

The Treasure Island



The Treasure Island

after Robert Louis Stevenson

dramatization by Christian Lanciai (2014)

the characters:

Billy Bones
Jim Hawkins
father Hawkins
Black Dog
Pew, blind
Tom Morgan
Merry
other pirates
Squire Trelawney
First mate Dance
John Silver
Captain Smollett
Israel Hands
Ben Gunn

The action takes place on the south coast of west England
and on an unidentified island in the Caribbean in the beginning of the 18th century.

Act I scene 1. The inn of "Admiral Benbow"

*A kind of bum comes pushing a wheelbarrow with a large chest.
Billy Bones comes limping after it, sits down outside the inn puffing,
chases the helper away and sings with a hoarse voice:*

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

Jim (opens the door) Are you looking for lodging?

Bill What kind of a place is this?

Jim Admiral Benbow.

Bill Do you have rum?

Jim Certainly.

Bill Get me a mug at once, and I might stay here. (*Jim goes in.*)

I hope indeed they won't find me here, but the place seems rather desolate.

Jim (reappearing with a mug) Here you are, Sir.

Bill It seems rather desolate here. There are not many people coming here, are there?

Jim We are a little off, Sir. Only regular customers come here, and doctor Livesey.

Bill Doctor Livesey?

Jim He looks after my father.

Bill Is he ill?

Jim He is ailing.

Bill Then I think I dare trust my life with you for the time being. Here you are. (*Gives him some heavy coins*) Tell me when you want some more.

Jim Thank you, Sir. Please come in and make yourself at home.

Bill Nice having a real drink again. (*drinks deep*) Do you have some more?

Jim Certainly, Sir.

Bill Then fill it up, by hell! I am only alive when I drink! (*Jim indicates the chest.*) We can bring it in later.

Jim Please, Sir.

(*The inn opens up, Bill enters and sits down by a table puffing.*)

Bill (toasts) Fifteen men on the dead man's chest, – Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!

Tell me, my boy, you do have eyes, don't you?

Jim As far as I can see.

Bill There's a risk someone might be coming looking for me. In that case it will be a man with a crutch and a patch on his eye. You must look out for him for me.

Jim Is he dangerous?

Bill Only to me.

Jim I will watch for him, Sir.

Bill Good. I trust you. My life is in your hands – and in that chest. It must never be opened.

Jim No, Sir.

Bill What do you think I keep in it?

Jim I dare not guess, Sir.

Bill I keep my life in it, but I am living dead, so it's my own body lying in it. Do you dare open it?

Jim (frightened) No, Sir.

Bill That's good for you. But there is no risk. It can't be opened. My life is locked up for good, and my living body can never be dug up again, not even by the gang with the black patch.

Jim The black patch, Sir?

Bill The black patch. That's the only thing I fear. Only that keeps pursuing me, and therefore I am on a constant run with my own body in the cargo. If you see the man with the black patch and crutch, you must give a call, so that I can go on running away.

Jim You must have a terrible past, Sir.

Bill The most terrible you can imagine. *(enter the father)*

Father I see that we have a guest, Jim.

Bill I am not as dangerous as I look. Only they are dangerous who are looking for me, but I don't think they will find me here.

Father You are welcome as long as you behave.

Bill Don't be afraid. I can pay as long as I live and as long as I still can have some rum. *(puts his mug hard on the table, as if to demonstrate that it is empty)*

Father At once, Sir. *(goes to get some more)*

Bill (confidentially to Jim) All I really want is to die in peace for real. I have a terrible past that constantly haunts me, but the most terrible are the living who still keep looking for me. They must never get me. If they do I am lost.

Jim Yes, Sir.

Bill Stop calling me sir, boy. Call me captain Bill, if you want.

Jim Yes, captain Bill.

Black Dog (suddenly looking in) How nice to see you again, Bill.

Bill (petrified by fear) Black Dog!

Dog Take it easy, Bill. We just wanted to know where you were.

Bill Leave me at last in peace!

Dog You know very well that none of us will ever have peace.

Bill What do you want of me?

Dog Nothing.

Bill What are you doing here then?

Dog Just locating your position. We didn't have your bearings. Now we have it.

Bill I am finished with you! You have nothing to get from me!

Dog Tell that to the devil. But it is cool. Try to drink yourself to death if you can before we come back. You will not get rid of us in any other way. *(pulls back out)*

Bill (still terrified) I need support! Quick! More rum! Or else I will get hysterical!

Father (brings more rum and fills it up) This man hasn't far left to go. We will serve him as long as it lasts. It will be a contest with his timeglass.

Bill (empties his mug in a panic) I am lost! They have found me!

Father You are safe here, Sir.

Bill I am not safe for them anywhere. My only chance is that I haven't received the black patch yet, but it's only a question of time before it's finished.

Father Take it easy, Sir, and drink cautiously.

Bill How do you drink cautiously? (*empties another mug*)

Livesey (enters) I see that you have a new pensioner in your guest house.

Father Good to have you here, doctor. Honestly speaking, I think he might become troublesome.

Livesey You can see from afar that he has climbed out on his last branch. He drinks in panic. That's not a good sign.

Father Of what, doctor?

Livesey Of his condition. In brief, he is running wild towards death.

Bill How thirsty do you really allow a seaman to be? (*tries to empty his empty mug and collapses*)

Livesey (rises) That's it. (*examines him quickly*) He cannot take one drink more.

Father How is he?

Livesey Carry him out. He is finished with everything except as a corpse.

Jim He had a shock when he suddenly had a visit, doctor.

Livesey By whom?

Jim By someone called the Black Dog, who terrified him.

Livesey Of what?

Jim Of more unexpected visits.

Livesey Then they will come, you can be sure of that. He might survive this attack if he only gets some rest and doesn't get upset – and he cannot take one drop more.

Jim No, doctor Livesey.

Livesey I must go on, but call on me at once if anything happens.

Jim Yes, doctor Livesey. (*The doctor leaves.*)

Father We were not supposed to get a patient on our hands, even if he pays handsomely enough.

Jim He'll manage.

Bill (wakes up) Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum! Where is the rum?

Father You may not drink any more.

Bill Why not?

Father Doctor's orders.

Bill What bloody doctor? I see no doctor. No one has a right to decide for me except myself!

Father The doctor says that you will die if you drink one drop more.

Bill What bloody doctor? How does he know? Has he a second sight? My life has no space for any doctor, only crooks and pirates and skeletons...

Father In that case I regret that we can't satisfy your needs. (*resigns and leaves*)

Bill (to Jim, pleading) Boy, help me, please. I only need one drop.

Jim The doctor says it's dangerous.

Bill Of course it's dangerous. Life is dangerous. Nothing is more dangerous since no one gets away from the fact that he must die. If you live you must pay the

penalty and die. That's life, the greatest illusion and betrayal, so that you are almost better off dead, as you then are on the safe side of life. Only one drop. Surely you must have some bottle left?

Jim Father just fetched it. (*shows the bottle. Bill immediately empties it in the mug.*)

Bill You save my life.

Pew (outside) Billy Bones, it's time!

Bill (even more terrified than before, grabs hold of Jim) Tell him I am not at home!

Jim (opens and finds Pew at the entrance, a blind man with a stick in a hooded cloak.) He is not at home.

Pew Don't you think I hear you, Billy Bones? (*grabs hold of Jim, who can't tear himself out of the deadly grip*) Take me to him! (*forces him on inside while he knocks his way forward with his stick*)

Bill (pulling backwards against the wall) I am not at home! I am not here!

Pew What does it help? You are doomed anyway. Show me to him! (*Jim is forced to lead Pew to Bill*)

Bill What do you want of me, you terrible image of death?

Pew You know very well. We will never let you go, and you will never get rid of us. Here! (*forces a patch in his hand*) That's all. Mission completed. Live while you can, for then you must die! (*retires out again without the help of Jim but with the stick and vanishes*)

Bill (struck by terror) It's the end of me!

Jim What is it?

Bill (shows what he got) The black patch! It's the final summoning! I am done for! – Get me some more rum at once! Or else I will die.

Jim But the doctor warned you!

Bill I know. He says that I will die if I drink, but I will die anyway, so it doesn't matter. Save my life, boy, and soften my eternal suffering!

Jim (serves him helpfully)

Bill Thanks, my son. I will never forget this. (*drinks deep and passes out*)

Father (comes down again) Is he dead now?

Jim I don't think so.

Father I think you should call the doctor.

Livesey (happens to enter) I saw a scary figure on his way from here. What did he want?

Jim He was blind. He just gave captain Bill a message.

Father Whereupon Bill passed out. It was good luck that you turned up, doctor.

Livesey (severely) Have you given him more rum?

Jim He asked for it.

Livesey Then he is finished. I don't think he will wake up any more. (*takes his pulse and looks austere*) The case is closed. He is dead. Did he owe you much money?

Father Not much, but some.

Livesey Then you have the right to take what he owed you. His chest is locked, isn't it?

Father Yes.

Livesey Then it's probably its key he carries round his neck. (*snatches it off and gives to the father*) Please.

Father Open it, Jim.

Jim He warned me to do it.

Livesey He is dead now. There is no danger.
(*Jim unlocks the chest and looks into it with bewilderment*)

Jim There is almost nothing here. Only small things and souvenirs, old clothes, shells and baubles.

Father No purse?

Jim Yes, a small one, but there is not much in it. (*takes it up and shakes it: only coins*)

Father (*opens it and pours the coins out on the table*) Almost all are foreign. It's not worth much.

Livesey Is it enough?

Father Maybe.

Jim (*finds a folded parcel of wax*) Here is something else.

Livesey Keep it for a memory.
(*Upset voices outside*)

Black Dog You gave him the black patch, didn't you?

Pew(*'s shrill voice*) What do you think of me?

Dog How much time did you give him?

Pew Until ten tonight!

Dog We must get him out alive before that!
(*Someone struggles with the door handle.*)

Pew It's locked!

Dog Then we'll have to break in!

Pew We must get reinforcements!

Dog Come! (*They leave.*)

Livesey (*has all the time kept his finger on his mouth to keep all perfectly quiet*) They are getting reinforcements. They will be back. We have a short break. Come! We must leave. No one must be here alive when they come back.

Father What will they do?

Livesey When they don't find what they are looking for, they will probably tear the whole place down in raving fury.

Father My fine old inn!

Livesey It can't be helped. Their fellow here is dead, and they will never forgive him that he died before they could kill him. Bring his purse and your parcel, Jim. I suspect it could explain what they are after, since he owned nothing else.

Father It will be hard to leave a home to villains.

Livesey You can come back to it later when the danger is over. Now every minute is precious. We already know too much. Come! (*gets Jim and the father to follow him out. The chest is closed before they leave.*)
(*A moment's silence. Then darkness comes, and you hear the gang.*)

Trelawney Did they find it?

Livesey No, and that's why they got so infuriated.

Trelawney And your poor guest? Has he had trouble?

Livesey You can say that again. He is dead.

Trelawney My goodness! Did they lynch him?

Livesey No, he was fortunate enough to die before they came. That's why they got so infuriated.

Trelawney I understand. So only he knew what they wanted.

Livesey But now we know it as well.

Trelawney How exciting! Go on!

Livesey Show the parcel, Jim. I think it's time to open it now.

Jim (*willingly produces the parcel and tries to open it. The doctor helps him. They get out a very torn book.*)

Trelawney What is this? An account?

Livesey It must be a book of accounts. The deceased must have been their book-keeper and accountant.

Father It appears as a rather loosely kept account. Most of it is illegible and almost only pot-hooks and pot-hangers. And what could the meaning be of all these crosses?

Livesey (*reads*) Maracaibo. Caracas. Estrella. Estremadura. Madreperla. Cartagena. It's probably Spanish harbours or ships, all probably sunk or burned.

Trelawney Pirates!

Livesey Exactly my conclusion. Now open up the other parcel, Jim.

Jim (*opens it and unfolds a map. All make big eyes.*)

Livesey (*triumphant*) That's what I thought.

Trelawney (*flabberghasted*) What is it?

Livesey This, my friends, is captain Flint's own map of how and where he buried his loot on a certain unidentified island.

Trelawney But the bearings of the island are specified here.

Livesey Exactly.

Trelawney So it's just to go there and collect it?

Livesey Exactly.

Trelawney A small matter. The ship will be easily equipped, but we must gather the world's most reliable crew.

Father Could we really get a ship just like that?

Trelawney Who do you think I am? I would hardly be a magistrate if I couldn't produce a ship, would I?

Father Thank you, I'll stay at home.

Livesey Your inn is ruined.

Father That's why. It must be put back in order. I spent all my life making honest money, and I intend to go on that way.

Livesey As you wish.

Trelawney But we need a cabin-boy, and the enterprise would be worthless without this map, which we have Jim here to thank for.

Livesey Would you like to follow us, Jim?

Jim May I?

Livesey Of course you may.

Jim But what about father?

Father (lays his hand on Jim) I trust you will be back, Jim. An adventure such as this you must not miss.

Jim Oh, thank you, father!

Trelawney Now tell us some more about this captain Flint. Who was he really?

Father I know plenty about him. I heard stories about him all my life.

Livesey Captain Flint was the most consistent of pirates. He never spared anyone. If someone didn't suit him or his purposes he was irrevocably finished. Captain Kidd and captain Blackbeard were sheep in comparison with him. He never spared crews or passengers from taken ships except those who decided to follow him.

Father But didn't he take only Spanish ships and scourge only Spanish harbours?

Livesey Mostly, yes, but if a ship happened to be in his way it was captured no matter what its nationality or kind. He only evaded the largest British warships, but they never occurred in his wake. He kept out of the regular world.

Father But why? What can you get out of such a way of life? Permanent one-sided criminality could hardly make any human being happy.

Livesey Exactly. He tried to comfort himself with collecting treasures, but these he buried down like a squirrel and died away from them without having got any pleasure out of them.

Father Poor fellow.

Trelawney But they are lying there of no use to anyone, and we have now a unique opportunity to take care of them and use them for good purposes.

Livesey Quite, squire Trelawney, but the enterprise is sensitive. A hired crew must not know what the expedition is about. We must be discreet, squire Trelawney.

Trelawney How shall we then get a crew together? What shall we tempt them with?

Livesey Anything but the treasure of captain Flint.

Trelawney That will be difficult.

Father That's why I stay at home.

Jim Anyone could be allured by adventure.

Livesey Exactly. That will be the bait for an enthusiastic crew of idealists. I am positive we could get together more than we need.

Trelawney No problem. A small matter. Cheers to adventure, my friends!
(They all raise their mugs except Jim, who looks on.)

Act II scene 1. The pub in Bristol.

Dance We can't say how happy we are to have met you, Mr Silver. You are like sent to us from heaven.

Silver I know how difficult it is to get a crew together these times.

Dance Squire Trelawney went quite enthusiastic about your willingness to help. But how will you manage your pub while you are away?

Silver I'll simply have to entrust it with loyal companions until I get back.

Dance Here is now my employer. At last you shall meet squire Trelawney, your expedition leader.

(enter Trelawney with Livesey and Jim)

Trelawney Is this the famous John Silver, that we heard so much about? At last we'll have the pleasure of meeting!

Silver The pleasure is entirely on my side, squire Trelawney. Pardon me for not getting on my feet. *(indicates his crutch)*

Trelawney We understand. No problem. The main thing is that we have a crew, and a good one at that, thanks to you!

Silver Well, we still need some more.

Livesey May I have the indiscretion to ask what happened to your leg? I happen to be a doctor.

Silver The ship's doctor, I understand. A mere nothing. A cannon ball took it. It's not a real leg but a prosthesis, but it works. I got used to it, so it has become a part of me. I am just a bit stiff and have a third leg for support.

Trelawney Not bad! And with three legs you hardly need any sea legs, ha-ha-ha! *(laughs heartily at his own joke)*

Silver No heavy seas ever turned me over, whether on one leg, two legs or three legs.

Trelawney Ha-ha-ha!

Livesey We can't be too careful though with hiring our crew, though, Mr Silver, since our expedition is something of a state secret.

Silver I understand. I never talk unnecessarily.

Livesey Young Jim here, who is to be our cabin boy and will be directly under you as our cook, has seen you together with a certain ill-reputed fellow called Black Dog. What do you know about him?

Silver He tried to get away from paying his bill on my pub. If I see him again he shall pay.

Livesey So you don't know him?

Silver Not very well.

Livesey The last guest of Jim's inn, a certain captain Billy Bones, warned Jim about a man with a crutch. Do you know anything about Billy Bones?

Silver A drunk sailor who had seen better days and only had his worst days left. I heard he drank himself to death at Admiral Benbow.

Livesey That's unfortunately close enough to the truth. I tried in vain to stop his consumption of rum, but an inn is an inn. *(with an inquisitive look at Jim)* Any questions, Jim?

Jim I don't think it's him.

Livesey Who?

Jim The man with the crutch, whom Billy Bones warned me against.

Silver There are many sailors who walk on both a crutch and a wooden leg.
Livesey Indeed, amputations are common at sea. You can avoid them better on land. – Why don't you think it's he, Jim?
Jim He is too nice. The one Billy Bones warned me against seemed more like a nasty crook.
Livesey He accepts you, John Silver. See you on board, then?
Silver As soon as I get the last of the crew together.
Trelawney The sooner we get on our way, the better.
Silver Exactly. The longer you postpone a departure, the greater the risk that it is cancelled.
Livesey (*offers his hand*) Well met, John Silver! I hope we can trust you.
Trelawney And I am looking forward to our cooperation! Thanks for the crew! They shall all be richly rewarded!
Silver I don't doubt that for a moment.
(*They shake hands with John Silver and leave with Jim, while Silver remains at the pub.*)
I wish no harm to that boy. All the others we could easily do away with, but not the boy.

Scene 2.

Trelawney What is the problem, captain?
Smollett Honestly speaking, squire, I didn't like this enterprise from the beginning.
Trelawney What's wrong?
Smollett Everything!
Trelawney That tells me nothing.
Livesey If you have anything to complain of, captain, you should be more specific.
Smollett First of all I don't like the crew.
Trelawney What's wrong with it?
Smollett Everything!
Livesey You should be a little more specific. Is there anyone not good enough?
Smollett They are all scums and rogues! You could believe the worst about every one of them concerning foul play and villainy.
Livesey Without a single exception?
Smollett That would be mate Arrow in that case and the cook.
Trelawney It was the cook John Silver who succeeded in gathering this splendid crew and in no time!
Smollett Then we come to the main issue. Wasn't this supposed to be a secret expedition with sealed orders?
Trelawney Of course.

Smollett How come then that every single crew member knows every detail in the enterprise including the bearings on the island and its position, where everyone knows that you intend to dig for treasures?

Trelawney (and Livesey looking at each other) Impossible!

Smollett But that's how it is.

Livesey I asked you specially to for once hold your tongue and not talk too much to just anyone!

Trelawney But I haven't!

Livesey Who has then let the secrets out!

Smollett There is talk about a map.

Trelawney It is secret!

Smollett Who has it?

Livesey It is in a safe place.

Smollett Surely, since everyone knows about it.

Livesey This is extremely awkward.

Smollett Yes, it endangers the entire journey before it has even started! Do you really intend to go through with it?

Trelawney I can't even think of moving back a single step on this enterprise. I have put all my life and soul in it.

Smollett May I then suggest certain security measures, if you want to keep me for a captain?

Livesey You seem to be better informed about the situation than we are, captain. Please, go ahead.

Smollett Powder and arms have been stored next to the crew afore. I suggest that the entire store is moved next to the galley.

Livesey And?

Smollett You have brought four people with you from home. They have been given bunks afore. For their own safety I think it would be better to have them aft next to the galley.

Trelawney That can be arranged. Anything else?

Smollett I don't like the idea of having children on board.

Livesey The cabin boy? Jim Hawkins?

Trelawney That fills the cup! You are a sourpuss, Sir!

Smollett I am only thinking of the security of the journey and its participants, Sir, which I as the captain am chief responsible for.

Livesey Your sense of responsibility is an honour to you, captain. With you I am inclined to believe that you and John Silver are the only honest people on board, and as such you are indispensable.

Smollett Thank you, doctor.

Trelawney But you must put up with the boy! We can't send him home now!

Livesey (cautiously) And if he gets into close touch with the crew he could be of great use for us when it comes to learning about the crew.

Smollett You might be right.

Trelawney Good! Then I am sure we shall be able to put up with each other in spite of all!
Smollett I hope so.

Scene 3. On board on deck.

Israel Hands How strange is this case of mate Arrow. Where did he go? How did he disappear?

Silver Who knows. Maybe he drank himself over board.

Pirate 1 Just as he was becoming one of us!

2 But he had too much of what was good for him.

3 When shall we take over the ship?

Silver Keep still! We don't even have the map yet. We mustn't anticipate. We need the captain as far as possible, since he knows the ship and we are doing fine.

3 But what about the others? That unbearable bully of a land-lubber, that unreliable doctor and that worthless boy?

Silver It's the squire who will dig up the treasure for us. The doctor is needed for amputations. A doctor can after all save lives at sea. And the boy can't do us any harm. Leave him be.

2 Captain Smollett hates him. He can't stand pet boys.

Silver That's the captain's own problem. The boy hates him too, so they are equal.

Israel I believe in John Silver's tactics. We must be careful not to lose control.

1 Exactly.

3 But when shall we strike?

Silver Don't be so impatient. I think we should wait until we are half way home, when the treasure is salvaged, when we have passed the storm areas and everyone can take it easy. Then when they least suspect it is the best moment to strike, and then we can easily get rid of all the superfluous persons.

2 It's only about five or six that don't belong to our gang.

Silver But they are key figures. That's why we'll need them for as long as possible.

Israel Everything has worked out well so far, no one suspects anything, so no one has anything to fear. The voyage has been fast, we are almost there, and our good chief here John Silver has kept us all in good moods, cooked good food and kept us happy with extra rations of rum. All we need is to keep it up.

Silver Exactly. Remember, no one of the others has any idea of what we are up to. Our discretion must be absolute. Drink your fill, men never lose your balance or control. This is the chance of our lives to at last row a decent profit ashore.

2 We put our trust in you, John Silver.

Silver I actually think that's the safest thing for all of us. Would you be so kind, Dick, to give an apple from that barrel of apples.

1 Apples! Is it eating apples the only thing you can do, John Silver, when you yourself provided us with the ship's greatest supply of rum?

Silver As you wish. Save the apple for later, Dick. (*Dick turns away from the apple barrel.*) Let's all retire afore. We must ratify our plans in rum! (*They all move afore under some drinking and cheering.*)

(*When the danger is over, Jim shows himself peeping from the barrel.*)

Scene 4. In the galley.

Trelawney This is really serious news you bring, Jim.

Jim I have reported it as carefully as I could.

Livesey You have been tremendously useful, Jim. Only for that you shall now have a drink with us. (*pours him some wine*)

Trelawney I owe you an apology, captain Smollett. I thought the worst of you and the best of the crew, when I should have done the opposite.

Smollett If I had even guessed there were mutiny moods from the beginning I would have refused to sail with you, squire Trelawney. Usually mutiny tendencies appear in good time, but this crew has kept in strict self control all the way. That John Silver must be too much of a clever man. He fooled us all, gave us a crew of only bloodthirsty pirates without our noticing it and knew everything about the treasure and the purpose of our journey from the beginning.

Livesey It's time to start outwitting him.

Trelawney But what the heck can we do? If we turn back now they will mutiny at once, and we are stuck or will hang in the yard-arms!

Livesey The question is how many we can trust.

Smollett Basically no one except ourselves. The helmsman Israel Hands, who was promoted mate when Arrow disappeared, probably gone over board by drink, I thought was a secure card, but now we can't even trust him.

Trelawney That gives us four except the three of us.

Livesey That makes us seven against nineteen.

Jim No, six against nineteen. No one is counting on me.

Livesey But you are on good standing with all of them, Jim. Stay that way and be our agent. And above all: no one must know that we know more than they know.

Call (from outside) Land ohoy! (*enthusiastic voices, hurrahs etc. from above deck*)

Trelawney (getting up) We are there. Now begins the serious business, gentlemen.

Act III scene 1. All gathered on deck.

Trelawney Gentlemen, may I congratulate you on having made a successful journey so far. Without doubt many of you wish to stretch your legs on land for a change. I hereby give anyone permission to row ashore and do whatever he likes. (*enthusiastic cheers from almost everyone*)

Silver How long may we stay?

Trelawney As long as you like to start with. At the moment no one is needed on board, isn't that right, captain?

Smollett Only the watchman. I will stay, but on principle anyone can take any time off until further.

Trelawney Perhaps someone of you has been here before and would like to refresh old memories.

Silver I am familiar with the island and know its nature well. Many have anchored here to renew their supplies.

Trelawney We thank John Silver for his local knowledge and help in finding and piloting us in to the best place of anchorage.

Silver Thank the Skeleton Island for its ideal name.

Trelawney Well, who wants permission ashore?

Almost everyone (raising their fists or hands) Yeeeeeaaahh!

Trelawney You are dismissed at once.

John Silver organizes the extensive evacuation. Captain Smollett has discreetly stepped aside with doctor Livesey, Trelawney is looking on but starts to get worried when the men disappear, then turns to the doctor and Smollett.)

Trelawney Does anyone know where Jim is?

Smollett He was here.

Livesey He isn't any more. He must have stolen away among the pirates.

Smollett Didn't I tell you that the boy on board would only lead us into trouble?

Livesey There, captain, he can take care of himself, and the pirates like him, especially John Silver. I am sure he knows what he is doing.

Smollett In brief, I will not be responsible for the consequences.

Trelawney How many have remained?

Smollett Silver has left six of his men.

Livesey Then we can't take the ship.

Smollett No.

Livesey Perhaps Jim was wise in going ashore?

Scene 2.

Jim comes running, looks behind, and almost lands in the arms of Ben Gunn.

Ben Who are you?

Jim Jim Hawkins.

Ben Who else? And who am I, you wonder? That's the question. I hardly remember it any more myself. It was so long ago I was presentable. But surely you didn't come here alone?

Jim The pirates are here to take care of captain Flint's treasure, when squire Trelawney has dug it up.

Ben Then they are all out for bad weather or in brief for trouble and don't know what weather is expecting them, for they will end up in dead calm, and there is no way out of that eternal dead calm of the Sargasso sea.

Jim But how did you get here?

Ben That's the question. That's what I always wanted to forget but almost the only thing I still remember. I was marooned. I was with captain Flint. He dug down his treasure here and then shot down all his six helpers, so that there would be no witnesses, as pirate captains always do, but there will always be some awkward and unpleasant and extremely unwanted witness anyway. I was first mate under him and got away from belonging to those he executed, for I was harmless, for I saw nothing and heard nothing and said nothing, but when I came sailing here a few years later I persuaded some companions that we would stop here and search for captain Flint's treasure. We dug and dug and kept on digging. Finally my companions grew mad at me and asked me to stay and go on digging for myself, and I did, for I had nothing else to do. I was like a gravedigger who couldn't stop digging although I didn't have a single corpse to bury, and what I wanted to dig up I never found, until it was too late. I am almost buried alive myself, since I was the only one there was who could be buried. But what kind of pirates have you brought here together with that squire you said something about? It couldn't be remnants of captain Flint's old gang, could it? In that case there can't be much left of them, old pathetic skeletons and shadows of ghosts who hardly can stand on their legs any more and who only are good for digging themselves down and get buried. Don't tell me it's them.

Jim Yes, it's them.

Ben Don't tell me John Silver is with them!

Jim Yes, John Silver is with them, and he is here ashore now. I saw him just murdering one of the few honest men on board. That's why I was so terrified on the run.

Ben But why did you and your squire travel here with such a macabre lot?

Jim He came across Billy Bones' map.

Ben Billy Bones? Is he alive?

Jim No, he died suddenly. He had a drink too much and died. He wasn't allowed to drink any more rum, but he did it anyway.

Ben Then at least he didn't have to hang. An envious death, on my honour, the best possible death for an old drunken swine who would only have retched down his old keelson if he had made one journey too much, which all your comrades seem to have done now to search out their deaths with old captain Flint, who is still haunting the island but in the shape of ghosts. He has been my only company here for all these years. Most of them are better dead than alive, but some have to go on living although they outlived themselves long ago and should have died ages ago... Only captain Flint is definitely dead and died in the nick of time before he was hanged, but he had the death of dishonour in his bed. John Silver was with him but still didn't get hold of his map, which you now claim is still around somewhere anyhow. If the pirates get hold of it we will all be worse off than hanged. We become worthless and executed just like captain Flint's consumed helpers, since we would only be in the way. That's how the pirates work. They use you only as long as you

can be used, and as soon as they can't use you any more you get scrapped or at best marooned like me, so that you survive at least as a ghost until further, like a phantom among all the dead phantoms of memories and consumed pirates... So Billy Bones got hold of the map. I'll be damned. He must have stolen it from captain Flint before his corpse was cold and found it before John Silver. Captain Flint would never have given it away alive but rather buried it alive than seen that it survived. But what are you doing ashore alone?

Jim I keep watch on the pirate gang. They don't know that I spy for the squire. John Silver is my friend.

Ben He is no one's friend and not even his own. He is everyone's mortal enemy but pretends to be everyone's friend and acts as such until he strikes the knife in your back when you are least on your guard. He has no friends without consuming them. He is captain Flint's heir and a full-fledged pirate. But how many are you, who have to deal with the pirates?

Jim It's the squire, captain Smollett, doctor Livesey and three more honest men on board but also six pirates. Six pirates are ashore.

Ben But they will not give up until your squire has dug up the treasure which only he can do. Then your squire will be the next gravedigger here on this island for eternity. (*Boom!*) What's that?

Jim They are firing on the ship.

Ben Then it's war.

Jim It seems like it.

Ben I have a small dinghy. You had better go back to your own on the ship.

Jim Nice to meet you, Ben Gunn!

Ben The pleasure was all on my side. Hurry now! You might be needed out there!

(Jim runs along.)

Three years' isolation without the slightest change, and the first human being I meet is a child!

Scene 3. In the blockhouse

Livesey I am afraid our situation is rather critical. We had no choice but to abandon the ship, we couldn't overcome the pirates, which we could have done if the weather had been better, but now it wasn't, for it was dead calm, and if we had done with the pirates on board the others would have reacted, and we don't know what has happened to Jim. In brief, we had no other choice than to find safety here, locked up with all the world's dangers threatening around us, and with most of our supplies lost on the way.

Smollett Which the pirates now are taking care of. (*Boom!*)

Trelawney They are still shooting wildly about. They never seem to tire of missing all the time.

Livesey They shoot too far. When the bullets reach they have no force left but just drop down to get buried in the sand.

Trelawney Wouldn't it be better to haul the flag? They can't see the blockhouse. The flag is their only target, and it's a sore to their eyes.

Smollett Never that we would haul our Union Jack! We stand for civilization and honour and honesty!

Livesey But our supplies are limited. We don't have for more than ten days, and we can't expect any reinforcements until in a few weeks, isn't it so, squire Trelawney?

Trelawney If nothing is heard from us in August they will then send reinforcements.

Livesey So it's a question of months.

Trelawney Yes.

Livesey So our situation is all but hopeless, as long as we live. One of us has already had it, shot by the pirates, but my greatest worry is what might have become of little Jim... (*Boom!*)

Trelawney Now they miss again.

Smollett But I believe there is some reinforcement coming in.

Livesey Where?

Jim (*has climbed the palisade*) I think I have some positive news.

Livesey Welcome, Jim, my boy! We almost thought the worst of you!

Jim That I had failed you?

Livesey No, that the pirates had got the better of you and cut you short.

Jim No risk. I have met Ben Gunn.

Smollett And who in the name all cursed ghosts is Ben Gunn?

Jim He sailed with captain Flint. He knows all the pirates.

Trelawney And it was a living man you met? No old ghost haunting the place?

Jim He was marooned here three years ago and has been living here alone all the time but knows something about Flint's treasure.

Livesey Then he can help us. That's for certain.

Smollett But who is he?

Jim He was here when captain Flint built this blockhouse. He knows John Silver better than anyone else and knows what he is good for.

(a pipe whistling outside)

Trelawney Who is it?

Smollett White flag. Negotiation. Bly me if it's not John Silver himself!

Trelawney What does he want?

Smollett We shall know, if we talk with him.

Trelawney Who wants to talk with him? Not I.

Livesey Not I.

Smollett It will have to be me then.

Silver (*becomes visible, waving a white flag*) Halloo!

Smollett What do you want?

Silver Parley!

Smollett Do we have anything to discuss?

Silver You have a map. We have the ship. Let's make an exchange.

Smollett You have been shooting at us all day. Why would we believe you?

Silver You have no chance at length. We outnumber you by the double and can starve you out. Our only interest is the map.

Smollett Come and get it then.

Silver We will if we must.

Smollett You must nothing except dangle in the gallows as pirates the whole lot of you! You have mutinied and taken my ship by force!

Silver You deserted it.

Smollett Not willingly to you. Even a captain has the right to take leave ashore without losing his ship.

Silver You have no chance. We will storm you.

Smollett Do it then.

Trelawney (to Smollett) Shoot him on the spot!

Smollett No, we are no pirates. Even if the whole world only consisted of scoundrels, we must observe decency.

Silver Blame yourselves!

Smollett The same to you!

Silver This was your last chance!

Smollett You have nothing to offer!

Silver Yes, blood, fire and weapons!

Smollett We will not give in without a fight! How many have you lost already? Four or five?

Silver But you are also reduced.

Smollett But we have the honour and right on our side to fight for! You have nothing!

Silver We were captain Flint's men! We have the right to our salary under him! You are after something that doesn't belong to you!

Smollett We don't even know if it exists. We are an expedition equipped to examine the meaning of a map. As always when you hunt for something it belongs to the one who finds it.

Silver But we were Flint's men!

Smollett And we are squire Trelawney's men! Did captain Flint leave any will? No, he took everything with him in his grave. He gave nothing willingly and least of all to you.

Silver Therefore we shall have it!

Smollett We shall see who finds it.

Silver Go to blazes!

Smollett Go to hell!

Silver We are getting nowhere like this.

Smollett Didn't you find that out until now?

Silver You are all dead!

Smollett And you are all hopeless cases. I don't think you'll ever come out of this alive.
Silver We'll see.
Smollett We have nothing to discuss!
Silver As I said, blame yourselves!
Smollett You are the ones to do so.
Silver That's that then! (*strikes his flag and leaves*)
Trelawney What happens now?
Antonio They will attack.
Trelawney Can we do anything about it?
Smollett No, only defend ourselves and kill them.
Trelawney At least something.

(*Shots are fired.*)

Livesey Attention! Here they come! Take cover!
(*A tremendous interminable firing and screaming with violence and noise, mainly from the pirates.*)

Act IV scene 1. After the battle.

Livesey We made it.
Trelawney With the skin of our teeth. Hunter is dead, and captain Smollett is wounded.
Livesey He will make it. He has been wounded before. But how is Jim?
Jim A trifle.
Livesey That pleases me. (*examines the wounds of Smollett*) You will make it, my friend, but you must not get up and walk nor move your arm or speak, if you can help it, for a few weeks.
Smollett Hard cheese.
Livesey No, hard bandages.
Trelawney What can we do next except wait for the next attack?
Livesey Nothing, but that's the worst thing we can do, so we must do something.
Trelawney What?
Livesey Stupid question. I know what I must do.
Trelawney Go for a pee?
Livesey Not only that. I intend to search out that Ben Gunn.
Trelawney Go out alone in the thicket among the savages?
Livesey We got several of them. They have had their ration for a few days. We must avail ourselves of the time for some action.
Trelawney Don't go into the woods unarmed.
Livesey You will need your fire weapons here. Two men can hold the fort. All I need is a cutlass – and the map.
Trelawney Please. (*gives over the map*)

Livesey Thank you. It will be my pass-bill to Ben Gunn. But where is Jim? Has he run away again?

Trelawney (looks around like the doctor) It doesn't look any better.

Livesey (calling) Jim! *(no answer)* Luckily he hasn't got the map.

Trelawney Good luck, doctor, and come back.

Livesey You can be certain of that. *(takes his hat, a cutlass and leaves.)*

Trelawney Alone in the woods crowded with corpses and pirates stealing around in the bushes. It looks bad. And the captain out of order ashore. Talk about a bad fix.

Scene 2. On board.

Jim coming up, seeing Israel Hands and Redcap lying motionless and bloody over each other.

Jim That explains it! They have killed each other while drinking! And that's why the ship is out of control...

Israel Not quite dead yet, but on our way. Good luck that you came. Now we can manage the ship.

Jim What happened?

Israel We intended to get away with the ship after all the firing we heard from land. There can't be many left there now. Are you the last one alive?

Jim We still have the blockhouse.

Israel But how many are left?

Jim We are four against nine.

Israel Then some of you have also gone down to earth.

Jim But why did you quarrel?

Israel You tell me. I suppose we had too much to drink. Please, could you give me some water? As you see, there's not much left of my leg.

Jim (fetches some water) Then we'll sail the ship ashore. I am the captain now. And we haul the pirate flag.

Israel So you are captain Hawkins now. Earlier we had captain Silver and before that the sourpuss captain Smollett. So you intend to run the barge ashore and have never sailed before, or what?

Jim No.

Israel I was captain Flint's cannon master. I never miss a shot, but this barge is damned. It just misses all the time. And now half of us are dead. Can you manage the tiller?

Jim I can try.

Israel I am sure you can. Just set the course and keep it. Do your friends know that you are here?

Jim No.

Israel So you came here on your own when you saw the barge with slack sails. Did you think we were all dead?

Jim Well, you almost were.

Israel Not quite yet. That's right. Keep the course. You are learning. All you have to do is to feel the personal qualities of the ship and use them. You never sail with your common sense but only with your sensitivity and intuition, but most alert of all you must be about the weather. It could start anything any time and usually quite suddenly, especially on these latitudes.

Jim So much I learned.

Israel You will be a good sailor when you grow up, if you live that long.

Jim I will probably live longer than anyone of you, since I will never be a pirate.

Israel Don't be too sure. All pirates were innocent children like you. John Silver says you could make a career under his guidance.

Jim Never in my life! He is a traitor!

Israel Is he? Aren't all authorities and politicians traitors with real politics for an excuse, with which they always get away since they are in an established position? We are honest who stand for what we are good for without hiding our villainy. They live on hiding it and will betray anyone if it serves their purpose. How do you think squire Trelawney came to his fortune?

Jim I know nothing about such things.

Israel Just as well, and that's best for you. Go on like that and stay outside, and you might manage. Speaking of that, could you do me a last favour before I die? You have set the course, and we will soon run aground, and then the ship will get into the hands of either my friends or yours, it doesn't matter, there was no treasure anyway, we were all snuffed, most died in civil wars as usual, so we decided to get away from it all, and then we were divided about a small matter, and so he is lying there like a wasted rag doll. Cut a quid for me before I die. I have the tobacco here. That's my life's last wish.

Jim Are you really as dying as you look?

Israel As you see. There's hardly even any panting left of me.

(Jim sets the rudder and approaches Israel to help him cut a quid. When Jim is close enough Israel brings out a secret knife and makes an effort at an attack. Jim immediately withdraws, Israel throws the knife, misses, but Jim has drawn two pistols, fires both at the same time, Israel is hit and dies and Jim at once drops the guns. Immediately the whole ship hits a bank with a great crash, and Jim falls down.)

Back to the blockhouse! *(abandons the ship)*

Scene 3.

Trelawney What do you think Jim's real intentions are?

Livesey I don't think he has joined the pirates, if that's what you mean.

Trelawney I mean nothing. I just wonder.

Livesey So do I. Anyway, the ship is gone, and we stand no chance against the pirates that are left, since they have all the resources.

Trelawney What do you mean?

Livesey We must retire and give them the map on condition that they leave us in peace. We can't risk anything more with Jim gone.

Smollett (from his bed) He has always returned back.

Livesey (sternly) Quiet, captain! – I hope he will return, but he has nothing to return to unless we put ourselves in a totally secure position. By Ben Gunn we have got a chance to achieve that security.

Trelawney Tell us!

Livesey Later. Now we must get another parley before they attack again, and we have a wounded patient to transport.

(applies himself to Smollett and his bandages)

Scene 4.

Silver I don't get it. Although they were in perfect security they abandon the blockhouse and move into the woods and give up the map for a warrant that we leave them in peace. What's on their minds? Are they so sure we will all end up in the gallows? If there was anything I never believed in, it was the law and its so called justice. It does not exist. It's a myth mostly abused for oppression and to unnecessarily mess with people. We are all born free, but the purpose of the law is to limit all freedom and punish it, and all you can do then is to break free and enforce your right to freedom. I was well off in Bristol with my wife and inn, but freedom was missing, why I dared to cast myself out on this my last adventure as all the same the greatest chance of my life. And then Jim comes running straight into our arms when the ship is gone and only six of us are left and almost offers himself as a hostage, and he promises to help me and testify for me if I am ever prosecuted, but it's too late for me to join the squire and doctor. I killed too many already on this voyage, and my last men would instantly kill me if I tried to give myself up. Nothing works out, and still nothing is yet lost, and we have the map. If we succeed in saving the treasure and finding the ship the coast would be clear.

Livesey (outside) Blockhouse ohoy! It's the doctor!

Silver Coming to patch up our dying comrades. That he has the guts! – We have Jim here!

Livesey I know. May I speak with him?

Silver Jim, he wants to chat with you.

Jim (runs to meet the doctor, with whom he speaks through the palisade) It's not what it looks like, doctor. I am not one of them.

Livesey I know, my son, but jump the palisade, and we'll escape together to freedom and Ben Gunn.

Jim I have promised John Silver not to escape. I am the only hope for his life, and he has protected me against the other pirates, who wanted to kill me.

Livesey Why doesn't he come over to us?

Jim He can't desert his comrades, who would kill him if he tried. And he doesn't believe in the crown's justice.

Livesey He is right. It would never spare him. He has mutinied, and he has killed several of our crew. He has no chance. In this situation you are the only one who has a chance.

Silver Come in to the patients, doctor. They are waiting.

Livesey For me or for their liberation by death?

Silver Both, I presume. The vanity of human nature always wants to live as long as it is possible and preferably all the way up to the execution.

Livesey What are their hopes?

Silver Their last vanity is salvaging the treasure, for which we will leave tomorrow to dig up, whether anyone can take it with him or not. Without the temptation of the treasure they would have killed me and Jim yesterday, when he arrived.

Livesey It was our fault. We should have trusted him and in some way stopped him from returning to the blockhouse.

Silver How?

Livesey I don't know. We didn't know where he was, did we?

Silver He says that he has saved the ship for you, which he hid in a secret bay.

Livesey (surprised) What?

Jim It's true, doctor.

Livesey And you are going for the treasure tomorrow?

Silver Those are the plans.

Livesey Be very wary on your guard when you find it.

Silver A warning? Against what?

Livesey No, a doctor's assistance.

Silver It could save lives. Let's see if you can save any more in here. Please come in.

Livesey I feel the scent that you at least not yet suffer any lack of anaesthetizing liquor.

Silver I am afraid that's the only thing we do not lack. *(They enter the blockhouse.)*

Act V scene 1.

Entrance of the pirates on stage.

Silver is the last man with a snare around Jim as his prisoner.

Silver We haven't far left to go. It's over there.

Morgan I didn't like the skeletons.

Silver Neither did they.

Pirate 2 Captain Kidd did the same: shot down his own diggers.

3 He fired at random for nothing.

4 But always aimed at the heart and always pricked it.

2 You couldn't have your heart in the right place.

Morgan Don't talk but move on!

3 Don't tread on my heels, you death scull!

4 You are the death scull here.

Silver Don't joke about death. He could take it as a calling.

Morgan What kind of a tree was it we were supposed to look for?

2 There are many trees.

Silver The tree over there.

3 And how do you know it's the right tree?

Silver Which else would it be?

4 Any tree is like any tree.

Silver You are all seeing double. There is only one tree on the map.

Morgan But the more in reality.

Ben Gunn(*'s voice*) Fifteen men on the dead man's chest, – Yo-ho-ho, and a bottle of rum!

Several Whew! (*terrified*)

4 It was the voice of captain Flint!

Morgan But captain Flint is dead, isn't he?

3 Impossible!

Morgan I don't like this.

Silver Someone is pulling our legs.

Ben Gunn Darby McGraw! (*wailingly*) Darby McGraw! Darby McGraw! Go for some rum, Darby!

Morgan Captain Flint's last dying words!

2 His ghost! He is haunting us!

3 What else would he do? We found his six skeletons, which probably have been unblest and haunted the island since then, so why wouldn't he also?

4 This damned island is unblestness itself.

Morgan I don't know if I want to go on any longer.

Silver Are you hesitating now, you addict failures, when we only are a few steps from the treasure? You hare-brained coward sloths, we have almost reached our goal!

Morgan The voice sounded more like Ben Gunn than captain Flint.

4 Ben Gunn? What would he be doing here?

3 Who the devil cares about Ben Gunn?

Silver Come on now! Don't reason, don't babble, but just get on with it!
(*They reach the empty excavation and are as baffled as they earlier were terrified.*)

2 Someone has been here before us!

Silver (*in a low voice to Jim*) Keep behind me and be alert! (*gives him a gun*)

Merry What's the meaning of this, John Silver? Is this supposed to be some kind of a joke? In that case it isn't funny at all.

4 Have you been here before us, you devil?

Morgan Where in the name of all devils is the treasure?
(*In the same moment hell breaks loose. One of the pirates dies at once.*)

That settles it! I have had enough of all this devilry!

(runs for his life, and the other two follow him.)

Enter the doctor, Trelawney and Ben Gunn.)

Silver You scared them out of their wits, Ben Gunn!

Ben Gunn That was my intention!

Silver Imagine that you are still alive! Who left you here?

Ben Gunn Those fools who tired of digging for the treasure. Marooned here I had nothing else to do but to go on digging until I found it. Is that so strange?

Livesey (liberates Jim) I regret the inconvenience, Jim.

Jim No inconvenience at all, just fun.

Trelawney If only all inconvenience could be experienced as fun, which apparently children can! John Silver, you have nothing to fear, since you saved the life on this boy.

Silver Still I intend to do all I can to abscond justice.

Livesey Well, squire Trelawney, the voyage is paid with interest thanks to Ben Gunn.

Trelawney I thank you for it, Ben Gunn. How does it feel to at last be able to come home to England?

Ben Gunn I long for getting drunk to death for my share of the money.

Silver Once a pirate always a pirate. Ben Gunn, you would be wisest if you followed me.

Ben Gunn Not again. Never in my life.

Livesey We have a poor pirate to bury. What shall we do with the three others?

Trelawney Leave them be. They will have to find their own way back.

Silver They have liquor enough, so they can manage.

Trelawney But we have much work to do. The treasure must be brought to the ship, which must be put in order, and then we have our journey back home to think of.

Silver Come on, Jim. You are still my cabin boy.

(They all leave, Silver with his hand on Jim for support.)

Scene 2. The galley.

Captain Smollett by the log table navigating. Enter John Silver.

Silver Captain, let me congratulate you on your recovery after the ordeals on Treasure Island.

Smollett Nothing to congratulate me for. A sailor must be able to stand a beating, as you well know, captain John Silver.

Silver You call me captain although I led the mutiny.

Smollett By every right. Your navigation after the mutiny was the most difficult, because navigating across a sea is just handiwork, but hidden rocks can be more troublesome than people, and thanks to your navigation we came through alive in spite of running the gauntlet between all the murderers.

Silver The three that were left alive cause me some pain.

Smollett It couldn't be helped. They could at least remain alive, and hopefully the next ship that reaches the death scull island while be a pirate, where they might find

some old brothers on board. Had we taken them with us and saved them they would irrevocably have been hanged in England, which brings me to the question why I asked you here.

Silver Well?

Smollett Your head hangs by a thread, captain John Silver, and none of us on board would want you to lose it.

Silver I have no intention to.

Smollett The fact is, that squire Trelawney is a magistrate and a legal authority, and not even he could save your life if you come to England.

Silver What do you suggest?

Smollett Also doctor Livesey is a person of authority, but I have nothing to do with any authority. I have considered the matter carefully. The treasure is a greater amount of wealth to each one of us than what any of us would need. I suggest the following. When we reach the next harbour, which must be Spanish, I want you to break into the store room where the treasure is kept, take as much of it as you can carry without spilling and abscond ashore and there remain underground until we are gone.

Silver You ask me to desert?

Smollett No, I order you, because it is your last chance.

Silver Thanks, captain. I guess I have no other choice than to obey.

Smollett No, you haven't. Good luck on your further voyages, captain John Silver.

Silver I wish you the same, even if I suspect that you will from now on stay at home. With age you get less prone to abandon yourself on new journeys, but I guess my journeys will never reach an end, since I will always find it worth while to evade official justice.

Smollett You are still young. Surely you aren't even fifty yet?

Silver And the condition of my legs force me to constantly move on. Or else also the other leg will stiffen.

Smollett But you have three.

Silver A wooden leg is a handicap, no luxury.

Smollett Good luck, captain John Silver. I guess our journey together was the jolliest for both of us. Therefore I will from now on stay at home.

Silver My last journey has unfortunately only just begun. (*limps out on his crutch. Captain Smollett liking him approvingly shakes his head and resumes his navigation.*)

Smollett Doctor Livesey, it was your idea, but I presume Jim gave it to you. May we as any real pirates never betray each other.

Curtain.

(Milan 5.4.2014,
translated 22-25 November 2019)

Post Script

For practical reasons in regard of theatrical possibilities on stage, John Silver has here been furnished with an extra leg, so that he doesn't have to do without any – no actor can be expected to play the role of a one-legged person on stage, if he isn't already one-legged by nature, which no actor is. The eventual actors who have lost a leg and still continued to be active actors are as far as I know only one in history – Sarah Bernhardt, but not even she could have been expected to play the role of John Silver.

Jim Hawkins' mother has been left off stage, while we have allowed his father to go on living. According to Robert Louis Stevenson's unsurpassed original, both had left their lives before Jim left England. These and other liberties which we have taken with the first great pirate novel, we humbly ask the aforesaid author to forgive us, and our readers and audience to forbear, as we always can recommend the application of the original to resort to when needed for control of the actual text, which should be available in translation in every language on earth.

Gothenburg, May13th, 2014