

Treasure Island

(written by David Gidney : adapted from the story by Robert Louis Stevenson)

Introduction: (Given by Jim with appropriate sound effects)

Our story tonight, dear audience, is one of skulduggery, derring-do and adventure brought to you from across the seven seas. It took place many years ago but it started not so very far from us on a bitter, windswept night in the little fishing village of Morchard Ho! Imagine if you will a fierce Atlantic gale (**track 1**) battering the cliffs and throwing great waves against the breakwater of the little harbour. The fishing boats are safely tied up but thrown around violently in the swell. The sign of the venerable Admiral Benbow Inn is swinging violently on its hinges (**track 2**). Inside, huddled around the last warmth of the fire is the young Jim Hawkins, his mother the landlady Henrietta and his twin sisters Trinny and Susanna. Their father is lying mortally ill in his bed upstairs (**track 3**). They are finishing their cocoa after another long hard day at the inn, the last of the patrons having finally staggered off into the night (**track 4**). . They are about to put the cat out into the storm, draw the bolts and go to bed (**track 5**) when from outside they hear

Mad Dog: (From off stage) 15 men on a dead man's chest
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

I know this story very well, ladies and gentlemen ...for it happened to me.

(Jim now runs into scene and takes his place by fireside)

Act 1 Scene 1

(A loud knock at the door)

Henrietta: Who could that be bothering us on a wild night the like this? Why the devil himself would not be out in it. Some awful murdering cut-throat after all of our hard earned cash, I'll bet. Go and answer it Trinny!

(Trinny looks at her sister but neither move)
(There is some more persistent knocking)

Mad Dog: Open up in there will you? It's a fierce night and this tired old sea dog is chilled to the marrow.

(Henrietta now sends Jim to the door
(Mad Dog enters dragging a large chest which he then puts down and sits on the corner)
(There is an awkward pause)

Mad Dog: Well what are you staring at? Cat got your tongues? I'm spitting feathers and soaked to the skin. Fetch me some rum boy and don't be hanging about doing it. Have you got a room where I can lay my weary bones?

Jim: First good sir can I take your wet coat and that big old chest upstairs for you?

Mad Dog: You keep your thieving hands off this chest boyand if you even thinks of looking inside, I'll have you split from top to toe with my cutlass here, see if I don't. (Waves cutlass around)

(Jim hurries off)

(Black Dog now looks nervously around him, under tables, behind curtains; sits again)

Mad Dog: Well, it seems a quiet and comfy spot; somewhere a man can lie low for a while. Do you get many people snooping round and not minding their own business round here? They'd better not poke their noses or they'll find themselves getting a musket ball between the eyes. (Waves musket around)

(Jim returns with some rum in a glass, which Mad Dog downs in one huge gulp)

Mad Dog: Now I need me bed and some more 'o that rum.....And you better not be telling anyone you've seen me here or I'll

Henrietta (Quickly) Yes, I think we get the picture. Now we have just one room left upstairs, next door to my poor dear dying husband (**track 3**).

Mad Dog: I'll take it. Does it have a lock and key?

Henrietta: For you sir, I'll even throw in a pillow and its two shillings a night full board.

Mad Dog: Never mind about that. I'll see you right. Now fetch me a full bottle of this grog and a plate of something and a pipe of tobacco. (Leers as she turns away) My but you're a fine looking womanyou wouldn't fancy tucking me in once you've looked after that sick old husband of yours?

(Scene fades to dark; same scene returns in daylight; Mad Dog is at his "usual" table much the worse for drink, several empty bottles on his table; the rest are busy; other patrons at sitting tables)

Mad Dog: 15 men on a dead man's chest
Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum

Henrietta: (To Jim): Can't you get him to plug that awful racket? And don't give him any more rum. He's been here 3 weeks and he hasn't paid us a penny for a drop of it or his lodgings. And what with your poor, dear dying father on his last legs. (**track 3**)

Mad Dog: (Pulls an unwilling customer to one side). Avast young man, I wager you never went to sea a day in your life, you scurvy lily-livered land-lubber. I'll tell you a story. We was becalmed in the Tropics when our ship was attacked by the terrible monster squid from the deep. Took us all by surprise it did and before we could fight it off had its gruesome tentacles round four of me crew. Tore their heads off and juggled them in the air like ping pong balls, then took each one and sucked out their brains!

(Customer looks shocked and walks off)

Henrietta: And if he keeps on telling these stories, I won't have any customers left either.

(A pirate arrives and walks to the bar)

Black Eyed Pete: Pardon missus, but I be looking for a tall dark stranger.

Henrietta: Aren't we all dear! But what can I really do for you, sir?

Black Eyed Pete I'm on the look out for a nice big chest!

Henrietta Ooo, look no further, big boy!

Black Eyed Pete: Ahem, the man I seek is drunk more than sober, sings awful songs and drags one around with him.

Henrietta: Well you're in luck. He's slumped over there in the corner and mind, he's never paid me a penny for all the rum he's soaked up. So if you are a friend of his maybe you could see yourself covering his tab?

(Black Eyed Pete waves her away and walks over to Mad Dog; pulls his head up off the table)

Black-Eyed Pete: So this is where you skulked off to, you conniving dog? Well ye know what we is after and if you just hand it over nice and quiet, nobody'll get 'urt.

Mad Dog: (Revives). You filthy spawn of a whelk, who do you think you are marching in here? You lot are getting nothing. Over my dead body first.

Black-Eyed Pete: As you like it Mad Dog. Don't say you didn't ask for it.

(Takes out enormous Black Spot and places it on the table; leaves)

Jim (Walks to table) Captain, what did all that mean?

Mad Dog: Its fearful dark secret Jim lad, but I'll be takin it to the grave with me now. I've been rumbled and given the dreaded Black Spot. I'll be dead by nightfall (**track 3**) ..And so will he 'e by the sound of it.

Henrietta Well don't be making a mess. And I'll only miss the 20 guineas you owe me ...not your flea-bitten rum-sodden carcass.

(Darkness falls again and the pub is now empty except for Mad Dog slumped at his table)

(Blind Pew and a group of pirates are skulking outside; they enter scene through the audience)

Blind Pew Well I may not be able to see much but I can sure sniff something out and I knows he's here somewhere. (Blind Pew sniffs several audience members) Now follow me boys, I thinks we is getting close.

(Break into inn and tip toe across room; Blind Pew sniffs right up to the table)

Blind Pew Aha boys, we 'ave him right 'ere. Now let's go to work!

(Mad Dog awakes just in time. There is a scuffle and Blind Pew is killed but Mad Dog also suffers a mortal blow. Henrietta and Jim are woken upstairs and call out from offstage)

Henrietta Keep it down will you? I'm trying to get my beauty sleep up here!
(The remaining pirates run off)
(Enter Jim and Henrietta)

Henrietta My goodness but who's been messing up my nice clean bar?

Jim But mother look, Mad Dog was spot on about that Black Spot. He's lying there dead and there's some funny looking chap next to him all pegged out too.

Henrietta (Shocked) and blood and guts all over my new rugs from the Range ...

Jim Never mind that ma, I would bet that its all connected to that old chest he was so keen to keep out of our way. I think its time we looked inside

(Bends to take keys from the body).

Jim What do you reckon we'll find?

Henrietta Let me guess ... Riches from the Spanish Main? All the gold I can eat? A three day ticket to Crealy? The keys to an Aston Martin?

(Jim walks to chest and empties it but only a pile of smelly old clothes
At last a cloth bag out of which he unfolds a large map and studies it for a while).

Henrietta Well that's a let down ...just a bag of smelly old sailor's socks.

Jim I am guessing this is what they were all after (holds up bag). And while it is here and so are we, it's not safe for us all to stay. There will be more of those scoundrels back for it soon enough. We'll leave the others upstairs sleeping and get help fast. I think its time we went and told Squire Trelawney and he sent for the militia.

Henrietta That's fair enough but what about these two dead pirates ...

Jim We'll put them in the Mid Devon recycling box in the morning. Now come on, let's get moving before we end up joining them ...

(track 6)