

Treasure Island

4. The voyage and the apple barrel

- Narrator: So the good ship *Hispaniola* strikes out westward across the Atlantic in search of adventure - and treasure! There's fair weather and foul, and a couple of hands are lost overboard, but life is cheap at sea and apart from that the voyage is uneventful. The sails go up, the sails are trimmed, the sails come down, and the waters of the deep blue carve shapes along the good ship's hull. Jim makes great friends with Silver and visits him often in the galley:
- Parrot: It'll end in tears! It'll end in tears! Who's the parrot now then? Who's the parrot now then? Silver and gold! Silver and gold!
- Jim: I've cleared the captain's cabin and ground the coffee for breakfast. Just the pots now.
- Long John Silver: Come away, Jim Hawkins, and have a yarn with me. Sit you down now and hear the news. Cap'n Flint here was just predicting success to our voyage. Wasn't you cap'n?
- Parrot: Stand by to go about!! Pieces of Eight! Pieces of Eight!
- Long John Silver: I can't disagree with him, Jim, he's never been wrong afore. Here you go...
- Jim: Why do you call him Captain Flint?
- Long John Silver: Ah, well now. I named him Flint after the famous buccaneer...
- Jim: I thought Captain Flint was an evil man, a monster.
- Long John Silver: A monster? Damn your eyes, Jim, you'd be a lucky whelk to say that and live if Flint could hear you. Though - he was a monster right enough. Most wicked pirate that ever lived. Cut more throats than I've cooked hot dinners. Struck terror across the whole Caribbee. Pass me that other knife. Ta. Flint wore out the plank he made so many walk off it to their deaths. So I'm told, mind. Not that I'd know.
- Jim: You met him?
- Long John Silver: Never had the pleasure, I'm sure. Now come on, you little scallywag, I'll help you with those pots.

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Narrator: Such is the atmosphere on the voyage, such the spirit, that neither Jim, nor Squire Trelawney, nor Dr Livesey himself suspects the terrible truth about the crew. The awful secret they are all concealing. The discovery is only made at the last minute, by chance - by young Jim himself - on the last day of the outward journey...

The *Hispaniola* has arrived by night in the very seas where the island is marked on the treasure map. A hush fills the ship as each man scours the horizon, searching for land, and thinking of the possibilities of the morrow. Jim heads up on deck to grab an apple from the big barrel. He reaches in too far - and falls to the very bottom. Then he hears voices - and what he hears stops his scrabbling dead.

Sailor 1: I think we should do it tonight.

Sailor 2: You'll stay quiet till I give the word. And not till we spy land.

Narrator: What he hears makes his heart sink and his breath race and his body tremble.

Long John Silver: When the time comes boys, we'll let her rip! We'll take the ship, kill them as ain't square with us, and dig up old Flint's treasure.

Narrator: Silver is talking mutiny with a bunch of the crew. Arguing over when they should take over. Arguing over who gets to kill Trelawney and who gets to kill Captain Smollet. And Silver himself is the one in charge...

Jim: ...the blood thirstiest pirate of them all...

Long John Silver: Only one thing I claim - Squire Trelawney! I'll rip his calf's head off his body with these here hands boys! Now then young Dick, you jump up like a good lad and get me an apple from that barrel...

Narrator: As the footsteps approach the barrel, Jim's eyes bulge in fear, he takes a breath, ready to leap and run when -

Sailor: Land ahoy! Land ahoy!

Narrator: The men on deck all rush to the side to peer into the gloom. Jim pops out of the barrel unseen and slips away.

Sailor 1: It's Skeleton Island all right!



- Sailor 2 We're here!
- Sailor 3: Treasure Island, me lads!
- Narrator: A great cheer fills the ship. In the darkness, Jim finds Captain Smollett, Dr Livesey and the Squire in the cabin and tells them his terrible news. They work out the numbers - there are only seven sailors including themselves they can trust. Which leaves nineteen pirates against them.
- Sailors singing: 'Yo ho ho and up she rises, yo ho ho and up she rises...'
- Jim: What's happening?
- Smollett: That, I may believe, is the sound of the Jolly Roger being raised.
- Jim: What are we going to do?
- Dr Livesey: A very good question my boy. A very good question indeed.

