

(Jim is getting apples from a barrel when SILVER and DIRK enter.)

SILVER: No, no, Flint was cap'n and I was quartermaster. The last round of cannon shot struck us off the larboard bow, took down the mainmast with it, killed three men and pinned my leg and me up against the rail. I seen that gunner's eyes smilin' when he made the hit, we were that close. Then I watched him reload and aim his blasted cannon right at me to finish off the job. I was pinned fast and couldn't move. He had me sighted dead, to be sure. What was I to do, now I ask ye. What was I to do?

DIRK: I don't know?

SILVER: "Off with it!" I yelled at the master surgeon, he that ampytated me — out of college and all — Latin by the bucket; he was hanged like a dog and sun dried like the rest — "Off with it!" I said. And no sooner did he cut me loose but that cannon shot whistled across where my head used to be. I kilt that gunner two years later off the coast of Spain. He wasn't smiling so much when I scraped my cutlass 'cross his throat. Aye, to see what I have seen. Why, I've known of Flint's ship to run amuck with red blood and fit to sink with gold!

DIRK: Aye, I've heard 'o him since I was a boy. He was the flower of the flock, was Flint.

SILVER: That he was, lad, that he was. There wasn't a man stepped off the shore but wasn't feared of of Flint; but Flint his own self was feared of me. The devil himself would have been afeared to go to sea with the both of us on board. But now, you look here: you're young, you are, but you're as smart as paint so I'll talk to you like a man. If you join up with us, you'll live the life of a gentleman of fortune.

DIRK: A pirate?!

SILVER: Don't say that word. It's a horrible word. Gentlemen of fortune is what we call ourselves, men of opportunity, to be sure. You join up with us, and you may live rough and risk swinging, but you'll eat and drink like a fighting cock, and when a cruise is done, why, it's pounds of gold in your pockets, not pennies. What do say, lad?

DIRK: I'm in.

SILVER: And a brave lad you are, and a smart one too! Smart as paint, I say. I seen that when you first came on board. And so, clap hands and a bargain. (They shake hands. HANDS enters.) Remember one thing now, lad — once in, never out. Don't go forgettin' that.

DIRK: No...no, sir.

SILVER: (Resuming the shake once again) There's a lad! A finer figurehead for a gentleman of fortune than I've seen in many a year. (HANDS comes forward.) Dirk's square.

HANDS: Oh, I knowed Dirk was square. He's no fool. But look here, Long John, how long are we going to stand off like a blessed bumboat?

SILVER: Just hold off a little while more.

HANDS: We've waited long enough.

SILVER: Who's captain here?

HANDS: You are, I knows.

SILVER: Then stow it!

HANDS: But how long, Silver?

SILVER: Till I say so.

HANDS: Well, I say we grab that little sea-punk Jim Hawkins and make him tell us where the map is and then toss him and the whole bloody bunch of 'em o're the side. I'm tired of waitin', by thunder!

SILVER: Israel, your head ain't much account, nor never was. Now here's what I say: you'll berth forward, speak soft, and keep sober till I give the word.

HANDS: Well, I don't say no, do I? What I say is when? That's what I say.

SILVER: When! by the powers! When?! Till the last possible moment I can manage, that's when! Here's a first rate seaman, Cap'n' Smollett, sails the blessed ship for us. Here's the doctor or the squire with the map Hawkins probably don't know where it is. Do you know where it is? I don't. Well, then, I say we let them find the treasure and get it on board for us before we do a blessed thing. Can you understand that?! If I had my way I'd let Cap'n Smollett sail us halfway home before we struck.

DIRK: Why, we're all seaman aboard here, I should think. We can sail her home.

SILVER: Ay, we can steer a course, but who's to set one?

HANDS: When was all I asked.

SILVER: Ay, ay, I know the sort you are! All of you. We'll finish 'em off on the island as soon as the treasure's on board. Are you happy now? Do you have your when?

HANDS: Easy all, Long John. No one's a-crossin' you.

SILVER: How many brisk lads, think you now, have I seen hanged and drying in the sun at execution dock? And all for this same hurry, hurry, hurry. I've seen a thing or two at sea, I have.

DIRK: But when we do lay 'em 'athwart, what are we to do with 'em, anyhow?

SILVER: There's the man for me! That's what I call business. Well, now, what would you do?

DIRK: We could put 'em ashore and maroon 'em all.

SILVER: Ay, that's one way.

HANDS: Cut 'em down like so much pork.

SILVER: And there's another. Dead men don't bite, they say. Mark you here, I'm an easy man, I'm usually quite the gentleman, but his time it's serious. Dooty is dooty, mates. I give my vote — death. Wait is what I say, and then let her rip!

HANDS: Now you're talking, Long John.