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About This Edition

This book is a simplified English adaptation created for extensive reading practice. The text was generated using ChatGPT and prepared for intermediate English learners as part of an educational project.

Target reading level: CEFR A2-B1

This edition aims to support fluency development through accessible vocabulary, expanded narration, and improved readability while preserving the original story structure.

Source Text

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Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (Simplified Edition, Adapted and Simplified by ChatGPT)

Part 1

I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York. My family was good and respectable, though my father was not born in England. He came from Bremen and first lived at Hull. He made good money by trade, then left business and moved to York. There he married my mother. Her family name was Robinson, and because of that I was first called Robinson Kreutznaer. But in England people changed the sound of our name. In time we wrote it and spoke it as Crusoe. My friends also called me Crusoe, and so I became Robinson Crusoe.

I had two older brothers. One was a soldier and died in war far from home. What became of the other, no one knew. My father and mother lost him, just as later they lost me. I was the third son, and no trade was fixed for me. Because of that, and because my mind was restless from an early age, I began to dream of travel. I wanted motion, danger, distance, ships, and foreign lands. The quiet life of home seemed too small for me. I did not then understand that a man may throw away peace because he is too foolish to value it.

My father was a wise and serious man. He saw my mind before I spoke it plainly. One morning he called me into his room. He was ill with the gout and could not move easily, but his mind was clear and strong. He asked me why I wished to leave my home and my country. He said I had no need to seek bread in a hard world. He said I might live well where I was, with comfort, work, and respect, if I only chose it. Then he began to speak at length about the middle condition of life.

“Robinson,” he said, “men of very low condition often go abroad because they are driven by want. Men of very high condition go abroad because they are driven by ambition. But you belong to neither of these. Your place is in the middle state, and that is the best state in the world. It is the station most fit for human happiness.”

I listened, though my heart was not quiet. He went on slowly, as if he wished

to place every word firmly inside me.

“The poor suffer from hunger, hard work, pain, and many bitter needs,” he said. “The rich suffer from pride, envy, luxury, and empty desires. But the middle state escapes both kinds of misery. It has enough without excess. It has peace, health, society, moderation, and simple pleasure. A man in that state moves through life quietly and safely. He is not broken by labour, and he is not ruined by ambition.”

Then he looked at me with great feeling and said, “Even kings have wished for such a life. The wise man prayed not to be made either poor or rich. That prayer shows what true happiness is.”

My father spoke for a long time. He said that if I remained at home, he would do well for me. He said I might have a comfortable and honest life. He begged me not to throw myself into misery by a foolish wish to wander. He reminded me of my dead brother, who had also followed young desire instead of good advice. Then his voice changed. He told me that if I left home against his counsel, God might not bless me. He said I would one day have time to repent, when no one could help me.

At that, tears ran down his face. He tried to continue, but his heart was too full. He stopped speaking and turned away from me. I was deeply moved. It was impossible not to be moved. I felt shame, love, fear, and sorrow all at once. I resolved in that hour that I would stay at home. I said to myself that I would give up my wild desire and obey my father.

But this good resolution did not last.

A few days passed. Then the force of his words began to grow weak inside me. The old desire returned. The world beyond York again seemed bright and full of promise. Home again seemed narrow. I began to think that one voyage would do no great harm. I told myself that a man could see the world and still return to live wisely. I used such thoughts to cheat myself.

Some weeks later I spoke to my mother. I chose a time when her temper seemed soft. I told her that my thoughts were wholly set upon seeing the world. I said I was already eighteen and too old to begin some quiet trade with any real heart. I said that if I were forced into such a life, I would only break from it later. Then I

tried to persuade her.

“Only ask my father to let me go on one voyage,” I said. “If I return and do not like it, I will go no more. I will work doubly hard after that and make up for lost time.”

My mother became angry at once. “It is useless to speak to your father of this,” she said. “He knows too well what is good for you. After all his kind words, after all his warning, how can you still think of this? If you ruin yourself, I cannot stop it. But do not hope for my consent. I will not help in your destruction.”

Later she told my father what I had said. He sighed and answered, “That boy might be happy if he stayed at home. But if he goes abroad, he will be the most miserable creature ever born. I cannot give my consent.”

Nearly a year passed before I finally broke away. During that time I remained stubborn. I refused every plan for settling into a proper life. Yet I did not go at once. I argued. I delayed. I dreamed. At last chance opened the door. I went one day to Hull, with no fixed plan to run away at that moment. There I met a friend who was about to sail to London in his father’s ship. He urged me to go with him.

“Come,” he said. “It will cost you nothing for your passage.”

That was enough. I did not ask my father. I did not ask my mother. I did not even send them a message. I did not ask God’s blessing. I did not think seriously of consequence. In an evil hour, on the first of September, 1651, I stepped on board a ship bound for London. So began the long chain of my misfortunes.

We had hardly left the Humber when the wind rose. The sea lifted and darkened. I had never before been at sea, and I was struck at once with sickness in body and terror in mind. Every sound of the ship frightened me. Every rise and fall of the sea seemed the beginning of death. I believed each great wave would swallow us. In that fear I began to think of my father, my mother, my home, and my sin in leaving them.

“This is the judgment of Heaven,” I said to myself. “I have left my father’s house and broken my duty.”

In my misery I made many vows. “If God will spare me this once,” I thought, “I will go straight home. I will never step on a ship again. I will obey my father

and seek no more such misery.” At that moment my father’s middle state seemed full of wisdom. I saw clearly how easy and safe his life had been, and how mad I had been to leave it. I felt like a lost son who had at last come to his senses.

The storm continued for some time, and my fear remained strong while it lasted. But the next day the wind fell. The sea grew calm. By evening the sky was clear, the light was beautiful, and the water shone gently under the sun. My body rested, and my mind changed with the weather. That is how weak I was.

My friend came to me laughing. He struck me lightly on the shoulder and said, “Well, Bob, were you afraid last night? That was nothing. Do you call that a storm?”

“Nothing?” I said. “It was terrible.”

He laughed again. “You are only a fresh-water sailor. Come, let us drink. We will forget all this.”

So we drank. In one foolish evening I drowned all my repentance. The sea became smooth, and my conscience also became quiet. My fear passed, and with it passed my promise. Yet Providence had not finished with me. A second and far worse trial was waiting ahead.

After some days we came to Yarmouth Roads and lay at anchor there with many other ships, waiting for a better wind. At first the sailors seemed easy and cheerful. But then the wind began again. It grew stronger and stronger. The sea rose high. Men ran across the deck. Orders were shouted. Anchors were dropped. Masts were cut away. The ship shook under me like a living thing in pain. Even the sailors grew pale. I heard the master say, “Lord be merciful to us. We shall all be lost.”

Then I knew that my trouble had only begun.

Part 2

The storm grew worse through the night. Our ship lay among many other ships in Yarmouth Roads, all struggling against the same furious wind. The sea ran high and wild. Waves struck the ship again and again with a sound like thunder. The vessel groaned and trembled under every blow. I had never imagined that water

and wind could show such power.

I was frightened beyond measure. My sickness returned, and I could scarcely stand. But my fear was greater than my illness. I thought every moment would be my last. I remembered my father's warning with painful clarity.

"I am punished already," I said to myself. "If I had obeyed him, I would now be safe at home."

Yet I was not the only one in danger. Even the sailors, who had lived long at sea, were troubled. They moved quickly across the deck, tightening ropes, lowering sails, and shouting orders to one another. The master of the ship stood near the helm with a grave face.

At one terrible moment he cried out loudly, "Lord have mercy upon us! We are lost!"

Hearing these words, I felt a cold terror run through me. If the master believed we were lost, what hope could remain?

Soon the wind increased again. The waves grew larger, and the ship began to drive dangerously toward the shore. Another ship near us lost her anchor and drifted past us like a helpless thing. Men shouted from her deck, but their voices were carried away by the storm.

At last our own anchor began to drag. The sailors worked desperately to hold the ship steady, but it was useless. The wind and sea were too strong. The master gave the order to fire guns for help.

The thunder of the signal guns rolled through the storm. Other ships answered with their own guns, calling for help in the darkness. But help did not come quickly enough.

By morning the storm had grown still more violent. Our ship could no longer hold against it. We were driven closer and closer toward the land. The sea broke over us in heavy waves that covered the deck with water.

The sailors now prepared the boat, hoping that we might escape before the ship was completely destroyed. The boat was lowered with great difficulty. When it touched the water, several of the crew climbed down into it. I followed them in terror.

We pushed away from the ship, trying to row toward the shore. But the waves were too strong for us. The boat rose high on one wave and then dropped deep into another valley of water. The men struggled with their oars, but the sea laughed at our efforts.

Suddenly a great wave rolled behind us like a moving wall. I heard someone shout, "Look out!"

The wave struck the boat with terrible force. In a moment it overturned us all. I was thrown into the sea.

The water closed over my head. I struggled wildly, but the power of the wave carried me along like a piece of wood. I had no breath and no strength. I believed that I was dying.

Yet another wave lifted me and threw me forward. My feet touched the sand for an instant, then the next wave pulled me back again. I fought with all my strength. Once more a wave pushed me toward the shore. This time I ran forward while I still could breathe.

Again the sea caught me and threw me down. I was beaten and rolled in the water like a stone. But at last one final wave carried me beyond the reach of the next. I fell upon the sand and lay there gasping for air.

When I looked around, I saw that I was alone. The boat was gone. The men who had been with me had disappeared beneath the sea.

I stood up slowly. My body was weak and shaking, but I was alive. Behind me the storm still roared over the water. Before me lay the shore, wet and silent under the grey sky.

I cannot describe the feelings that filled my heart at that moment. I had been spared while all the others had perished. I did not know whether to rejoice or to weep.

After a while I began to walk along the shore. I saw wreckage from our ship scattered in the water, but no living soul appeared. I soon understood that I alone had escaped.

This thought filled me with sadness and fear. I was in a strange place with no friends and no help. Yet my first trouble was not how to live, but how to return

home.

By good fortune I soon found a small house near the shore. The people there treated me kindly and gave me dry clothes and food. They asked many questions about the ship and the storm, and I told them what little I knew.

The master of the house listened carefully. At last he said, "Young man, you have had a warning. If you are wise, you will go home and leave the sea forever."

His words struck me deeply. I knew they were true. My own conscience repeated the same advice.

"Yes," I thought, "I will go home now. I have learned my lesson."

But weakness again overcame my good resolution.

I had little money. The journey home seemed long and difficult. At the same time I met several sailors who were preparing for another voyage. They spoke of distant lands and profitable trade. Their stories awakened my old desire.

"One more voyage cannot harm me," I said to myself. "After that I will return home and live quietly."

So once again I deceived myself.

I went to London and joined a merchant ship that traded along the coast of Africa. This voyage proved successful. We carried goods to Guinea and returned with valuable cargo. I learned something of trade during that journey, and I made a small profit for myself.

The captain of that ship was a kind and honest man. He treated me almost like a son and taught me many things about navigation and commerce. While he lived, I was fortunate.

But after our return to England he died. That event changed everything.

Another voyage to Guinea was soon planned by different men. I joined it without hesitation. We sailed again toward the coast of Africa, expecting an easy journey like the first.

For several days the voyage went well. Then misfortune struck us suddenly.

Near the coast we were attacked by a Turkish pirate ship from Sallee. The pirates were stronger than we were. They quickly captured our vessel. We were taken prisoner and carried to the port of Sallee on the coast of Morocco.

There our goods were stolen and our ship was lost. As for us, we were divided among the captors like spoils of war.

I had now fallen into a new and miserable condition.

My master was the captain of the pirate ship that had taken us. He carried me to his house and kept me there as his slave. My work was to serve him and to fish in his boat.

Thus my life as a sailor ended for a time, and my life as a slave began.

I was now far from home, without hope of rescue, and under the command of a man who owned my labour and my freedom. Yet even in that miserable state my restless spirit did not sleep. Day by day I watched the sea and thought about escape.

I did not yet know how it would happen. But the idea of freedom slowly grew inside me.

In time that idea would become a plan.

Part 3

My condition in Sallee was miserable, but not quite so terrible as it might have been. My master, the captain of the pirate ship, did not treat me with cruelty. He kept me at his house and sometimes sent me to sea in a small fishing boat. My work was to catch fish for his table and for the market. Yet I was still a slave, and that thought weighed heavily upon me every day.

Whenever I went out in the boat, I watched the open sea. Beyond that wide water lay freedom. But the coast was guarded, and I had no friend to help me. If I tried to escape alone, I would almost certainly be caught again or perish in the sea.

Still I waited. I observed everything carefully and kept hope alive in my heart.

After some time my master began to trust me more. He often sent me fishing with a Moorish servant and a young boy. The boy's name was Xury. He was quick, lively, and cheerful, and he seemed to like me. We spoke together when we could, and little by little we became friendly.

I soon understood that if I were ever to escape, it must be by sea. Therefore I

began to prepare quietly. I watched how the boats were supplied and what provisions were taken aboard. I thought about the direction of the coast and the winds. But all this planning remained only in my mind. I did nothing openly that might cause suspicion.

One morning my master ordered that we prepare a larger boat than usual. Some guests of his wished to go fishing for pleasure. Food, water, and other supplies were placed in the boat. The Moorish servant and I were to manage the vessel.

When everything was ready, my master suddenly decided not to go himself. Instead he ordered us to take the boat out and bring back fish for the guests' dinner.

This change gave me a sudden thought. If the boat already carried food and water, perhaps the time had come.

Before leaving the harbour I spoke quietly to the Moorish servant.

"Let us take some extra provisions," I said. "Our masters will want a great quantity of fish."

He agreed. Together we loaded bread, water, and other supplies into the boat. I also took some powder and shot and placed them under the seats. My heart beat quickly, but I tried to appear calm.

At last we sailed out of the harbour.

For some time we fished in the usual way. The Moor was busy with his lines, and Xury helped him. Meanwhile I looked carefully at the shore and the sea. The coast stretched southward, wild and empty. Beyond it lay lands that belonged to Christians.

Suddenly I made my decision.

I stepped behind the Moor while he leaned over the side of the boat. Then I seized him and threw him violently into the sea.

He rose again at once and called out to be taken back into the boat. He promised to serve me faithfully if I would save him. But I had no trust in him.

"Swim to the shore," I said. "You are close enough."

The wind and waves soon carried us away from him. I turned to the boy.

"Xury," I said, "if you are faithful to me, I will treat you well. If you are not, I must throw you into the sea like the other man. Will you go with me and help me

escape?”

The boy looked frightened but answered quickly. “Yes, I will go with you. I will be true to you.”

I believed him. From that moment we became companions in our dangerous flight.

We turned the boat southward along the coast. My plan was to keep near the land during the day and to anchor at night. In that way we might find water and food when necessary.

For several days we sailed in this manner. The coast was lonely and wild. Sometimes we saw great forests stretching down to the sea. At other times the land rose into bare hills.

Once we saw a great creature lying on the beach. At first I feared it might attack us. But when we came nearer, we saw that it was only a sleeping lion. Even so, the sight of it filled us with alarm.

“Let us shoot it,” I said to Xury.

“Why shoot it?” he answered. “If you shoot, many lions will come.”

His words were sensible. We left the animal undisturbed and sailed away.

On another day we saw people on the shore. They ran along the beach and called out to us. At first I feared they were enemies, but they made signs of friendship. We dared not land among them, however, because we did not know their language or their customs.

Our food began to grow scarce. I used the gun to shoot birds and other small animals along the coast. Xury proved very useful in cooking them. In this way we lived from day to day.

One morning we saw a large ship far out at sea. I climbed upon the side of the boat and waved a cloth to attract attention. At first I thought they did not see us. But after some time the ship changed direction and sailed toward us.

As it approached, I saw that it was a Portuguese vessel. My heart filled with hope. Soon a boat came out from the ship and brought us aboard.

The captain received us kindly. I told him the story of my escape and my long voyage along the coast. He listened with interest and promised to help me.

“You are fortunate,” he said. “Another few days alone in that boat might have destroyed you.”

I thanked him with all my heart.

The captain treated me generously during the voyage. He bought my small boat and the few goods I had taken from Sallee. He also wished to buy Xury as a servant.

At first I hesitated. The boy had helped me faithfully, and I did not wish to treat him like a slave. But the captain promised that he would treat him well and give him freedom after ten years of service.

After hearing this promise, I agreed. Xury himself seemed content with the arrangement.

In this way I parted from the boy who had shared my escape.

The Portuguese ship carried me across the Atlantic Ocean to Brazil. There I found a new life waiting for me.

Brazil was a land rich in forests and fertile soil. Many Europeans had settled there and were growing sugar and tobacco on large plantations. With the help of the captain, I soon found work among them.

I began by learning how to cultivate the land. Gradually I saved enough money to buy a small plantation of my own. With patience and labour I improved it year by year.

At last I began to prosper.

Yet prosperity did not cure the disease that had driven me from home in the first place. My restless desire for adventure soon returned.

That desire would lead me into the greatest misfortune of my life.

Part 4

For several years I lived in Brazil as a planter. At first my life there was simple and full of work. I learned how to prepare the land, how to plant and grow tobacco, and how to manage the labour needed on a plantation. My small estate slowly improved. The soil was rich, and the sun was strong. If a man worked carefully

and patiently, he could expect good reward.

In time my plantation began to prosper. I built a small house and planted more fields. My neighbours were also planters, and we often spoke about trade and farming. They were pleased with the progress I had made in such a short time.

Yet there was one great difficulty. Labour was scarce. The work of clearing forests and cultivating large fields required many hands, and most of us wished to increase our plantations more quickly than we could manage alone.

One evening several of my neighbours came to visit me. We sat together and spoke about business. After some time the conversation turned to the question of labour.

One of them said, "If we had more workers, our plantations would grow much faster."

Another replied, "Yes, but workers are difficult to obtain here. They must be brought from Africa."

They looked at one another thoughtfully. At last one of them turned to me.

"Crusoe," he said, "you have been at sea. You understand ships and voyages better than we do. Why should we not fit out a vessel and sail to the coast of Guinea? There we could buy slaves and bring them back to Brazil. Each of us could share the cost and the profit."

The proposal surprised me at first. Until then I had thought only of improving my plantation little by little. But the more they spoke, the more the idea tempted me.

"You would not even need to invest money," another said. "If you manage the voyage for us, your share of the cargo will be as great as ours."

That offer struck directly at my old weakness. I was no longer poor. I had land, crops, and a promising future. Yet the thought of a sea voyage awakened the restless spirit that had never truly left me.

I knew well that my present life was safe and comfortable. If I had been wise, I would have remained where I was. In a few years I might have become one of the richest planters in the district.

But wisdom did not guide me.

I accepted their proposal.

Even as I agreed to the plan, I remembered my father's warning. I remembered his tears and his words about the dangers of wandering beyond one's proper station. Yet instead of obeying that memory, I pushed it aside.

"It will only be one voyage," I said to myself. "After that I will return to my plantation and live quietly."

Thus I repeated the same mistake that had already brought me so much trouble.

A ship was soon prepared for the voyage. She was a strong vessel and well supplied with goods to trade along the African coast. I went aboard as supercargo, responsible for the cargo and the trading.

On the first of September, 1659—exactly eight years after I had first left my father's house—I sailed from Brazil.

For some weeks the voyage went well. The sea was calm, and the winds carried us steadily across the Atlantic. The sailors worked easily, and our spirits were high.

Then one day dark clouds gathered in the sky.

At first the change seemed small. The wind grew stronger, and the sea became rougher. But soon the storm increased with frightening speed. Great waves rose around us, and the ship began to struggle.

The sailors hurried to shorten the sails. The captain shouted orders. The sky turned black, and the wind roared like a living thing.

For several days the storm continued without rest.

At last the ship lost control and was driven far from our intended course. The waves grew higher than I had ever seen before. They crashed over the deck and swept everything before them.

One terrible night the sea struck us with such force that the ship seemed ready to break apart. The sailors cried out that we were lost.

We worked desperately to save the vessel. The masts were cut away to lighten the ship. The pumps were used constantly to remove the water that poured into the hold.

But nothing could save us.

At dawn we saw land in the distance. Instead of bringing hope, the sight filled

us with dread. The storm was driving us straight toward a rocky coast.

“We must run the ship aground,” the captain shouted. “It is our only chance!”

The sailors tried to guide the vessel toward a stretch of beach where the waves might throw us ashore. But before we could reach it, a monstrous wave struck the ship from the side.

The vessel lifted violently and then crashed against the rocks.

The sound was like thunder. The hull split open. Water rushed in from every side.

“All hands to the boat!” someone cried.

We lowered the boat in great haste and climbed into it. The sea tossed us like a leaf. I could hardly hold on as the waves lifted and dropped the little craft.

For a moment we believed we might reach the shore alive.

Then another enormous wave rolled toward us.

I heard a cry of terror. The wave struck the boat and overturned it instantly.

In a moment we were all in the sea.

I struggled wildly among the waves, fighting for breath. The water filled my mouth and nose. I could see nothing but foam and darkness.

Somehow I was carried forward by the force of the sea. I felt the ground beneath my feet for a moment and tried to stand. Another wave knocked me down and rolled me across the sand.

Again and again the waves struck me. I thought each one would be my last.

At length one great wave threw me far up the shore beyond the reach of the next. I lay there half dead, gasping for air.

When I recovered enough to look around, I saw that I was alone.

Not one of my companions had reached the shore.

I was the only survivor.

Before me stretched a lonely island. Behind me the broken sea continued to roar over the wreck of the ship.

I had escaped death—but I had escaped into a place more terrible than death itself.

I was alone on a deserted island.

Part 5

When I had strength enough to stand, I looked around me more carefully. The storm had begun to weaken, though the sea still ran high. The wreck of our ship lay some distance from the shore. She had struck upon a sandbank, and though she was badly damaged, she had not yet broken apart entirely.

The sight of the ship gave me a little hope.

But when I first reached the land my condition was miserable indeed. My clothes were wet through, and I had nothing to change them with. I had neither food nor drink to refresh me. I possessed no weapon, no tool, and no shelter.

The only things I had with me were a knife, a pipe, and a little tobacco in a box.

When I considered these circumstances, my heart sank within me. I was saved from the sea, but I had escaped into a dreadful situation. Before me lay the prospect either of starving to death or of being killed by wild beasts.

As evening approached my fear grew even greater. I did not know what animals might live on the island. If there were hungry beasts nearby, what chance had I to defend myself?

At last I saw a large tree not far from the shore. I climbed into it and made myself as secure as I could among the branches. There I sat through the night, cold and tired, listening to the distant sound of the sea.

Despite my fear, exhaustion overcame me, and I fell asleep.

When I woke the next morning, the storm had passed. The sea was much calmer, and the sky was clear. But what surprised me most was the position of the ship.

During the night the wind and tide had carried her closer to the shore. She now lay not far from the beach where I stood. If I could reach her, perhaps I might find food, tools, and other useful things.

I immediately began to search for a way to reach the wreck.

The water between the shore and the ship was deep, but the sea had become calm enough for swimming. After considering the risk for a moment, I resolved to try.

I removed my heavy clothes and entered the water.

The swim was long and difficult, but at last I reached the ship. The side of the vessel rose high above the water, and for some time I could find no way to climb aboard. At length I discovered a rope hanging from the side, and with great effort I pulled myself up.

Once on deck, I thanked God for guiding me safely.

The ship was empty. All my companions had been lost in the sea. Yet many useful things remained aboard. The cabins were still filled with food and supplies.

My first thought was for something to eat.

I found bread, rice, and cheese, and I ate eagerly. After so much hunger and fear, that simple meal seemed like a feast. I also drank some fresh water and felt my strength returning.

Now I began to consider what I should do next.

I could not remain on the ship. The sea might destroy it at any moment. But if I could carry useful supplies to the shore, I might improve my chances of survival.

The difficulty was how to transport them.

After some thought I decided to build a raft.

On the ship I found several large planks and pieces of wood. I tied them together with rope to form a flat platform. It was not very elegant, but it floated well enough.

Then I began to load it.

First I placed several planks and boards upon it. These might later serve in building a shelter. After that I searched for the things I needed most urgently.

I found three sailors' chests. I forced them open and emptied them of clothing. Then I filled them with food—bread, rice, and three large Dutch cheeses. I also added several pieces of dried goat meat.

There were also some small bags of grain and other provisions that the sailors had kept for their own use. All these I placed carefully upon the raft.

Next I looked for tools.

Tools were more valuable than almost anything else in my situation. After searching for some time I discovered the carpenter's chest. It contained axes, saws, hammers, nails, and many other instruments.

Finding that chest gave me greater pleasure than all the money in the world could have done.

I loaded it onto the raft with great care.

My next concern was weapons.

In the great cabin I found two excellent fowling pieces and two pistols. I also discovered powder horns, bags of shot, and several swords that were somewhat rusty but still useful.

I placed the guns, powder, and shot upon the raft. I also added two small barrels of gunpowder.

When everything was ready, my raft was heavily loaded.

Now came the most dangerous part of the task.

I pushed the raft gently into the water and climbed upon it. Using a long pole, I guided it slowly toward the shore. The sea was calm, but the raft moved awkwardly, and I feared that the cargo might fall into the water.

Fortunately the tide carried me safely toward land.

After some anxious moments the raft reached the shallow water near the beach. I jumped into the water and dragged it onto the sand.

My first journey had been successful.

I now possessed food, tools, weapons, and several other useful things. These supplies would help me survive for some time.

But I still had no proper shelter.

I began at once to think about where I should live.

Near the shore I found a small piece of rising ground. From there I could see the sea and watch for passing ships. The place also seemed safe from flooding.

That evening I carried as many of my supplies as I could to this spot.

Before nightfall I arranged the chests and planks in a rough circle around me. In this way I made a kind of small wall for protection.

Then I placed the guns beside me and lay down to sleep.

Though I was alone in a wild and unknown place, I felt some comfort in knowing that I had already begun to secure the necessities of life.

Still, as I lay awake in the darkness, one thought returned again and again.

I was entirely alone in the world.

Part 6

The next morning I woke early and looked toward the sea. The wreck of the ship was still there. When I saw it, I understood that much work remained to be done. If the ship stayed where it was, I might still carry many useful things from it to the shore.

Therefore I decided to return to it again.

I built another raft much like the first one, though this time I made it stronger and wider. Then I swam once more to the ship and climbed aboard. Now that I had some experience, I worked more quickly.

This time I searched for things that might help me build and live more comfortably.

I found more clothing and bedding. I also discovered several bags of nails, which would be very useful for building. There were ropes, pieces of canvas, and other materials that could serve many purposes.

I also found tools of different kinds and carried them carefully to the raft.

When the raft was loaded, I returned again to the shore. The tide helped me greatly, and I landed safely. Little by little I carried all the goods to my camp on the rising ground.

During the following days I repeated this journey many times. Each trip brought new supplies.

I brought flour, rice, and barley. I found several boxes of biscuits and other preserved foods. I also recovered many useful household objects—pots, knives, spoons, and cooking tools.

One of my most valuable discoveries was a small barrel of powder. Powder was precious, for with it I could use my guns to hunt animals or defend myself.

In this way I gathered a surprising quantity of goods.

When I had finished carrying everything I could from the ship, I began to consider my condition more calmly. My situation was still difficult, but it was not

as hopeless as it had first appeared.

I had food enough to last for some time. I had tools with which to build shelter. I had weapons for hunting and protection.

In order to understand my condition more clearly, I decided to examine both the good and the bad sides of my situation.

I took a piece of paper and wrote two columns, just like the account books used by merchants. On one side I wrote my misfortunes, and on the other side I wrote the advantages I still possessed.

Misfortune: I was cast upon a dreadful island, with no hope of rescue.

Advantage: All my companions had drowned, but I alone had been saved.

Misfortune: I was separated from all human society and forced to live alone.

Advantage: I had not been cast upon a barren desert without food.

Misfortune: I had no clothes and little comfort.

Advantage: I had been cast upon a warm climate where clothes were not so necessary.

Misfortune: I had no weapons to defend myself.

Advantage: I had been able to recover guns and powder from the ship.

Misfortune: I had no one to speak with or to comfort me.

Advantage: The ship had been driven near enough to the shore for me to recover many useful things.

When I had finished writing this list, I felt somewhat comforted. I saw that although my situation was miserable, it might have been much worse.

Encouraged by these thoughts, I began to plan a more permanent dwelling.

After exploring the nearby area, I discovered a small flat place halfway up a hill. Behind it rose a steep rock wall, almost like the wall of a house. From the top of the hill nothing could fall down upon the spot.

In the rock face there was a small hollow that looked like the entrance of a cave. It was not a real cave yet, but it seemed a good place to begin building.

The ground in front of this hollow was open and covered with grass. It measured perhaps a hundred yards across and twice as much in depth. From there the land sloped down gently toward the sea.

I decided to place my tent in this place.

First I carried several poles and pieces of wood from the ship. With these I built a strong tent using the canvas I had saved. The tent stood against the rock, and I placed all my goods inside it.

But a tent alone did not seem safe enough.

I therefore planned to build a fence around the front of my dwelling.

I marked out a half-circle in front of the rock. The rock itself formed the back wall of my home. The half-circle had a radius of about ten yards.

Along this line I drove strong stakes deep into the ground. They stood close together so that nothing could pass between them. Each stake rose about five and a half feet above the earth, and their tops were sharpened.

I placed two rows of stakes for greater strength. The space between them was filled with smaller branches and pieces of wood.

When the work was finished, the fence formed a strong wall.

I did not leave any opening for a door.

Instead I used a ladder. Whenever I wished to enter my enclosure, I climbed over the stakes with the ladder. Once inside, I pulled the ladder up after me.

In this way no creature could enter while I slept.

Inside the fence I arranged my supplies carefully. The tent served as my main shelter, and the rock behind it protected me from wind and rain.

I also began to dig into the hollow in the rock. With great effort I enlarged it until it became a small cave. This cave served as a storehouse for my powder and food.

My work was slow and difficult. I had no help and only simple tools. Yet I worked every day with patience.

At last my dwelling became a secure place.

When I looked around at my small enclosure, with its strong fence and its cave in the rock, I felt a certain satisfaction.

I could now sleep without constant fear.

My island life had truly begun.

Part 7

After I had finished building my first dwelling, I began to arrange my life more carefully. My shelter now consisted of a strong tent standing before the rock and a cave behind it, which I had slowly dug out with my tools. Inside the cave I stored my powder, food, and other valuable supplies. Around the whole place stood the fence of stakes I had driven into the ground. With the ladder pulled inside each night, I could sleep with some degree of safety.

Yet my work had only begun.

I soon understood that if I wished to survive for many years, I must organize my time and my labour. Otherwise I would fall into disorder and despair.

One of the first things I did was to mark the passage of days.

Near my dwelling I set up a large wooden post. On its surface I cut the date of my arrival upon the island. Beneath that mark I began to cut a notch for every passing day. For each seventh day I made a longer mark so that I could keep track of weeks. In this way I created a simple calendar to measure time.

This small act gave me comfort. Without it, the days might have flowed together until I lost all sense of time.

Soon after that I began to keep a journal.

Among the supplies from the ship I had saved ink, paper, and a pen. With these I started to write down the events of each day. At first my writing was simple. I recorded the weather, my work, and anything that seemed important. But the journal soon became something more. It allowed me to speak to someone, even if that someone was only my future self.

Writing helped to calm my mind.

During these early days I worked constantly.

My first concern was food. The provisions I had brought from the ship would not last forever. I therefore began to hunt the animals of the island. With my gun I shot several birds and small creatures. Their meat was not always pleasant, but it kept me alive.

I also explored the island carefully.

The land was greener and more pleasant than I had first imagined. There were trees that bore fruit, and in some places I found wild goats moving among the hills. The island was not entirely barren.

Still, I remained cautious. I feared that dangerous animals might appear without warning.

One day while walking along the shore I saw a small bird sitting on a branch. I raised my gun and fired. The shot echoed loudly across the island.

At that sound something remarkable happened.

A parrot flew down from a tree and settled near me. It began to repeat strange sounds that resembled human speech. At first I thought I was imagining things. But the bird continued to speak in a rough imitation of my voice.

This surprised and delighted me greatly.

I captured the parrot and brought it back to my dwelling. In time I taught it to say my name. The bird would cry out, “Robin! Robin Crusoe!” whenever it saw me.

This small creature became one of my earliest companions.

I also found two cats that had survived from the shipwreck. They soon began to live near my dwelling. One dog had also been saved and remained with me faithfully.

Thus my lonely household slowly grew.

Often, when I sat down to eat, the scene would have made a strange picture to any observer. I sat at the center like the ruler of a small kingdom. My parrot perched nearby, speaking whenever it pleased. The dog sat beside my chair. The two cats waited patiently for scraps of food.

In those moments I sometimes smiled at the thought.

“Here I sit,” I said to myself, “king of the whole island. All that I see belongs to me.”

Yet the smile soon faded.

A king without subjects is a lonely ruler.

My labour did not stop with hunting and exploring. I also began to cultivate the land.

One day I noticed several green shoots growing near my dwelling. At first I thought they were weeds, but when they grew larger I recognized them as barley and rice. These grains had probably fallen from the sacks I had carried from the ship.

I watched them carefully.

When the plants ripened, I gathered the grains and stored them safely. The amount was small, but it gave me hope. If I planted them again, perhaps they would produce more.

So I prepared a small field and sowed the seeds.

This was the beginning of my farming.

The work was slow and difficult because I had no proper tools for agriculture. Still, patience and determination helped me overcome many obstacles.

I also learned to bake bread.

At first this seemed almost impossible. I had flour but no oven and no proper dishes for baking. Yet by experimenting again and again, I discovered ways to shape the dough and cook it over hot stones.

The first loaves were rough and imperfect, but they were bread. That alone felt like a great victory.

My life soon followed a regular pattern.

In the morning I worked on building or farming. In the afternoon I hunted or explored. In the evening I returned to my dwelling, prepared my meal, and wrote in my journal.

Day after day passed in this way.

Yet despite all this labour, loneliness remained my constant companion.

Sometimes I spoke aloud simply to hear a human voice. Sometimes I listened to the parrot repeating my name and imagined that another person was calling to me.

In such moments the silence of the island seemed deeper than ever.

Still I continued to work, hoping that patience and faith would sustain me in the long years that might lie ahead.

Part 8

As the months passed, I became more skilled in the work of survival. At first every task had seemed difficult and strange. But practice slowly taught me how to manage the tools I possessed and how to use the resources of the island.

One of my greatest concerns was storage.

My tent and cave soon filled with supplies from the ship. If I did not arrange them carefully, they would spoil or become useless. Therefore I built shelves along the walls of my cave. Upon these I placed my food, tools, powder, and other belongings in an orderly way.

I also divided the cave into sections.

In one part I stored my powder and weapons. I was careful never to keep all the powder in one place, because a single accident might destroy everything. In another part I stored my grain and food. The rest of the space I used for tools and other goods.

After some time I began to enlarge the cave even further. With my pick and shovel I slowly dug deeper into the rock. This was extremely hard labour. Often I worked for hours and made very little progress. Yet little by little the cave grew larger.

At last it became not only a storehouse but also a kind of inner room.

During the rainy season this inner cave proved especially useful. The rain sometimes fell for many days without stopping, and during those times I could remain inside and work on small tasks.

One such task was making furniture.

At first I had no table or chair. I ate my meals sitting on the ground. But after some effort I managed to build a rough table from planks taken from the ship. Soon afterward I built a stool as well.

These simple objects greatly improved my comfort.

Another problem soon appeared. My clothes, which I had brought from the ship, slowly wore out. The tropical climate and constant labour damaged them quickly.

At first I did not know how I would replace them.

Fortunately the island provided a solution. After hunting several goats, I kept their skins. By studying the skins carefully, I learned how to dry them and shape them into simple garments.

My first attempts were clumsy. The coat I made was stiff and awkward. But with practice I improved. Soon I had a hat, a jacket, and trousers made from goatskin.

When I looked at myself wearing these strange clothes, I laughed aloud.

If anyone from my former life had seen me then, they would scarcely have recognized the planter from Brazil or the sailor from York. I had become a wild man of the island.

But these clothes served their purpose well. They protected me from both sun and rain.

As time passed, my farming also improved.

The barley and rice that I had planted produced new grain. At first the harvest was small, but each year it grew larger. I carefully saved part of the grain for planting again the following season.

After some years I possessed enough grain to make bread regularly.

I also learned to build simple baskets from branches and vines. These baskets allowed me to store and carry grain more easily.

Making pottery proved even more difficult.

At first every pot I tried to shape cracked or broke in the fire. Many weeks passed before I succeeded in making vessels that could hold water or cook food.

But when at last I produced several strong clay pots, I felt a deep satisfaction. Each new skill gave me greater independence.

Meanwhile the animals of the island became more familiar to me.

The goats were especially useful. At first I hunted them only for meat. Later I realized that if I could capture some of them alive, I might keep them near my dwelling.

After several attempts I succeeded in trapping a few young goats.

I built a small enclosure and placed them inside. There I fed them with grass and leaves until they grew accustomed to living near me.

In time the herd increased.

Soon I had more goats than I needed for food alone. Their milk became another valuable source of nourishment.

With goats for milk and meat, grain for bread, and fruit from the trees, my island began to supply nearly everything necessary for life.

Yet even as my material situation improved, another feeling slowly entered my mind.

I began to think of the island not merely as a place of survival, but as my domain.

The fields I had planted, the goats I had raised, the cave I had carved from the rock—all these things existed because of my labour.

“This island,” I sometimes said to myself, “is entirely my own.”

And in a certain sense it was true.

No other human being lived there. The land, the animals, and the fruits of the soil were all under my control.

Yet such thoughts did not bring happiness.

Possession without companionship is a poor form of wealth.

Often I climbed the hill near my dwelling and looked out over the sea. The horizon stretched endlessly in every direction.

Sometimes I imagined a distant ship appearing upon that wide water. I imagined voices calling out and human faces greeting me.

But no ship ever came.

The ocean remained empty.

Thus my life continued—safe, orderly, and productive, yet surrounded by an immense and silent loneliness.

I did not know that a discovery awaited me which would soon change my peace into a new and terrible fear.

Part 9

My life on the island had now become orderly and calm. Many years passed in this way. I worked, I farmed, I hunted, and I improved my dwelling little by little.

Though I often felt lonely, I had grown accustomed to my situation.

Yet my sense of safety was not complete.

The strong fence around my home protected me from animals, but I sometimes wondered whether other dangers might exist on the island. I had never seen another human being there, yet the world was wide and uncertain.

One day I decided to explore a part of the island I had not visited for some time.

The day was warm and clear. Around noon I was walking along the shore toward the place where I sometimes kept my boat. My mind was quiet, and I was thinking only of the ordinary tasks of the day.

Then suddenly I stopped.

On the sand before me I saw the mark of a human foot.

I stood still like a man struck by lightning.

The print was clear and unmistakable. The shape of the heel, the arch, and the toes could all be seen plainly in the sand. It was the footprint of a naked human foot.

For a moment I could not move.

My heart began to beat violently, and my thoughts rushed through my mind in confusion. I looked around me in every direction. I listened carefully for any sound.

But there was nothing.

The sea moved quietly along the shore. The trees stood still. No voice, no movement, no sign of any living person appeared.

Yet the footprint remained there before my eyes.

I approached it slowly and examined it more closely. The mark was fresh. It had been made recently, perhaps only hours before I arrived.

I measured it with my own foot.

It was not my footprint.

A terrible fear seized me.

For fifteen years I had believed myself the only human being on the island. Now that belief was suddenly destroyed.

“Who could have made this mark?” I asked myself.

My imagination filled with dreadful possibilities. Perhaps savages from the mainland had come to the island. Perhaps they were even now hiding somewhere nearby.

My fear grew so strong that I could hardly control myself.

I hurried away from the shore and began to run toward my dwelling. As I ran, I turned my head again and again, thinking someone might be following me.

Every tree seemed like a man standing in the distance. Every bush appeared to hide a watcher.

My mind was full of wild and terrible thoughts.

When I finally reached my enclosure, I climbed over the fence in great haste. I scarcely remember how I entered—whether I used the ladder as usual or crawled through the narrow opening in the rock. I only remember that I rushed inside like a man escaping from danger.

That night I did not sleep.

Though the place where I had seen the footprint was far from my dwelling, my fear increased rather than decreased. The imagination of a frightened man can create dangers greater than those that actually exist.

Again and again I thought I heard footsteps outside the fence. Sometimes I believed I saw shadows moving among the trees. But each time I looked carefully, there was nothing.

Still my mind refused to be calm.

“If someone has come to the island once,” I said to myself, “he may return again. And if he returns with others, they may discover my dwelling.”

These thoughts filled me with dread.

During the following days I rarely left my enclosure. When I did go outside, I carried my gun and moved cautiously through the woods.

The peaceful life I had built suddenly seemed fragile.

My next concern was the security of my home.

The fence that had once seemed strong now appeared weak. If enemies discovered my dwelling, they might easily attack it.

Therefore I began to strengthen my defenses.

I planted another row of stakes outside the first fence. Between the two rows I wove branches and thorny plants. Over time these plants grew thick and formed a natural wall.

From the outside the place soon appeared like a dense forest rather than a dwelling.

I also increased my supply of weapons. I loaded several guns and kept them ready at all times. I placed them in different parts of the enclosure so that I could reach them quickly.

In addition, I began to store more food inside the cave. If I were forced to remain hidden for a long time, I would still be able to survive.

These preparations took many months.

During that time I did not see another footprint, nor did I find any sign of human presence. Yet my fear did not completely disappear.

My mind returned again and again to that single mark in the sand.

“Who was he?” I wondered. “Where did he come from? And why did he leave the island without finding me?”

I could find no answer.

My once peaceful island had become a place of hidden danger.

And though I did not yet know it, the truth behind that mysterious footprint would soon reveal itself in a far more terrible way.

Part 10

For many months after I discovered the footprint, I lived in constant fear.

Every sound in the forest troubled me. When the wind moved through the leaves, I imagined that men were hiding among the trees. When birds suddenly flew into the air, I feared that someone had disturbed them.

Yet no one appeared.

Still, the thought of enemies remained in my mind. If savages had visited the island once, they might return again. I therefore continued to strengthen my defenses.

My dwelling, which had once been a simple enclosure, slowly became something like a fortress.

I planted thick rows of stakes around it and encouraged bushes and trees to grow between them. Over time these plants formed a dense wall of green. From the outside no one could easily see what lay within.

Inside the enclosure I organized my weapons carefully.

I placed several loaded guns near the entrance and others in the cave. Powder and shot were stored in separate places so that an accident could not destroy everything at once. I also kept my swords within easy reach.

At night I listened carefully for any sign of movement outside the fence.

But though my fear remained strong, nothing disturbed my solitude.

During this time I also changed the way I used my boat.

Earlier I had sometimes sailed along the coast for pleasure or exploration. Now I feared that enemies might see the boat and discover that the island was inhabited.

Therefore I hid the boat carefully in a small creek surrounded by trees. From the sea it could not be seen.

For several years I continued to live in this cautious manner.

Yet something else happened during that period which greatly affected my mind. I became ill.

The sickness came suddenly. At first I felt weak and tired, and my head burned with fever. Soon I could hardly stand. My body trembled, and I lay upon my bed in great misery.

Because I was alone, there was no one to care for me.

During those days my thoughts turned constantly toward my past life. The memory of my father returned with great force. I remembered his warnings and his tears.

“All this misery,” I said to myself, “has come because I refused to obey him.”

My mind became confused with fear and regret.

One night, when the fever was strongest, I believed that I saw a strange vision.

A bright light appeared in the room. In that light stood a terrible figure. His face was stern, and his voice was like thunder.

“Since all these things have not brought you to repentance,” the voice said, “you shall die.”

At that moment I awoke in terror.

I realized that the vision had been only a dream, but its meaning remained powerful in my mind.

For the first time since my arrival on the island, I began to think seriously about God.

I remembered that during the storm long ago I had promised to change my life if I were saved. Yet after the danger passed, I had forgotten that promise.

Now I lay sick and helpless.

“If I die here,” I thought, “who will know what has become of me?”

My fear was not only of death but of judgment.

In my distress I searched through the goods I had saved from the ship. Among them I found a Bible. Until that moment I had hardly opened it.

Now I began to read.

One verse struck my mind deeply: “Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.”

These words seemed written for my situation.

I fell upon my knees and prayed for the first time with true feeling. I asked God to forgive my past sins and to guide my life.

During the following days I continued to read the Bible. My sickness slowly passed, and my strength returned.

But something inside me had changed.

Before this illness I had thought mainly about my physical survival—food, shelter, safety. Now I began to think about my soul.

I realized that even though I lived alone on the island, I was not entirely abandoned. God had preserved my life many times—during storms, during slavery, and during the shipwreck.

These reflections brought a new kind of peace.

My loneliness no longer seemed the greatest problem. Instead I felt that my life had been given to me for a purpose.

From that time forward I began each day with prayer and reading from the Bible. My mind grew calmer and stronger.

The island, which had once appeared only as a prison, slowly began to seem like a place of reflection and learning.

Yet even as my spirit became peaceful again, the dangers of the island had not disappeared.

The memory of the footprint still remained in my thoughts.

And soon I would discover proof that the island was visited by people far more frightening than I had imagined.

Part 11

My health returned slowly after the fever, and with it came a calmer state of mind. I no longer felt the same restless fear that had troubled me when I first saw the footprint. My thoughts were steadier, and my days followed a regular order once again.

I worked, prayed, read, and cared for my small island household.

Yet the memory of that footprint never completely left me.

Sometimes I wondered whether it had truly belonged to another man or whether some strange accident had deceived my eyes. But deep within my heart I knew that it had been real.

For a long time, however, I found no further sign of visitors.

Years passed.

During those years my life continued much as before. My fields produced more grain each season. My herd of goats increased. I improved my cave and built several small shelters in different parts of the island.

One of these shelters stood on the far side of the island, near a pleasant valley where fruit trees grew abundantly. When I stayed there, I often forgot for a time that I was alone in the world.

Still, the island always reminded me of its solitude.

One day I decided to walk along a distant part of the shore that I had not visited

for some time.

The weather was bright and clear. The sea was calm, and the wind moved gently through the trees.

As I walked along the beach, I suddenly noticed something that made my blood run cold.

Scattered across the sand were bones.

Human bones.

Some were broken. Others were blackened by fire. Nearby lay ashes and pieces of burned wood, as if a fire had once been lit there.

I stood staring at the terrible sight.

At once I understood the truth.

The visitors who had left the footprint were not peaceful travellers. They were savages who came to the island to perform dreadful acts.

They had brought prisoners here and killed them.

Worse still—they had eaten them.

The thought filled me with horror.

I had lived so many years on the island believing it to be empty of other people. Now I realized that it was sometimes visited by men capable of such cruelty.

For some time I stood motionless, unable to decide what to do.

My first feeling was anger.

“If I ever meet these monsters,” I said to myself, “I will kill them all.”

I imagined myself attacking them with my guns and destroying them before they could escape.

But when I began to think more carefully, doubts entered my mind.

If I killed one group of them, would that stop the others? Probably not. If they came often to the island, new groups would appear again and again.

In that case I would be forced to fight them endlessly.

I also asked myself another question.

“What right do I have to punish them?”

They did not know my laws or my customs. In their own country such actions might be common and accepted.

These thoughts troubled me greatly.

I felt both hatred and uncertainty.

At last I decided that the best course was to remain hidden. If the savages never discovered my dwelling, I could continue to live in safety.

From that time forward I became even more careful.

I rarely fired my gun except when absolutely necessary. The sound might reveal my presence.

When I cooked food, I tried to prevent smoke from rising high into the air.

I also strengthened my defenses once again.

My enclosure became more secure than ever before. The plants around it had grown thick and tangled, forming a natural wall that no stranger could easily pass.

Thus my dwelling became something like a hidden fortress.

Though I lived in constant caution, many more years passed without any direct encounter with the savages.

Sometimes I saw distant signs that they had visited the island. The ashes of fires or scattered bones showed that they had returned to their terrible feasts.

But they never discovered me.

My life continued in this strange mixture of peace and fear.

And yet, after so many years of solitude, my heart began to change again.

I found myself longing more and more for human companionship.

Even the company of strangers—even of enemies—sometimes seemed better than endless silence.

I did not yet know that this longing would soon be answered in the most unexpected way.

The day was approaching when I would finally meet another human being on the island.

That meeting would change everything.

Part 12

After discovering the terrible remains on the shore, I became more cautious

than ever before. The island that had once seemed empty and peaceful now appeared uncertain and dangerous. Yet as the years passed, my fear slowly weakened again. The savages did not visit the island often. Sometimes many months, even years, passed without any sign of them.

During that time my life continued with steady labour.

My fields of barley and rice grew larger. Each year I harvested more grain than before. I built better baskets to store it and improved the way I baked my bread. What had once seemed difficult gradually became ordinary.

My herd of goats also increased. At first I had only a few animals, but by careful breeding the herd grew strong. Their milk became one of my most valuable foods. I learned how to make a kind of cheese as well, which lasted longer than fresh milk.

In this way my island provided nearly everything necessary for life.

I also continued to improve my dwelling.

The cave behind my tent had become large enough to serve as a storehouse and workshop. There I kept my tools, my powder, and my grain. I made shelves and partitions to keep everything in order.

My enclosure had become so thick with trees and bushes that it was almost invisible from the outside. Anyone walking through the forest would have passed it without noticing that a man lived there.

At times I felt almost proud of the small world I had created.

“Here I live,” I sometimes said to myself, “as the master of this island.”

And indeed it was true. All that existed there depended on my labour and my care.

Yet this strange kingdom did not remove my loneliness.

Often I spoke aloud simply to hear a human voice. Sometimes I held conversations with my parrot, who had learned to repeat several words clearly.

“Robin Crusoe!” the bird would cry whenever it saw me.

Hearing those words sometimes made me laugh—and sometimes made me deeply sad.

One of the most difficult things to bear was the silence of the island. Day after

day passed without the sound of human speech. The wind, the sea, and the birds were my only companions.

During this period I also explored the island more completely than before.

One day I climbed a high hill from which I could see far across the surrounding sea. I hoped that perhaps another island might lie nearby.

In the distance I thought I saw land.

At first this discovery filled me with excitement. If another island existed, perhaps it was inhabited by people who could help me return to civilization.

But when I considered the matter more carefully, my excitement turned into anxiety.

If the island was inhabited, the inhabitants might be the same savages who visited my shore.

I realized that my present island, though lonely, might actually be safer than the unknown lands beyond the sea.

Therefore I abandoned the idea of leaving.

Instead I focused on improving the life I already possessed.

One of my most ambitious projects was the construction of a larger boat.

My first small canoe had been too heavy to move easily. After finishing it, I discovered that I could not carry it to the water.

This time I chose a tree growing much closer to the shore. I spent many weeks cutting it down and shaping it carefully with my tools.

The work was exhausting, but at last I produced a strong canoe.

With great effort I managed to launch it into a small river that flowed into the sea. When the canoe finally floated upon the water, I felt a great sense of achievement.

Yet I did not use it to leave the island.

The currents around the island were strong and dangerous. I knew from experience that a small boat might easily be carried far out into the ocean.

Therefore I used the canoe only for short journeys along the coast.

During one of these journeys I discovered something that filled me with hope.

Far out at sea I saw the distant shape of a ship.

My heart leapt with excitement. I climbed onto a hill and waved my arms wildly, hoping that someone aboard might see me.

But the ship was too far away.

Slowly it disappeared beyond the horizon.

When it was gone, the silence returned.

I stood on the hill for a long time watching the empty sea. A deep sadness filled my heart.

“If only one man had survived from that ship,” I said aloud, “if only one companion had come ashore with me! Even a single friend would have changed everything.”

That day I felt my loneliness more strongly than ever before.

Yet the island still held many secrets.

I did not know that before many more years had passed, another human being would run across the sand toward my dwelling—running for his life.

Part 13

Many years had now passed since I first arrived on the island. My life had become steady and orderly, but the memory of the savages who visited the shore never completely left my mind.

I had learned that they sometimes came to the island for a dreadful purpose.

They brought prisoners with them.

These unfortunate people were killed and eaten upon the beach.

The thought filled me with horror every time I imagined it.

One day, after a long period without seeing any sign of visitors, I climbed a hill near the shore to observe the sea.

What I saw there made my heart beat rapidly.

In the distance several small boats were approaching the island.

Even before they reached the shore, I understood who they must be.

The savages had returned.

I quickly ran back to my dwelling and prepared my weapons. My first impulse

was to attack them immediately and destroy them.

But I forced myself to remain calm.

If I attacked a large group of them alone, I might easily lose my life without accomplishing anything. Therefore I decided to watch them first and learn what they intended to do.

From a hidden place among the rocks I observed their landing.

About thirty men came ashore.

They built a fire on the beach and began to dance around it in strange movements. Their bodies were painted, and they shouted loudly in a language I could not understand.

Soon afterward they brought two prisoners from one of the boats.

My heart sank when I saw this.

One of the prisoners was struck down immediately with a heavy club. Several of the savages then began cutting the body into pieces for their horrible feast.

I felt anger and disgust rising within me.

The second prisoner remained standing nearby, guarded by several men. He seemed to understand that his own death would soon follow.

For a moment I watched helplessly.

Then something unexpected happened.

The prisoner suddenly broke free from his captors.

Perhaps he saw an opportunity when their attention was elsewhere. Perhaps the instinct of survival gave him sudden strength.

Whatever the reason, he began running.

He ran with incredible speed across the sand—directly toward the part of the island where my dwelling stood.

Immediately two savages ran after him.

When I saw this, I understood that the moment for action had arrived.

If the man reached my hiding place, I might save him.

I loaded my guns quickly and moved into position.

The prisoner came running closer and closer. His pursuers followed behind him but were beginning to fall behind.

When the first savage approached within range, I fired my gun.

The sound of the shot echoed loudly across the beach.

The man fell instantly.

The second pursuer stopped in terror at the noise and sight of the gun. Before he could escape, I fired again.

He too fell to the ground.

The prisoner stopped running and stared at me in amazement.

For a moment he seemed uncertain whether I was a friend or another enemy.

I stepped forward and made a gesture for him to come nearer.

At first he hesitated. Then slowly he approached.

When he reached me, he suddenly fell to his knees.

He placed his head upon the ground and then lifted one of my feet and placed it upon his head. From his gestures I understood that he was offering himself as my servant for the rest of his life.

His gratitude moved me deeply.

I smiled and raised him to his feet. I made signs to show that he need not fear me.

The man appeared to be about twenty-five years old. His body was strong and well shaped. His face showed intelligence and kindness, and when he smiled his expression became gentle and friendly.

Though we could not yet speak to one another, I immediately felt that he was a good man.

Since I had rescued him on a Friday, I decided to give him that name.

“Friday,” I said, pointing to him.

He repeated the word carefully.

“Friday.”

Then I pointed to myself.

“Master,” I said, teaching him the word by which he should call me.

He repeated it obediently.

“Master.”

In this way our strange friendship began.

That day changed my life completely.

After more than twenty years of solitude, I was no longer alone on the island.

Part 14

From the moment Friday entered my life, the character of my island existence changed greatly.

For more than twenty years I had lived entirely alone. I had spoken only to myself, to my parrot, and sometimes to my animals. Now, for the first time in many years, I had a human companion.

At first communication between us was difficult.

Friday did not understand my language, and I could not understand his. Yet we both tried with patience. I pointed to objects and spoke their names. He repeated the words carefully, learning them one by one.

In this way he slowly began to speak a little English.

The first word I taught him was “Master,” because I wished him to understand my authority. But soon I taught him many other useful words—bread, water, gun, tree, goat, and many more.

Friday proved to be an excellent student. His memory was quick, and he seemed eager to please me.

I also gave him clothing.

At first he felt uncomfortable wearing it, for he had never used such garments before. But after some time he became accustomed to them.

I soon discovered that Friday possessed a cheerful and gentle nature. He showed great loyalty and gratitude toward me. Whenever I spoke to him, he listened attentively.

In truth, I began to feel great affection for him.

During the first days after his rescue, I was careful to keep him hidden from the savages who might still be nearby. We remained inside my enclosure and watched the sea carefully.

Fortunately the remaining savages soon returned to their boats and left the

island.

After they had gone, I showed Friday my dwelling and the fields that I had cultivated.

He looked at everything with wonder.

The cave, the fence, the goats, the grain fields—each of these things amazed him. It seemed that he had never before seen such arrangements.

I soon began teaching him useful work.

He helped me care for the goats and repair the fences. He learned how to plant grain and harvest it. He also assisted me in preparing food and maintaining the dwelling.

His strength and willingness to work made many tasks much easier.

Before long we had established a routine.

In the morning we worked in the fields or repaired tools. In the afternoon we hunted or explored the island. In the evening we returned to the enclosure and prepared our meal.

My loneliness disappeared almost completely.

Yet there were also serious matters to discuss.

One day I began asking Friday about the savages who had visited the island.

“Where do they come from?” I asked.

He pointed toward the distant mainland that could sometimes be seen from the hills.

From his gestures and the few words he knew, I understood that his people lived on that mainland. The island was only a place where they sometimes came with prisoners.

“Do they often come here?” I asked.

Friday explained that they visited from time to time when they wished to perform their feasts.

This information troubled me greatly.

If the savages continued to visit the island, they might someday discover our dwelling.

Therefore I decided to prepare more carefully than ever before.

Friday proved very helpful in these preparations. He understood the dangers of his former enemies and agreed that we must remain cautious.

One day I asked him another question.

“Friday,” I said, “would you like to return to your own country?”

At once his face brightened.

“Yes,” he said eagerly. “Friday like go home.”

I then pointed to myself.

“Would you take me with you?”

Friday nodded quickly.

“Yes, yes! Friday and Master go together.”

His answer pleased me, but I was still uncertain.

If we returned to his country, would his people welcome me—or would they treat me as an enemy?

Friday seemed confident that they would receive me kindly.

“Master teach them,” he said. “Teach them good things. Teach them pray to God.”

I smiled at his simple faith.

“Friday,” I replied, “you do not understand. I am not wise enough to teach a whole nation.”

But Friday continued to insist that I could help them.

Our conversation then turned to another matter.

I told him that if he wished, he might return to his country alone. I would remain on the island as before.

At these words Friday became deeply troubled.

He ran to fetch one of the small axes we used for work. Bringing it to me, he placed it in my hands.

“Master take,” he said.

“Why should I take this?” I asked.

“Take,” he repeated. “Kill Friday.”

I was astonished.

“Why would I kill you?”

His answer came with great emotion.

“Why Master send Friday away? Better Master kill Friday. Do not send away.”

Tears filled his eyes as he spoke.

At that moment I understood the depth of his loyalty.

I immediately assured him that I had no intention of sending him away. As long as he wished to remain with me, he would always be welcome.

Friday’s face brightened again.

From that day forward our friendship became stronger than ever.

Yet even as our small community grew happier, events were moving that would soon bring new dangers—and new companions—to our island.

Part 15

After Friday had lived with me for some time, our life on the island became easier and more pleasant. With two men instead of one, many tasks that had once required great effort were now quickly completed.

Friday proved to be both strong and intelligent. He learned new skills rapidly, and he performed every task with enthusiasm. Whether we were tending the goats, repairing fences, planting grain, or preparing food, he worked faithfully beside me.

In return, I tried to teach him as much as I could.

I showed him how to use tools properly. I taught him how to fire a gun and load it safely. At first the loud sound frightened him greatly, but soon he learned to handle the weapon with confidence.

I also taught him many more English words.

Within a year he could understand most of what I said. Though his speech remained simple, we could now hold real conversations.

One of the most important things I wished to teach him concerned religion.

When Friday first spoke about his people, he told me that they believed in a powerful spirit whom they called Benamuckee. According to their belief, this spirit lived far away in a great mountain.

I tried to explain that the true God was everywhere and that He had created the whole world.

Friday listened carefully to these explanations.

“If God make everything,” he asked one day, “why God not kill devil?”

The question surprised me.

I paused for a moment before answering.

“God has wisdom beyond our understanding,” I said. “He allows evil to exist for a time, but in the end good will triumph.”

Friday seemed satisfied with this explanation, though I could see that he continued to think deeply about it.

Meanwhile we also discussed the possibility of returning to his homeland.

Friday often described the mainland that lay beyond the sea. According to him, the distance was not very great. With a strong boat and good weather, it might be possible to reach it.

This idea slowly grew in my mind.

If we could reach the mainland safely, perhaps we might eventually find a way to return to civilization.

Therefore I decided to build a larger and stronger boat than any I had made before.

With Friday’s help the work progressed much faster than when I had laboured alone. We selected a suitable tree near the water and began shaping it carefully.

Day after day we worked with axes and tools until the trunk became the shape of a canoe.

When the boat was finished, we placed it in the water and tested it. It floated well and moved smoothly.

But before we could prepare for our voyage, another event occurred that changed our plans.

One morning Friday and I climbed a hill to look toward the sea.

Suddenly Friday cried out in excitement.

“Master! Boat! Boat coming!”

I looked carefully in the direction he pointed.

Several canoes were approaching the island.

Once again the savages had come.

We quickly hid ourselves among the trees and watched their arrival.

This time the group was larger than before. Several boats landed on the shore, and many men came ashore. They carried prisoners with them, just as they had done before.

My anger rose at the sight.

But I knew that attacking such a large group would be dangerous. Therefore we waited and watched carefully.

The savages began their terrible preparations. They built a fire and started their wild dances around it.

Soon afterward they brought the prisoners forward.

But something unexpected happened.

Among the prisoners was a man whom Friday recognized.

“Father!” Friday cried in astonishment.

His father had been captured by enemies and brought here to die.

Another prisoner stood beside him—a white man.

From his clothing and appearance I guessed that he was a Spaniard.

At once I understood the importance of the moment.

If we could rescue these two men, our small community would grow stronger.

I turned to Friday.

“Are you ready to fight?” I asked.

Friday nodded eagerly.

Together we prepared our guns and moved quietly toward the place where the savages were gathered.

When we were close enough, I gave the signal.

The sound of our guns shattered the silence.

Several savages fell instantly.

Panic spread among the others. They had never before heard such weapons, and the noise terrified them.

Friday rushed forward with courage and skill. His hatred of the men who had

captured his father gave him great strength.

The battle did not last long.

Some of the savages fled toward their boats. Others were killed in the struggle.

When the fighting ended, the prisoners were safe.

Friday embraced his father with tears of joy.

The Spaniard also thanked us warmly for saving his life.

In a single moment our lonely island had become home to four men instead of two.

And with this new companionship came new possibilities for the future.

Part 16

After the battle on the shore, we brought the rescued men safely to my dwelling.

Friday was overcome with joy to see his father again. The old man embraced his son again and again, speaking quickly in their own language. Though I could not understand their words, their happiness was clear.

The Spaniard, meanwhile, looked at everything around him with great curiosity.

My enclosure, the cave, the fields of grain, and the herd of goats all surprised him. It must have seemed remarkable that a single man had created such a place on a deserted island.

Through Friday's help we slowly began to speak together.

The Spaniard explained that he and several other Europeans had been shipwrecked on the mainland many years earlier. They had been captured by the natives and forced to live among them.

His companions were still alive, though their situation was uncertain. They lived far away in another region of the mainland.

When I heard this, a new plan began to form in my mind.

"If we could bring those men here," I said, "we might have enough people to repair a ship or build a new one. Then we might all escape from this place."

The Spaniard agreed that this might be possible.

Friday's father also seemed willing to help. Though he spoke little English, he

understood enough to see that cooperation would benefit everyone.

For the moment, however, we could not attempt such a journey.

First we needed to prepare supplies.

Therefore we began by improving our settlement so that it could support more people.

The Spaniard proved to be a useful and intelligent man. He helped me repair tools and strengthen the buildings. With four men working together, many tasks that once required weeks could now be finished in a few days.

We also expanded our fields.

The grain harvest that year was larger than ever before. I stored the extra food carefully so that it would last through future seasons.

Friday's father assisted in caring for the goats. Though he was older than the rest of us, he worked diligently and seemed grateful for the safety we had given him.

As our small community grew stronger, I sometimes reflected upon the strange change in my life.

For many years I had lived as the sole ruler of the island. Now I found myself surrounded by companions.

Yet even in this new situation, I remained the leader.

The others depended upon my knowledge of the island and the supplies I had gathered over the years. In truth I felt almost like a king among his subjects.

Sometimes this thought amused me.

The entire island was my property. The fields, the goats, the dwelling—all belonged to me. And the men who lived there owed their safety to my protection.

Thus my little kingdom had grown.

But this kingdom did not remain peaceful for long.

One evening, while we were discussing our future plans, the Spaniard suggested that he and Friday's father should return to the mainland.

"My companions will trust us," he explained. "If we tell them about this island, they will gladly come here. Together we will have enough men to defend ourselves and perhaps build a vessel."

The idea seemed reasonable.

After much discussion we agreed that the journey should be attempted.

We prepared a canoe with food, water, and weapons. Friday's father and the Spaniard would travel to the mainland and return later with the other Europeans.

Before leaving, they promised to remain faithful to me and to respect my authority on the island.

When the day came, we launched the canoe.

Friday embraced his father once more before the old man stepped into the boat. The Spaniard thanked me warmly for saving his life and promised to return as soon as possible.

Then the canoe moved away from the shore.

Friday and I watched until it disappeared beyond the horizon.

For the first time since Friday had joined me, we were once again alone.

Yet we did not feel the same loneliness as before.

We now had hope that more companions might soon arrive.

What we did not yet know was that an entirely different group of men would soon appear on the island—men whose arrival would finally bring my long exile to an end.

Part 17

After the Spaniard and Friday's father sailed away, Friday and I returned to our ordinary work. Though we were again only two people on the island, our situation felt different from the lonely years before Friday had come into my life.

We now lived with expectation.

At any time the canoe might return, bringing the Spaniard's companions with it. If that happened, our little settlement would grow into a real community.

In preparation for that possibility, we worked harder than ever.

We planted more grain so that there would be enough food for many people. We repaired the fences and expanded the goat enclosure. I also began to gather additional supplies of powder and shot.

“If many men come here,” I said to Friday, “we must be ready for danger as well as friendship.”

Friday understood this well. He had not forgotten the enemies who had once captured him and his father.

Months passed without any sign of the returning canoe.

At times I wondered whether they had reached the mainland safely. Perhaps they had been delayed. Perhaps their journey had failed.

Still we waited.

Then one morning an event occurred that changed everything.

Friday and I were standing on a hill overlooking the sea when Friday suddenly pointed toward the horizon.

“Master,” he said, “ship!”

I looked carefully in the direction he indicated.

Far out upon the water a large ship was sailing toward the island.

My heart began to beat quickly.

For more than twenty-five years I had watched the sea hoping for such a sight. Now at last a vessel had appeared.

Yet I did not immediately feel joy.

Ships sometimes carried danger as well as rescue.

Therefore we watched carefully as it approached.

The ship did not come close to the shore. Instead it anchored some distance away, and soon afterward a boat left the vessel carrying several men.

When the boat reached the beach, the men stepped ashore.

At first I believed they were simply sailors exploring the island. But as I watched them more closely, I noticed something strange.

Among the group were three men whose hands appeared to be bound.

The others treated them roughly.

“These are prisoners,” I said quietly to Friday.

We moved to a hidden place among the trees where we could observe without being seen.

The men who guarded the prisoners soon sat down and began to drink from

bottles they had brought with them. Their behaviour became careless and disorderly.

Meanwhile the three prisoners sat apart, speaking quietly among themselves.

I felt certain that something serious had occurred aboard the ship.

After some time two of the guards walked away along the shore. The others soon fell asleep.

Seeing this, I decided to approach the prisoners.

Friday and I moved cautiously through the forest until we were close enough to speak with them.

When they saw us appear suddenly from the trees, the prisoners were astonished.

I raised my hand to show that I meant no harm.

“Who are you?” one of them asked in great excitement.

“I am an Englishman,” I replied, “who has lived on this island for many years.”

The man stared at me with amazement.

“Then Heaven has sent you to save us,” he said.

He explained that he was the captain of the ship anchored offshore. The sailors had mutinied and taken control of the vessel. They had brought him and two loyal companions to the island, intending to leave them there.

When I heard this story, I understood the opportunity before me.

“If I help you recover your ship,” I said, “will you carry me back to England?”

The captain grasped my hand eagerly.

“With all my heart,” he answered. “You shall return home as soon as the ship is ours again.”

We quickly formed a plan.

The sleeping guards were easily overcome. Friday and I seized their weapons and secured them before they could resist.

When the two men who had walked along the shore returned, they were captured as well.

Now the captain and his companions were free.

Together we prepared to face the remaining mutineers.

The struggle for the ship had begun.

And with it began the final chapter of my long exile on the island.

Part 18

After freeing the captain and his two loyal companions, we prepared carefully for the next stage of our plan.

The mutineers who had brought the prisoners to the island were now disarmed and tied securely. They looked at us with fear and confusion, for they could not understand how their situation had changed so quickly.

The captain questioned them sternly.

Some of the men soon admitted that they had taken part in the rebellion against him. Others claimed that they had been forced into it by the leaders of the mutiny.

The captain considered their words carefully.

“Some of these men may still return to their duty,” he said quietly to me. “But the worst among them must be punished.”

For the moment, however, we had a more urgent problem.

The ship remained in the hands of the mutineers who had stayed aboard. If they suspected what had happened on the island, they might sail away at once.

Therefore we needed to act quickly.

Fortunately the captured sailors expected that another boat from the ship would soon arrive. The mutineers aboard believed their companions were simply exploring the island.

Our plan was simple.

When the next boat arrived, we would surprise the new group of mutineers just as we had surprised the first.

Then, with enough loyal men gathered together, the captain would return to the ship and reclaim it.

We hid ourselves among the trees and waited.

Before long another boat approached from the ship. It carried several more sailors.

As they reached the shore, they began calling to their companions. Receiving no answer, they grew suspicious.

One of them shouted, "Where are the others?"

At that moment the captain stepped forward from the trees.

"Here they are," he said firmly.

The sailors stared in astonishment.

Before they could react, Friday and I appeared behind them with our guns ready. The captain's loyal men also stepped forward with weapons drawn.

Surrounded and outnumbered, the mutineers quickly surrendered.

Some of them begged for mercy. Others stood silently, knowing that resistance was useless.

The captain spoke to them with authority.

"Your lives will be spared if you return to your duty," he declared. "But if any man attempts further rebellion, he will answer for it with his life."

Most of the sailors immediately promised obedience.

Only a few of the worst offenders remained defiant. These men were tied securely and kept under guard.

Now the captain finally had enough men to attempt the recovery of the ship.

Under cover of darkness, a small group of us boarded the boat and rowed quietly toward the vessel.

The sea was calm, and the ship lay still upon the water.

As we approached the side of the vessel, the captain called softly to one of the sailors on watch. The man, believing that his companions were returning from the island, lowered a rope.

One by one we climbed aboard.

When the remaining mutineers realized what had happened, it was already too late.

The captain and his loyal men quickly took control of the deck. The rebels were disarmed and secured before they could organize resistance.

Within a short time the ship was once again under its rightful command.

At dawn the vessel sailed closer to the island to collect those who remained on

shore.

When I stepped aboard the ship, I felt a strange mixture of emotions.

For twenty-eight years, two months, and nineteen days I had lived upon that island.

It had been my prison, my refuge, and my kingdom.

Now I was leaving it behind.

I looked back toward the shore where I had spent so much of my life. The fields, the goats, the dwelling hidden among the trees—all were disappearing slowly in the distance.

Friday stood beside me on the deck.

Like me, he watched the island grow smaller as the ship moved away.

At last the land vanished beyond the horizon.

My long exile had ended.

I was finally returning to England.

Part 19

The ship sailed steadily across the ocean, carrying me farther and farther away from the island where I had lived for so many years.

During the first days of the voyage I often stood on the deck, looking out over the water and thinking about my long exile. The life I had built there—the fields, the goats, the cave, and the strong fence around my dwelling—seemed almost like a dream now.

Yet it had been real.

For twenty-eight years I had lived alone on that island. I had struggled against loneliness, illness, and fear. I had built a home with my own hands. And at last I had escaped.

Friday remained constantly at my side. The sea voyage did not trouble him as it troubled some of the sailors. He moved easily about the ship and watched everything with curiosity.

The captain treated both of us with great kindness.

“You have earned your passage home,” he said to me more than once. “Without your help I might never have recovered my ship.”

The voyage lasted many weeks.

At last we reached England.

When I stepped ashore, I felt as though I had returned from the dead. For so many years the world had continued without me that I scarcely knew what to expect.

My first question concerned my family.

Sadly, I soon learned that both my father and my mother had died during my long absence. My older brothers were also gone. Of all my family, only a few distant relatives remained.

Hearing this news filled me with sorrow.

I had left home in disobedience many years earlier. Now the chance to ask forgiveness had disappeared forever.

Yet another discovery soon changed my situation completely.

The plantation I had left behind in Brazil had not been forgotten.

The Portuguese captain who had once helped me after my escape from slavery had faithfully managed my affairs. With the assistance of other friends, he had protected my property and expanded my plantation.

Over the years it had become very valuable.

When the accounts were finally presented to me, I was astonished.

I was now a wealthy man.

The income from my plantation and other investments provided more money than I had ever imagined possessing.

At first this sudden wealth felt strange.

For many years I had lived with only the simplest necessities. Now I could purchase almost anything I desired.

Yet the habits of my island life remained with me.

I lived quietly and spent my money carefully.

Friday also remained with me. I treated him as a loyal companion rather than a servant, and he continued to show the same affection and devotion he had shown

on the island.

After some time I decided to travel again.

The sea route between England and Portugal was dangerous during the winter months, so I chose to journey across Europe by land.

Friday accompanied me on this journey.

We passed through France and into the mountains between France and Italy. These mountains were high and covered with snow, and the roads were narrow and difficult.

During one part of the journey we joined a small group of travellers for safety.

One day, as we were moving through a forest in the mountains, we encountered a large bear.

The animal stood upon the path ahead of us.

The travellers stopped in fear.

But Friday did not hesitate.

He stepped forward calmly and spoke to the bear in a strange playful tone.

“Bear! Bear!” he cried, waving his arms.

The animal looked at him with curiosity.

Then Friday climbed a nearby tree with surprising speed.

The bear, perhaps thinking this was a game, followed him.

As the animal climbed higher, Friday moved quickly from branch to branch until he reached the end of a long limb.

There he waited.

The bear crawled slowly toward him along the branch.

At that moment Friday raised his gun and fired.

The shot echoed loudly through the forest.

The bear lost its hold and fell heavily to the ground.

The travellers watched in amazement.

Friday climbed down from the tree laughing happily.

“Friday catch bear!” he said proudly.

The others praised his courage and skill.

That day I realized once again how fortunate I had been to meet him on the

island.

Our journey continued safely after that.

Though my life had passed through many dangers and strange adventures, I had at last returned to the world of men.

And when I looked back upon the long years of exile, I saw them not only as a time of suffering, but also as a time of learning.

My story, I hoped, might serve as a warning to others.

The greatest cause of human misery is often a simple one: the refusal to be satisfied with the place in life that God and nature have given us.

My own life had begun with that very mistake.

And all that followed had grown from it.

Part 20

After our journey through the mountains ended, Friday and I continued traveling across Europe until we finally returned to England once more. By then I had seen many lands, survived many dangers, and lived a life far stranger than I had ever imagined when I first left my father's house as a young man.

Yet England itself felt unfamiliar to me.

So many years had passed that the country seemed almost new. Cities had grown larger. Old friends had disappeared. Even the customs of daily life seemed different from the world I had once known.

I now lived as a man who had returned from another age.

My wealth from the Brazilian plantation allowed me to live comfortably. The income was large enough that I never again needed to struggle for food or shelter.

But wealth alone did not bring happiness.

I had spent nearly three decades building a life through labour, patience, and struggle. Compared with that life, the quiet comfort of England sometimes felt strangely empty.

Friday remained my most faithful companion.

He adapted to European life with surprising ease. Though many people stared

at him with curiosity, his good nature and honesty soon won their respect.

Often we spoke together about the island.

“Master remember goats?” Friday would say with a smile.

“Yes,” I would answer. “And the cave, and the fields, and the parrot who called my name.”

Those memories had become part of us both.

Sometimes I wondered what had become of the island after we left it. The fields we had planted, the animals we had raised, and the shelters we had built might still exist there, hidden among the trees.

Perhaps the Spaniard and his companions had returned and settled there.

Or perhaps the island had returned to silence once again.

Whatever the truth, that place had shaped my life more than any other.

In those long years I had learned patience, courage, and faith. I had learned to survive with almost nothing. I had learned the value of human companionship.

Most of all, I had learned the cost of disobedience.

When I was young, I believed that adventure and freedom lay only beyond the life my father had wished for me. I believed that happiness could be found by leaving behind the quiet safety of home.

Instead I found hardship, slavery, shipwreck, and long solitude.

Yet even those hardships had not been entirely wasted.

Through them I discovered strength that I did not know I possessed. I also discovered that Providence often guides a man through dangers he cannot understand at the time.

Looking back over my life, I could see how many times I had been preserved when death seemed certain.

The storm that should have drowned me.

The slavery that might have lasted forever.

The shipwreck that killed all my companions.

The long years of solitude that might have driven me mad.

Yet through all those trials I survived.

Perhaps my story might serve as a warning to others.

Men often destroy their own happiness because they cannot be satisfied with the condition in which they are placed. They dream of distant fortunes and adventures, not understanding that peace and security are themselves great blessings.

My father had tried to teach me that lesson when I was young.

I did not listen.

It took nearly thirty years of suffering for me to understand what he had meant.

And so, as I look back upon my strange and wandering life, I can say this with certainty:

A man may travel across the whole world, face storms and wild lands, rule a lonely island, and still discover that the wisdom he needed was spoken long ago in his father's quiet house.