

"I haven't got any cheese with me, but I will bring you some later from my ship." Ben Gunn smiled. Then suddenly they heard gunfire coming from far off. "The pirates!" cried Jim. "They must be attacking the ship."

"Pirates?" asked Ben Gunn, standing up suddenly. "Has Flint's crew come back? Are you with them?"

"I'm not a pirate," said Jim. "Nor is our captain. But some of Flint's crew are with us, and they want to steal our ship. Their leader is Long John Silver."

"Silver!" cried Ben Gunn. "I knew him. You are in serious trouble, my young friend."

"I know," said Jim. He took a deep breath. "Will you help us fight Silver? If you do, I will ask my friends to take you home to England with us."

Ben Gunn grabbed Jim's hand and shook it. "Yes! Ben Gunn will save you! I'm the king of this island, the richest king you'll ever meet!"

Jim thought Ben Gunn must be slightly crazy. "I hear guns again," he said. "I must go back." He added curiously: "Did you really sail with Captain Flint?"

As they were walking, Ben Gunn told Jim his story. "When I was your age, I was honest and good," he said. "But I wanted adventure, and so I joined Flint's pirate crew. I didn't know then what a wicked man he was. I was there when he came to this island. He took the treasure and six of the crew with him, and the rest of us stayed on the ship. A few hours later, he came back alone. The other six were dead. He killed them so nobody would know where the treasure was buried! After Flint died, I joined another ship. Years later, as we were sailing by this island, I told the crew that Flint's treasure was buried here and that we should go ashore and find it. They agreed and we searched for three days, but we found nothing. It was too well hidden. They were so angry with me that they decided to leave me here alone. How I regretted becoming a pirate! But if I ever get back to England, I'm going to be an honest man again, Jim, I promise."

"Look!" interrupted Jim. "I see the flag of England flying above

