

Treasure Island

6. The stockade and the pirates attack

Narrator: On Treasure Island you might be forgiven for thinking a war was taking place. Anchored in the bay, the *Hispaniola* is firing her cannon deep into the woods. And through the trees, the pirates advance, muskets blazing. Oblivious to the danger, young Jim Hawkins races through the undergrowth heading for the Union Jack that flies bravely atop the trees. When he gets there, it's a relief to find there's shelter. A tall wooden stockade stands in a clearing - and inside it, his old friends Squire Trelawney, Doctor Livesey, Captain Smollett and a handful of faithful sailors, are fending off a full-blown attack from the pirates.

Jim: Doctor! Squire! Captain! Let down the drawbridge! It's me!

Dr Livesey: Quickly, men, let the boy in!

Squire: Jim - we thought we'd lost you!

Hunter: Happen as still might unless we keep them muskets firing.

Squire: Ah, yes, good thinking my man. Repel the blackguards! A sovereign for every man we put down!

Narrator: But the pirates give up the fight - for now. Jim and the others exchange news. It turns out that the stockade they're in was built many years ago by Captain Flint as a stronghold if ever he should be attacked. Squire Trelawney and the others just beat Silver and the pirates to it - though they lost a couple of good men in so doing. They managed to salvage enough guns, ammunition and food from the ship to keep them going for a couple of weeks but not much more.

Jim: So - we're still outnumbered.

Captain Smollett: Aye - the laddy's right!

Hunter: Who goes there? Stand or we fire!

Long John Silver: Flag of truce!

Dr Livesey: What do you want with your flag of truce?

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- Long John Silver: Cap'n Silver, sir, to come on board and make terms.
- Captain Smollett: Cap'n Silver! Never heard of him. Who's he?
- Long John Silver: Me sir. These poor lads have chosen me to be their cap'n, after your...desertion...sir.
- Captain Smollett: Ha! Desertion! I'll show you desertion!
- Doctor Livesey: Smollett! Smollett! We'll hear you, Silver. But just you mind, now.
- Long John Silver: Why thankee, sir. I knew you were a reasonable gent.
- Narrator: Captain Smollett and Long John Silver face each other sullenly. Each man sits and lights a pipe. Neither speaks until...
- Long John Silver: So here we are all together like a happy family, in a manner of speaking.
- Captain Smollett: If you have anything to say, man, say it and be off with you!
- Narrator: So Silver lays down his terms. He wants the treasure - and he means to have it. But he needs the map to find it. So if they'll just give him the map, he promises to let them be and not to kill them all.
- Long John Silver: A handsomer deal, you couldn't look to get, now, could you?
- Narrator: Silver smiles. But Smollett's face is dark. He in turn makes Silver an offer.
- Captain Smollett: Give yourselves up now, and I'll make sure you get a fair trial back home. That - or die here on the island. Now off with you mister Silver before you get a bullet in your back!
- Narrator: Silver's face darkened and his eyes grow cold.
- Long John Silver: Give me a hand up!
- Narrator: The Captain turns his back.
- Long John Silver: Who'll give me a hand up?
- Narrator: Not a man moves to help him. Silver has no choice. He crawls along the sand till he can grab hold of the porch and then hoists himself up against his crutch. Jim holds his breath.



- Long John Silver: *(Spitting)* That's what I think of ye! Laugh, by thunder, laugh! Before an hour's out I'll stove in your old block-house like a rum-puncheon! Them that die'll be the lucky ones!
- Narrator: And off he stumbles into the trees.
- Squire: Well said, Smollett! That'll take the wind out of his sails.
- Jim: I'm not sure, sir - isn't that the pirates now..?
- Narrator And before they can say another word there's the scream of cannon ball and the crack of musket ball and the wild swearing of blood-thirsty pirates as Silver's men hurl themselves upon the stockade.

The fight is long and gruelling - and when it's over, five more pirates lie dead; the rest are scattered. Smollett is badly wounded and two more loyal sailors are dead too. Exhausted, Jim, the Squire and Doctor Livesey settle down for a grim and fearful night. Whilst, up on the hill above the stockade, mad Ben Gunn sniffs the air, listens to the island's night time noises and begins to plot his revenge.

