***Treasure Island***

***Chapter 11:***

# *What I Heard in the Apple Barrel*

***Brief Summary:***

* Long John Silver is in the middle of telling a story to the youngest sailor on board, Dick.
* He's telling Dick about his time serving under Captain Flint.
* Apparently most of the men under Flint's command are now aboard the *Hispaniola* – this very ship!
* Long John Silver says the pirating business has gone downhill. Look at Pew, who had to retire after he went blind. After living like a king, Pew spent all of his cash and had to beg for his supper.
* Long John Silver compliments Dick for being "smart as paint" (11.5).
* Jim hears this and gets totally jealous: Jim thought *he* was supposed to be smart as paint.
* Long John Silver gives Dick a recruitment pitch for piracy: sure, it's dangerous, but the profits are great.
* After this last trip is done, Long John Silver plans to set himself up as a gentleman, but he started out his piracy career as a lowly sailor just like Dick.
* Dick says that all Long John Silver's money is gone anyway – it's not like he can go back to Bristol after all of this.
* Long John Silver explains that his wife will empty all of his accounts in Bristol and join him in some secret place where the two of them will settle down.
* Dick is impressed by Long John Silver and agrees to join him.
* Just then someone else strolls up to the two men. It's Israel Hands.
* Long John Silver tells Israel that Dick is going to join them.
* Israel wants to know why they haven't mutinied yet – he really wants to get rid of Captain Smollett.
* Long John Silver tells Israel to wait. Why rise up sooner than they have to, so long as Captain Smollett keeps sailing their ship for them?
* Dick reminds Long John Silver that they're all sailors.
* Long John Silver answers that they're all *crewmen*. Who is supposed to set the course for them? He doesn't know where Doctor Livesey and the squire keep the map, after all.
* Long John Silver warns them to be patient or they'll all hang. Captain Flint and Pew were impatient and fun-loving and look where they are now: dead.
* Long John Silver wants them to wait until the right time, but then they should kill all of the officers: after all, dead men tell no tales.
* Long John Silver wants to be the one to kill Squire Trelawney.
* Listening to all of this, Jim is terrified.
* Long John Silver and Israel Hands send Dick to get some alcohol to celebrate.
* Israel Hands whispers to Long John Silver that Dick's the last of the crewmen who will join.
* Jim realizes that some of the crew must still be loyal to the captain.
* Long John Silver, Israel Hands, and Dick drink a toast.
* Just then, the shout rings out: "Land ho!" (11.40).

***Synopsis:***

As this chapter opens, Jim is still in the apple barrel and overhears Long John Silver telling someone else stories about the time he served as Captain Flint's quartermaster. Excitedly, he remembers that he lost his leg at the same time that the pirate [Pew](https://www.gradesaver.com/treasure-island/study-guide/character-list#pew) lost his sight, in an explosion of gunfire. As he is bragging about his previous exploits, Silver begins to recruit the youngest sailor aboard, calling himself a "gentleman of fortune." Jim is offended that he uses the same words to lure the youngest pirate that he used to gain Jim's friendship. Silver tells the young pirate that the life of a pirate is rough and risky, but worth it because of the great wealth there is to gain. More impressive, he tells, is that after this voyage, because of the money he has saved and the money he plans to garner from this voyage, he is going to retire and live like a gentleman. In the mean time, he has instructed his wife to sell his tavern and take his money to a clandestine location where Silver will meet her after the end of the voyage.

In rough pirate dialogue, a far cry from the language he used when flattering Jim, he brags that he is even more feared than the famous pirate Flint. With these words, the young sailor (named Dick), agrees to become a pirate.

After this conversation, Israel Hand, a despicable man, joins Silver and Dick, inquires when Silver plans the mutiny. Silver's plans to exploit both Captain Smollett's skill at "setting a course" and the squire's and doctor's knowledge of the location of the treasure. The plan is to take the ship over, killing those on board who are not with the pirates, in order that Silver can return to live his perfect life as a gentleman.

At this point in the chapter, Silver orders Dick to get him an apple which scares Jim to death. Luckily, Jim is saved when someone suggests that they have a drink of rum instead. Finally, after the men have their drink, Dick leaves and Silver and Hand discuss the fact that this is the last sailor that will join, a fact that implies that there are still some honest sailors left onboard. At the conclusion of the chapter, Jim sees a bright moon and someone cries, "Land Ho!" because [Treasure Island](https://www.gradesaver.com/treasure-island) is finally within sight.

The dual personality of Long John Silver, something that has been hinted at in the previous parts of the book, is finally revealed in this chapter. Hawkins's attitude towards Long John Silver, becomes not one of reverence and awe, but instead, instantly, one of repugnance, as he remarks, "I think, if I had been able, that I would have killed him through the barrel." He feels betrayed, not only by Long John Silver's involvement with the pirates, but also because of the betrayal of their personal relationship between the Silver and Jim. Jim is most disturbed by the use of the same language that Silver used to talk to him that Silver uses to lure the new young pirate. This turn in the relationship between Silver and Jim marks another significant change in the book, a point at which Jim must again leave behind his childhood and grow up.

The most important literary technique in this chapter is the use of dialogue. The dialogue that the pirates use is some of the most colorful and deliberate of the entire book. For example, consider this scene, a superb use of pirate speech: "Billy was the man for that," said Israel. "Dead men don't bite.' Says he. Well, he's dead no his self; he knows the long and short on it now; and it ever a rough hand come to a port, it was Billy." "Right you are," said Silver; "rough and ready. But mark you here, I'm an easy man - I'm quite the gentleman, says you; but this time it's serious. Dooty is dooty, mates. I give my vote - death. When I'm in Parlyment and riding in my coach, I don't want none of these sea lawyers in the cabin a coming home, unlooked for, like the devil at prayers. Wait is what I say; but when the time comes, why, let her rip!"

The theme between the struggle of good and bad is also set up most brilliantly in this chapter. While there have been hints in the book, like the hints of Long John Silver's true character, in this chapter the true nature of the pirates and their plan of mutiny, as revealed through their dialogue, clearly predicts the future conflict between the "good" and the "bad" on the boat. In addition, Jim's worries that the future of the honest men on the boat also set up this paradigm of conflict between good and bad that will eventually come to pass.

***Critical Study:***

Chapter 11 ("What I Heard in the Apple Barrel") finds Jim listening as Silver speaks to a young crewman named Dick, flattering him with the same phrases and proffered friendship he has used on Jim, and at the same time revealing that he is indeed a pirate, as are most of the other hands he has "helped" Trelawney to choose. The two men, joined by Israel Hands, continue the conversation, with Jim growing more and more angry, resentful, and terrified. He hears Silver talk about Pew and others with contempt, advising Dick to save his money, as they did not. And he hears Silver's plan, which has been for the pirates to play their roles as honest seamen until the treasure has been found and loaded and Smollett has set a course for home. But Silver, perceiving that Hands and others will not have the patience for this, proposes that they not maroon the captain, Trelawney, Livesey, and others on the island, from which they may return, but to kill them all "when the time comes." He asks Dick to get him an apple, and Jim is horrified. But, at Hands' urging, Silver changes his mind and sends Dick to his secret keg for rum. They drink to "old Flint." Then the lookout sights land.

Hiding in the apple barrel, Jim overhears Long John Silver telling several other crewmembers about some of his adventures with old Flint. Silver mentions that he has nearly three thousand pounds safely hidden away in the bank, gained from his exploits with the other “gentlemen of fortune,” which Jim correctly guesses is just another word for pirates. Jim learns that most of old Flint’s former crewmembers are on board the ship now, posing as ordinary crew but plotting to take the treasure for themselves. Silver mentions that some of the other crewmembers have joined the conspirators, though others have refused. Jim watches the pirates partake of a secret stash of rum. As the men drink, the cry of “Land ho!” is heard from on deck.

***Critical Analysis:***

From his hiding place in the apple barrel, Jim overhears Silver, Israel Hands, and a young crewman named Dick discuss how best to steal Flint's treasure. He's shocked to learn that Silver sailed with Flint as his quartermaster.

Talk then turns to what should be done with the ship's captain, the honest hands aboard, and the squire and the doctor. Dick insists on killing them, and Israel Hands agrees, quoting his old shipmate Billy Bones: "Dead men don't bite." But then Silver cautions patience; let the pirates wait for the last moment to do the deed. Suddenly the ship's look-out cries excitedly, "Land ho!"

In the previous chapter [Captain Smollett](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Captain_Smollett) predicts that providing the crew with little luxuries like a barrel of apples is likely to spoil them. For once he is wrong. If not for the apple barrel, Jim would not have overheard the pirates plotting. It is pure luck that Jim is dozing in the apple barrel that evening, overhears the plot, and escapes detection by the pirates. Fate will seemingly interfere now and again throughout the story. The interference in this case tilts the balance of knowledge away from the mutineers. The honest men soon will know what the pirates intend.

Silver is clearly the ringleader and quite different from the genial tavern keeper that befriended [Squire Trelawney](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Squire_Trelawney) and signed on as ship's cook. He is a ruthless villain whose motto is "Dooty is dooty." Far from the ideal of duty that guides [Dr. Livesey](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Dr._Livesey) and Captain Smollett, the "dooty" Silver refers to can involve murder.

Silver equates having money with being a gentleman. He labels himself a "gentleman of fortune," though this is only a fancy euphemism for a common pirate. In Silver's mind there is a connection between wealth and social rank—as one increases, so does the other. It is a variation on the rise in wealth and rank that Billy Bones recorded in his ledger. However, qualities of a true gentleman, as displayed by Squire Trelawney or Dr. Livesey, are meaningless to Silver.

In his still childish naïveté, Jim is unprepared for Silver's deceit. He experiences it as a personal betrayal. Coming to terms with the incident is another painful step on the road to maturity that Jim is forced to take.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

[Long John Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) is relating the tale of the night he lost his leg and [Pew](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters) lost his sight, during a sea voyage with [Flint](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/captain-flint) as captain. The surgeon that amputated him, one of the pirate Roberts’ men, was hanged at Corso Castle. Now, Silver says, much of the good old men are scattered and weakened—before he died, Pew had become a beggar and robber and nearly starved. But Silver tells the youngest hand that he is smart and worth talking to frankly. [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) is appalled that Silver is flattering the boy in exactly the same way Silver had spoken to and flattered himself.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Only now does it become entirely clear what Silver’s relationship to piracy is: he is a pirate himself, who has traveled on pirate ships with Pew, Flint, and (presumably) Billy Bones. Jim is almost more offended by Silver’s obvious manipulation of the young crewman (which makes his kindness towards Jim that much more inauthentic) than by his boasting about evil deeds.

***Summary part 2:***

[Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) says that “gentlemen of fortune” live roughly and dangerously, but it’s worth it when they leave a cruise with hundreds of pounds. He, though, is careful with his money, hiding it to be safe. Now he’s given it to his wife: soon she’ll sneak off to meet him—but where, he won’t tell. While gentlemen of fortune are wary of trusting people, he says, he has a certain way about him.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Silver seems to enjoy his role as leader and lecturer. While he is a pirate himself, he’s careful to distinguish himself from the others—he has managed to be so successful precisely because he is both deceitful and, when he finds it useful, trusting.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) has realized that “gentleman of fortune” means simply a pirate, and that he’s witnessing perhaps the last honest crewman aboard being corrupted by [Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver)’s flattery. Jim then hears the voice of [Israel Hands](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters), who asks how long they’ll to lie in wait—he’s sick of [Captain Smollett](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/captain-smollett). But Silver tells him not to act until he gives the word—they need someone to steer the course. Instead he’ll finish with “them” on the island: he’s seen too many plots failed because of hurry.

***Analysis Part 3:***

By piecing together what Silver is sharing with the other members of the crew, Jim is able to understand the high stakes of the conversation and what it means for him and the others. They have until reaching Treasure Island, he realizes: then the planned mutiny will begin. This passage also introduces the important meaning of “gentleman of fortune”—as pirates, these men of the sea are deeply affected both by fate and chance (“fortune”) and the desire for wealth (the other meaning of “fortune”).

***Summary Part 4:***

Another hand asks what they’ll do with the others once on the island—abandon them there or kill them—and [Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) says he prefers death, if only to prevent the chance of them testifying at trial later. He claims [Trelawney](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/squire-trelawney) for himself. Then he asks the young sailor for an apple. [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) is terrified he’ll be discovered, but immediately [Hands](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters) suggests they drink [rum](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/symbols/rum) instead.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Silver’s cruelty and lack of concern for other people is evident here: he’s willing to do everything he can in order to survive, including killing off all those who might stand in the way of his own freedom. Jim, in turn, has enjoyed some good fortune of his own in escaping discovery.

***Summary Part 5:***

[Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) also hears [Hands](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters) whisper to [Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) that a few crewmen still haven’t been brought over to their side. Suddenly the voice of the look-out cries, “Land ho!”

***Analysis Part 5:***

Just as Jim is attempting to come to terms with what he’s heard, the moment of arrival (and mutiny) approaches.

***Quotations***

***Quotation 1:***

"Gentlemen of fortune," returned the cook, "usually trusts little among themselves, and right they are, you may lay to it. But I have a way with me, I have. When a mate brings a slip on his cable--one as knows me, I mean--it won't be in the same world with old John. There was some that was feared of Pew, and some that was feared of Flint; but Flint his own self was feared of me." (11.14)

***Explanation 1:***

It's because pirates have so little trust among themselves that they are constantly ruining their own plans: witness O'Brien the pirate, killed by one of his own comrades. This is why pirate "democracy" can be possible in name only; the most feared pirate will always be elected captain, regardless of merit.

***Quotation 2:***

"Davis was a man too, by all accounts," said Silver. "I never sailed along of him; first with England, then with Flint, that's my story; and now here on my own account, in a manner of speaking. I laid by nine hundred safe, from England, and two thousand after Flint. That ain't bad for a man before the mast--all safe in bank. 'Tain't earning now, it's saving does it, you may lay to that. Where's all England's men now? I dunno. Where's Flint's? Why, most on 'em aboard here, and glad to get the duff--been begging before that, some on 'em. " (11.3)

***Explanation 2:***

This is the key point that distinguishes Long John Silver from other pirates: he has vision for the future. He puts aside money to keep himself financially secure. In what other ways does Long John Silver's unusual ability to plan demonstrate itself?

***Quotation 3:***

"Well," said the other, "but all the other money's gone now, ain't it? You daren't show face in Bristol after this."

"Why, where might you suppose it was?" asked Silver derisively.

"At Bristol, in banks and places," answered his companion.

"It were," said the cook; "it were when we weighed anchor. But my old missis has it all by now. And the Spy-glass is sold, lease and goodwill and rigging; and the old girl's off to meet me. I would tell you where, for I trust you, but it'd make jealousy among the mates." (11.7-11)

***Explanation 3:***

Long John Silver is also the only pirate in the novel who is not alone in the world: his "old missis," his wife, is helping him take his money out of Bristol to some unknown location. We would give a million dollars to meet the woman who married Long John Silver. She must be amazingly patient. Do we see any signs of Long John Silver's personal loyalty or ability to form emotional attachments beyond these vague references to his "old missis"?

***Quotation 4:***

"Why, how many tall ships, think ye, now, have I seen laid aboard? And how many brisk lads drying in the sun at Execution Dock?" cried Silver. "And all for this same hurry and hurry and hurry. You hear me? I seen a thing or two at sea, I have. If you would on'y lay your course, and a p'int to windward, you would ride in carriages, you would. But not you! I know you. You'll have your mouthful of rum tomorrow, and go hang." (11.25-7)

***Explanation 4:***

Long John Silver offers this diatribe to Israel Hands when Hands tries to hurry him into mutinying before they reach the island. He points out that he's got experience and a plan on his side, but the other pirates are so impatient that they want everything right now. Long John Silver's go-to symbol for this self-indulgence is their "mouthful of rum tomorrow": they would rather have a shot of rum tomorrow than carriages in the future. And Silver proves correct: as soon as they fall to open warfare with the good guys, all the pirates get drunk, leaving them vulnerable to more sober minds.

***Quotation 5:***

"Right you are," said Silver; "rough and ready. But mark you here, I'm an easy man--I'm quite the gentleman, says you; but this time it's serious. Dooty is dooty, mates. I give my vote--death. When I'm in Parlyment and riding in my coach, I don't want none of these sea-lawyers in the cabin a-coming home, unlooked for, like the devil at prayers. Wait is what I say; but when the time comes, why, let her rip!" (11.31)

***Explanation 5:***

Here, Long John Silver is drastically redefining duty. His duty is to his pirate crewmates, which mean that he votes for killing Captain Smollett, Squire Trelawney and the other good guys. The problem with telling people to do their duty as a moral lesson is that we all have different notions of duty. To Long John Silver, apparently killing people for the profit of his pirate friends is a kind of duty.

***Quotation 6:***

"'Tain't much use for fools, you may lay to it--that, nor nothing," cried Silver. "But now, you look here: you're young, you are, but you're as smart as paint. I see that when I set my eyes on you, and I'll talk to you like a man."

You may imagine how I felt when I heard this abominable old rogue addressing another in the very same words of flattery as he had used to myself. I think, if I had been able, that I would have killed him through the barrel. Meantime, he ran on, little supposing he was overheard. (11.4-5)

***Explanation 6:***

Here's the moment when Jim realizes he's been tricked, when he sees Long John Silver use the same flattery ("you're as smart as paint") on Dick Johnson that he's been using on Jim. But how does Long John Silver know which words will charm each individual? What experiences have come together to forge such a gifted diplomat? Sure, even though this scene fills Jim with so much rage that he "would have killed [Long John Silver] through the barrel" if he could, seeing evidence of Long John Silver's craftiness in action only increases his interest to us.