***Treasure Island***

***Chapter 9:***

# *Powder and Arms*

***Brief Summary:***

* Jim, Doctor Livesey, and Squire Trelawney all go over to the dock where the *Hispaniola* is moored.
* Jim observes that Squire Trelawney gets along well with the mate, Arrow, but not with the captain of the ship, Smollett.
* Captain Smollett soon levels with Squire Trelawney: he's not happy with the crew or his first mate.
* Squire Trelawney quickly takes offense and asks point-blank if Captain Smollett doesn't like him either.
* Doctor Livesey interrupts the argument and asks Captain Smollett for an explanation.
* Captain Smollett has the following complaints:
  1. He doesn't know why he's being kept in the dark about the *Hispaniola*'s destination by Squire Trelawney;
  2. He has found out that their goal is a treasure hunt – from his own crew, who know more than he does;
  3. He's worried that neither Doctor Livesey nor Squire Trelawney really knows what he is doing;
  4. He would have preferred to hire his own crew; and
  5. he mistrusts Mr. Arrow, his first mate, who seems too friendly with the crew to be a good officer.
* To this list of complaints Captain Smollett adds some *really* serious objections: the crew seems to be stockpiling gunpowder in a place that is handier for them to reach than for the Captain.
* Also, Squire Trelawney has been talking *way* too much, and some of the private details of the treasure map have clearly spread throughout the crew.
* Doctor Livesey asks Captain Smollett if he is worried about a mutiny – an uprising on the part of the crew once they are at sea.
* Captain Smollett agrees. He thinks some of the men, including Arrow, are honest, but he is worried that something about the trip is not quite right. He won't sail unless he's allowed to take certain precautions.
* Captain Smollett takes his leave, and Doctor Livesey says that he is an honest man – along with Long John Silver.
* Squire Trelawney protests that Captain Smollett is a coward.
* Doctor Livesey won't judge him yet.
* Doctor Livesey and Squire Trelawney agree to Captain Smollett's wishes: instead of allowing all the officers to be quartered at one end of the ship, they set up places to sleep throughout the boat. Spreading themselves out will prevent the crew from ambushing them all in one place.
* Captain Smollett also manages to get Squire Trelawney to move the gunpowder so it isn't all centralized near the crew.
* Long John Silver comes aboard just as these changes are being made and seems surprised.
* Captain Smollett reminds him that they are his orders.

***Synopsis:***

While boarding the ship, Jim, Silver, and the others meet Mr. Arrow, the first mate, with whom Trelawney gets along well. There is some animosity, however, between Trelawney and the captain, whose name is Smollett. Smollett is very opinionated, and speaks openly about his dislike of most of the crew and about the fact that he has a bad feeling about the voyage. Smollett also adds that there has been too much blabbing about the map and the treasure, though Trelawney protests that he has told no one. After the captain leaves, Livesey asserts that he trusts Silver and Smollett completely.

***Critical Study:***

When Jim, Trelawney, and Livesey board the Hispaniola, at the beginning of Chapter 9 ("Powder and Arms"), the captain (Mr. Smollett, referred to earlier as the "sailing master") asks to speak with Trelawney, and Jim and the doctor stay in attendance. Smollett has complaints about the enterprise. He does not trust many of the crew (which it ought to have been his right as captain to hire), does not like the habit of his first mate, Mr. Arrow, of associating too freely with the common sailors, and especially does not like the fact that the whole crew knows they are sailing for treasure — and knows the bearings of the island — when he himself has been told none of this. The squire, saying he has told no one about the map and the island, begins to bluster heatedly, but Dr. Livesey steps in and prevents him from firing Smollett on the spot. Under Livesey's questioning, the captain explains his objections, admits that he has no proof that the first officer and crew are not to be trusted, but says that this treasure hunt will be a dangerous voyage. He asks that Trelawney's servants, Redruth and others whom the squire has brought with him, be quartered near Trelawney's cabin rather than before the mast with the rest of the crew, and that the store of guns and powder be removed from the forehold and kept below the cabin. This, Livesey observes, will effectively separate the newly hired crewmen from those whom Trelawney already knows — as well as from the weapons — and sounds as if the captain fears a mutiny, but Smollett again says he is only being cautious, and that if he had a real reason to fear mutiny he would ask to resign his orders.

Silver comes on board and complains that moving the powder and arms will waste too much time. Captain Smollett tells him to mind his own business, and tells Jim to go to the galley (ship's kitchen) with Silver to help prepare the meal.

***Critical Analysis:***

As soon as Jim, [Dr. Livesey](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Dr._Livesey), and [Squire Trelawney](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Squire_Trelawney) are aboard the *Hispaniola*, the ship's captain, Smollett, asks to speak with the squire. [Captain Smollett](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Captain_Smollett) bluntly states that he has misgivings about the cruise, the crew, and his first mate, Mr. Arrow. He is disturbed by the fact that the purpose of the cruise is supposedly secret, but everyone knows about it. It troubles him that the crew is storing the gun powder and arms where they can be easily obtained.

Dr. Livesey appreciates the captain's candor and judges that he is one of the two honest hired men aboard—the other being [Long John Silver](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Long_John_Silver). On the other hand Squire Trelawney dislikes the captain intensely, labeling him "an intolerable humbug." Nevertheless, upon Captain Smollett's advice, the powder and arms are moved to a more-guarded location.

As the work continues, Smollett notices that Jim is unoccupied. Sharply he orders the boy below, to help Silver with the cooking. "I'll have no favorites on my ship," he explains to the doctor firmly. At that moment Jim decides he hates the captain deeply.

The theme of duty is underscored by [Captain Smollett](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Captain_Smollett) in this chapter. Duty is central to his character, and he takes to heart his responsibility for the lives of the people on his ship. Honesty prevents him from directly accusing the crew of intending mutiny, but duty compels him to relay his concerns to the squire. When Trelawney takes offense, the captain is unmoved.

The confrontation between Captain Smollett and [Squire Trelawney](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Treasure-Island/character-analysis/#Squire_Trelawney) highlights the squire's less admirable qualities: occasional arrogance, stubbornness, and naïveté. He does not like having his judgment questioned, especially by a man he considers a subordinate. He stubbornly refuses to consider that the captain may be right. And he naïvely underestimates the dangers posed by a crew hungry for gold.

The doctor, on the other hand, appears coolheaded and willing to consider Captain Smollett's concerns. As a magistrate, he is used to listening to both sides of an argument before making a decision. He will act as a buffer between the squire and captain.

The captain plays no favorites in irritating the people aboard his ship. His command that Jim get busy and help the cook does not sit well with the boy. For the first time Jim expresses resentment at being told what to do by an adult—a sign that he may be starting to grow up. It also indicates that, in Jim's dreams about the voyage, he never imagined the reality of having to work.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

The group heads towards the ship, the Hispaniola, and they greet the mate, [Mr. Arrow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters), as well as a sharp, angry-looking man, [Captain Smollett](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/captain-smollett). Smollett declares that he doesn’t like the trip, the men, or the officer. In response to [Dr. Livesey](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/doctor-livesey)’s questions, he says that everyone seems to know more than he does about where they’re going and what they’re after.

***Analysis Part 1:***

While Jim’s first impression of Silver was of a good-natured, kindly man, Captain Smollett is immediately introduced as mean-tempered and stubborn. He does, though, have his own suspicions about secrets that are being kept from him.

***Summary part 2:***

[Smollett](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/captain-smollett) has overheard talk of treasure, which doesn’t please him, and he is upset at not having a role in choosing the crew. [Mr. Arrow](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters) is also too familiar with the crew, he adds. He suggests a number of changes he’d like, and the [squire](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/squire-trelawney) agrees cheerfully.

***Analysis Part 2:***

A hunt after treasure, in the book, seems sometimes and to certain characters like a fools’ errand. But the squire is undeterred by the captain’s doubts.

***Summary Part 3:***

Then [Captain Smollett](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/captain-smollett) says he’s heard that they have a [map](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/symbols/the-map-of-treasure) of the island where the treasure chest’s location is marked. The [squire](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/squire-trelawney) cries that he never told anyone about this: [Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) knows that he is a blabber, and yet in this case still believes him. In any case, it remains a mystery. The [doctor](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/doctor-livesey) declares that Smollett and [Silver](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/long-john-silver) are, at least, two honest men that the squire found for the crew: the squire, though, declares that the captain is “unsailorly” and “un-English.”

***Analysis Part 3:***

The squire has evidently shared the details of the sea voyage with a number of people in Bristol, but in this case Jim still has the sense that there is more to the story, even if he can’t quite put his finger on what there is. The squire does seem to feel as if he’s made a mistake with one crew choice.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Jim](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/jim-hawkins) is pleased with the ship’s new arrangement, following [Smollett](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/captain-smollett)’s requests, which will allow him a berth to himself. As Jim is examining the ship’s cannons, though, the captain barks at him to get to work, and Jim decides he agrees with the [squire](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/treasure-island/characters/squire-trelawney) about Smollett.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Jim is excited to begin this new adventure, and to him the captain’s only role is preventing him from reveling in this new life—the worst kind of parental authority.