knows, I cannot find it in my heart to blame you, but this much I will say: when Captain Smollett was well, you dared not have gone off; and when he was ill, by George, it was downright cowardly!"

I will admit that I began to weep. "Doctor," I said, "you might spare me. I have blamed myself enough; my life's forfeit anyway, and I should have been dead by now if Silver hadn't stood up for me; and doctor, believe this, I can die – but what I fear is torture. If they come to torture me—"

"Jim," the doctor interrupted, and his voice was quite changed, "Jim, I can't have this. Whip over the fence, and we'll run for it."

"Doctor," said I, "I gave my word."

"I know, I know," he cried. "We can't help that, Jim. I'll take it on my shoulders, blame and shame, my boy; but I cannot let you stay here. Jump! One jump, and you're out, and we'll run for it like antelopes."

"No," I replied; "you know right well you wouldn't do that yourself – nor would squire nor captain; and no more will I. Silver trusted me; I gave my word, and back I go. But, doctor, you did not let me finish. If they come to torture me, I might let slip a word of where the ship is, for I got the ship, part by luck and part by risking, and she lies in North Inlet, on the southern beach, and just below high water. At half tide she must be high and dry."

"The ship!" exclaimed the doctor.

Rapidly I described my adventures, and he heard me out in silence.

"There is a kind of fate in this," he observed when I had done. "Every step, it's you that saves our lives. Do you suppose that we are going to let you lose yours? That would be a poor return, my boy. You found out the plot; you found Ben Gunn – the best deed that ever you did. Oh, by Jupiter, and talking of Ben Gunn! Why, this is the mischief in person. Silver!" he cried. "Silver! I'll give you a piece

of advice," he continued as the cook drew near again; "don't you be in any great hurry after that treasure."

"Why, sir, I have to seek it," said Silver. "I can only save my life and the boy's by seeking for that treasure."

"Well, Silver," replied the doctor, "if that is so, I'll go one step further: look out for squalls when you find it."

"Sir," said Silver, "that's too much and too little. I don't know what you're after, or why you left the log-house, or why you given me that there chart, do I? And yet I done your bidding with my eyes shut and not a word of hope! But no, this here's too much. If you won't tell me what you mean, just say so and I'll leave the helm."

"No," said the doctor musingly; "I've no right to say more; it's not my secret, you see, Silver, or I'd tell it you. But I'll go as far with you as I dare, and a step beyond, for the captain would be angry with me! And first, I'll give you a bit of hope; Silver, if we both get alive out of this wolf-trap, I'll do my best to save you, short of perjury."

Silver's face was radiant. "You couldn't say more, I'm sure, sir," he cried.

"Well, that's my first concession," added the doctor. "My second is a piece of advice: keep the boy close beside you, and when you need help, halloo. Good-bye, Jim."

And Dr. Livesey shook hands with me through the fence, nodded to Silver, and set off at a brisk pace into the wood.

Chapter 31

The Treasure-hunt – Flint’s Pointer

“Jim,” said Silver when we were alone, “if I saved your life, you saved mine; and I’ll not forget it. I seen the doctor waving you to run for it; and I seen you say no, as plain as hearing. Jim, that’s one to you. This is the first glint of hope I had since the attack failed, and I owe it you. And now, Jim, we’re to go in for this here treasure-hunting, and I don’t like it. You and me must stick close, and we’ll save our necks in spite o’ fate and fortune.”

Just then a man hailed us from the fire, saying that breakfast was ready. They had lit a fire big enough to roast an ox, and so hot that they could not approach it easily. In the same wasteful spirit, they had cooked three times more than we could eat; and one of them, with a laugh, threw what was left into the fire, which blazed and roared up again.

I never in my life saw men so careless of the morrow. What with wasted food and sleeping sentries, I could see their entire unfitness for anything like a prolonged campaign.

Even Silver, eating away, with Captain Flint upon his shoulder, had not a word of blame for their recklessness. And this surprised me, for he was being more cunning than ever.

“Aye, mates,” said he, “it’s lucky you have Barbecue to think for you. I learnt what I wanted: sure enough, they have the ship. Where it is, I don’t know yet; but once we hit the treasure, we’ll find out. And then, mates, us that has the boats, I reckon, has the upper hand.”

Thus he kept running on, with his mouth full of bacon, restoring their confidence, and, I suspect, his own at the same time.

“As for this hostage,” he continued, “that’s his last talk with them he loves so dear. I’ve got my piece o’ news, and thank you to him for that; but it’s done. I’ll take him on a rope when we go treasure-hunting, for we’ll keep him like so much gold, in case of accidents. Once we got the ship and treasure and are off to sea, why then we’ll talk Mr. Hawkins over, we will, and we’ll give him his share, to be sure, for all his kindness.”

It was no wonder the men were in a good humour. For my part, I was horribly cast down. Should the plan Silver had just described succeed, he would not hesitate to adopt it. He was doubly a traitor, with a foot in either camp, and there was no doubt he would prefer wealth and freedom with the pirates to a bare escape from hanging, which was the best he had to hope for on our side.

And even if he kept his faith with Dr. Livesey, what danger lay before us! When the pirates’ suspicions turned to certainty, he and I should have to fight for our lives – he a cripple and I a boy – against five strong and active seamen!

Add to this the mystery that still hung over the behaviour of my friends – their unexplained desertion of the stockade, their handing over of the chart, and the doctor’s mysterious warning to Silver, “Look out for squalls when you find it,” –

and you will readily believe with how uneasy a heart I set forth behind my captors on the quest for treasure.

We made a curious group, all in dirty clothes, and all but me armed to the teeth. Silver had two guns slung about him – one before and one behind – besides the great cutlass at his waist and a pistol in each pocket of his square-tailed coat. Captain Flint sat perched upon his shoulder, gabbling sea-talk. I had a rope around my waist and obediently followed Silver, who held the loose end sometimes in his free hand, sometimes between his powerful teeth. Thus I was led like a dancing bear.

The other men were laden with picks and shovels, and pork, bread, and brandy from our stores for the midday meal. It was clear that if Silver had not struck a bargain with the doctor, he and his mutineers must have been driven to survive on water and the proceeds of their hunting. But water would have been little to their taste; and a sailor is not usually a good shot.

Well, thus equipped, we all set out – even the fellow with the broken head – and straggled in a line to the beach, where the two gig-boats were. These bore traces of the pirates' drunken folly in their muddy, water-logged condition. We climbed into them and set forth across the anchorage.

As we rowed, there was some discussion about the chart. The red cross was far too large to be a guide; and the words on the back were quite ambiguous. They ran, the reader may remember, thus:

Tall tree, Spy-glass shoulder, bearing a point to the N. of N.N.E.
Skeleton Island E.S.E. and by E.
Ten feet.

A tall tree was thus the principal marker. Now, right before us rose a plateau, two or three hundred feet high, joining the sloping shoulder of the Spy-glass hill and rising towards the south into the rough peak called the Mizzenmast Hill. The top of the plateau was dotted thickly with pine-trees of varying height. Every here and there, one rose forty or fifty feet clear above its neighbours.

Which of these was Captain Flint's particular "tall tree" could only be decided on the spot, and by the readings of the compass. Yet every man on board the boats had picked a favourite of his own before we were half-way over, despite Long John bidding them wait till they were there.

After pulling the oars for a while, we landed at the mouth of a river which ran down a woody cleft of the Spy-glass. From there we began to ascend the slope towards the plateau.

At first, heavy, marshy ground slowed us down; but little by little the hill began to steepen and became stony under foot, and the wood became more open. It was, indeed, a most pleasant part of the island that we were now approaching. Many flowering shrubs had taken the place of grass. Thickets of green nutmeg-trees were dotted here and there, amidst the red columns and the broad shadow of the pines; and they mingled their spice with the pines' aroma. The fresh air and the sunbeams revived us wonderfully.

The group spread itself out in a fan shape, shouting and leaping to and fro. At the centre, and a good way behind the rest, Silver and I followed – I tethered by my rope, he ploughing and panting across the sliding gravel. From time to time, I had to lend him a hand, or he would have fallen backward down the hill.

We had walked about half a mile and were approaching the brow of the plateau when the man furthest to our left began to shout aloud, as if in terror. The others ran in his direction.

“He can’t ’a found the treasure,” said old Morgan, hurrying past us, “for that’s clean a-top.”

Indeed, as we found when we reached the spot, it was something very different. At the foot of a big pine, and tangled in a green creeper, a human skeleton lay, with a few shreds of clothing, on the ground. The creeper had partly lifted some of the smaller bones. I believe a chill struck every heart.

“He was a seaman,” said George Merry, who, bolder than the rest, had gone up to examine the rags of clothing. “Leastways, this is good sea-cloth.”

“Aye, aye,” said Silver; “likely enough; you wouldn’t look to find a bishop here. But what sort of a way is that for bones to lie? ’Tain’t natural.”

Indeed, the man lay perfectly straight – his feet pointing in one direction, his hands raised above his head like a diver’s, pointing the opposite way.

“I’ve taken a notion into my old numbskull,” observed Silver. “Here’s the compass; there’s the tip-top point o’ Skeleton Island, stickin’ out like a tooth. Just take a bearing, will you, along the line of them bones.”

It was done. The body pointed straight in the direction of the island, and the compass read duly E.S.E. and by E.

“I thought so,” cried the cook; “this here is a pointer. But, by thunder! If it don’t make me cold inside to think of Flint. This is one of his jokes, and no mistake. Him and these six was alone here; he killed ’em, every man; and this one he hauled here and laid down by his compass, shiver my timbers! They’re long bones, and the hair was yellow. Aye, that would be Allardyce. You remember Allardyce, Tom Morgan?”

“Aye, aye,” returned Morgan; “He owed me money, he did, and took my knife ashore with him.”

“Speaking of knives,” said another, “why isn’t his lying round? Flint warn’t the man to pick a seaman’s pocket; but there ain’t a thing left here. It don’t look nat’ral to me.”

“No, by gum, it don’t,” agreed Silver. “Great guns! Messmates, if Flint was living, this would be a hot spot for us.”

“I saw Flint dead,” said Morgan. “Billy took me in the room where he was laid, with penny-pieces on his eyes.”

“Aye, sure enough he’s dead and gone below,” said the fellow with the bandage; “but if ever spirit walked, it would be Flint’s. He died bad, did Flint!”

“Aye, that he did,” observed another; “now he raged, and now he hollered for the rum, and now he sang. ‘Fifteen Men’ were his only song, mates; and I tell you true, I never liked to hear it since. It was hot, and the window was open, and I heard that old song as clear as clear – and the man close to death already.”

“Come, come,” said Silver; “stow this talk. He’s dead, and he don’t walk, that I know; leastways, he won’t walk by day, you may lay to that. Keep going for the treasure.”

We started out again; but in spite of the hot sun and the bright daylight, the pirates no longer ran shouting through the wood, but kept side by side and spoke low. The terror of the dead buccaneer had fallen on them.

Chapter 32

The Treasure-hunt—The Voice Among the Trees

Partly from the damping influence of this alarm, partly to rest Silver and the sick folk, the whole group sat down as soon as they reached the brow of the plateau.

The spot commanded a wide view. Before us, over the tree-tops, we saw the Cape of the Woods fringed with surf; behind, we looked down upon the anchorage and Skeleton Island, and further out a great field of open sea. Sheer above us rose the Spy-glass, dotted with pines and black cliffs.

There was no sound but that of the distant breakers, from all round, and the chirp of countless insects in the brush. Not a man, not a sail, was visible upon the sea; the very largeness of the view increased the sense of solitude.

Silver, as he sat, took bearings with his compass.

"There are three tall trees," said he, "in about the right line from Skeleton Island. 'Spy-glass shoulder,' I take it, means that lower point there. It's child's play to find the stuff now. I've half a mind to dine first."

"I don't feel sharp," growled Morgan. "Thinkin' o' Flint as done me."

"Ah, well, my son, you praise your stars he's dead," said Silver.

"He were an ugly devil," cried a third pirate with a shudder; "that blue in the face too!"

"That was how the rum took him," added Merry.

Ever since they had found the skeleton and got into this train of thought, they had spoken lower and lower, and they were almost whispering by now.

All of a sudden, out of the middle of the trees in front of us, a thin, high, trembling voice struck up singing:

*"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest—
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"*

I never have seen men more dreadfully affected than the pirates. The colour went from their faces; some leaped to their feet, some clawed hold of others; Morgan grovelled on the ground.

"It's Flint!" cried Merry.

The song stopped as suddenly as it began – broken off in the middle of a note, as though someone had laid his hand upon the singer's mouth. Coming through the sunny atmosphere among the green tree-tops, I thought it had sounded airy and sweet; and the effect on my companions was all the stranger.

"Come," said Silver, with ashen lips; "this won't do. This is a rum start, and I can't name the voice, but it's someone skylarking – someone that's flesh and blood, and you may lay to that."

His courage had come back as he spoke. Already the others, listening to his encouragement, were recovering, when the same voice broke out again – not singing this time, but in a faint distant call that echoed among the cliffs.

"Darby M'Graw," it wailed; "Darby M'Graw! Darby M'Graw!" again and again; and then rising a little higher, and with an oath: "Fetch the rum, Darby!"

The buccaneers remained rooted to the ground, their eyes starting from their heads. Long after the voice had died away they stared in silent dread before them.

"That fixes it!" gasped one. "Let's go."

"They was his last words," moaned Morgan.

Dick had his Bible out and was praying volubly. He had been well brought up, had Dick, before he came to sea and fell among bad companions.

Still Silver was unconquered. I could hear his teeth chatter, but he had not surrendered.

"Nobody in this here island ever heard of Darby," he muttered; "except us that's here." And then, making a great effort: "Shipmates," he cried, "I'm here to get that stuff, and I'll not be beat by man or devil. I never was feared of Flint in his life, and, by the powers, I'll face him dead. There's seven hundred thousand pound not a quarter of a mile from here. When did a gentleman o' fortune ever turn his back on that much money, for a boozy old seaman – and him dead too?"

But his followers' terror only grew.

"Belay there, John!" said Merry. "Don't anger a spirit."

All the rest were too terrified to reply. They would have run away had they dared; but fear kept them together, close to Long John, as if his boldness helped them.

"Spirit? Well, maybe," he said. "But there was an echo. Now, no man ever seen a spirit with a shadow; so what's he doing with an echo, I should like to know? That ain't in nature, surely?"

This argument seemed weak to me. But you can never tell what will affect the superstitious, and George Merry was greatly relieved.

"Well, that's so," he said. "You've a head upon your shoulders, John, and no mistake. Come to think on it, it was not clear like Flint's voice, after all. It was liker somebody else's voice – it was liker—"

"By the powers, Ben Gunn!" roared Silver.

"Aye, so it were," cried Morgan. "Ben Gunn!"

"It don't make much difference, do it?" asked Dick. "Ben Gunn's not alive any more'n Flint."

But the older hands greeted this remark with scorn.

"Why, nobody minds Ben Gunn," cried Merry; "dead or alive, nobody minds him."

It was extraordinary how their spirits had returned and the colour had revived in their faces. Soon they were chatting and listening; and hearing no further sound, they shouldered the tools and set forth again, Merry walking first with Silver's compass to keep them on the right line. He had said the truth: dead or alive, nobody minded Ben Gunn.

Dick alone still held his Bible, and looked around him as he went, with fearful glances; but he found no sympathy, and Silver even joked about him.

"I said you had spoiled your Bible," said he. "If it ain't no good to swear by, what do you suppose a spirit would give for it? Not that!" and he snapped his fingers.

But Dick was not to be comforted. Indeed, it was plain to me that the lad was falling sick; hastened by heat, exhaustion, and fear, the fever predicted by Dr. Livesey was growing swiftly higher.

It was fine open walking here upon the summit. Our way lay a little downhill, where the pines grew wide apart, and between the clumps of nutmeg and azalea, large open spaces baked in the hot sunshine. Striking north-west across the island, we drew ever nearer the shoulders of the Spy-glass, and looked ever wider over that western bay where I had once tossed and trembled in the coracle.

We reached the first of the tall trees, but the compass bearings proved it the wrong one. It was the same with the second.

The third tree rose nearly two hundred feet into the air – a giant with a red trunk as thick as a cottage. It was conspicuous far to sea both on the east and west.

But it was not its size that impressed my companions; it was the knowledge that seven hundred thousand pounds in gold lay somewhere buried below its spreading shadow. The thought of the money swallowed up their previous terrors. Their feet grew speedier; their souls were bound up in that fortune, that lifetime of extravagance and pleasure that lay waiting for each of them.

Silver hobbled, grunting, on his crutch; he cursed like a madman when the flies settled on his hot and shiny face. He plucked furiously at the rope that held me to him and turned his eyes upon me with a deadly look.

I could read his thoughts like print. With the gold so near, all else had been forgotten: his promise and the doctor's warning were both things of the past. He hoped to seize the treasure, find and board the Hispaniola, cut every honest throat upon that island, and sail away laden with crimes and riches.

Shaken as I was with these fears, it was hard for me to keep up with the rapid pace of the treasure-hunters. Now and again I stumbled, and then Silver pulled roughly at the rope and launched his murderous glances. Dick, who had dropped behind us, was babbling prayers and curses as his fever kept rising.

To crown all, I was haunted by the thought of the tragedy that had once been acted on that plateau, when that ungodly pirate with the blue face – Captain Flint – had, with his own hand, cut down his six accomplices. This peaceful grove must have rung with screams, I thought; and I could almost believe I heard it ringing still.

“Huzza, mates, all together!” shouted Merry; and the foremost men broke into a run.

And suddenly, not ten yards further, we saw them stop. A low cry arose. Silver doubled his pace, digging away with his crutch like one possessed; and next moment he and I came also to a dead halt.

Before us was a great ditch, not very recently dug, for the sides had fallen in and grass had sprouted on the bottom. In it, the broken shaft of a pickaxe and the boards of several packing-cases lay strewn around. On one of these boards I saw branded the name Walrus – the name of Flint's ship.

The treasure had been found and rifled; the seven hundred thousand pounds were gone!

Chapter 33

The Fall of a Chieftain

There never was such an overturn. It was as though all six men had been struck. But with Silver the blow passed almost instantly. He had been set full-stretch, like a race-horse, on that money; he was brought up, in a single second, to a dead stop; but he kept his head, and changed his plan before the others had time to realize the disappointment.

"Jim," he whispered, "take this, and stand by for trouble." And he passed me a double-barrelled pistol.

At the same time, he began quietly moving northward, and in a few steps had put the hollow between us two and the other five. Then he looked at me and nodded, in a way that was not quite friendly. I was so revolted at these constant changes that I could not help whispering, "So you've swapped sides again."

There was no time for him to answer. The buccaneers, with oaths and cries, leapt one after another into the pit to dig with their fingers, throwing the boards aside. Morgan found a piece of gold, and held it up with a spout of oaths. It was a two-guinea piece, and it went from hand to hand among them.

"Two guineas!" roared Merry, shaking it at Silver. "That's your seven hundred thousand pounds, is it? You're the man for bargains, ain't you? Him that never bungled nothing, you wooden-headed lubber!"

"Dig away, boys," said Silver with cool insolence; "you'll find some pig-nuts, I shouldn't wonder."

"Pig-nuts!" screamed Merry. "Mates, do you hear that? I tell you, that man knew it all along. Look at his face and you'll see it there."

"Ah, Merry," remarked Silver, "you standing for cap'n again?"

But this time everyone was entirely in Merry's favour. They began to scramble out of the ditch furiously, on the opposite side from Silver.

Well, there we stood, two on one side, five on the other, the pit between us, and nobody offered the first blow. Silver never moved; he watched them, very upright on his crutch, and looked as cool as ever I saw him. He was brave, and no mistake.

At last Merry spoke.

"Mates," says he, "there's only two of them; one's the old cripple that blundered us down to this; the other's that cub that I mean to have the heart of. Now, mates—"

He was raising his arm and his voice, and plainly meant to lead a charge. But just then – *crack! crack! crack!* Three musket-shots flashed out of the thicket.

Merry tumbled head first into the pit; the man with the bandage spun and fell at full length on his side, where he lay twitching; and the other three turned and ran for it with all their might.

Before you could wink, Long John had fired two barrels of a pistol into the struggling Merry. As the man rolled up his eyes at him in his last agony, he said, "George, I reckon I settled you."

At the same moment, the doctor, Gray, and Ben Gunn joined us, with smoking muskets, from among the nutmeg-trees.

"Double quick, my lads," cried the doctor. "We must head 'em away from the boats." And we set off at a great pace, plunging through the bushes.

Silver was anxious to keep up with us. The work that man went through, leaping on his crutch! But he was already thirty yards behind us and gasping for breath when we reached the brow of the slope.

"Doctor," he called, "see there! No hurry!"

Now we could see the three survivors running for Mizzenmast Hill. We were already between them and the boats; and so we sat down to breathe, while Long John, mopping his face, came slowly up to us.

"Thank ye kindly, doctor," says he. "You came in the nick of time for me and Hawkins. And so it's you, Ben Gunn!" he added. "Well, you're a nice one, to be sure."

"I'm Ben Gunn, I am," replied the marooned man, wriggling like an eel in his embarrassment. "And," he added, after a long pause, "how do, Mr. Silver? Pretty well, I thank ye, says you."

"Ben, Ben," murmured Silver, "to think as you've done me!"

The doctor sent back Gray for one of the pick-axes left by the mutineers, and then as we walked downhill to the boats, told us briefly what had taken place. It was a story that profoundly interested Silver; and Ben Gunn was the hero from beginning to end.

Ben, in his long, lonely wanderings about the island, had found the skeleton. It was he that had rifled it; he had found the treasure; he had dug it up (it was his pick-axe that lay broken in the ditch); he had carried it on his back, in many weary journeys, from the foot of the tall pine to a cave on the two-pointed hill at the north-east of the island. There it had lain stored in safety for the last two months.

The doctor had wormed this secret from him on the afternoon of the attack. Next morning, when he saw the anchorage deserted, the doctor had gone to Silver. He had given him the chart, which was now useless – given him the stores, for Ben Gunn's cave was well supplied with salted goats' meat – given him anything and everything to get a chance of moving in safety from the stockade to the two-pointed hill, there to be clear of malaria and keep a guard upon the money.

"As for you, Jim," he said, "it went against my heart, but I did what I thought best for those who had stood by their duty; and if you were not one of those, whose fault was it?"

That morning, finding that I was to be involved in the horrid disappointment he had prepared for the mutineers, he had run all the way to the cave with Gray and Ben Gunn, leaving the squire to guard the captain. They had crossed the island to be ready beside the pine. Soon, however, he saw that our group was ahead of him; and Ben Gunn, being fleet of foot, had been sent in front to do his best alone. It had occurred to him to work on the superstitions of his former shipmates, giving Gray and the doctor time to catch him up and hide.

“Ah,” said Silver, “it were fortunate for me that I had Hawkins here. You would have let old John be cut to bits, and never given it a thought, doctor.”

“Not a thought,” replied Dr. Livesey cheerily.

By this time we had reached the gig-boats. The doctor demolished one of them with the pick-axe, and then we all got aboard the other and set out to row to North Inlet.

This was a run of eight or nine miles. Silver, though he was almost dead already with fatigue, was set to an oar, like the rest of us, and we were soon skimming over a smooth sea. We passed out of the strait and rounded the south-east corner of the island, round which, four days ago, we had towed the Hispaniola.

As we passed the two-pointed hill, we could see the black mouth of Ben Gunn’s cave and a figure standing by it, leaning on a musket. It was the squire; we waved a handkerchief and gave him three cheers.

Three miles farther, just inside the mouth of North Inlet, what should we meet but the Hispaniola, cruising by herself? The last tide had lifted her, and if there had there been much wind or a strong current, we should never have found her again, or have found her stranded beyond help.

As it was, there was little amiss beyond the torn main-sail. Another anchor was got ready and dropped in a fathom and a half of water. We all pulled round again to Rum Cove, the nearest point to Ben Gunn’s treasure-house; and then Gray returned with the boat to the Hispaniola, where he was to spend the night on guard.

A gentle slope ran up from the beach to the entrance of the cave. At the top, the squire met us. To me he was cordial and kind, saying nothing of my escapade. At Silver’s polite salute he flushed.

“John Silver,” he said, “you’re a prodigious villain and imposter – a monstrous imposter, sir. I am told I am not to prosecute you. Well, then, I will not. But the dead men, sir, hang about your neck like mill-stones.”

“Thank you kindly, sir,” replied Long John, again saluting.

“Do not thank me!” cried the squire. “It is a gross dereliction of my duty. Stand back.”

We all entered the cave. It was a large, airy place, with a little spring and a pool of clear water, overhung with ferns; the floor was sand. Before a big fire lay Captain Smollett, and in a far corner, duskily flickered over by the blaze, I beheld great heaps of coins, and towers built of bars of gold.

That was Flint’s treasure that we had come so far to seek, and that had cost already the lives of seventeen men from the Hispaniola. How many it had cost in the amassing, what blood and sorrow, what good ships scuttled on the deep, what brave men walking the plank, what shot of cannon, what shame and lies and cruelty, perhaps no man alive could tell.

Yet there were still three upon that island – Silver, and old Morgan, and Ben Gunn – who had each taken his share in these crimes.

“Come in, Jim,” said the captain. “You’re a good boy, but I don’t think you and me’ll go to sea together again. You’re too much of the born favourite for me. Is that you, John Silver? What brings you here, man?”

“Come back to my dooty, sir,” returned Silver.

“Ah!” was all the captain said.

What a supper I had of it that night, with my friends around me! We dined on Ben Gunn’s salted goat, and some delicacies and a bottle of old wine from the Hispaniola. Never, I am sure, were people happier.

And there was Silver, sitting back almost out of the firelight, but eating heartily, prompt to spring forward when anything was wanted, even joining quietly in our laughter – the same bland, polite seaman of the voyage out.

Chapter 34

And Last

The next morning we began to work early, for to move this great mass of gold nearly a mile to the beach – and from there three miles by boat to the Hispaniola – was a hard task for so small a number. The three pirates still at large upon the island did not worry us; a sentry on the hill ensured us against any sudden onslaught, and besides, we thought they had had enough of fighting.

The work was pushed on briskly. Gray and Ben Gunn came and went with the boat, while the rest of us piled treasure on the beach. Two gold bars made a good load for a grown man – as long as he walked slowly. For my part, as I was not much use at carrying, I was kept busy all day in the cave packing the money into bread-bags.

It was a strange collection, as varied as Billy Bones's hoard, but much larger. I think I never had more pleasure than in sorting through those coins. English, French, Spanish and Portuguese, Georges and Louis, doubloons and double guineas, strange Oriental coins stamped with what looked like wisps of string or bits of spider's web, round pieces, square pieces, and pieces bored through the middle – nearly every type of money in the world must have found a place in that collection. There were so many that my back ached with stooping and my fingers hurt.

Day after day this work went on; by every evening a fortune had been stowed aboard, but there was another fortune waiting for the next day; and all this time we heard nothing of the three surviving mutineers.

At last, on the third night, the doctor and I were strolling on the hill when, from out of the thick darkness below, the wind brought a noise between shrieking and singing. A snatch reached our ears, followed by silence.

"Heaven forgive them," said the doctor; "'tis the mutineers!"

"All drunk, sir," struck in Silver's voice behind us.

Silver, I should say, was allowed his entire liberty, and seemed to regard himself once more as quite a privileged friend. Indeed, it was remarkable how politely he kept trying to ingratiate himself with us all. Yet none of them treated him better than a dog, except Ben Gunn, who was still terribly afraid of him, or myself, who had really something to thank him for; although I also had reason to think even worse of him than anybody else, for I had seen him meditating treachery.

The doctor answered him gruffly.

"Drunk, or feverish and raving," said he.

"Right you are, sir," replied Silver; "and precious little odds which, to you and me."

"My feelings may surprise you, Master Silver," returned the doctor with a sneer; "but if I were sure they were feverish – and I am certain at least one of them is down with fever – I should leave this camp, at whatever risk to myself, and use my skill to help them."

“Begging your pardon, sir, you would be very wrong,” said Silver. “You would lose your precious life. I’m on your side now. But those men couldn’t keep their word, even if they wished to; and what’s more, they couldn’t believe that you could.”

“No,” said the doctor. “You’re the man to keep your word, we know that.”

Well, that was about the last news we had of the three pirates. Once we heard a gunshot a great way off and supposed them to be hunting. We decided that we must desert them on the island – to the huge glee, I must say, of Ben Gunn. We left them a good stock of gunpowder and shot, most of the salt goat, a few medicines, and some tools, clothing, a spare sail, rope, and a handsome present of tobacco.

That was about our last act on the island. We had got the treasure stowed and had taken on water and goat meat; and at last, one fine morning, we weighed anchor, and sailed out of North Inlet, with the same flag flying that the captain had flown and fought under at the palisade.

The three fellows must have been watching us. For as we came through the narrows near the southern point, we saw them kneeling together on a spit of sand, with their arms raised in supplication. It went to all our hearts, I think, to leave them in that wretched state; but we could not risk another mutiny; and to take them home for the gallows would have been a cruel sort of kindness.

The doctor hailed them and told where to find the stores we had left. But they continued to call out, appealing to us to be merciful and not leave them to die in such a place.

At last, seeing the ship was swiftly drawing out of earshot, one of them – I know not which – leapt to his feet with a hoarse cry, whipped his musket to his shoulder, and sent a shot whistling over Silver’s head.

When next I looked they had disappeared from the spit, and the spit itself had almost melted out of sight in the growing distance. That was the end of that; and before noon, to my inexpressible joy, the highest rock of Treasure Island had sunk into the blue round of the sea.

We were so short of men that everyone on board had to help, with only the captain lying on a mattress and giving orders. We headed for the nearest port in Spanish America, for we could not risk the voyage home without fresh hands; and as it was, what with baffling winds and a couple of fresh gales, we were all worn out before we reached it.

It was just at sundown when we cast anchor in a beautiful land-locked gulf, and were immediately surrounded by shore boats full of black men and Mexican Indians selling fruits and vegetables and offering to dive for money. The sight of so many good-humoured faces, the taste of the tropical fruits, and the lights that began to shine in the town were delightful after our dark and bloody stay on the island.

The doctor and the squire took me ashore with them in the evening. Here they met the captain of an English man-of-war, began talking, went on board his ship, and had so agreeable a time that day was breaking when we came back to the Hispaniola.

Ben Gunn was on deck alone. As soon as we came on board he began, with wonderful contortions, to make us a confession. Silver was gone. Ben had connived at his escape in a shore boat some hours ago, and he assured us he had only done so to preserve our lives, which would certainly have been endangered if “that man with the one leg had stayed aboard.”

But this was not all. The sea-cook had not gone empty-handed. He had cut through a bulkhead unobserved and had removed one of the sacks of coin, worth perhaps three or four hundred guineas, to help him on his wanderings. I think we were all pleased to be so cheaply quit of him.

Well, to make a long story short, we got a few hands on board, made a good cruise home, and the Hispaniola reached Bristol just as Mr. Blandly was beginning to think of fitting out her consort. Only five men of those who had sailed returned. “Drink and the devil” had done for the rest, with a vengeance.

All of us had an ample share of the treasure and used it according to our natures. Captain Smollett is now retired from the sea. Gray not only saved his money, but is now mate and part owner of a fine full-rigged ship, married besides, and the father of a family.

As for Ben Gunn, he got a thousand pounds, which he spent or lost in three weeks, or to be more exact, in nineteen days, for he was back begging on the twentieth. Then he was given a lodge to keep; and he still lives there, a great favourite, though something of an object of fun with the country boys, and a notable singer in church on Sundays.

Of Silver we have heard no more. That formidable seafaring man with one leg has at last gone clean out of my life; but I dare say he met his wife, and perhaps still lives in comfort with her and Captain Flint. It is to be hoped so, for his chances of comfort in another world are very small.

The bars of silver and the arms still lie, for all that I know, where Flint buried them; and there they shall stay as far as I am concerned. Oxen and cart-ropes would not bring me back again to that accursed island; and the worst dreams that I ever have are when I hear the surf booming about its coasts, or I start upright in bed with the sharp voice of Captain Flint still ringing in my ears:

“Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!”

The End