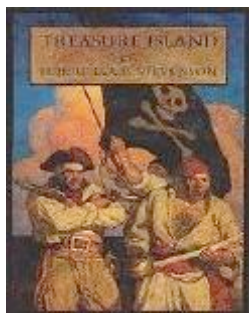


# TREASURE ISLAND



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## BOOK ONE – THE OLD BUCCANEER

### CHAPTER 1.

#### THE OLD SEA-DOG AT THE ADMIRAL BENBOW

Mr. Trelawney, Dr. Livesey, and the other gentlemen have asked me to write down all the details about Treasure Island from start to end.

I won't leave anything out, except where the island is, because I know there is still treasure buried there.

My name is Jim Hawkins and I am writing this story in 1791. I will start at the time when my father was the Inn-keeper at The Admiral Benbow Inn.

Back when an old, brown seaman stayed at our Inn. He came to the Inn door, with his sea-chest following behind him in a wheel-barrow.

He was a big, tall, strong man, with an oily black pigtail, which hung over the shoulder of his dirty blue coat.

His hands were worn and scarred with black, broken nails and a big dirty, grey scar across one cheek.

I remember him looking around the cove and whistling to himself. He started to sing an old sea-song that I would hear so many times:



"Fifteen men on the dead man's chest...  
Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!"

He sang in a loud, rough, old voice that was almost in tune but sounded a bit broken.

Then he banged on the door with a bit of stick. As my father answered the door, the stranger called loudly for a glass of rum. He took the rum and drank, but also looked around him at the cliffs and then up at the name of our Inn.

"This is a nice handy cove," he said after a while, "And a good place for a grog-shop. Do you get many people here, mate?"

My father told him no, very few people came.

"Well then, this is the place for me. Hey you..., matey," he cried to the man who pushed the timber wheel-barrow. "Bring it up here and help me lift my chest off. I'll stay here for a bit," he said.

"I'm a plain man. Rum, bacon and eggs is all I need, and to walk up to the cliff to watch ships off.

You can call me Captain.

Oh!..., and I see what you want...

there!" and he threw down three or four gold coins on the door step. "You can tell me when I've spent all that," he said, looking very fierce.



From the way his clothes were all worn and the way he spoke, he did not look like a man who was Captain of a ship.

The man who pushed the wheel-barrow told us a ship had dropped him off yesterday at the Royal George Hotel. The man said that he had asked about the all inns along the coast and I guess he heard that ours was very quiet. That was all we could find out about the stranger.

All day, he hung around the cove or up on the cliffs with a brass telescope watching the sea.



All evening he sat in a corner of the lounge next to the fire and drank very strong rum and water. He did not speak unless he was spoken to. Even then, he would often look up and glare, then blow through his nose like a fog-horn.

My father and I, and the other people who visited our Inn, soon learned to leave him alone.

Every day when he came back from his walk, he would ask if any sea-faring men had been on the road. At first we thought he asked this question because he was lonely and wanted a friend like him. But soon we realised that he did not want to see them.

When a seaman did stop at the Admiral Benbow, he would watch them from behind the door before he came in to the room. He was always as quiet as a mouse when another seaman was around.

I became just as worried also...

One day, he told me he would give me a silver coin on the first day of every month. If I would keep my "eye open for a sea-faring man with one leg" and let him know as soon as I saw him.

Many times when the first of the month came and I asked him for his money, he would only blow through his nose at me and then stare at me.

But by the end of the week, he would bring me my silver coin and tell me again to look out for "the sea-faring man with one leg."

The image of that person haunted my dreams, I tell you!

On stormy nights, when the wind blew so hard and the waves roared along the cove and crashed into the cliffs, I would dream of this one legged man in a thousand ways.

I would imagine his leg was cut off at the knee, then at the hip, or that he was a monster who only had one leg, in the middle of his body! My worst nightmare was when I would see him chase me over fences and hedges. I really worked hard for my monthly silver coin, having these awful dreams.

Although I was scared of a sea-faring man with one leg that I had not met yet, I was not quite as scared of the Captain. Some nights he drank a lot more rum and water than his head could take. Other times, he would sit and sing his old, sea-songs, to himself.

Then he would call for drinks for everyone and make them all listen to his stories, or put up with his singing.

I often heard the whole Inn shaking with,

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

All the people had to join in for fear of death. All sang louder than the others to try and avoid his anger.

It was on these nights he was the most, bossy person ever. He would slap his hand on the table for silence, or he would jump up in anger at a question.

Sometimes he got angry because no one asked a question.

He thought that no one was listening to his story.

He did not allow anyone to leave the Inn until he had drunk himself to sleep and crawled off to bed. But his stories were what scared people most of all. Dreadful stories... about hanging and walking the plank, about storms at sea, as well as, doing bad things in places like the Spanish Main\*.



*\* The Spanish Main was a famous trading route from South America to the Carribbean. Gold, silver, spices and leather hides as well as other riches were shipped back to Spain.*

By his stories, he must have lived his life among some of the meanest men that sailed the sea.

My father always said the Inn would be ruined. People would stop coming here to be bossed over and put down. But I think he did us good. People were scared at the time, but looking back I think they may have liked it.

Some of the young men wanted to be like him and called him a "true sea-dog" and a "real old salt".

He nearly did ruin us though, because he stayed week after week, then month after month, so that all the money he had given us, was all used up.

My father did not feel brave enough to keep asking for more. If he did ask, the Captain blew through his nose so loudly that he roared. He would stare my poor father out of the room!

I had seen my father wringing his hands and quite upset.

The whole time he lived with us, the Captain did not change his clothes once - except to buy some stocking socks from a hawker\*. *\*A hawker is sales person who comes to the door.*



One of the corners of his hat hung down, which annoyed him greatly when the wind blew.

He never wrote or received a letter. He only spoke to the people at the Inn and only when he was drunk on rum. None of us ever saw him open his great sea-chest.

Then one day, just before my poor father died, Dr. Livesey came to visit. After seeing my father, the Doctor ate dinner cooked by my mother, before going into the main lounge to smoke a pipe. He had to wait for his horse to arrive from the village, as we did not have stables at the Old Benbow Inn.

I remember the contrast of the neat, clean Doctor, with his face as white as snow and his bright, black eyes and nice manners.

While the dirty, big Captain with blood-shot eyes, sat at the table, drunk with rum.

Then, the Captain, began to pipe up his usual 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!"

I thought "the dead man's chest" must be exactly like the big sea-chest upstairs in his room.

By now, no one paid any notice to his song any more. But, it was new to Dr. Livesey. I could tell he did not like it, because he looked up quite angrily, before he went on talking to old Mr. Taylor.

The Captain slowly got louder with his singing, until at last he slapped his hand down on the table in front of him. We all knew he meant, stop talking! The voices stopped at once... all except Dr. Livesey's. He kept talking clearly and kindly while puffing on his pipe.

The Captain glared at him for a while, then slapped his hand down again and glared even harder.

He said in a low curse, "Silence, there, on deck!"

"Were you talking to me, sir?" asked the Doctor.

Then with another curse, the Captain said he was.



"I have only one thing to say to you, sir," replied the Doctor.  
"If you keep on drinking rum like that, then this world will soon be rid of a very dirty villain!"

The old Captain's anger was scary. He jumped to his feet, took out and opened a sailor's clasp-knife, and threatened to pin the doctor to the wall!



The doctor did not move. He spoke to him in the same calm, steady voice for all to hear:

"If you don't put that knife back in your pocket right now, I promise, on my honour, you will hang at the next day of court," he said.

They just stared at each other, but the Captain soon backed down and put away his knife. He sat down on his seat, growling like a beaten dog.



The Doctor said, "Sir, now that I know there is such a man in my area, you can count on me having my eye on you day and night. I am not only a Doctor; I am also a Judge. If I hear one word of complaint against you, even if it is only for being rude like tonight, I will have you hunted down. This is a warning!"

Then, Dr. Livesey's horse was brought to the door and he rode away. The Captain kept very quiet that night, and for many days after that.