

Treasure Island

10. Silver escapes and the heroes return

- Narrator: After many weeks, the *Hispaniola* visits a port in South America for supplies. It is a vibrant, colourful place and the music drifting from the bars in the town works its magic.
- Squire: Now then, young Jim. The Doctor and Mr Gunn and I have decided to take good Captain Smollett ashore for a little...er...local entertainment.
- Dr Livesey: All in the name of medicine of course, you understand.
- Squire: You shall stay here in charge of the good *Hispaniola*. And we shall see you in the morning.
- Smollett: Keep your eye on that rascal Silver, mind.
- Jim: Of course, Captain!
- Smollett: Cast off!
- Narrator: And away they go in a little skiff towards the harbour steps. Jim settles back on deck to soak in the atmosphere. Pretty soon he's fast asleep, dreaming of riches and his own good fortune.
- Parrot: Stand by to go about! Pieces of Eight! Pieces of Eight!
- Long John Silver: Button that beak, you pesky parrot...
- Narrator: Jim wakes in an instant.
- Long John Silver: No..no..need to stir, young Jim. I be just...er...checking the sails for...er...moths.
- Jim: With a bag of gold, I see.
- Long John Silver: What? Bag of gold? Agh! Now where the devil did that come from?
- Jim: Are you running away, Silver?
- Long John Silver: Now why should I be doing that, Jim? I gave my word, didn't I?

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- Jim: I think they'll hang you soon as we reach home.
- Long John Silver: Ah well, Jim. There you have it. In a nutshell. This be my only chance.
- Jim: I should stop you.
- Long John Silver: Aye, you should. But what if I promised to give up this pirate lark for good?
- Jim: I wouldn't believe you, Silver.
- Long John Silver: Neither would I. I've a black heart, Jim, a black heart. And you can't change a black heart without ripping it out.
- Narrator: The old pirate leans on his peg-leg, his eyes beseeching.
- Long John Silver: We been through hell and high water, shipmate, didn't we just?
- Jim: We did, Silver.
- Long John Silver: Fate and fortune - we shared em both, didn't we?
- Jim: I think I'll get a little more sleep...
- Long John Silver: And I'll just check these here...em...these...
- Narrator: Silver lowers himself into the little boat and gently gathers the oars.
- Long John Silver: I'll say a prayer of thanks for ye, Jim. Every day.
- Jim: You won't pray, Silver.
- Long John Silver: No, son. I won't. Ha, ha! You're as smart as paint, Jim me lad. Didn't I say that? Smart as paint.
- Narrator: And with that - Long John Silver is gone.

When the others return and discover he's escaped and taken a bag of treasure too - Jim acts the innocent. In truth no-one's sorry to see the back of the old pirate.

After many months at sea, they arrive back in Bristol to a tumultuous welcome. Over the next few years Jim and the others learn to spend their great fortune wisely. But the memory of his adventure is never far away...



Jim: Of Silver we have heard no more. That formidable man with one leg has at last gone clean out of my life. I dare say he met up with his wife in the end and perhaps still lives in comfort with her. It is to be hoped so, for his chances of comfort in the next world are very small. I never told a soul about the true nature of his leaving.

At night sometimes I dream I am back on the island with the surf booming, and I sit bolt upright in bed with fear. I smell again the gunpowder, I hear the clash of cutlasses. I feel the knife burning deep into my arm...and see that pirate face disappearing into the deep dark water for ever. And last of all, before sleep claims me again, I see Long John Silver grinning down at me, and I feel his great arm thumping into my back as he laughs. And I hear the sharp voice of Cap'n Flint ringing through the years: 'Pieces of Eight! Pieces of Eight! Pieces of Eight!'

