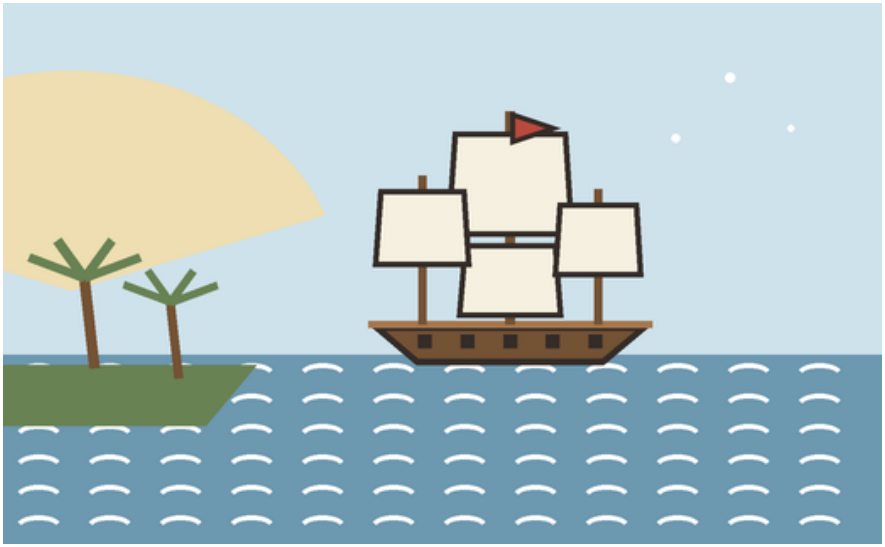
Treasure Island

A story of the sea, a map and a one-legged cook



Retold in simple English for Didier

Based on the novel by **Robert Louis Stevenson**, first published in 1883

Twenty-four short chapters

CHAPTER 1

The Old Sailor



My name is Jim Hawkins. I was fifteen years old.

My mother and I had a small inn near the sea. It was called the Admiral Benbow. My father was ill in his bed upstairs, and my mother did all the work.

One winter morning an old sailor came to the door. He was big and brown. He had a white scar on one side of his face. Behind him, a man pulled his sea chest on a little cart.

“Is this a quiet inn?” he said.

“Yes,” said my mother. “Very quiet.”

“Good. I will stay here.” He put money on the table. “Call me captain.”

So he stayed. Every day he walked by the sea and looked at the ships with a long glass. Every night he sat by the fire and drank rum and sang the same old song.

He did not talk to anybody. When a sailor came into the inn, the captain looked at him for a long time, and he did not eat.

One day he took me outside. He gave me a silver coin.

“Watch the road,” he said. “Watch for a sailor with one leg. When you see him, come and tell me. Only me.”

After that he gave me a coin every month. I watched every day. I did not see the man with one leg, but I dreamed about him at night. In my dream he ran after me and he had only one leg, and he was very fast.

CHAPTER 2

Black Dog

In January a man came to the inn. He was thin and yellow, and two fingers were missing from his left hand.

“Is my friend here?” he said. “My friend Bill?”

“There is a captain here,” I said.

“That is my Bill,” said the man. He smiled, but it was not a good smile. “We will wait for him. Behind the door.”

The captain came in from the sea. He opened the door and he walked to his chair.

“Bill,” said the man.

The captain turned round fast. His face went white, like the face of a very old man.

“Black Dog,” he said.

They sat down together and they talked quietly. Then their voices got loud. There was a shout, and a table fell, and Black Dog ran out of the door with blood on his

shoulder.

The captain went after him. Then he stopped in the road. He put his hand on his head, and he fell down.

We carried him to a chair. He was not dead, but his face was a strange colour.

“Jim,” he said quietly. “They want my sea chest. They are all after me. Do you understand? All of them.”

CHAPTER 3

The Black Spot

Two days later a blind man came up the road. He was old, and he had a big stick, and he was in a long grey coat.

“Will a kind boy help a poor blind man?” he said.

“Yes,” I said.

He took my arm. His hand was cold and very strong. It was like a piece of iron.

“Now take me to the captain,” he said.

I was afraid, but I took him inside. The captain looked up and his mouth opened.

The blind man put something into the captain’s hand. Then he turned and he went out of the door, fast, and his stick made a noise on the road.

The captain opened his hand. It was a small round piece of paper. One side was black.

“The black spot!” he said. He looked at his watch. “Ten o’clock. They give me six hours. Jim, we can fight them yet—”

He stood up. Then he put both hands on his heart. He made a strange sound, and he fell on the floor.

I ran to him. My mother came. But the captain was dead.

“Mother,” I said, “they are coming at four o’clock. We must open his chest. He owes us money, and we must take it now.”

CHAPTER 4

The Sea Chest



the sea chest



the map

We found the key on a string around the captain’s neck.

The chest smelled of tobacco and the sea. On top there were old clothes, very good clothes, but he never wore them.

Under the clothes there were many things: two guns, a piece of silver, a small Spanish watch, four beautiful shells, and an old cup.

At the bottom there was a bag of money and a packet of papers. The papers were tied with string.

My mother took the bag and began to count the money. She wanted her money and nothing more. She was an honest woman, and she counted slowly.

“Mother,” I said, “please. There is no time.”

Then we heard a noise outside in the dark. It was a stick on the road: *tap, tap, tap*.

My mother stood up. “Take the bag,” she said. “I will take this.” She had some coins in her hand.

I took the packet of papers and I put it inside my coat. We went out of the back door and we ran into the dark.

CHAPTER 5

Under the Bridge

There was a small bridge over the stream. We went under it and we sat in the water and the mud. We did not move.

We heard them. Seven or eight men ran to the inn. They broke the door.

“Bill is dead!” shouted a voice.

“Look in his chest!”

We heard them upstairs. Things fell and broke.

“Somebody was here! The chest is open!”

“Is the money there?” It was the voice of the blind man.

“The money is here.”

“I do not want the money, fools! I want Flint’s papers!”

“They are not here, Pew.”

“It is the boy! Find him! Find him!”

Then we heard horses on the road. The men shouted and ran into the trees. The blind man was alone in the

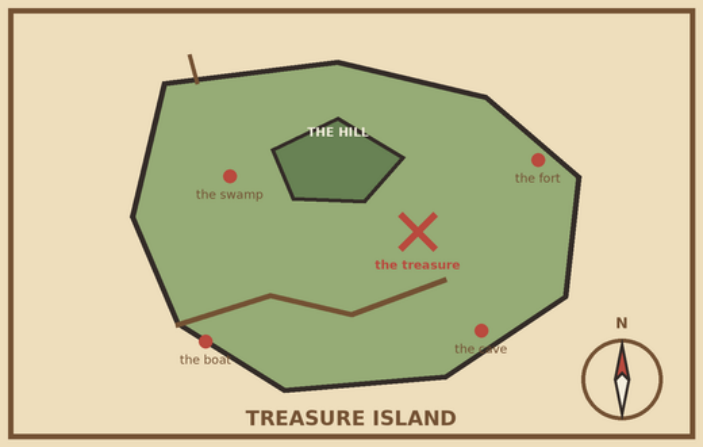
road. He turned the wrong way, and he ran, and the horses came, and he did not get up again.

The riders were the King’s men. They took us to a warm house and they gave my mother a hot drink.

I sat by the fire with the packet in my hands.

CHAPTER 6

The Map



The next morning I took the packet to Doctor Livesey. He was our doctor, and he was a good man.

He was at the big house with Squire Trelawney. The squire was a tall man with a red face, and he talked very loudly.

We opened the packet on the table. Inside there was a little book, and there was a paper. The paper was a map.

It was a map of an island. There were hills, and a wood, and two good places for a ship. There was a red cross in the middle of the island, and next to it, in small letters: *Here is the treasure.*

On the back there were more words. They gave the place of the treasure: a tall tree, a hill, and ten feet of ground.

The squire jumped up from his chair.

“Livesey!” he shouted. “This is Flint’s treasure! Flint was the worst pirate who ever lived. He took gold from ships for twenty years and he put it on this island!”

“We will go there,” said the squire. “I will buy a ship. Jim will come with us.”

“Very well,” said the doctor. “But one thing, Trelawney. You must not tell anybody. Not one word.”

“Of course not,” said the squire. “Not one word.”

CHAPTER 7

Bristol

Some weeks later a letter came from the squire. He was in Bristol, a big city with a big port.

He wrote: *I have the ship. She is called the Hispaniola. I have the men too. Come at once.*

There was more. He wrote about a cook he met in the town, a man with one leg who kept a small inn near the water. The man was an old sailor, and he helped the squire find good men for the voyage.

I read that line twice. A man with one leg.

But I was young, and I was going to sea, and I thought about the island and not about the cook.

I said goodbye to my mother. She did not cry until the last minute. Then I got on the coach, and I did not look back, because I could not.

Bristol was full of ships. There were ships from every country in the world. There were sailors with rings in their ears, and there were parrots in cages, and

everything smelled of salt and tar.

I walked by the water all morning and I was very happy.

CHAPTER 8

Long John Silver

The squire sent me to the little inn near the water with a note for the cook.

The cook was a tall man. He was clean and he smiled a lot. His left leg was gone at the hip, and he walked with a crutch under his shoulder. He moved fast. He moved like a bird.

On his shoulder sat a green parrot.

“You are Jim Hawkins,” he said. “The squire told me. Come in.”

I looked at his leg and I thought: *this is the man. This is the sailor with one leg.*

Then a man got up from a table and ran out of the door. I saw his face. It was Black Dog.

“Stop him!” I shouted. “That is Black Dog!”

“Black who?” said Silver. “Ben, run after him!” He hit the table with his hand. “He did not pay for his drink! Who was he, Jim?”

I told him. Silver listened, and he looked very angry, and he said all the right things.

“A bad man,” he said. “We will tell the doctor.”

He was so honest and so friendly. I was sorry for my first thought. I liked him very much.

CHAPTER 9

The Voyage

The *Hispaniola* was a good ship. Captain Smollett was a serious man with a hard face, and he did not smile.

“I do not like this voyage,” he said to the squire. “I do not like the men. And everybody in Bristol knows about the treasure. Everybody. Even the boy in the street.”

The squire was angry. But the captain was right.

We went to sea. I was the cabin boy. I carried food and I cleaned the cups and I learned the names of the ropes.

The men worked well. Long John Silver was the best of them. He cooked, and he sang, and he was kind to everybody.

His parrot sat in a cage by the door of the kitchen. All day she said the same thing: “Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!”

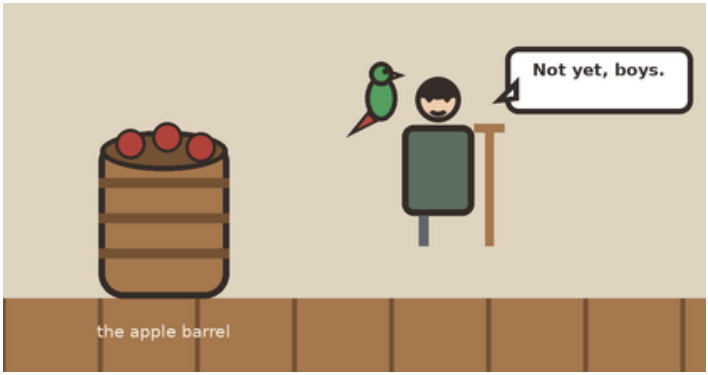
“She is two hundred years old, Jim,” said Silver. “She sailed with Captain Flint himself.”

The days were long and blue. I climbed the mast. I watched the flying fish. I was happier than I have ever been.

And every day we came nearer to the island.

CHAPTER 10

The Apple Barrel



One evening, near the end of the voyage, I wanted an apple.

There was a big barrel on the deck. It was nearly empty now. I climbed up and I went inside, and I sat down at the bottom in the dark.

The ship moved slowly. I fell asleep.

A voice woke me. Somebody sat down next to the barrel, and the barrel moved a little.

It was Silver. He was talking to a young sailor.

“I sailed with Flint,” said Silver quietly. “I was there when he put the gold in the ground. I know that island.”

“When do we take the ship?” said the young man.

“Not yet,” said Silver. “Smollett is a good sailor. He will take us to the island. The squire has the map. Let them find the treasure for us and carry it to the ship. Then—”

“Then what?”

“Then we kill them,” said Silver. “All of them.”

My heart was so loud. I was sure they could hear it. I did not move. I did not breathe.

They were not sailors. They were pirates, nearly all of them, and my friend Long John Silver was their captain.

CHAPTER 11

Land

I sat in the barrel for a long time. Then a voice called from above: “Land! Land in front of us!”

Every man ran to the side of the ship. I climbed out of the barrel in the noise, and nobody saw me.

The island was grey and green. There were three hills, and one hill was very tall.

“I know this place,” said Silver happily. “I was here with Flint. That is Spy Glass Hill. And there is a good place for the ship on the other side.”

He was so friendly, and so helpful, and he put his hand on my shoulder.

“A fine island for a boy, Jim,” he said. “You can climb and swim and look for goats. It makes me young again.”

I smiled at him. It was the hardest thing I ever did.

That night I found the doctor on the deck.

“Doctor,” I said, “I have something to tell you. Please get the captain and the squire.”

CHAPTER 12

Seven Against Nineteen

We went into the captain’s cabin and we closed the door. I told them everything.

Nobody spoke for a long time.

“Captain,” said the squire, “you were right and I was wrong. I am a fool.”

“No, sir,” said the captain. “But this is bad. Let us count. How many men can we trust?”

They counted on their fingers. The captain, the doctor, the squire. Three good men from the squire’s house. And me.

“Seven,” said the captain. “And they are nineteen.”

“We have the map,” said the doctor. “They do not.”

“And we have Jim Hawkins,” said the squire.

“Yes,” said the captain. He looked at me, and for the first time he almost smiled. “Jim, they trust you. That is worth more than a gun. Now listen, all of you. Say

nothing. Do your work. Smile at them. And wait.”

It was very hard to smile at Long John Silver the next morning. But I did it.

CHAPTER 13

Ashore

The next day was hot and there was no wind. The sea was flat like glass. The men were angry and tired, and they did not work well.

“Let them go to the island for the afternoon,” said Silver to the captain. “They will be happy again.”

The captain looked at the doctor. There was nothing else to do.

“Very well,” he said.

Thirteen men got into the two boats. Six stayed on the ship.

I stood by the side and I watched them. And then I did something very stupid. I put my leg over the side and I dropped down into the nearest boat.

Nobody said anything. A man near me said: “Is that you, Jim?” But Silver looked at me from the other boat, and his face was not friendly now.

The boat touched the sand. I did not wait. I jumped out and I ran, and I ran into the trees, and I did not stop until I could not hear them.

CHAPTER 14

Ben Gunn

The island was hot and strange. There were green birds, and flowers I did not know, and trees with long grey hair on them.

I walked for an hour. I was alone, and I was happy to be alone.

Then I saw something move behind a tree.

It moved again. It was fast, like a goat. But it ran on two legs.

It was a man.

He was thin and very brown. His clothes were pieces of old sail and goat skin, and they were held together with buttons and string. His hair was long and wild.

He came near and then he went down on his knees.

“Ben Gunn,” he said. “I am poor Ben Gunn. I have not talked to a man for three years.”

“Three years?”

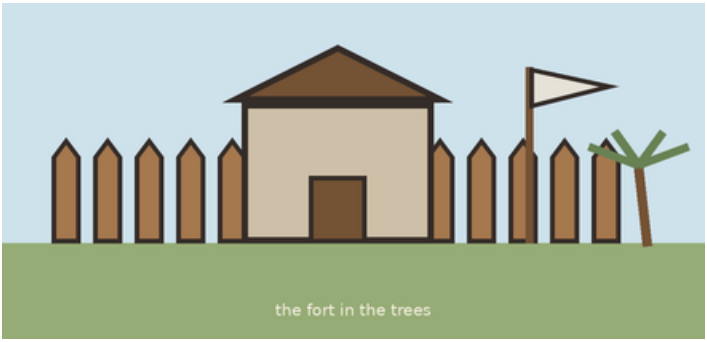
“They left me here,” he said. “I was in Flint’s ship. We came back to look for the gold and we did not find it, and they put me on the sand and they sailed away.”

He held my arm and he looked into my face.

“Jim,” he said. “Do you have any cheese? Many nights I dream about cheese. Toasted, mostly.”

CHAPTER 15

The Fort



the fort in the trees

“Now,” said Ben Gunn, “tell me. Is that Flint’s ship out there?”

“It is not Flint’s ship,” I said. “Flint is dead. But some of Flint’s men are on it, and that is bad for us.”

“Is there a man with one leg?”

“Silver,” I said.

“Ah,” said Ben Gunn. He was quiet for a moment. Then he said: “Jim, listen. Ben Gunn is a rich man. Tell your squire that. Ben Gunn has something, and he will talk to a gentleman.”

I did not understand him then.

While I was in the trees, my friends left the ship. There was an old fort on the island: a log house inside a high wall of sharp trees, with a clean stream inside the wall. Captain Flint built it many years before.

The doctor, the squire, the captain and three good men took food and guns and went there.

In the evening I came out of the trees and I climbed over the wall.

“Jim!” said the doctor. “We thought you were dead.”

That night we heard the pirates on the ship. They were drinking rum and singing. Their song came over the water all night.

CHAPTER 16

The White Flag

In the morning Silver came to the wall with a white flag. Another man carried it. Silver stood in the wet grass and he looked up at us.

“Good morning,” he said. “A fine day.”

“What do you want?” said Captain Smollett.

“We want the map,” said Silver. “Give us the map and you can keep your lives. Go home in the ship, or stay here with food. That is a fair offer.”

“Is that all?” said the captain.

“That is all,” said Silver, “and it is more than you will get later.”

The captain stood up straight.

“Now you listen to me,” he said. “You cannot find the treasure. You cannot sail the ship: there is not one man among you who can do it. And you cannot fight us. Come here and ask nicely, and I will put you in chains and take you home for a fair trial. That is my

offer, and it is the last one you will get from me.”

Silver’s face went dark red.

“Then in one hour,” he said quietly, “I will break that door of yours.”

He turned and he went into the trees.

CHAPTER 17

The Fight

We waited. The sun came up higher and the air did not move. Nobody talked.

Then they came.

They came out of the trees on the north side, all together, shouting. Some climbed the wall. Two came through the door of the log house.

It was very loud and very quick. There was smoke, and I could not see, and somebody fell against me.

I remember the doctor with a knife in his hand. I remember the captain shouting an order. I remember running with a gun that was too heavy for me.

And then it was finished.

Five pirates were dead in the grass. The others ran back into the trees.

Two of our men were dead too. The captain sat against the wall with blood on his shoulder, and his face was grey.

I sat down on the ground. My hands were shaking and I could not stop them.

“That is the worst of it,” said the doctor. “We won, Jim.”

But I looked at the two men in the grass, and I did not feel like a winner.

CHAPTER 18

Jim Runs Away Again

That afternoon the doctor went out of the fort alone. I watched him walk into the trees, and I thought: *he is going to find Ben Gunn.*

Then I had an idea of my own. It was not a good idea.

Ben Gunn told me about a little boat. He made it himself, in a cave, out of wood and goat skin. Nobody knew about it but me.

I did not tell anybody. I filled my pockets with bread and I went over the wall when nobody was looking.

I know now that this was wrong. My friends needed me, and I left them.

I found the boat under a tent of goat skins. It was very small and very light. I carried it down to the water in the dark.

The pirates on the ship had a big fire on the beach. I could hear them singing.

I put the little boat in the black water and I got in.

CHAPTER 19

The Rope

The sea carried me out. I could not steer the little boat well: it turned and turned. But it went where I wanted, towards the ship.

The *Hispaniola* was a dark shape with one light. I came under her side and I found the big rope that held her.

It was as thick as my arm, and it was hard as iron in the water.

I took out my knife and I began to cut.

Above me two men were arguing in the cabin. Their voices were thick with rum.

I cut and cut. Then the wind pushed the ship, and the rope went soft for a moment, and I cut the last piece.

The ship began to move. Slowly, quietly, she turned in the water and she went out to sea, and my little boat went with her.

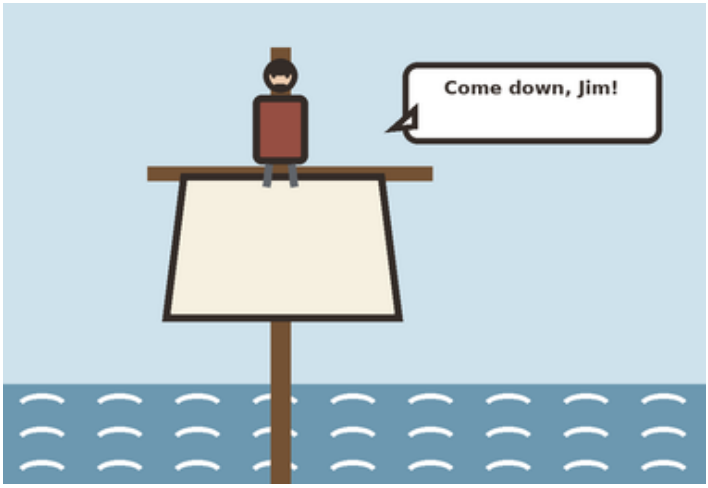
The pirates on the beach could not follow her now.

Then I looked around me at the black water, and I understood something. I could not follow her either. I was alone in the dark, on the sea, in a boat the size of a bath.

I lay down at the bottom of the boat, and I was very tired, and I slept.

CHAPTER 20

Israel Hands



The sun woke me. The island was far away, and the *Hispaniola* was near.

She was turning and turning in the water, with nobody at the wheel. When she came close I jumped, and I caught a rope, and I climbed up.

Two men were on the deck. One was dead. The other was a man called Israel Hands. He sat against the side with a red cloth around his leg, and his face was the colour of a candle.

“Water,” he said.

I brought him water and he drank it all.

“I am the captain of this ship now,” I said. I took down their black flag and I threw it into the sea.

He smiled at me. I did not like his smile.

“Take her into the north bay,” he said. “I will tell you how.”

He was helpful and he was polite, and all the time he watched me.

When my back was turned, I heard something. I turned round. He was coming at me with a knife in his hand.

I ran. I climbed the mast, up and up, and I did not stop until I was high above the water.

“Come down, Jim,” he said quietly. And he began to climb after me.

CHAPTER 21

Back to the Fort

I do not want to write about what happened on the mast. It was very fast, and it was not brave, and afterwards I was sick.

But I brought the ship into the north bay, and I made her safe, and I got down into the water and I walked to the sand.

It was dark. I was wet and I was so tired I could hardly walk. But I was happy. I had the ship. I took the ship from them, alone. I wanted to see the doctor’s face when I told him.

I came to the fort and I climbed the wall. Inside, the fire was low and red. Everybody was asleep.

I walked forward with my hands out in front of me.

And then a loud voice cut the dark:

“Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!”

It was the parrot.

A man jumped up and made a light. I saw six faces, and none of them was the face of a friend.

And in the middle of them, on the floor, sat Long John Silver.

CHAPTER 22

Silver Keeps His Word

“So,” said Silver. “Jim Hawkins. Come to see us. This is a friendly thing.”

“Where are my friends?” I said.

“Gone. The doctor came yesterday with a white flag and gave me the map.” He held it up. “They walked out of here this morning.”

I could not understand it. Why did the doctor give him the map?

“Kill the boy,” said one of the pirates.

“No,” said Silver. He stood up on his one leg. “Nobody touches Jim Hawkins.”

The men went outside and talked for a long time. Then they came back and they gave Silver a piece of paper with a black spot on it.

Silver laughed at them.

“You want a new captain?” he said. “Here is why you will keep me.” And he threw the map on the floor.

The men fell on it like dogs. They shouted and they were happy again.

Later, when they slept, Silver came near me.

“Jim,” he said very quietly, “I will save you from them, and you will save me from the rope. That is the deal.”

I looked at him. I did not know if he was my friend or my enemy. I am not sure I know today.

CHAPTER 23

The Hole in the Ground

In the morning we walked into the trees to find the treasure.

Silver had a rope around my waist and he held the other end. I walked in front of him like a dog on a lead.

It was very hot. The men carried tools and they talked about what they would buy with the gold.

We came up a long hill. We found the place from the map: the three tall trees, and the ground between them.

Then one man began to run, and they all ran, shouting and pushing each other.

And then they stopped.

In front of us there was a big hole in the ground. It was old: grass grew in the bottom of it. There was one broken box, and a piece of rope, and nothing else.

The treasure was gone.

The men turned round slowly and they looked at Silver, and their faces were terrible.

Silver put his hand quietly on his gun. “Jim,” he said, “stand near me.”

CHAPTER 24

Ben Gunn’s Cave



Then there were shots from the trees, and two pirates fell, and the others ran.

The doctor came out of the wood with a gun in his hand. Ben Gunn was with him, and one of our men.

“Thank you, doctor,” said Silver. “You came at the right moment.”

The doctor explained it as we walked. Ben Gunn found the treasure two years before, alone. He dug it up and he carried it, a little every day, for many days, to a cave on the other side of the island. That was why the hole was empty. That was why the doctor gave Silver the

map: the map was worth nothing.

The cave was cool and dry. And there, at the back of it, was Flint’s treasure: English gold, French gold, Spanish gold, all mixed together in a great bright pile.

It took us three days to carry it to the ship.

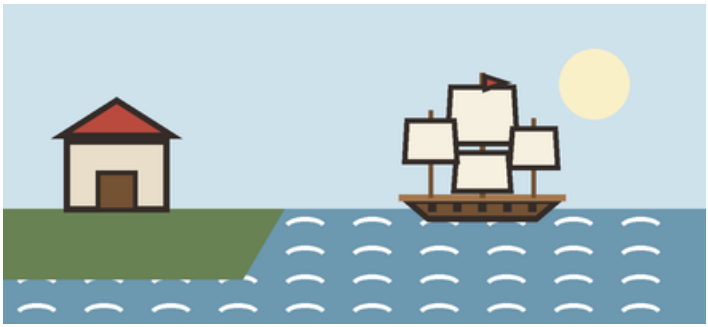
We left three pirates on the island with food and tools. It was more than they gave Ben Gunn.

In a port in America, Silver took a bag of coins and went away in the night. Nobody looked for him very hard. I think the doctor was glad.

Ben Gunn got a thousand pounds. He spent it in nineteen days.

I am an old man now. I have a quiet life and I like it. But sometimes, at night, I still hear that voice in my sleep:

“Pieces of eight! Pieces of eight!”



THE END