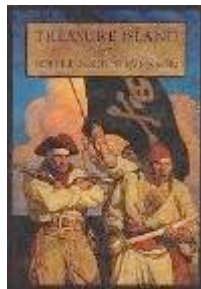


# TREASURE ISLAND



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Adapted for The Ten Minute Tutor by: Debra Treloar

## BOOK ONE – THE OLD BUCCANEER

### CHAPTER 4.

#### THE SEA CHEST

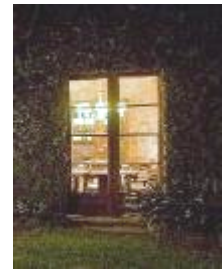
I told my mother right away, what I knew. Maybe I should have told her earlier because both of us didn't feel safe. We were still owed money by the Captain, but we didn't think his ship mates - Black Dog or the blind beggar would want to give up their share of the dead man's money.

I could not follow the Captain's orders to ride a horse to Dr. Livesey either, as I did not want to leave my mother alone. We knew we couldn't stay at the Inn much longer. The dead body of the Captain was still lying on the lounge room floor, even the noises from the kitchen and the tick of the clock, filled us with fright. In fact, the whole street seemed to be haunted by foot steps. The thought of that awful blind beggar coming back made our skin crawl.

We did not even have time to put on a hat or coat to protect us from the chilly fog, before we made a dash to the next village to ask for help.

The next village was not far away but we could not see it, as it was in the next cove. At least it was the other way from where the blind man had come from and that made me feel a little better.

It was almost dark when we got to the village and I remember how the doors and windows shone with yellow light from the candles and fires. This cheered me up, but not for long. Not one person would come with us to the Admiral Benbow.



The more we told them of our trouble, the more they wanted to stay in the warmth of their houses. Many knew the name of Captain Flint, and most were too afraid.

Some of the men who had worked on the far side of the Admiral Benbow had seen a few strangers on the road. They thought they were smugglers and had run away. They decided, that anyone who was a friend of the Captain's was enough to scare them to death.

So in the end, we could only get a few who were willing to ride to Dr. Livesey's, in the other direction, but none of them would help us protect our Inn.

Then my mother made a speech. She would not, lose the money that was due to her boy and who now also, did not have a father.

"If none of you will help," she said, "Jim and I will do it on our own. We will go back the way we came, with small thanks to you big, men with chicken hearts. We'll open that chest, even if we die for it. I'll take that bag, thank you, Mrs. Crossley, to bring back our money in."

Of course, I said I would go with my mother, and of course they all said that we were mad. But not one person, would come along with us. All they did was, give me a loaded pistol in case we were attacked. They promised to have horses saddled in case we were chased when we came back.

One boy would ride to the Doctor and ask for help from the police.

My heart was beating too fast as we set off again in the cold night on our dangerous trip.

A full moon was coming up and would soon poke through the upper edges of the fog. We were worried that too much light would show us to any strangers who may be watching. We crept along the hedges, as fast and quiet as we could and to our relief, we made it to the door of the Admiral Benbow and closed it behind us.

I snibbed the bolt as fast as I could and we stood there leaning against the door and panting in the dark. Then my mother lit a candle, and holding each other's hands, we moved into the lounge. The Captain 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 try to look in."

"We have to get the key off that! She said pointing at the Captain "I don't know who would want to touch it!" and she gave a kind of sob as she said the words. I went down on my knees at once.

On the floor, close to his hand, there was a little piece of paper, blackened on the one side. I knew this was the Black Spot and written in very good writing on the other side was: "You have until ten tonight."

"He had until ten, Mother," I said. Just as I said it, our old clock began striking. The sudden noise made us both jump but thank goodness, it was only six o'clock.

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

I felt in his pockets, one by one. A few small coins, a \*thimble, some thread and big needles, a piece of tobacco, his clasp-knife with the crooked handle, a pocket compass, and a tinder box to start a fire were all that were there.

I began to worry.

(\*A thimble is used to protect the end of a finger when sewing with a needle.)



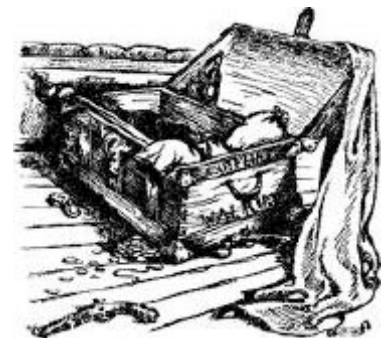
"Maybe it is around his neck," suggested my mother.

Trying not to be sick, I tore his shirt open at the neck, and yes, we found the key on an old bit of string, which I cut with his clasp-knife.

We raced upstairs to the little room where he had slept for so long and where his chest had been since his very first day.

It looked like any sea-man's chest on the outside, the initial "B" burned on the top of it with a hot iron, and the corners were a bit smashed and broken from use.

I gave the key to my mother. The lock was very stiff, but she turned it and threw back the lid. A strong smell of tobacco rose from the inside, but we couldn't see anything on the top except a suit of very good clothes, carefully brushed and folded. My mother said they had never been worn.



Under that however was... a quadrant\*, a tin cup, some tobacco, two very good pistols, a bar of silver, an old Spanish watch and some other bits of little value, two brass compasses, and five or six strange West Indian shells. (\*A quadrant is used by sailors to work out where to go – like a compass)



I have often wondered, why would he carry shells with him on his travels?

Really, we found nothing of any value except the silver and a few bits and pieces. Underneath all that was an old worn sea-faring jacket, which was white with sea-salt. My mother pulled it out in a hurry and underneath we could see the last thing in the chest. A bundle tied up in an oily cloth, which looked like papers. There was also a canvas bag that when you touched it, you could hear the jingle of gold.

"I will show these rascals that I am an honest woman," said my mother. "I'll have what I am owed and not a penny more. Jim, hold Mrs. Crossley's bag." She began to count the money from the Captain's sailor bag into the one that I held.

It was a long, tricky task, because the coins were from all different countries and all different sizes. There were Spanish gold coins, French gold coins, English gold coins, and \*pieces of eight. (\*Spanish silver dollars)



My mother only knew how to count the English gold coins, and there were not very many of them. When she was about half way through counting, I put my hand on her arm. I had heard in the silent frosty air, the sound that made my heart jump into my mouth... the tap tapping of the blind man's stick on the frozen road.

It came closer and closer, while we sat holding our breath.

Then it hit on the Inn door and we could hear the door handle being turned and the bolt rattle. There was a long time of silence both inside and outside. After a while, the tapping started again, until it got further and further away and we both gave a sigh of relief!

"Mother," I said, "take it all and let's get going." I was sure the bolted door must have seemed strange and it would stir up a whole wasp's nest if we did not go.

But how glad was I, that I had bolted that door. I did not want to meet that terrible blind man again. But my mother, even though she was scared, was not going to take any more than what was owed and yet she was not going to miss out on her fair share.

"It is not seven o'clock yet," she said "and I know what is right."

She was still arguing with me when a little low whistle sounded a long way off up the hill. That was more than enough, for both of us to jump to our feet.

"We'll take what we have!" she said.

"And I'll take this oily cloth for my fair share," I said picking it up.

The next minute we were both feeling our way down the stairs and left a candle by the empty chest. We opened the door and had headed off just in time as the fog was fast becoming thinner and the moon was making every thing brighter.



We were almost half way to the village when the fog began to lift and we could hear the sound of many footsteps running. As we crossed the bridge we looked back, we could see men carrying a lantern.

"Jim, my dear," said my mother all of a sudden grabbing my arm, "Take the money and keep running. I am going to faint."

By good luck, and I don't know how I did it, I dragged her down to the bank of the river and a just under the arch of the bridge. I could not move her any more, as the bridge was too low for me to crawl under it.



So... we had to stay right there... my mother not quite hidden and both of us just able to hear voices at the Inn.