

"I love maps, and I really like the way the map of the island fits with the story." Ishmael, 10



TREASURE ISLAND

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Dr Livesey opened up the folded paper. As he spread it out on the table in front of him, I gasped. Even a brief glimpse was enough to tell me it was a map of a small island – and a red cross had been drawn upon it, together with the words 'The treasure lies here'.

After the discovery of the map young Jim Hawkins joins an expedition to the island with Dr Livesey and the squire. But who else knows the secret of the buried treasure?



Soon Jim and his companions find that they are in a desperate fight for survival with Captain Flint's old shipmates, who are determined to kill everyone who stands between them and the hidden gold. Who is the peculiar man who lives on the island? Whose side is he on?

When Jim is separated from his friends, can he think of a way to outwit the pirates before they capture him?

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Robert Louis Stevenson



Retold by Tony Evans
Illustrated by Sarah Wimperis



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THE CHARACTERS



Jim Hawkins

Jim Hawkins is fourteen years old, trustworthy and intelligent. How will he cope with the dangers which threaten him when he reaches Treasure Island?

Dr Livesey

Dr Livesey is a magistrate as well as a doctor. He is a lively, honest man who has a taste for adventure. Will he regret joining his friend the squire in their voyage to the Caribbean?



Squire Trelawney

The squire is forceful and determined. When he makes up his mind to charter the *Hispaniola* and find a crew, does he realise what trouble lies ahead?



Captain Smollett

The captain is a skilful sailor, loyal and honest. Why is he so suspicious at the start of the voyage, and are his concerns justified?

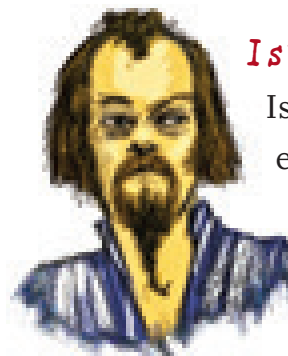
Long John Silver

This cheerful seaman is employed as the ship's cook on the *Hispaniola*. All the crew respect and obey him. He works hard to make sure the expedition is a success – but can he be trusted?



Israel Hands

Israel Hands is a knowledgeable, experienced sailor and a close friend of Silver. Have the two of them sailed together before?



Ben Gunn

Ben Gunn was abandoned by his shipmates and has been living alone on Treasure Island for three years. Will he turn out to be Jim Hawkins' friend, or his enemy?





TREASURE ISLAND

I will never forget the day that the fierce old sailor dropped dead in the dining room of the Admiral Benbow, for it marked the start of my great adventure. When he first came to stay at my mother's inn in the autumn of 1757 he did not give his name, but said that he wished to be known only as 'the captain'.

When the captain had first arrived he had given us a few gold coins for his lodgings, taken from his sea chest which he always kept locked, but for months we had not received a penny more from him. He was a rough, violent man, and wore a cutlass at his side – so that when he refused all requests for further payment we did not choose to quarrel with him. He spent all his time drinking rum and staring suspiciously out to sea through his old brass telescope. The captain seemed nervous of strangers and was always on the lookout for visitors to our inn.

One frosty January morning a visitor arrived enquiring for the old sailor. He was a tall, pale man dressed in seafaring clothes, with a sword swinging from his belt. We had barely exchanged a few words when our lodger came down for his breakfast.

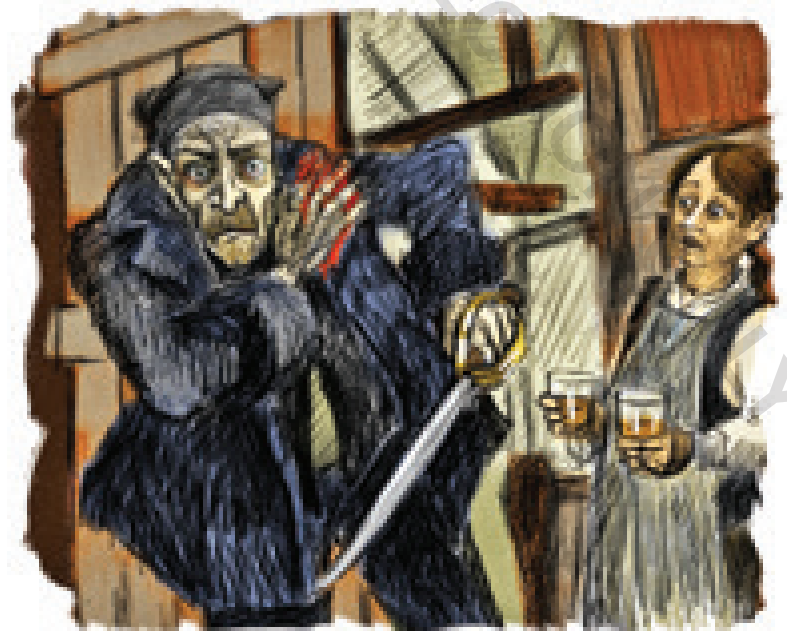
The captain turned pale and gasped. 'Black Dog!' said he.

'And who else?' replied the other. 'We've tracked you down at last, Billy Bones – me and your old shipmates. Now it's time for us to have a little talk. You've something we want, and we mean to get it one way or another. I'll send this lad for two glasses of rum, then we'll get down to business.'

When I returned with the drinks I hesitated outside the door of the dining room, trying to overhear the conversation between the two sailors. At first I could hear nothing but a low gabbling; but at last the voices began to grow louder, and I could make out the captain's words.

'No, no, and that's the end of it!' he cried. 'You can whistle for Flint's map, for you'll never have it. And you can tell the rest of his crew they'll get nothing from me. The treasure can stay in the ground for all I care.'

Then all of a sudden I heard the sound of the chair and table going over, and the clash of steel. The door burst open and Black Dog rushed out, streaming blood from his shoulder, with the captain hotly pursuing, both with cutlasses drawn.



think of some of the vivid and original details with which Robert Louis Stevenson filled *Treasure Island*. For example, the idea of a treasure map was fully developed for the first time in his story. Stevenson himself drew a sketch-map of the island which contains all the elements which we now expect: an 'X' which marks the spot; imaginative names like 'Spy-glass Hill'; and landmarks such as rocks or stockades. When teachers ask their pupils to draw a map of an imaginary island and write an exciting adventure story to go with it, we can trace this method right back to Stevenson.

One of the reasons for the lasting popularity of *Treasure Island* is the cast of lively and striking characters who fill the book. Chief of these, most would agree, is Long John Silver, the one-legged sailor with a parrot on his shoulder who is everyone's image of a pirate. As many readers of the book have pointed out, Stevenson cleverly presents Silver as a 'likeable villain'; he is obviously a very wicked man, but his intelligence and cheerful cunning – and

his devotion to his pet bird – mean that it is hard for us wholly to dislike him. Perhaps that is why the author allows him to escape at the end, rather than to be taken to England to suffer the fate of convicted pirates, and to be executed.

While *Treasure Island* first appeared in book form in 1883, it had earlier been serialised in the children's magazine *Young Folks*. Although this publication was intended for both girls and boys, to the modern reader it seems strange that there are no female characters in the book apart from Jim Hawkins' mother. There are two main reasons for this: firstly, there were hardly any women or girls involved in seafaring and piracy in the 1750s, when the book is set. Secondly, in the 1880s when the book was written there were very few examples of female action heroes in literature, and Stevenson's characters follow this tradition.

In his later story, *Kidnapped* (published in 1886 and also available as a Real Read), Stevenson made use of his own detailed