

Adapted from *Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson (1883)

## Pieces of Eight

Darkness cloaked me as I walked deep in the belly of the ship. Not one man who was with me woke up from their sleep. I would not know they were there at all if it was not for the odd snore or restless shudder,

The watery hands that held her were rocking the boat gently. It was as if the boat was singing to her bairns, the lullaby of a true Pirate Queen.

I remember chuckling to myself and thinking how funny it would be if I lay down next to the men and joined them in their dreams. How their faces would look when they woke up to find me there, a boy sleeping with murderers.

All of a sudden, a shrill voice came out of the darkness.

'Pieces of eight... Pieces of eight. Pieces of eight... Pieces of eight.'

Captain Flint! Silver's green parrot had given me away.

My heart pressed heavy in my chest and I dared not breathe in case I let out a scream.

The dark shapes around me began to stir from their sleep like shadowy bears waking from their winter hibernation. I was so petrified that I myself was frozen to the very timbers I was standing on.

'Who goes?' came the voice of Silver.

I dared not answer.

'A light!' cried the voice of Silver again.

And as the footsteps and the voices of the crew got louder, I knew I was doomed to be discovered.

