***Treasure Island***

***Chapter 30:***

# *On Parole*

***Brief Summary:***

* Jim wakes up to a voice calling into the fort, announcing that Doctor Livesey is there.
* Jim is glad to see the Doctor, but he's also ashamed because of his desertion.
* Long John Silver greets him heartily.
* Doctor Livesey is coming to treat the pirates for their injuries and sickness.
* Long John Silver has a surprise for him: Jim!
* Doctor Livesey is so shocked to see Jim that he stops for a moment without speaking.
* Before asking what's going on, Doctor Livesey goes in to see the pirates.
* Even though he knows they might kill him at any time, he doesn't behave as though anything is out of the ordinary.
* The fellow with the bandaged head is looking a bit better, but George Merry and Dick Johnson are both feverish.
* Doctor Livesey swears he'll do his best to keep them alive so they can stand trial and be hanged back in England.
* After treating them all, Doctor Livesey wants to have a word with Jim.
* George says that's not OK, but Long John Silver allows it as long as Jim swears not to run away.
* The pirates protest, but Long John Silver tells them to shut up – they'll keep the treaty until the right time, he insists.
* Long John Silver walks down with Doctor Livesey and Jim to the gate.
* Long John Silver warns Jim to walk slowly – the pirates are looking for any excuse to turn on Jim and him.
* Long John Silver wants Jim to stand witness that he saved Jim's life, at great personal risk to himself.
* Long John Silver leaves Jim and Doctor Livesey to their talk.
* Doctor Livesey says he's disappointed that Jim ran off like a coward the minute Captain Smollett got injured, and that he'll get what he deserves.
* Jim starts to cry. Doctor Livesey doesn't need to remind him he's done wrong, and Jim knows he's doomed anyway.
* Doctor Livesey feels bad and suggests that he and Jim run away.
* Jim can't – he promised Long John Silver.
* But Jim is worried that, if he's tortured, he'll reveal that he knows where the ship is.
* Jim quickly outlines everything he's done since he snuck out of the stockade.
* Doctor Livesey promises he won't let Jim be killed, since Jim has saved their lives more than once by uncovering the plot and finding Ben Gunn.
* Doctor Livesey then calls out to Long John Silver, warning him to steer clear of the treasure, or else he'll find more trouble.
* Long John Silver answers that he can't; he needs that treasure to save his and Jim's lives.
* Long John Silver asks why Doctor Livesey gave him the map in the first place. Why doesn't Doctor Livesey just come straight out and say what's going on?
* Doctor Livesey says he can't share a secret that isn't his.
* Still, Livesey promises to do his best to save Long John Silver if they all get out of this. He also advises that Long John Silver keep Jim close by his side.
* With that, Doctor Livesey heads back into the forest.

***Synopsis:***

Jim wakes up the next morning as Dr. Livesey arrives to tend to the pirates. Jim is happy to see the doctor, but fears his disapproval. Livesey is visibly shocked to see Jim, but does not speak to him, and proceeds to treat his patients. Finally he asks to see Jim alone. One of the pirates voices a refusal, but Silver insists that that the request be granted. Jim and Livesey advance to the other side of the stockade, still in view of Silver. Livesey expresses surprise that Silver is not worried about losing his hostage, and Silver replies that he trusts Livesey as a gentleman.

Livesey accuses Jim of being cowardly in deserting the captain at a moment of weakness. Jim begins to weep. Livesey suddenly suggests that they both make a run for it and flee the pirates. Jim responds that such an action would not be right. He tells Livesey that he knows the location of the Hispaniola. Livesey exclaims that Jim manages to save their lives at every step. He returns Jim as a hostage to Silver and warns Silver not to be in any hurry to find the treasure.

***Summary:***Early the next morning (Chapter 30, "On Parole"), Livesey, coming to treat the wounded man and Merry, asks to have a talk with Jim. The men object to this, but Silver overrules them, makes Jim swear that he will not run for it, and then takes him out to talk with the doctor through the stockade fence, telling them he relies on them both to save him from hanging. Alone with Jim, Livesey rebukes the boy for running off two days before, but tries to get him to climb the fence and escape now. Jim refuses — he gave his word — and tells the doctor where the ship is. Then, calling Silver over to him, Livesey warns Silver, without giving him a reason, not to seek the treasure. Silver says that he must or the others will overpower him and Jim will be killed. The doctor advises Silver to look out for trouble, but tells him that he will do what he can in his behalf.

***Critical Study:***Early the next morning, [Dr. Livesey](https://www.gradesaver.com/treasure-island/study-guide/character-list#dr-livesey) appears at the stockade in order to take care of those men that are his patients. Long John Silver informs the doctor of Jim's presence and the doctor just nods grimly to Jim and proceeds to his patients, treating them professionally and showing absolutely no fear about being in the midst of the enemy. Finally, the doctor asks to speak alone with Jim, a request that George Merry strongly objects to. Long John Silver, however, silences his fellow pirate and Jim gives him his word that he will not run off. Silver then allows Jim and the doctor to speak, as long as the doctor is outside and Jim is inside. When the doctor leaves, the men accuse Silver of "playing double," sacrificing the groups interests in order to save himself. In order to bluff them, he reminds them that they are searching for the treasure that very day. While the men are silenced by this reasoning, they are clearly not convinced and still view Long John Silver with skepticism.

Once they go outside, Silver tells Jim to move slowly because he is wary that the other pirates might attack them. Silver then puts his own case before the doctor, complete with a trembling voice. He tells how he saved Jim's life, admits that he is afraid of hanging, and asks the doctor to put in a good word for him. After that, he steps out of hearing so Jim and Livesey can talk alone.

At first, Livesey scolds Jim for running off and leaving the group, especially because he did so at a time when the captain was wounded. Jim begins to cry and tells the doctor that he is not afraid to die, he is only afraid of torture. The doctor then tries to persuade Jim to run away, but the boy refuses because he has given his word to Silver and trusts him. Jim then tells the doctor about his adventures, finishing with the good news that the Hispaniola is beached at the North Inlet. Humbly, the doctor says that Jim ahs saved their lives at every point and that somehow they will find a way to save Jim.

At this point, Long John Silver returns to the conversation and the doctor warns Silver that there might be some trouble when the pirates search for the treasure, but Silver says the treasure hunt is the thing that may save his and Jim's life. Finally, the doctor tells Silver that if they all survive and get off of the island he will do what he can to save Silver's life. Livesey also instructs the pirate to keep Jim close to him, and to call if he needs any help. At last, the doctor leaves, going to get help.

Jim's adventure with [Israel Hands](https://www.gradesaver.com/treasure-island/study-guide/character-list#israel-hands) and his success in saving the Hispanolia, gave him the sufficient stature to enable him to be the hero in a boy's adventure - to serve as the character with which the reader identifies himself as he reads - without removing him too far into the realm of the heroic so that he ceases to be recognizable as an ordinary boy. The major thing to remember is that his good fortune is due as much to luck as to skill. That is evident, even to the other characters, in this chapter as Dr. Livesey tells him, "There is a kind of fate in this. Every step, it's you that saves our life." Jim has courage and resourcefulness, but it is not these qualities alone that enable him to save himself and his friends. He has a kind of beginner's luck.

Why would Stevenson deliberately keep Jim from achieving too impressive a heroic stature? The obvious reason is that he is to stand for the boy reader and must not therefore move too far above the reader's conceivable accomplishment. Another reason, however, is that he must not compete in picturesque bravado with Long John Silver no in calm adult competence with dr. Livesey. He is the ordinary boy thrown into the midst of adventure by pure chance and acquitting himself very creditably.

In the course of the story he develops from a purely passive character into an experienced and resourceful campaigner. This development takes place under the readers' eyes, and the reader can see it as natural and inevitable under the circumstances. With his outwitting of Israel Hands in the previous chapter, Jim achieves his full stature as a man of action, just as in his refusal to go back on his word and escape from Silver and his men with Dr. Livesey in this chapter, he achieves his full moral stature.

***Critical Analysis:***Jim awakes the next morning to the sound of a voice crying, "Block-house, ahoy! Here's the doctor." Indeed, [Dr. Livesey](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Dr._Livesey) has come to treat the ill and injured buccaneers, and it seems he is expected.

When he is finished, Dr. Livesey asks to have a private word with Jim. At first the doctor condemns Jim for deserting the camp, calling the act "downright cowardly." Through tears of shame, Jim explains what good fortune—recovery of the ship—resulted from his recklessness. The astonished doctor soon softens his criticism. When he encourages Jim to take this chance to escape, Jim staunchly refuses.

Before leaving Jim with the pirates, Dr. Livesey warns Silver in secret not to be in a hurry to find the treasure. The doctor then asks Silver to take care of Jim. If he does so, the doctor promises he will do what he can to save Silver from the gallows once they get off the island.

Duty and honor as well as courage are the driving forces behind [Dr. Livesey](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Dr._Livesey)'s visit to the stockade and Jim's refusal to escape. The doctor feels duty-bound to treat the pirates, though they are scoundrels and he is in mortal danger. It is the same sense of duty that drives him to help Billy Bones. He also considers it a point of honor to keep the mutineers alive, if possible, for a proper trial in England.

When the doctor encourages Jim to take a chance and flee the stockade, it is yet another test of courage, which Jim passes. This time his moral courage is on the line. Jim has given his word to Silver that he won't try to escape. Therefore, as tempting as it might be, Jim feels he must honor that promise and remain a prisoner.

Silver's chameleon-like ability to adapt to the needs of a situation is highlighted when he overrides his men's objections and lets Dr. Livesey speak privately with Jim. Silver intimidates the pirates with roars and curses, yet moments later, speaks with trembling earnestness to Dr. Livesey. Each performance is designed to get Silver what he wants. The effect is a complex, ever-shifting, and untrustworthy character whose identity and motives are always in doubt.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

All are awakened the next morning by the [doctor](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/doctor-livesey)’s voice. [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) is glad to hear it but also feels ashamed. [Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) greets the doctor cheerfully, telling him that a little stranger has arrived. The doctor asks disbelievingly if it’s Jim, and Silver concurs. The doctor pauses, shocked, but then says he’ll do his duty first. He tends to [Merry](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters), saying he’ll do all he can to save him for the gallows. He dispenses medications to the others before asking Silver to have a word with Jim outside: he leaves. Merry sputters, “No!” but Silver orders him to be silent, and asks Jim for his word of honor not to run away. Jim gives it, and he begins to head outside with Silver. But the pirates roar with disapproval, accusing Silver of playing double (a charge Jim can’t imagine Silver will successfully evade). Still, Silver defends himself handily, saying he’ll keep the doctor till he no longer needs him, then kill Livesey himself.

***Analysis Part 1:***

As Jim prepares to meet the doctor for the first time since he’s snuck away, he remembers just how immature it was for him to fail to ask permission and to leave his fellow crewmen behind, especially now that he is imprisoned rather than returning in triumph with the stolen ship. The doctor, like Silver, is able to hide his true feelings and act in according to his own best interests, while maintaining an attitude of cool, sometimes scornful indifference. While Silver had appeased the pirates’ discontent earlier, now he nearly loses their loyalty once again, as the careful game he’s playing continues to grow more complicated.

***Summary part 2:***

[Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) and [Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) advance across the sand to where the doctor is waiting. Silver tells the [doctor](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/doctor-livesey) that Jim will tell him how Silver saved his life and was given the [black spot](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/symbols/the-black-spot) for it: he hopes the doctor will take this into account in judging Silver. Never has the pirate seemed more in earnest: Dr. Livesey asks if he’s afraid, and Silver declares he’s no coward, but wants to avoid the gallows all the same. He leaves them.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Now it seems to become clear what Silver’s true, earnest desires really are—survival, pure and simple. Silver seems to have realized that the other pirates are not as clever as Jim, the doctor, and the captain, and that it’s better for him to cast his lot with them.

***Summary Part 3:***

The [doctor](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/doctor-livesey) greets [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) sadly, saying he can’t truly blame him, but it was cowardly for him to slip off while [Smollett](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/captain-smollett) was unwell. Jim begins to cry, saying that he’s blamed himself enough: he’s willing, now, to die, but is only afraid of torture. In a changed voice, the doctor suggests that they run for it, but Jim says he’s given his word, and cannot. He tells the doctor where he’s hidden the ship, and that he worries he might let the location slip if the pirates torture him.

***Analysis Part 3:***

Jim’s fears come true to a certain extent as the doctor lectures him for his cowardly behavior—a rebuke that Jim can only counter with the revelation that he’s stolen the ship and hidden it. His tears remind us of his young age once again, even though he’s been thrust into very adult challenges.

***Summary Part 4:***When [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) tells the [doctor](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/doctor-livesey) of his adventures, the doctor marvels that at every turn it’s been Jim who has saved their lives. In return, he says, they’ll be sure to protect him. Livesey also starts to mention [Ben Gunn](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/ben-gunn), but at that moment [Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) returns, and the doctor tells him not to hurry after the treasure. Silver replies that only by doing so can he hope to save his life and Jim’s. In that case, the doctor says, he must watch out for “squalls,” or violent cries. He won’t say any more, despite Silver’s protest, but promises to do his best to save Silver if they both survive. Livesey sets off.

***Analysis Part 4:***While the doctor has called Jim’s decision to flee cowardly, Jim’s tale of his adventure makes the doctor (like the pirates, though from the opposite perspective) acknowledge what a crucial role Jim has played in the pursuit of the island’s treasure and battle against their enemies. At the same time, the doctor continues to mystify both Jim and Silver with confusing statements and acts.