

Treasure Island

As soon as Silver disappeared, the captain, who had been closely watching him, turned towards the interior of the house, and found not a man of use at his post but Gray. It was the first time we had ever seen him angry.

“Quarters!” he roared. And then, as we all slunk back to our places. “Gray,” he said, “I’ll put your name in the log; you’ve stood by your duty like a seaman. Mr. Trelawney, I’m surprised at you, sir. Doctor, I thought you had worn the king’s coat! If that was how you served at Fontenoy, sir, you’d have been better in your berth.”

The doctor’s watch were all back at their loopholes, the rest were busy loading the spare muskets, and every one with a red face, you may be certain, and a flea in his ear, as the saying is.

The captain looked on for awhile in silence. Then he spoke.

“My lads,” said ~~h~~He, “I’ve given Silver a broadside. I pitched it in red-hot on purpose; and before the hour’s out, as he said, we shall be boarded. We’re outnumbered, I needn’t tell you that but we fight in shelter; and, a minute ago, I should have said we fought with discipline. I’ve no manner of doubt that we can drub them, if you choose.”

Then he went on the rounds, and saw, as he said, that all was clear.

On the two short sides of the house, east and west, there were only two loopholes; on the south side where the porch was, two again; and on the north side, five. There was a round score of muskets for the seven of us; the firewood had been built into four piles—tables, you might say—one about the middle of each side, and on each of these tables some ammunition and four laded muskets

were laid ready to the hand of the defenders. In the middle, the cutlasses lay ranged.

The iron fire basket was carried bodily out by Mr. Trelawney, and the embers smothered among sand.

“Hawkins hasn’t had his breakfast. Hawkins, help yourself, and back to your post to eat it,” continued Captain Smollett. “Lively now, my lad; you’ll want it before you’ve done. Hunter, serve out a round of brandy to all hands.”

And while this was going on, the captain completed, in his own mind, the plan of the defense.

“Doctor, you will take the door,” he resumed. “See and don’t expose yourself; keep within, and fire through the porch. Hunter, take the East side there. Joyce, you stand by the West, my man. Mr. Trelawney, you are the best shot, you and Gray will take this long north side with the five loopholes; it’s there the danger is. If they can get up to it, and fire in upon us through our own ports, things would begin to look dirty. Hawkins, neither you nor I are much account at the shooting; we’ll stand by to load and bear a hand.”