

WE THE PYRATES

ADVENTURES FROM THE PIRATE REPUBLIC

Based on History Known an Surmised.

An Epic Pyrat Pley wot is in Verse

By A.J. SCHAR



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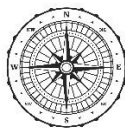
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Illustrations are from Howard Pyle's Book of Pirates : fiction, fact & fancy concerning the buccaneers & marooners of the Spanish Main.

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All Ye who'd fay We Sail this Republic
Upon a leaky Ship, for our Keelf be
Bafed with Barnacle of Piracy
have a Care to Recall We have Sailed her
Upon Democraef af well We could
For the Waterf be Strange in Storm or Fair.



Introduction & Acknowledgements

Pirate Captains of many different nations successfully formed a Republic off the shores of America— in retaliation against the same powers that America would come to defy: not just England, empire, colonialism, but slavery, poverty, forced military service, forced taxation (privateering), religious persecution, etc.

Like our own American Republic, there never was a time they were a perfectly unanimous Union— nor was abandoning the Republic ever held in unanimous favor. And incredibly (or unsurprisingly), their progression of leaders was remarkably like our own, moving from the Principled toward the Party-driven toward the Personally-motivated, until only the “loud crowd” remained to run what was left of the show.

The overarching questions I had in mind while creating this were: why and how did they manage to come together into a Republic; why and how did their Republic end? These questions have been of interest to me for years and remain all the more so because the history itself is *so despicably, wonderfully Human*. While there is not a character in *WE THE PIRATES* that doesn't do something truly terrible, or at least morally bleak— as who among us hasn't?— they are also brave (or brave-faced), heroic (ambitious), intelligent (cunning), and most of all free. I admire them, every one of them, and believe you may, too.

If there is a central message to this play, among the many piratical lessons that may be gleaned, it is that We Are All Pirates. And All of these Pirates, are Us.

Acknowledgements are given with gratitude to Colin Woodard for the painstakingly detailed research he offers in his book, *The Republic of Pirates*, which, alongside *A General History of the Pyrates* by “Captain Charles Johnson” (alias of Woodes Rogers), were the primary sources referenced while selecting the

historical events and details to make this play. Many hundreds more stories exist.

Other background references of note include *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine, *The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli, the *Ten-Point Program* by Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale, *The Pirates' Code* by Rebecca Simon, *A Collection of the Popular Poems, Songs, and Ballads, Relative to That Celebrated English Outlaw Robin Hood* by Joseph Ritson, and two shanty books, one compiled by Gary Coover and the other by Captain W.B. Whall.

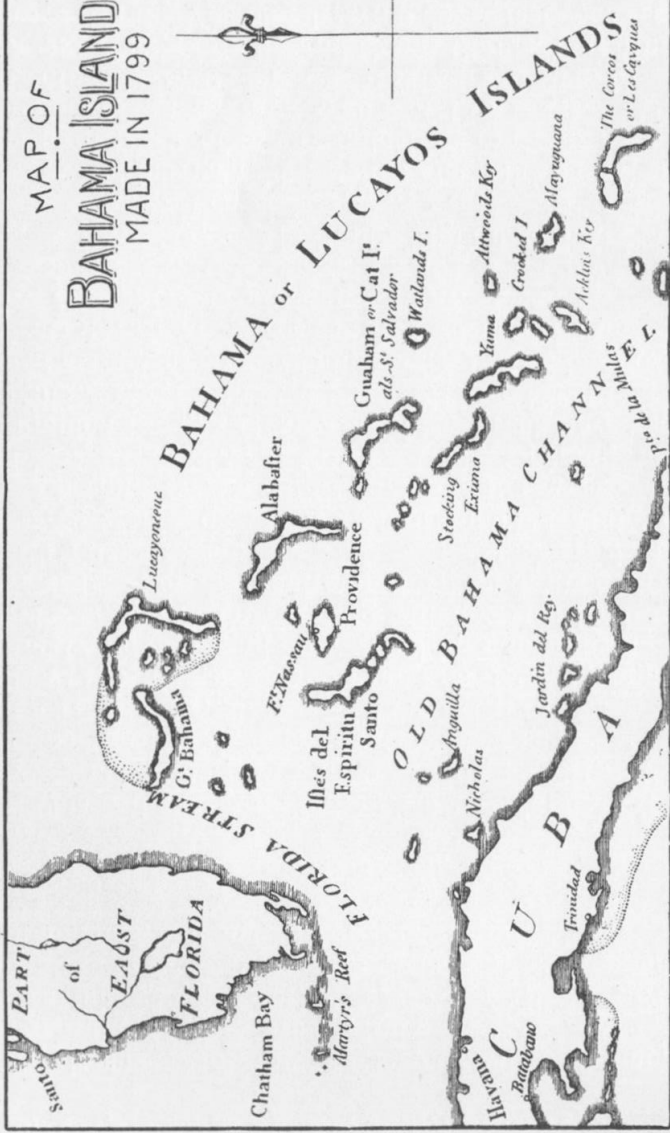
WE THE PIRATES was workshopped by the New Fortune Theatre Company of San Diego, California in 2024. Their motto: *Theatre is for the Daring.*

Sincerely,

Amanda Jane Schaar
(Schaar: say it like a Pirate.)



MAP OF
BAHAMA ISLANDS
 MADE IN 1799



PARTS

-In Order o Speekin-

Teach
Bellamy
Caesar
Williams
Hornigold
La Buse
King
Mary
Pearse
Anne
Vane
Jennings
Bonny
Ireland
Burgess
Rackham
Dunks
Artist
Turnley
Rogers

A Crier (a voice offstage)

Nameless Man (N.M. should be played as a new role by the actor playing Teach, or Bellamy)

“Sum Evokativ Facks” about each Part follow the Pley.



Time: spans 1718. By'n large the events are chronological, tho condensed. All the scenes (save fer the harlot 'beddin' scenes, which are probable) are selected from History as 'tis known an surmised.

Single set: an English Colonial-style Tavern House on the S.E. harbor of Nassau, Isle o Providence (née Hog Island). The main entrance faces the harbor, as do some windows with wood shutters (fer defensive purposes) and sail-cloth curtains to shade the glare o the sea. Another entrance leads off to other rooms (presum'ly a kitchen, dinin' chamber & livin' quarters for Dunks and the harlots). But we's in the main room, furnished simply but well for accommodatin many pyrates in comfort at once. A round table o the time. Well-washed wood chairs. Barrels of refreshments perhaps. A handmade bar n shelves upstage where bottles of liquor and cups are kept clean an safe by Dunks. Perhaps ballads by the yard are pinned to the walls; perhaps there are (false) flags of nations or of pirates displayed; perhaps sailcloth hangs from above, which can blow in the storms.

Notes on the text: the watchword is 'lively.' This text is to be read lively and naturally, keeping the wind in its sails. If words could swagger. Lively an Natural, now.

- The Verse is written in a light but intent hand that riffs around traditional pentameter. While based in serious studies of the jazzy, soundful, antithetical iambs of Shakespeare... in the "mighty line" of Marlowe... and not least, in the flights of fancy from classical alexandrines in Rostand (Cyrano)... this verse is intended to have its Own high style and surging throughline, like a tall ship in the tides.
- For the sake of veracity and authenticity, "quoted text" is included as language that's word for word from the time of the events themselves; mostly these come from narrative reports, including quotes from court proceedings, eyewitness accounts, journals, etc.

- Near every word a pirate said (or is Said to have said) that's been recorded is included in that pirate's lines. There are a great many direct and paraphrased pirate quotes in this play; often they are Centerpieced text.
- Rhymes often involve a point o convincin', an not least convincin' those who say 'em.
- Blank beats are t' be honored as seen fit fer Dramatic purposes, as are extra beats (12 beat lines), and shared/split lines. These are all meant to serve, rhythmically and emotionally, the telling of these character-driven events. Keep a watchword in mind: lean forward lively, and mean it naturally.
- Capitalized Words should almost always receive a stress; aside from indicating stress, capitalizations may also be: Honoring Intangible Nouns that were often capitalized at the time (like Principle, Honor, Dignity); pointing out an Irony; visualizing Mirrored language (or, a Call and Response); and of course, they may indicate sheer Importance.

Now keep er aloft with the wind in yer sails an' bravely on me Hearties!





WE THE PYRATES

ACT I

OR "AN INFAMOUS MEETIN OF THEM AS IS RIVALS"

(the Year of Our Lord 1718.

in the main room of a tavern, we see Dunks cleaning
an ornate cup with a rag, and eavesdropping.

Anne and Mary may be glimpsed moving through the "living
quarters" beyond the main room; also cleaning themselves with
rags and also eavesdropping.

outside the tavern, one party of Teach, Hornigold, Caesar and
Artist, spies another party of Bellamy, Williams, La Buse
and King in the thoroughfare;

we overhear their conversation just beyond the door.

it is morning now; a clear day; Bahamanian, heavenly light.)

Teach: Ahoy there!

Bellamy: Ho! Have ye seen?

Caesar: Seen what?

Bellamy: Look!

Williams: A White Flag Flies Toward Providence! There!

Bravin' our Sou'West side. Ye see? Must be

Brave as Slaves to seek out our colony

Of Pirates. Brave or Foolish, as may be.

All the Pirates: (lookout) Oh, aye! I do sees, aye. Look at that.

Hornigold: Don't you be calling this a colony.

As long as I be the Governor here,

I say, ye can say what ye will, except:

Pirates have not 'colonized' this island.

Teach: We ain't bad as That.

Hornigold: We're a Republic.

Teach: Colonies Keep land for foreign Powers.

Pirates live here to Keep those Powers Out.

We Peacefully Inhabit this Island;

In Peace with its other Inhabitants;

Pirates, smugglers, harlots, artists, even;

No one lives under any Tyranny;

All the People who live here, live here Free.

All the Pirates: Aye. Ar!

Hornigold: Except! For the Former Governor here.

All the Pirates: Oh aye.

Hornigold: Tom Walker is a troublesome old Fart.

If I see him, I will shoot and Kill him.

I say, if'n he don't mind his own business,

I will burn down his house, kill him, and whip

All the rest of his family senseless!

All the Pirates: Aye. That's right. That's more'n fair. Ar.

(now the ship is close enough to see that—)

La Buse: That ship is English.

Bellamy: Let us drive her off!

Hornigold: No! Don't fire on the English!

La Buse: Mon Dieu.

Hornigold: To shoot at England is to shoot at Home.

La Buse: England is not my home. This is my home.

They'd shoot at me there, I'll shoot at them here.

No need to Kill them, but let's drive them off;

For they mean us no good; if we Let them come,

They won't leave again without Force.

Bellamy: Damn me.

We Mustn't Let the king's soggy soldiers,

To come among us and our Merry Men!

... We know, by the king's own Proclamation,

That England wants to see us Pyrates, Dead!

Damn the king and all his men!

All the Pirates: Damn the king! (all spit.)

Bellamy: We Must not let that ship land Unchallenged!

We have 40 canon in the Fort now;

And men already on those 2 frigates;

30 and 20 guns each, that's almost...

Williams: 90.

Bellamy: Near 100 guns, 90 guns, yes, which,

We can let fly at that ship of the king's!

All the Pirates: Damn the king. (all spit.)

Williams: That ship would burn at the Sight of a shot.

For it's a Fire ship! Can ye see, lad?

King: A fire ship?

All the Pirates: Oh, ar. So ‘tis! I’ll be...

King: That sounds like a Terrible thing to fight.

La Buse: A fire ship will rarely fight at all.

Williams: They’re made to be set a’ fire, ye see,
And sailed into the enemy, ablaze.

See how poorly-made the poor auld ship is.

Hornigold: Cur’ous to sail That ship here tho, innit...

Teach: Let’s have a glass of rum and talk this out.

All the Pirates: Aye, that’s for me. Excellent. A glass of rum and
a council. Aye.

(these pirates enter, followed by Artist.
drinks are standing ready for them all.

Anne and Mary are now reading in the main room,
a book of science and a thesaurus, respectively.)

Teach: If we fire our guns upon that ship...

It’s true, that we’ll be Sure to win the day.

But, all those men aboard will be Injured,
Or Killed.

(the pirates touch their forelocks.)

Teach: (cont.) And, if we fire on that fire ship, Mates,
We’ll Never have Hope of that Pardon.

Hornigold: ...Might I Suggest we Let them come ashore?

We’ll see how brave they are t’ come face Us.

And, when they’ve come ashore, quakin’ in their boots,

We’ll greet them Joyously, and Take The Pardon!

They’ll feel like such heroes! And so surprised.

And once we’ve got their Pardon for our crimes,

We can each do what we please in the way

O Piracy. Keeps it or leaves it.

And, no one the poorer or worser off

To have a clean slate for Retirement.

Teach: And a United front for the Present.

Truly, I believe this will confuse them

Much. And therefore, be to our advantage.

All the Pirates: Hear hear.

Hornigold: All those in favor of begging pardon?

All the Pirates: ...Aye.

Teach: All those opposed?

(pause.)

Hornigold: Alright then lads! Agreed. Let's smarten up.
We'll want to look at best and most Sincere!

Teach: Which would ye most wish to Avoid? This.

(he makes a change.)

Or this.

(he makes a change. the pirates consider the choice seriously.)

La Buse: They are both Fearsome.

Williams: The expression helps.

Mary: Let me try?

(Mary sets down her book and makes Blackbeard look fiercer,
using anything handy.)

Teach: I find when I look fearsome as fearsome can be,
Even when I'm outgunned, no one dares shoot at me!
I'm always glad to Avoid the Violence.
Glad to save the ammunition, as well.

Caesar: Our whole crew does this before boarding a prize.
You should see the Fear in the other crew's eyes.
We none of us care much for taking men's lives,
An' the Pretending is Liberating.

Bellamy: Would you call it 'pleasant and delightful'?

All the Pirates: That's a lovely song. Ar. He'll sing it sweet as a
nightingale.

Bellamy: (sings 'Pleasant and Delightful')

It was pleasant and delightful, at the dawning of the day,
And the dewdrops shone like rainbows, in the flowers where
they lay,

And the green trees smelled so lushly, in the sea's salty spray,
And the larks they sang melodious, at the dawning of the day.

All the Pirates: (sing) And the larks they sang melodious,
And the larks they sang melodious,
And the larks they sang melodious at the dawning of the day.

Williams: (sings) But it's back to the ship lad, I'm sorry to say,
For the topsail's a'hoisting and the anchor's a'weigh,
I wish that I, could leave you here, with your True Love to stay,
But the bright dawn never lasts, lad, but for the dawning of the
day.

All the Pirates: (sing) No the bright dawn never lasts, lad,
No the bright dawn never lasts, lad,
No the bright dawn never lasts, lad, but for the dawning of the
day.

(Pearse enters the tavern.

Turnley enters as his second.)

Pearse: My name is Vincent Pearse.
Captain of the H.M.S. Phoenix. There.
Lieutenant in His Majesty's Navy.
And this is my pilot, Richard Turnley.
I alone have volunteered to come here.
I come to make the pirates here aware:
The King extends to you an Act of Grace.

(the pirates do not spit.

Pearse retrieves a copy to read to them; he is prepared.)

Bellamy: We are Aware of the 'Act of Grace.'

(Pearse was not quite prepared for that, but remains on form.)

Pearse: Already aware? But how can that be?

I only heard of the Proclamation
In Boston it was, upon Christmas Day...
Then I came as speedily as I may.

Hornigold: Of course you did, and welcome, welcome!

Williams: Speedily, you say? Speedily, he says.
(to King) That's near two months ago now, is it not?

King: (to Pearse) Today is February twenty-third.

Pearse: (to King, defensively)

I had to beg permission to come, first,
Which the Governor of New York granted me.
And then I had to find enough men, for
None of the bastards wanted to come here.
No, a measure of Pressure had to be used.
And at last, I set sail from Boston.

(to all) And all this, I did in under two months.
Speedily, I said. Speedily, I say.

And to say more, it's more than you deserved.

Teach: (effortlessly intimidating)

We Un'erstand the 'Proclamation for
The Suppression of Pirates' was made on

September fifth of last year, in Hampton.
It stated, that all of us Pirates would be
Forgiven fer all Acts o Piracy
We done 'fore the fifth day of January.
As the young man there says, you have arrived
On the twenty-third of February,
So for all of yer haste, you're already too late,
To 'make us aware' that we Could have been
'Pardoned.'

Pearse: You seem to have... quite good information.
But How could you have news before I did?
I, a commander in The King's Navy;
And you... unlearnéd villains and slaves!

Caesar: I wonder if you Mean to be Insulting.
(all the pirates put hands to weapons.)

Hornigold: Ho! Keep 'er Aloft, me buckos; Easy...

Teach: It did take us longer than Usual
To Acquire this new Information...
A little more than a WEEK, so it was!

All the Pirates: Hehar. Ar.

Teach: (cont.) After the Proclamation was 'Proclaimed,'
A merchant brought the News to Bermuda,
To their Governor, who, the merchant felt,
Might Welcome this News of Our 'suppression!'

Pearse: I-I'm sure he did.

Teach: Then yer surely Wrong.
He rather likes ar kind o quid pro quo;
He Personally Warned us of that Act

(he points at it in Pearse's hand)
Of 'Grace.' No, I take it back— 'twas his Son;
His young Son— no more high yet than Yer Gorge—
(Pearse puts a hand to his throat.)

Teach: (cont.) He sailed here, like you did, stepped ashore;
Started handin' out copies right away;
(he takes Pearse's copy)

In hours, Everyone knew about this...
'Joyous News' of 'pardon' from our 'king.'
(all the pirates except Hornigold spit.)

Pearse: ...And what have you decided to Do with
This Information?...

Hornigold: (defensive and absolute)

We've decided to Accept the king's pardon!

Pearse: What, all of you?

Hornigold: All of us!

Pearse: Right! Well then!...

(Pearse was entirely unprepared for this,
but hopes it is a stroke of luck.)

I-I don't have the papers on my person,

Of course. You must go to a Governor

To procure the Proper Papers to sign.

Either Mister Bennet in Bermuda

Or Lord Archibald Hamilton not far

From here in Jamaica. Or a Governor

In America. The English Colonies.

Any of them will be able to help you.

Hornigold: (sensing restlessness)

Much obliged, I'm sure. Any other news?

Any other business ye may have with us?

Pearse: Not at present. No.

Hornigold: Then we'll let ye go.

Caesar: Wait.

I think we need some kind of guarantee.

Now that the time of pardoning is past,

To walk into a governor's Office,

We may be walking right into a Trap.

We may be Captured and Executed.

Pearse: Or, you may capture and Kill Them instead.

But we offer fair, and we do not fear you.

(Caesar steps toward Pearse.)

Pearse: (cont.) Ah. Most likely, You would Never be Killed, no.

You would be sold as a Slave, most likely.

You're Worth More at a Market than say, him.

It's men like him we execute, not you.

'The usual sentence,' the Judges, you know.

(all the pirates advance upon Pearse.)

Hornigold: Steady now...

Pearse: Ah. I could write to the governors first.
To Confirm the pardon still stands.

Caesar: Do that.
We'll expect confirmation, 'speedily.'

Pearse: I shall do so now. I shall go write them.
Right now.

(Pearse and Turnley exit.)

Teach: Now, to more interesting things.
Who Is This Boy I see?

Bellamy: This is no boy...
This is The Boy King! He's with Me. Third Mate.
Say hello.

King: John King.

Teach: Edward Teach.

King: (gasps, he thought so) Blackbeard!
(Teach bows. King bows.)

Teach: This, be my good friend and gunner, Caesar.
(Caesar bows. King bows.)

Bellamy: (to Teach and Caesar)
You remember Paulsgrave Williams, of course?
My Quartermaster; Yankee Little John!
And La Buse there, still as French as ever.

La Buse: I have no nation, I have only Life.
We all of us have only Life, and Death.

Hornigold: (to King) Call me Cap'n Benjamin Hornigold.
Founder of this Flying Gang of cap'ns.
Governor of this Pirate Republic.
All the Pirates that be here in Nassau,
Be under My Protection.

All the Pirates: Hear hear.

Teach: (to King) How long have you been sailing together?
I presume, you took these men prisoner.

Bellamy: It must be a month or two now, I think.
We detained The Boy King's ship so's we'd have
Something to careen The Marianne to...
Cleaning barnacles from off Her Bottom.

(Anne and Mary snort.
King admires this.)

Bellamy: (cont.) (of Golden Times)

The Boy King's ship was no match for Pirates,
Leastwise not in Courage, save for his own.
And so, soon as ever she saw us,
She turned herself into the wind,
Her white Sails flapping like laundry,
In Surrender.

We the Pirates, seeing her so gentle,
We boarded her like Robin Hood's own men!
We took the fancy clothes of those aboard,
And offered fair, to let them all go Free,
Soon as we finished with Marianne's bottom...

(Mary and Anne smile at each other.)

Bellamy: (cont.)

But this Boy King begged Us to take him with us.
And when his mother 'the queen' tried to stop him,
He demanded to be unhanded! Quoth he:

King: I will Kill myself if you restrain me!

Williams: There he was, in his fine shoes and stockings.
We weren't sure he were cut out for a Pirate.

We asked him first to tell us, under Oath,
What Loyalty he felt he'd owe to Us.

King: I promise not to steal even one
Piece of eight. For it is wrong to steal
Even that much from your friends. Damn me, man.

All the Pirates: Hear hear. Well said, lad. Bravely done.

Bellamy: So oft we sailed with the Boy King here;
By now, I think we've lost 'the queen,' his mother.

Williams: She did put up a chase though, didn't she.

Bellamy: She ordered child slaves to be his friends.

Williams: Still; all just goes to show how much she cared.

All the Pirates: Aye. Aye.

(As Mary makes introductions,
Anne sashays forward to offer King her hand.)

Mary: Boy King, my name is Mary. Mary Read.
And this is my friend, Anne.

King: Pleased to meet you.

La Buse: Say 'enchante.'

King: Enchante.

Anne and Mary: Enchante.
(Vane enters.)

Vane: Introducing a young lad to harlots!
I knew I liked ye, Black Sam Bellamy.

Bellamy: Charles Vane! Damn me, man. Good to see you.
(shaking hands.)

Killed many people lately?

Vane: One or two.
I'm looking for the captain of that fire ship.
Have you seen him?

Bellamy: We have. You just missed him.

Vane: I trust you told him to Shove Off.

Bellamy: Not quite.
(Jennings enters.)

Vane: Captain Jennings! They're here.

Jennings: (stiffly) I can see that.
(calls) Men. They're in here.

Bellamy: Good to see you, Captain.
(they nod but do not shake hands.)

Jennings: (addressing Hornigold)
I've taken All the best provisions from
The Port of New Orleans.

Hornigold: The riff-raff there
Gets all the best o the Contraband, they does.

Jennings: They do. Having Cornered the Market, I
Came here to Sell for Outrageous Profits.
But seeing as that English ship is here,
I'll stash the Goods and Trade in Words instead.

Vane: Black Sam here says the captain of that ship
Out there was here. ...I hope they Shoved Him Off.
(Jennings slaps Vane across the face.)

Jennings: How dare you Hope for such a thing
In front of me, sir. I come to greet him!
Respectfully! Not 'Shove Him Off.'

Bellamy: Damn me.
Charles, old chap, we greeted the man, too.
Leastwise, we didn't lay a hand on him...

Captain Hornigold advised us All
To accept of the 'king's' gracious 'pardon'
And, to Own the Truth... we All Agreed.

Vane: What. All of you.

Bellamy: All of us.

Vane: Right! Well then!

(Vane punches Bellamy right in the face.

Williams and La Buse join the fight against Vane.

Rackham and Bonny enter the tavern

and join the fight for the fight's sake.

Ireland enters smiling and doffs his hat.

Burgess enters, watches, and waits by the door;

he takes out a knife and pares his nails.

Teach takes off the gun that's tucked into one of his belts,
and hands it to King.

Teach takes off the belt and snaps it like a shot.

the pirates stop.)

Teach: What are we fighting about?

Bonny: I don't know!

La Buse: Why has the kid got a gun?

Teach: Never mind.

Hornigold: (crossly) What's the use to fight a settled matter.

The matter be settled. It be settled.

A council's been held. A vote has been cast.

And, I says, I do, as the Governor here,

That we'll all greet the English joyfully,

And be accepting of the Act of Grace!

Ireland: (laughs) Like hell we will!

Jennings: Shut your mouth.

Williams: Let 'im talk!

Ireland: I'm not about to be an 'honest man;'

We're not businessmen; I mean, we're not Thieves!

All the Pirates: Hear, hear. Ar. Aye.

Bonny: Aye, but I weren't Destined fer a Pyrat!

Me mother never wanted this for me!

I were eager to become a man of means!

I mean a man of means— not by These means

Anywise...

Burgess: Boi the means of A
Legitimate Commercial Enterprise.

All the Pirates: Oh aye. Commerce. Ar.

Bonny: Not much a'one for Public speakin', I.
(Anne regards Bonny with interest.)

Teach: I think, with respect, gentlemen, ladies,
The question we must ask ourselves today is:
Why be a Pirate, if we don't have to?
'Til now we'd'a been Hunted forever.
And maybe, who knows, we still will...
Even in Peace...

But If we are to take 'em at their word,
And know that we can leave this life for good,
With no consequences, forevermore:
Why be a Pirate, if we don't have to?
(pause.)

Rackham: Ta Be Rich?

Caesar: Free.

Bellamy: To Be Henry Avery.
(all the pirates doff caps and bow heads.
'Henry Avery' 'Henry Avery'.)

King: I've never heard of Henry Avery.

Bellamy: ...Didn't you tell me that you went to school?

King: Yes.

Bellamy: Damn me. (to Teach) I think we ought to address this.

All the Pirates: Aye! Ar. Bless the lad. Bless Avery! Henry
Avery. Henry Avery!

(all the pirates know this story well,
and would always stop to hear it told again.)

Bellamy: Let me tell ye of Henry Avery.

All the Pirates: Henry Avery!

Bellamy: Henry Avery.

Henry Avery: the First Great Pirate.

(to King, lightly but Intent)

As a boy, about your age, he went to Sea

As a sailor on a few Trading vessels.

And when England went to War with France,

He joined the Navy. And he saw combat.

And he saw men beat and humiliated
By the Navy Officers. And he saw them
Eat rotten food that the Navy bought cheap
From crooked pursers. And he saw people
Lose their arms and legs and feet and eyes
In accidents and battles. And he saw them
Go through this for years on end, without Pay.
People say Prisoners are treated better
Than These honest men— these Patriotic men.
(to all) Henry Avery lived and served his country
For 20 years like this!!

(the pirates nod and look askance; that is like their story, too.)

Bellamy: (cont.) Then one day, Henry Avery heard news:

An expedition planned for the West Indies;
Some fat English merchants led by a man called
...‘Houblon.’ They Planned to strike up a Trade with
The Spanish colony, Used to be Here. And,
Planned to Plunder all the French ships in their wake—
Which was Lawful If ye were a ‘Privateer.’
Good business for them, and the king, and the war;
And, mayhaps, even for the Crew, who
They were Promising to pay FAIR WAGES to!
He should have known, ‘twas too good to be True.
But he Wanted that Fair Wage, so he applied
For the voyage, with Excellent References,
And a Distinguished Service Record, and
He was hired as the First Mate on the Flagship,
The Charles. And he felt Reassured because
Houblon himself, the expedition’s owner,
He’d come aboard the ships before they sailed
To let them know that they, and their Families,
Would be paid every six months. He Promised them.
Personally. And then they set sail.
From the start, the whole voyage went wrong.
What should have taken 2 weeks, took 5 months,
If you can imagine.

All the Pirates: (murmurs) Crickey. Oi can imagine. Terrible.
That’s the Navy fer ye.

Bellamy: (cont.) And once they got to the Spanish colony
They'd been destined for, they found that their
Privateer Paperwork hadn't arrived!

Meanin' now they'd go to Jail, or to Jack Ketch,
For attacking and Plundering the French!

Vane: (scornfully) It ain't Piracy, if there's Paperwork.

Bellamy: For which, they sat at anchor in the harbor.

And they waited. For a week. At this point

It had been 6 months and the men were due

For their Pay. But they weren't given it!

And when some of the men Petitioned to

Make this fact known, Houblon ordered his Agents

To clap 'em in irons and put 'em in the brigs!

Because they'd asked for what was Promised them.

Some men got word to their Wives back at home,

And the Wives went to petition Houblon, too.

His response, can you guess? To their Wives, now:

"The ships and their men are now under

The king of Spain's control.

And as far as I'm concerned,

The King can Pay them, or HANG them, if he Please."

All the Pirates: He told My wife that, I'd lay him out. Shame.

Hateful man. Terrible.

Bellamy: When the sailors learned of this, they panicked;

And they offered to forsake All their Pay

If only they would be allowed to Leave!

They were told, that if Any Tried to leave,

They would All be thrown in Jail for they'd

All been sold as Slaves to the king of Spain

For All the dayes of their lives!

To this, Henry Avery said NO.

He would have his Freedom, and not just for himself,

But for All his fellow men who wanted Freedom.

King: He Mutinied?

All the Pirates: Aye Ar! 'e did. Good man. Henry Avery!

Bellamy: He MUTINIED.

Now. They knew they couldn't take the whole fleet

Of ships they'd sailed in, but they figured that

Together, they could all take the Flagship,
The Charles. And they had a Good Plan. But then...
In the dark, as they gathered together,
As Avery was waiting on the men...
He heard an Alarm clang 'MUTINY!'...
And he Knew, he Couldn't Wait for All of 'em...
So he ordered the men already aboard
To cut the anchor lines; unfurl the sails;
To Do All Men May to get out of that bay! (points to the harbor)
...The other ships in Chaos fired upon him!
And the fort, that fort right there, soon followed suit!
...Avery came near to sailing into Kingdom Come!
But he Made it to The Open Sea;
They All Made it to Freedom!

All the Pirates: (all moved) S'right! They made it. AYE, they did! Oh ar, Henry Avery. Henry Avery!

Bellamy: (to King, quieter)

This now is the part ye must Remember.
Once they were a few leagues away,
And they couldn't be caught in a rush,
Henry Avery stepped below deck
To speak with their Original Captain—
Confined to quarters with his Second Mate. And,
Although they both would have let him be Hanged,
He treated them with Courtesy; Respect.
He asked them to join with him; they refused.
So Avery declared... he'd let them go;
For they were free men, and should remain so.
He'd let them take the small boats come first light.
(to all) Henry Avery, he even saw them off;
He took the men were leaving by the hand,
And he wished them well home, and he bid them...
To remember him to His Wife.

And as the men who wished to rowed away,
The last thing they heard Henry Avery say, was...

All the Pirates: "I am a man of Fortune,
And I must seek my Fortune."

Bellamy: (cont.) (to King) That's how a good man, and a Patriot,

Became the first Great Pirate!

Williams: Tell The Boy King what the men with him did Next!

All the Pirates: Tell ‘im of the meeting! Tell ‘im of the shares.
Tell ‘im of the Voting. Henry Avery!

Bellamy: (laughing) Alright, alright, pipe down an’ I’ll tell him!
They convened for a General Meeting!

A Pyrate Tradition still to this day.

And Avery Suggested to them All,

That they plunder ships now, as first they planned;

But now, they’d Share the plunder Equally!;

And not be waiting for nice paperwork;

And not share any plunder with their king,

Who’d let them all be sold to Spain as slaves!

(the pirates spit.)

Bellamy: (cont.) They All Agreed, and All became Pirates!

La Buse: On most Royal ships, the captains Take
Fifteen Times more than the Sailors. Or more.

All the Pirates: Or more. More. Huge percentages! No Reason
fer it.

Bellamy: As Pirates, who saw themselves as Equals;

They would Share, and Vote, Equal in all things.

Except, in times of Battle. At these times,

The Captain’s orders would be absolute...

And they all Voted Avery for Captain.

Jennings: Captains Must be Obeyed in time of Battle.

These are called a captain’s War Powers, Boy King.

Hornigold: The next Vote they took was a bit o fun:

They Voted to rename their ship, “The Fancy.”

King: I think I’ve heard of The Fancy!

Rackham: Fancy that!

Bellamy: (to all) Damn me, I’ve talked enough!

(to Rackham) You tell the rest!

(all the pirates laugh;

Rackham doesn’t know what to say.)

Bellamy: (cont.) (laughing) As Captain, Henry Avery Suggested
That they make Madagascar their H.Q.

Caesar: (smiling) Madagascar be Sou’East of Africa.

It had no posts for Europe in those days.

Teach: His thinking was there, they could Plunder in Peace,
Fer as long as they wished, unTil if they wished,
They Could go home to England, Peacefully—
England says Welcome Home to Wealthy men!
(all the pirates laugh,
some bitterly.)

King: Did it work?

Bellamy: Some say that it did.

Williams: Some say
They took a Fleet of Turkish Treasure Ships!
On a pilgrimage to Mecca. They say
Such Treasure ships be Too Hard to Take,
But, the captain in charge of that fleet
Panicked at the Sight of the Pirates;
So he hid below deck with the harem girls;
Who he put in turbans, and handed swords,
And ordered to defend him!

La Buse: And some say
Henry Avery, found aboard that ship,
A Rare Treasure, “more pleasing than jewels;”
The granddaughter of the Moghul Emperor,
On the way to her wedding with a huge
Dowry and beautiful handmaidens, too.
Henry Avery proposed to the Princess
At first sight. She said Yes. And he Lived
The rest of his Life, Richer than any King.
(La Buse gives nodding bow to King.)

King: But what do the others say happened?

Bellamy: Well!... Let’s just say that Pirates are more...
Even-Handed now when it comes to how
We treat the Muslim people.

Burgess: They say it were
An Orgy of Blood!

Bellamy: But one thing all agree,
Is that the Treasure they took from that fleet,
Was one of the biggest Takes, ever took.
And, we know that they made their way here;
To Providence, where Our HeadQuarters are—

Hornigold: (grimly pleased)

The Spanish colony had been Destroyed.

Bellamy: Then the Pirates went three different ways:

Some back to England, they wanted to go Home,

Some to America, to make something New,

And some just stayed here in Providence. Free.

And when they Woke or Dreamed, this place was Heaven.

King: What happened to that wicked Houblon?

All the Pirates: Damn his eyes. Ar. A curse upon Houblon.

Teach: Houblon, as it turns out, was

The Founding Deputy Governor

Of the Bank of England! And his brother,

Who was Chief Governor of the Bank,

Became the Mayor of London— right after

He sold Avery and his fellow men

To Spain, as Slaves!

All the Pirates: Boo! It figures. Monsters! Sss.

King: But Avery, did he live Happily

Ever After? What happened to their Treasure?

Vane: I heard he gave all his Gold and his Gems

To some Merchants to Fence— who were already

So Filthy Rich, that no one would wonder

Where they Came By all them Gold an Gems to Sell—

And when they sent to Henry Avery

His portion o the Proceeds from the Fence,

It weren't enough to buy him Bread!

Jennings: And when Avery confronted them,

The merchants told him it was either That:

Or they would turn him over to the LAW.

Ireland: And so, when he finally died, he weren't

“Worth as much as would Buy him a Coffin!”

Bellamy: And Avery said, that proved Them to be...

All the Pirates: “As good Pyrates at Land as he was at Sea!”

King: The Pyrates were Honester.

Bellamy: (defensive) Henry Avery, and his men,

Were the Only Honest Men!

All the Pirates: Aye! Ar! The honestest. In the whole story! In any story. Henry Avery!

Bellamy: Not the merchants, the kings, the banks, no one else!
No man could remain Honest while he Served
A sickening, self-Serving System!...

All the Pirates: Hear hear! Our adversary. 'Tis the same now.
'Tis the same damn thing!

Caesar: "It does not matter what colour your skin,
But they Will make a Slave out of You.
In Our Company, you have a Choice:
Be a Slave. Or be a Pirate."

Jennings: Or:
Take a Letter of Marque. Be Privateers.
We all know the Work is the same.

Bellamy: Damn ye!

Jennings: Make piracy a patriotic act.
Lord Archibald Hamilton is Ready
To accept you all into his Service.
Let's get this settled without more ado.
We are Wasting time, and time is Money.

Williams: Before we take Letters of Marque, let's be clear:
Lord Hamilton, he Is just like a pirate.
...Or he Would be if he Weren' such a Coward!
He'll Take a Share Away from Every Man;
A cut of everything We'll Work to get!
He'll maintain his right to do this under Threats!
Of Jail! He won't care if We Live or Die.
He'll only care: If we're Alive, we TITHE!
He'll Take and Take under the name of Law!

Bellamy: (nods) He's like what Prince John was to Nottingham.
(to King) He's Everything We Stand Against, Boy King.

King: (bravely scoffs) If he's a thief and Pretends he is not?
He is no better than a Sneaking Puppy!

All the Pirates: Smart lad! Handsomely said, lad. 'he's no better
than a Sneaking Puppy!' Where's my slippers, Archy...
Naughty, naughty, Lord Archy...

Jennings: (generally outraged)
You're not fit to lick Lord Archibald's black boots!

All the Pirates: How dare ye, sir? Don't talk back to Cap'n Jennings! I warn ye! He Is like Prince John...Hehar hehar hehar hehar! (something smashes)

Teach: (o'er the din) Let us collect our thoughts and information!
Let us call a formal Pirate Congress
Into session. And then, let us Vote,
Formal-like, as if we was on a ship,
Deciding of a Matter of Moment
Such as concerns All of our Lives, and Deaths.
For of a Certain, this concerns us All—
What to do with this alleged 'Act of Grace.'
(seeing how things stand.)

Let not Divided Pirates Counterfeit...
With the Genuine Articles of our Code;
The gold standard we live by, as 'twere.
The First Article in the Pirate Code states:
Nothing makes one man worth more than another.
And when it says Nothing, Nothing it means:
He ain't worth More coz he Agrees with you;
He ain't worth Less for parting with yer views.
And a captain's view ain't worth more than his crew's—
So let No Man here lead a 'party' Vote.
'Vote Flying Gang,' 'Vote English Loyalist.'
(glancing at Jennings and Hornigold.)

For sech parties must DICTATE and DIVIDE;
And want the best for them and theirs; not All.
S'why there be no parties in the Code!
Such parties be the Thing that We Oppose!
(beat.)

Now. When all's said and done, ar job here's to Find
Ar United Answer, back to the king's Mind.
Is that not so?

All the Pirates: Aye, ar. Safer. Whither way, t'would be safer.
(spits.)

Teach: Maybe, United Answer We Shall Have!
To join With the English, or Against 'em.
So let each man here Vote his Own CONSCIENCE,
And we shall Know how United We Are...

All those in Favor of Formal Council?
All the Pirates: Aye!



ACT II
OR "TEACH ME REVENGE" THE PIRATE CONGRESS

Teach: Then let's get down to business! But first, a drink!

All the Pirates: AYE! Ar.

Anne: (to Bonny) Buy me a drink, sailor?

Bonny: Ah, of course! Ah.

I got money. Loads! ...Just none about me.

Rackham: (to Anne) Pardon Moy, Madam Moozle. Allow me.

Bonny: (to Rackham) You ain't go no money neither, motley.

(Rackham brushes Bonny aside,
grabs Dunks and puts a knife to his throat.)

Rackham: Gimme a bottle of yer best Chableau.

Teach: Unhand that man.

Anne: (to Bonny) What do they call ye, sailor?

Bonny: Ah?

Rackham: (to Teach) I'm just buyin the lady here a drink.

Teach: Not like that, yer not. (to Dunks) A cup of wine, please.

(Rackham releases Dunks;
Dunks quickly pours Teach the wine.)

Teach: (cont.) Merci. I am Paying you for this cup.

(Teach hands Dunks a generous amount of money.)

Dunks: Much obliged to you, I'm sure!

Teach: Not so fast.

I am Taking that bottle.

Dunks: Of course, sir.

Teach: To be clear, I will Not be paying you

For the rest of this excellent bottle.

Dunks: Of course not, sir. Perish the thought.

Teach: (to Rackham) You see?

Same result. Much pleasanter. Your Chableau.

(hands Rackham the bottle who turns to where Anne was.

Anne and Bonny have gone to a more secluded spot to whisper.)

Jennings: (to Teach) You call yourself a Pirate?

Teach: Aye, I do.

(low, to Dunks) And drinks are on the house.

Dunks: (to all) Drinks are on the house!

All the Pirates: Ho-ho! Yo-ho-ho! Nelson's curse! That's more like it!

Teach: Now, men! It will be Important to know
What Led to the Proclamation for the
Suppression of Pirates—

Bonny: (to Anne) The what?

Anne: (to Bonny) Speak up!

Bonny: Procla-wot? Never heard of it!
(some laughs.)

Vane: (to Bonny) What d'ye mean? Why th'English ship's here.

Burgess: (to Bonny) What we woz Talking bout.

Bonny: Never heard of it.

Jennings and Hornigold: The Act of Grace.

Bonny: Oh, that?

Jennings: Idiot.

(Jennings takes Bonny's place by Anne.)

Rackham: Wait wait wait wait wait.

The 'Proclamation' IS the 'Act of Grace'?

All the Pirates: Aye. Blimey. Chowderheads. Eejits. As thick as
2 short planks...

Rackham: Well, I never heard that before!

Bonny: Nor I!

Rackham: Never heard the word 'suppression' neither.

Teach: What are you called?

Rackham: Jack Rackham!

Bonny: James Bonny!

Bellamy: Well, I've never heard of either of You!

Hornigold: Stow it, Sam.

Mary: Suppression: noun. To suppress,
Stifle, silence, throttle, to Forcibly
Put an End to, to stop, prevent, Control,
Eliminate, inhibit, cut out, Kill.

Rackham: A Proclamation to KILL the Pirates?
That's the Act of Grace? That's wot I've been For?
There's naught Graceful about Killing Pirates!
(hear hear!)

Teach: (taking a folded copy from his pocket)
Have ye not seen this before?

Rackham: Seen it? Sure.

I cain't read it. I heard what it said, tho.

Bonny: (brags to Mary) I can read, but I ain't had the time to.

Teach: (to Hornigold) As Governor, call us into Session.

Hornigold: Gentlemen. We have not kept regular times.

Nor met before as this full pirate host.

But many's the council we've each sat upon,

Here in this very tavern, in the defense,

And preservation, of our mutual

Best Interests. And here we finds arselves,

All met, in this here time, what shall decide,

The Fate of Pirates, an' this, ar Republic!...

I calls the First United Congress of

All The Nassau Pirates into Session.

(Hornigold fires a gun into the air.

he holds the gun casually in hand for the remainder.)

Hornigold: (cont.) First order of business. I nominates

Ed Teach as Magistrate. Impartial judge

Of Votes and matters needin' Discernment.

All those in favor?

All the Pirates: Aye.

Hornigold: All those opposed?

(silence.)

Hornigold: Motion passes. Mr. Teach, you have the floor.

Teach: Thankee. Time to bring forth our Intelligence;

Meanin' news an' the few good idears we have!

(he har!)

Let's begin with the crux of the matter.

The Proclamation, read for the record:

(reads) The London Gazette. September 15,

Published by Authority. It says here:

Complaint has been made to His Majesty,

By great Numbers of Merchants, Masters of Ships,

Governors of His Majesty's Islands,

And Owners of English Plantations, that

The Pirates are grown so numerous, that

They infest from the Seas near Jamaica,

To even the Shores of America. And,

Unless some Effective Means be used, Now,
The whole Trade from Great Britain to those Parts
Is in Imminent Danger of bein' Lost!

All the Pirates: He har, got 'em edgy, have we...

Teach: (reads) His Majesty, in the first place, upon
Mature Deliberation in Council,

Has been graciously pleased to Order a Force
Of a dozen warships to be employed
For suppressing the said Piracies;

Vane: He 'graciously orders a dozen warships!'
'Garcon!'...

Ireland: ... 'a skosh more warring for me, please!'
(har har!)

Teach: (reads) Those at Jamaica, Barbadoes, and the
Leeward Islands are to Join this English Force,
Upon occasion, to annoy the Pirates—

Vane: 'Annoy!'

Ireland: 'Upon occasion!'

Vane: 'Annoy' us!

Teach: (reads) —And those at New-England, Virginia, and
New-York, are to do the like.

Vane: 'Annoy' us!

Jennings: Pipe down and listen up, it's important.
A mighty force has grown against us here.

Teach: (reads) All Pirates volunteering to Surrender,
Shall be Forgiven, though they be in Jail.
(beat.)

All Pirates neglecting or refusing
To Surrender themselves up to Justice,
Must be discovered and seized, or Caused to
Be discovered and seized, so as they may
Be brought to Justice, convicted, and hanged.
(some pirates cross themselves, others drink,
Rackham is entering agonies.)

Teach: (reads) Any Person, or Persons, so making
Such Discovery, or Seizure, or causing
Or procuring, such Discovery,
Or Seizure, to be made—

Rackham: Stop! I begs yez!

‘Tis worse’n whips, the way they knot them Words!....

Teach: That’s exactly why it’s written this way!

Bellamy: He speaks True. This is one of their Weapons!

La Buse: Build your Selves like Flying Fortresses.

Make the Great Hull of Your Ship ten feet thick!

Teach: (reads) —Any such person shall have as a REWARD

For every such Capture or Seizure, viz.:

For any Captain of any Pirate Ship,

The Sum of... One hundred Pounds.

All the Pirates: Never! Some would hunt us fer less. I might hunt us fer less. Lot o money... Christ.

Teach: (reads) For all Pirate Lieutenants and Masters,

And all Boatswains, Gunners, and Carpenters,

The Sum of... Forty Pounds;

For every Inferior Officer

The Sum of... Thirty Pounds;

And for every Private Man... Twenty Pounds.

All the Pirates: A price on each our heads. Every neck. To a man. A bounty on me...

Teach: (reads) And if any Person, or Persons,

Belonging to, and Being Part of the CREW

Of any such Pirate ship or vessel,

Shall, as a Reward for the Same, receive

For every Pirate Captain the Sum of...

Two Hundred Pounds.

(the pirates sit forward much distract, performing superstitions,
eyeing each other, murmuring.)

Teach: (reads) Which said Sums the Lord Treasurer,

Or the Commissioners of our Treasury

For the Time being, are hereby required

And directed to pay, etcetera...

Given at our Court at Hampton-Court,

Fifth Day September, 1717,

In the Fourth Year of our Reign. God save the King.

(spits. spits. Teach folds and pockets the paper again.)

Burgess: They pay Double if we turn on our Own!

Hornigold: I did not know that.

Jennings: Nor did I.

Burgess: 'Tis smart.

All the Pirates: Aye. Ar. Using us to fight their fight fer 'em. Rary. Lot o money.

Rackham: Do yoo mean to tells me, they're Comin' Here?

Williams: Have ye not been listening?

Rackham: I listened!

La Buse: Listen to me then, strange calico man!
All the World wants this place! France, England, Spain!
They've all been here before. They'll all be here
Again! This is the most strategic Port
For Trade between one Enslaved Continent
And another!

Rackham: Well! I were gwan stay here
After I tooks the pardonne, but now!
I won't! Not if YER here!

La Buse: No one can stay!
None of us can stay here as a Pirate!
Not if we Let them come! Do Not Let a
Prince come among you!

Bonny: A Prince is coming?

All the Pirates: A prince! Machiavelli. Idiot. The prince.

Teach: Woodes Rogers is coming! Listen! Listen!
(to Artist) Give me the Woodes Rogers collection.
(Artist doesn't.)

Teach: (cont.) Please.

Artist: I do this under protest!

Teach: Understood.
(Teach takes a stack of sketches from Artist and begins to hang them on the walls using knives and devices about his Person.)

Hornigold: Who is that man, there?

Teach: He, is an Artist!
They had him working as Cartographer
On a ship we 'detained' some time ago.

All the Pirates: He har. The sketches be quite good. Detained...

Teach: I'd never seen such Work as his, his Art
Was being wasted. I saved him.

Artist: You what.

You kidnapped me.

Teach: They could never appreciate your work—

No one in Commerce can Appreciate

The real value of your work and you—

Not like I do. There's money now. Thank you.

Artist: If you Appreciate me, you scoundrel,

You will release me, this very minute!

Teach: I will do no such thing. Where would you go.

You're on an island.

Artist:

I'll go to that man,

To the Vincent Pearse man. And his fire ship.

Teach: Ha. You think that man will protect you. Help you.

I tell you, Artist, that man cares for No Man.

He, is out for himSelf.

La Buse:

So are we all!

Teach: Is that right?

All the Pirates: (murmur restlessly) Aye. Ar. No. Nay.

(Teach has finished mounting his papers with knives, etc..

he now draws his sword and points with it to the image of

Woodes Rogers.)

Teach: (cont.) Woodes Rogers is coming. This be the man.

He does not seem to be out for himself.

He cares about You. All of you. In fact,

Ye could say this man is fanatical

For pirates and all things piratical;

For he is a merchant in the Slave Trade. And,

For sech a business as trading slaves be,

We pirates is most problematical!

They Know they can't keep men slaves when We've come.

Is not that right?

Caesar: Why would we stay?

Bellamy:

Indeed!

Williams: We welcome them aboard for Equal Share!

Teach: Aye. Now, Rogers has been t' Madagascar;

Our Dear Auld Retirement Community;

An' the Pirates There, Struck him as "lonely;"

As men who were Desperate to come Home, to

The Comforting embrace of King and Country.

All the Pirates: (pirates murmur) Oi doubt that. Mayhaps. Laughable. I gets lonely sometimes.

Teach: E'en so. Woodes, assumin' that most Pyrats Were like to his own Privateering crews, He reasoned, they might 'upon Occasion,' Do something rash, like disobey orders, Or attempt to Seize the Ship— but most Pirates, Providing they repent their evil ways, Should come in line with him, if offered Pardon...

(Teach pats his pocket where the Proclamation is.)

And if any Refused to come easy, well, These Men 'e could Punish Harshly, to set A Good Example for the rest of 'em. And in this way, Woodes Rogers here believes: A Pirate Republic can be changed, by he, Into a law-abiding: Colony.

(Hornigold spits.)

Jennings: He sounds straightforward: the carrot and stick.

Anne: He's a master who cares for the masses?

Mary: An idealist, and a hypocrite!

Anne: A man like that will never get much done.

Teach: Aye, that's what I first thought meself. ...But hear How It Is He Came To Madagascar:

It was briefly a place o port for him...

On a simple little expedition...

To Take The Famed Manilla Galleons!

All the Pirates: Can't be done! He's a Fool, an all who follow 'im! 'Tis Impossible! Never!

Teach: (cont.) Built to be Impregnable, we all know!

Floating Fortresses of 2000 Tons,

Bearing Hundreds of men and Heavy canon.

Each canon ball they shoot, 24 pounds.

An' our 5 pound canon balls wouldn't leave

A Dent in a Galleon's Hardwood Hull!

Sure, only a Fool would try it— and did;

The trip was to be Funded by a fool

Called Dampier, who had tried this once before,

And who had Failed Miserably— Not

In combat with the Galleons— But
Who sank his own ship by not cleaning it!
(laughter.)

Teach: (cont.) And thus, Marooned more than 200 Men!
(horror.)

Teach: (cont.) Woodes Rogers did not know any of this
When he took the position of Captain.

And full of Hope he was when they set sail.

...And Then... they Found a Spanish Galleon!

One of the mighty Treasure ships they sought!

Rogers engaged it in combat, royal;

And he took a musket shot in the cheek;

And it Shattered his jaw up here; and his teeth,

Splattered out onto the deck; and the Shot,

Stuck up 'ere; But— They Took the Galleon!!

All the Pirates: (impressed murmurs) Shiver me timbers. Never
heard the like. God's eyebrows!

Teach: (cont.) Rogers learned from the Treasure ship's Captain
Of Other Galleons that could be taken.

So naturally, he tried his luck agin...

(all the pirates hang upon the tale.)

Teach: (cont.) ...In tryn' to take the Second Galleon...

Cannon Blasted through Rogers's left foot;

His heel Bone sticking out; half his ankle

Missn'. Said one of the other commanders,

"We might as well have fought a Castle of

50 guns as that Ship." Rogers had Failed.

All the Pirates: (murmurs) Got greedy. We may've done the
same. Serve 'im right.

Teach: (cont.) He couldn'a talk, or walk, as he prepared

His fleet for the long trip home. But then...

The Crew didn't Trust Rogers to Lead them.

They weren' about to Let themSelves be Led

Through that kind of Foolishness agin, no!

King: The crew should've Impeaced 'im!

Teach: They did so!

But then he used his power as captain...

To try and Stop his own Impeachment!

All the Pirates: Shame! Shame. Bad form. Toss ‘im overboard.

Teach: It made him Enemies among his crew, who,
Spite his interference, elected someone new.

A castaway of Dampier’s, it was!

A man lost on the first trip, found agin.

All the Pirates: I’ll be. What’r the odds. They ought write a story
bout that. Aye. Call it Castaway.

Teach: The trip home took 22 long months.

And in that time, all Rogers’ enemies

Accused him of “insidious designs”—

Of theivin and tradin East Indian Goods—

An allegation that would beat him home...

When they at last dropped anchor in the Thames,

The East India Company’s Agents

Were waitin’ for him. And they ‘Insisted’

Rogers had Cheated their Monopoly!

And they Seized most of his Share Of Treasure took!

So his face, and his fortune, were wasted!

And his wife, Mrs. Woodes, was Greatly Displeased

With All this— and with him Most of all.

Woodes Rogers was made Much the worsor or worst...

Most men would Stop There. Fair?

All the Pirates: Aye, ar. More’n fair.

Teach: Not Woodes Rogers! He’d had an Idea!

(points to sketch of Dr. Hans Sloane with his sword.)

Rogers sent Dr. Hans Sloane a letter—

See, Woodes Rogers, and people like him,

Think the doctor here is an Important man.

For he has the pulse of the English court—

Literally, doctor to the king now,

He kept Queen Anne alive jest long enough

To pull off the ‘king’s’ Hanoverian Coup—

Anne: “Ovarian.”

Teach: ...Anne, d’ye have something t’share with us all?

Anne: Why yes, Teach, I do have something to share.

Burgess: Apart from the scabs an the botch an the pus!

Yer a Whore! She’s a Whore!

Anne: And you, are a

Fork-tongued, knock-kneed, lily-livered, limp-dicked,
Scurvy, stinkin, spineless, squelchin scoundrel;
With or without your pants on!

Rackham: She would Know!

Teach: Anne, ye swear worse'n any sailor I've knowned.

Jennings: She has a spectacular mouth. And legs.

Teach: Aye, and she can read, too. Educated
She was, as a rich miss on plantations.

Anne: (about Mary, generally)

She can read too; she was raised as a boy.

Teach: Anne, d'ye have something relating to
The matter at hand to share with us now?

Anne: Oh? Hm. I've forgotten it now.

Teach: Shall I continue?

Anne: Please do.

Bonny: If Anne says to!

Teach: (continues, pointing) Woodes Rogers, alongside these
So called 'men' of Perceived Importance...

Formed a company with a damned long name:

"The co-partners for carrying on a trade

And settling the" hardly matters what;

Their Objective was to Take— Any Land.

Rackham: (guffaws) Co-partners for 'carrying on.'

(to La Buse) I listened.

Teach: (pointing) Richard Steele, Irish writer and Journalist,
Quite recently Knighted.

Anne: (to Mary) Ooh. 'Sir Steele.'

Teach: (glances grinning, continues, pointing)

Joseph Addison, serving as the Crown's

Secretary of State for the Southern

Department... which includes the Bahamas.

(pointing) The Society for the Promotin' of

Christian Knowledge: a cash for Christ company,

Famous for its prolific production

Of Christian Pamphlets, books, and fliers...

Woodes hopes to use those to Reform some Pirates.

All the Pirates: (skeptical laughter) Good luck. Daft prat. Why's
Christ need cash for?

Teach: (cont.) These men, representing private interests,
In science, the press, politics, and the church
Came together in this... Scheme, is what it is...
These men Schemed to Take a land! Any land.
Per'aps a Pirate Stronghold somewhere,
Hundreds of leagues from the jurisdiction
Of the East India Trading Company?...
And per'aps then their grateful king would Give them
Prominent roles in the new Government!;
Which would Need to be established, First Thing;
And, big percentages on Trade, which could
Be safely and 'freely' done AFTER they'd
SUPPRESSED THE PIRATES there— successfully.

Burgess: An' they would call us a 'rogue's gallery.'

(grim laughs and agreement.

Turnley sneaks in unnoticed, plain clothes, low hat.)

Teach: But which Pirate Stronghold Should they Suppress?
Well. London's Top Diplomats were "alarmed"
By reports of Pirates in the Bahamas.

(pointing now to a map.)

Turnley: That's us I warrant ye.

Teach: That is US! Aye.

The loudest of those reports came from
Dear Archy, Governor Of Jamaica;
He insists that we are quote "Crippling trade,"
Meaning his own men's acts of Piracy...
And Alexander Spotswood, Governor
Of Virginia, who quote "fears for his safety."

(the thought of Spotswood arrests Teach for a moment.)

Fear, we all know, presents Opportunities;
Rogers leapt at his chance to Exploit them.
Leveraging the fear of these 'important' men
Woodes and his 'important' associates,
Got a Hundred more 'important' folks round here,
To sign a petition for His Coming;
And they sent the petition to the king.
5 months ago 'twas, they got their answer.
The king named Woodes Rogers as Governor,

And as Garrison, of the Bahamas;
To rule in the Britain's name, this port, so pretty,
We calls it Nassau, Providence. Heaven.

BUT...

The king added, he'd Pay Rogers NOTHIN'
To hold the position; Rogers, who had
Already Spent what was left of His monies;
His last 3000 pounds; into forming
(points at them all) This unholy association;
Rogers agreed to Govern here for FREE!

Burgess: (outraged) That's Unpiratical!!

All the Pirates: Aye, ar! Lunacy, is what it is! What's the catch?
He's a Fool! (murmurs, murmurs.)

Teach: Unpaid, save fer Promises o plenty—
A familiar arrangement to us all—
Woodes began his Preparations to come Here.

And on January 6 of this year,
King George issued his Formal Commission;
(referencing his journal) I quote: "Whereas by reason of the great
Neglect of the Proprietor of the
Bahama Islands—

Hornigold: Tom Walker, he means.

Teach: Aye, he! "By his neglect, the said islands are
Exposed to the dangers of pirates, and
Of being Lost from our Crown of Great Britain.

We, by these presents do constitute and
Appoint you, Woodes Rogers, to be Our
Captain General and Governor in Chief."
Woodes Rogers Is Coming. This be the man!
He is sailing Here— as we Speak! Thank you!

(Teach bows with a flourish of his sword.

the pirates applaud. 'he has the most excellent information!'
'excellent!')

Teach sits and has a drink of rum.)

Jennings: There. You see? They went to all that trouble...
We should take Mercy on Them when they come.
Let us Join Them! What d'ye say?

All the Pirates: (mixed reactions) Join them? Never! Why not?
Aye...

Williams: I say, those men don't have a patch on Us;
Most of 'em sound like they've got bilge for brains!

All the Pirates: (mixed reactions) T' put it mild. Then how come
they's so important? Idiots.

La Buse: Regardless of what we may feel about
Woodes Rogers, personally, or his men,
He represents, to Us, the English Crown.
And this is Vital to consider for
Not England's Crown, nor All the Crowns combined,
Are Worth a single Piece of Your Peace.

Bonny: What the devil is he on about now?

La Buse: Regarde: how many here fought in the War?
(all the pirates raise their hands.)

La Buse: (cont.) How many of you know what it was called?
(a few hands fall.)

La Buse: (cont.) (calls on King)
What was it called.

King: The Spanish War!

La Buse: That's wrong.

Mary: The War of the Spanish Succession.

La Buse: Right.

How many here, know what the War... was For?
(only Bellamy, Ireland, Vane, Caesar & Mary have hands raised.
La Buse is dumbfounded.)

Teach: Caesar, would you? As La Buse said, this is
Vital information for our Decision;
(to all) For if we ain't Pirates, we'll serve a King;
And their Empire, not this Republic.

Caesar: It would be my Pleasure. (to Artist) Give me the kings.
(Artist doesn't.)

Caesar: (cont.) Give me the king collection, Please.
(Artist does.)

Artist: I do this in Protest.

Caesar: Duly noted.
(Caesar stabs portraits to the wall, as he names them,
beginning with Charles.)

Caesar: (cont.) The former King of Spain: Charles the Second.
Not only sick in body; sick in head...

He wallowed in his own Filth like a pig—

He shot guns in his castle, at cats—

He dug his ancestors out of the ground—

He ordered his Courtiers to rob graves—

To gaze at the corpses in his Throne Room.

Spanish priests, many times, Exorcised him.

But king Charles remained a grotesque child-man

For his reign of more than Twenty Years...

Praise to The Gods, this man was Impotent.

When he died, on the Turn of the Century,

The Spanish Hapsburg line died with him. Then,

Most of the Western Hemisphere's Crowned Heads

Vied for Spain's Control. Including the French King

(stabs up Louis XIV.)

Louis the Fourteenth—

La Buse: (about the sketch) He was handsomer.

The Sun King. I took my commission from him.

Jennings: You took your commission from the Sun King?

I find that hard to believe.

Burgess: As do Oi.

Williams: La Buse was an Aristocrat before.

And an architect.

Caesar: Shall I continue?—

Rackham: (getting close to La Buse)

How could an Aristo get a patch eye?

La Buse: I'll show you.

(La Buse has a knife on Rackham.)

Caesar: Kill, or let me continue.

(La Buse hides his knife.)

Caesar: (cont.) This, of course, is the king of France now.

(stabs up Louis XV; it is a child of eight.)

King:

What?

Caesar: Louis [XIV] vied to control the Spanish throne.

And so did England's Queen Anne. (stabs up Anne.)

All the Pirates: Bless Queen Anne, bless her.

(Caesar stabs up George.)

Caesar: And now king George the First covets the same.
George, a German man who does not speak English;
Who does not live in England, nor Like England;
But long as he is not Catholic, like Anne;
That seems to be enough for England's Court.

Ireland: Many English kings haven't liked England!
That's simply unacceptable to me!

Bonny: I heard o'that! The Anne's Catholic thing.
Why is that?

Rackham: Yezz, why is that?

Caesar: The Catholic 'thing'
May be because the Pope gave the Western
Hemisphere to Spain as a Gift from God.
With no idea how vast the lands were;
Nor that Spain could Not Possibly 'keep' them.
It may also be because, the Catholic Church
Competes in the War to Rule the World.
This is no Secret. Witness, the Crusades. And,
The Pope, like these kings, hoped to get Spain's Throne,
After Charles the Second, at last, died.

Teach: This is why England fears a Catholic ruler.
They fear to be Collected by the Pope.

Caesar: Spain eventu'ly 'partnered' with France, and
England, for some reason, fought them All.
That's the War of the Spanish Succession!
(respectful applause.)

Williams: Only— if I may contribute?— England
Destroyed the biggest French and Spanish ships
Only a year or so into the War!
Happened to catch 'em All in a fjord!
So they stopped Fighting military battles,
And they started Stealing Treasure ships instead;
Each king was making riches in the West,
Spain silver, France fur, and England— slaves.
Despite the war, great wealth sailed to the East...
So All these kings 'enlisted' privateers
To Piratize their enemies at Sea.
They 'hired' every sea man they could find!

And we did well for them; a great success!

But when the war was done, they Fired us All!

Bellamy: Aye! We'd known naught but sailing and fighting,

So that's what we do still! They Made Us Pirates,

Those people there, because it suited them!

And now that they're well-prepared enough to

Make a move on reTaking These Islands

In the Interest of Their Commerce and Trade

(Not Ours), it suits them well enough to put

A Bounty on the heads of every

And each one of us! We, who fought and bled

For Them in the War! We, who they forsook!

We, who Woodes Rogers thinks are 'lonely!?'

Just in need of our Homes back in England!?

So THIS is the question now: where is Home?

Is it England? Or is it in Providence?

Here in Nassau, The Pirate Republic!!

All the Pirates: (immediately unruly) England! Nassau!

Freedom! Death! I'll never join with them! We cannot win!

We'll surely die!

Teach: Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote!

All the Pirates: (chant) Vote! Vote! Vote! Vote!

Teach: (over the din) Now whatever we do, we must Remember

To Abide by the Majority Rule!

The Majority Rule of The Pirate Code

States: 'Every man has a Vote in Affairs

Of Moment; for the Good of All: Together!'

If Majority says to Surrender, or Fight,

We Must do so Together! For it will

Be in Vain to fight part-ways, not all-ways;

They will Never take us, if we all stand

Together. But they will Surely take us,

If there be Any here among us,

Who Decide to turn on their own...

Hornigold: Ed is right.

Royal Navy gunners be too well trained.

Able to shoot their cannons twice our speed.

A well-timed broadside, and they could cut down

A hundred of us in a second.

It Will be in Vain to be Fighting Them.

Jennings: Aye. And it will be Useless to attempt

To Persuade any English Officers

To join with us, once they are Among us...

Taking the air in the streets of Nassau.

Ireland: Ye speak as if you were welcoming them?

Jennings: Not at all. I don't intend to Stay Here.

Bellamy: Damn yer eyes!

All the Pirates: Sneaking puppy! He's right, we must leave!

Surrender! Fight! Death to the King!

Teach: Now let us vote! Pirates! By show of hands!

Artist: I get a vote too!

Hornigold: Yer not a Pirate!

This don't concern you!

Artist: I beg to Differ!

La Buse: Of course, the Artist wants the Pirates to

Surrender so he can go home. Damned fool.

Artist: Is not what I say worth something to you?

No politicians court the Artist's vote,

But Matters of Moment, of life and limb,

Bloody well Matter this Moment to me!

Vane: Ye don't Do anything, do ye, Artist?

Ye don't run a ship, ye don't get a Vote.

Artist: Damn it man, what would you do without Art?

I'll tell you what you'd do— you'd lose your Mind.

(to all) Where would you be without your songs, music,

On your long trips at sea— where would you be?

Who would you be without your long sea stories?

The telling of them, and the hearing of them?

I'll tell you who you'd be: you'd be Insane!

Are these sketches not, right now, helping you?

Are they not helping YOU to form YOUR OWN views?

Is all this to be taken for granted?

(huge and filled pause.)

Or is Art in your Life, Worth something to you?

(all the pirates throw money at him, some of them deeply moved.

Vane perhaps throws the coins violently at him.)

Vane: I move that the Artist gets a Vote!

Ireland: I second that!

Bellamy: Third!

All the Pirates: We's open-minded! Here all men get equal say!
Egalitarian wez is. We cares fer the peoples! Pirates fer peoples!

Mary: We get a vote too!

(the pirates quieten, bein mystified and perturbed by this.)

Mary: (cont.) Without Men's say-so, this is Our Power:

'I Like this. I Don't like that.' And it don't
Mean Nothing!... What a Heartless thing to do
To withhold your say-so and stop our mouths...
T'is a Microcosm of Oppression

As it is around the World, for all Time!
For You, as Men from Across the Nations,
To tell yourselves You Care for The People
To tell yourselves All Men have Equal Say
And then tell Me, 'No, You don't get a Vote.'
And why? Only for because: you say-so?
That's, the whim of a king! A Suppressor.
You Must Let Us Vote too, If Yer Pirates!

All the Pirates: (shocked murmurs, grim agreement) I hate t' say
she's right. She's a he, I think?

Anne: And why murmur ye?...

What has Mary said that ye don't understand?...

All the Pirates: "Microcosm?" "Oppression." "Suppressor!"

Anne: (cont.) Why should not Women get the Vote, too? Why?

Because John has a Thing that is long,
And Mary, a thing That is hairy?
You men who circumnavigate the World
Must better map the World of Women.

According to this book, the clitoris

Was Discovered in 1559!

Because, while it has been winking at Men
For All Time, they were Looking... for an
Inside-out penis!

King: What's a clitoris?

Anne: My point is, while women are different,
We are not just an inside-out penis.

I, have a Mind, like you, that dislikes in
The Extreme being Dictated to.

I, have a Life, like you, which I want to
Improve and Protect! I'm a Woman, and
I can Make Life where you can only End it!
I can do Anything for I Am Woman;

This Concerns Me Every Bit As Much As You;
I Get a Vote!!

All the Pirates: She's right, hear hear!, a 'clitoris'?...

Dunks: I get a vote too!

All the Pirates: (exasperated laughter) Fer Christ! God Almighty.

Dunks: They'll shut me down soon as they get the chance!

I says to meself, John Dunks, tavern-keep,
Government gets here, administration,
Bureaucracy... They'll make up some license
Or something I'll 'legally' need to have
Just for to run this business, My Business,
And they'll shut me down if'n I don't Pay 'em.
They'll be like the Camorra mafiosos
To a man like me, John Dunks: Government.
I'll be loyal to the Pirates, I will,
As it's to the Pirates alone I owe
Me life me livelihood and me collection
Of cups carved for crownéd kings such as were
Plundered far asea and traded here to me.

(moved by his own words)

Drinks are on the house for all good Pirates here!

All the Pirates: Let's drink to that! Hear hear! Ar! Rary!

La Buse: Shall Boy King Vote?

Bellamy: He's Shares! He has a Say!

All the Pirates: Aye, ar, more'n fair. Youngest Pirate I ever
seen... The Boy King...

Teach: Whatever happens now, Majority Rules.

Be gracious in success. Gracious in loss.

Remember: resolving differences,

It don't mean we all have to Agree.

Resolving differences can also be:

The Art of Agreeing to Disagree.

Be Civil, mates, maintain Civility,
That's what Civilizations do, they 'Civil.'
And, to Remain a Pirate Republic,
We. Must. Civil. Majority Rules!

All the Pirates: Majority Rules.

Teach: All those in favor of Accepting the
King's pardon? Show of hands and call out Aye.

Pro-Pardon Pirates: AYE.

(the Pro-Pardon: Anne, Hornigold, Jennings, Burgess, Bonny,
Mary, Artist, Turnley.)

Teach: That's 8 ayes in favor of the pardon.
All those Opposed to taking the king's pardon?
Show yer hands now, and let yer word be Nay.

Anti-Pardon Pirates: NAY.

(the Anti-Pardon: Bellamy, La Buse, Williams, Ireland, Vane,
Rackham, King, Dunks.)

Teach: That's 8 nays opposed to taking pardon.
A tie!

All the Pirates: (general misrule) A tie?! Tie a noose up! Can't
be! Infuriatin! Fer Christ! No!

Hornigold: Has any among us not cast a Vote?

Rackham: The Teach ain't voted!

Teach: I am Magistrate.
Besides which Neutrality I abstain!

All the Pirates: (disorder) After all that! Nothin accomplished!!
I'll be hornswoggled! Damn!

Caesar: (o'er the din) It was I who did not Vote! I propose:
That if the nays have it, that Hornigold
Be Impeached as Governor of Pirates;
For he would have us Sell Our Souls to Hell;
And make Peace with the minions of Powers.

Vane: I second that.

Ireland: Third!

Caesar: Then I vote Nay. And we shall Not accept
The king's pardon. We are Pirates still, Mates!

(Anne turns to Jennings for comfort. He pushes her to the floor.
anti-Pardon pirates are celebrating.
Turnley slips out.)

Teach: Who shall our new governor be?

Williams: Bellamy!

Teach: All those in favor?

All the Anti-Pardon Pirates: Aye!

Jennings: Of course the motion passes...

Teach: (to Dunks) Drinks.

Dunks: (to all) Drinks!

All the Anti-Pardon Pirates: To Governor Bellamy! Drinks!

Huzzah! To the Robin Hood of the Sea!

Bellamy: (to Hornigold, goodnatured)

Damn my blood, Ben, I am sorry they won't

Let you be the Governor of Pirates now.

I scorn to do a man like you a mischief.

Hornigold: The Hell is it yer sayin' to me, Sam?

I be the Governor here. I made the

Flying Gang. I made All this. It's Mine.

Caesar: (firm, to Teach) He ain't the Pirate Governor, no more.

Teach: (to Caesar)

Leave it, mate. He's had a shock. He'll come round.

Caesar: Like hell he will.

Hornigold: (to Teach) Where's yer Respect fer me?

Where's yer Respect fer England's Pleasant Green?

Bellamy: (to Hornigold, his sympathy fast deserting him)

Damn ye, you Are a sneaking puppy,

And so are All those who will submit

To be governed by laws which the English

Made for their own Security, for the

Cowardly Whelps have not the Courage

Otherwise, to Defend what they get by

Their Knavery!

(his anger mounting with every word.)

Damn Ye altogether! Damn Them as

A pack of crafty Rascals. And you, you

Captains and seamen who serve them

As a parcel of goose-hearted numbskulls!

They Vilify Us, the English do,

When there is Only This Difference between us:

They rob all the poor under cover of their 'laws'...

And we plunder all the rich under cover
Of Our Own Courage!

(Bellamy looks Hornigold over again,
carefully weighing the effect of his next words.)

Would you not better make one of Us,
Then sneak after the asses of those Villains
For Employment?

Hornigold: (stiffly) My Conscience will not allow me to turn
Against me country, and me countrymen.

(Bellamy looks at him with disgust.)

Bellamy: You are a devilish Conscientious rascal.
Damn ye.

...I am a Free Prince, and I have as much
Authority to Make War on the Whole World
As he who has a hundred ships at sea
And an army of 100,000
Men in the field. And this my Conscience tells Me:
...There is no arguing with such sniveling
Puppies who allow 'superiors' to
Kick them about the deck with pleasure,
And who chase after the Pimps of Power,
Who neither practice nor believe nor care
What they tell the chuckle-headed Fools
Who are Damned Fool enough to Follow 'em!
I'll ask only once more: This is the Will
Of the Republic you've 'Made;' will ye not
Respect it, Captain? Join With Us!

(Bellamy thrusts out a hand to shake.

Hornigold coolly aims the gun he has been holding at Bellamy.
Bellamy disarms Hornigold, outraged; decides not to shoot him.)

Bellamy: (to the anti-pardon pirates)

Let him stay here or go if he please.
If he interferes, burn his ship until
The plume of smoke can be seen for miles
And the Fire is quenched by the Sea.

(Bellamy Exeunt.)

King: What is our captain's story. Bellamy.

(Hornigold, tight-lipped, joins Jennings and Burgess at a table,
and drinks.

the more expansive anti-pardon pirates listen.

Anne gathers up Mary and Bonny and takes them to bed.

Artist is quickly dead drunk.)

La Buse: He is the Youngest child, Bellamy.

The Only child who Survived to Inherit

An estate, a small estate, but an estate.

Where, as a boy, he watched the old ways Fall...

And watched them erect Aristocracies.

You don't know what that means but I will tell you.

Severing lowly ties to work, and Trade,

The landed gentry foreclosed Ancient leases;

Telling tenants they could keep their houses,

IF they would Pay to work the land, for the lords;

And IF, for the lords, would be the use and sale;

Of all the land produced— which was once their own;

And which had always been for centuries.

(Vane knocks something over angrily.)

La Buse: (cont.) It's made the lords much richer. Much Richer;

While the tenants can't afford to buy

The eggs Their chickens lay; the fruit on Their trees.

They Starve, amidst a Plenty, they have made.

They stand shorter a Hand than the lords of the land;

And only live for maybe half as long.

Bellamy refused to be such a 'lord'

Who would grow fat by eating other men.

And so did I refuse!

Williams: And I!

Ireland: And I! (Ireland doffs his hat and smiles.)

La Buse: (to King) With tales of Avery in his head,

And a book of Robin Hood in his hand,

Bellamy walked the whole length of England;

As a boy no bigger than you, by himself;

He made his way to Sea to be a Pirate;

To Do what he Dared for his Fellow Man.

And... for the Love of a Girl.

Williams: (to King)

That's all True.

(to the Pro-Pardon table) I agree with you men who say that
We shouldn't be at War with England—
Though its Leaders are all no better
Than Sneaking Puppies— England is also
The Home of heroic outlaws like these:
Avery, Robin Hood, and Bellamy...
It is the System We are at War with,
Not with the People, or Countries, or Kings,
And if we're not at War with the System,
Damn me and damn ye to hell, we Should be!
Since when did 'Commercial Interests'
Extend to selling out a Fellow Man?
Damn me! I cannot in 'Conscience' stand by.
I'll not be one to do nothing but talk.
Here I see Some who Still Pirates Be!
Let us set Sail Now with th' Free Prince of the Sea!
Ireland: Aye! And let us Burn the Fire ship!

(La Buse and Rackham together.)

La Buse: 'Tis an imperative action. Burn the ship!

Rackham: Oy do love t' burn tings! Burn the ship!

Williams: Be damned be the fire ship!

She can do nothing to Us, cannot Win.

Let us take a Slaver and Free the slaves!

Eh...? Let us be of some Use in this World!

La Buse: We must not let that fire ship rest at port.

Caesar: We must not let that fire ship stop our Work.

I say, we hunt for slave ships! Free the slaves!

(Rackham distracts the argument by striking up a song,
perhaps accompanying himself with a squeezebox.)

Rackham: (sings 'The Fireship') So listen all ye pirates now,
Who sail upon the sea,
And all ye jolly cabin boys,
A warning take from me,
I once did Take a Fireship,
Until my Shot was spent,
Until she burnt my money up,
And left me broke and Bent.

(some laugh and join in the chorus.)

CHORUS: She... had... a... dark and roving eye,
And her hair hung down in ring-a-lets.
She wuz a Ni-ce gal, a De-cent gal,
But one of the Rakish kind...

(Williams, La Buse, Rackham, and Caesar are gone,
and King Exeunt.

Teach joins the table with Hornigold, Burgess, and Jennings.

Vane stands apart with Ireland.

Artist is passed out.)

Teach: Never mind about keeping the power.

Not even to do good. Only mind

About Doing the good, and some day,

Th' fickle bastards'll join ye agin!

(all drink, a bit terse, and do not speak of what's just happened.)

Teach: (cont.) (tongue twists) Now.

We best 'Fortify' our Fort for

If it isn't Fortified

Then what else is a good Fort for?

Jennings: Not I. I'm setting sail for Jamaica!

Hornigold: Ah! "The receptacle of vagabonds,

The sanctuary of bankrupts, and

A pot for the purges of our prisons.

As sickly as a hospital,

As dangerous as the plague,

As hot as hell, Jamaica, hot as hell,

And as wicked as the Devil.

The Dunghill of the Universe,

A shameless Pile of Rubbish...

Neglected by God when He First Formed the World

Into its admirable order."

A proper dumping ground, Jamaica is,

Fer English Trash; English Slaves fer plantations.

Teach: By the time I arrived in Jamaica,

There were more African than English slaves there;

Less questions asked about them, I suppose.

But English and African slaves, Together,

Outnumbered all their owners 8 to 1!

All the slaveowners there lived in Terror

That any moment they should be Murdered
By All those Slaves in a Revolt— they’ve Learned from
The Bacon Rebellion, a ways back now,
When the whites and blacks, the women and men,
Came Together ‘n Torched a Town to the Ground...

(Jennings is skeptical.)

Teach: (cont.) T’was in Virginia.— So’s In Jamaicker:
They’re Tryin’ to Divide the whites an’ blacks
To Keep ‘em from Uniting ‘gainst ‘em there.
That’s why the whites are ‘household servants’ now,
In perpetuity, for no Pay nor Rights;
And the blacks are outside in plantations;
And hating All whites fer their relative ‘ease’;
Which made all whites to fear all black’s hatred;
Although all of them’s in the same ship, as ‘twere...
A slaver ship the size of all the land.
Some mean trick, getting folks to hate each other...
This has been Done To ‘Em, this Division!

Vane: Done to us All, and should be Done to Death!
...Here’s to the One Free Land left. Our Land Here.

(they drink, thoughtfully.)

Teach: Captain Jennings, whiles I Respect yer choice
To go and serve That Scotsman in Jamaica,
Just keep in mind that Slavery, Kidnapping...
A Governor is meant to Protect us
From these things. Not be the one to Do ‘em.

(beat.)

Jennings: Do you know Why the black and white slaves came
Together in Virginia? T’was because
They All wanted to drive th’ Indians out.
And it was Their Governor— who Refused.
...If you want to be fair in your critique
Of one people’s mistreatment of another,
You mustn’t limit yourself to the masters:
What of the peoples you say they exploit?
The Indians, for instance: The Mohawk Kings,
With such “absolute Notions of Liberty”
That they allow None to have what they do Not,

And Keep all that they Can by Right of Conquest.
The most fertile lands, the best hunting grounds,
...The monopoly on fur trade with the French.

Burgess: ‘Oo was it broke apart the Huron nation?

‘Oo was it ‘oo turned Force upon the Neutrals?

‘Oo was it ‘oo Destroyed all the Mohicans?

The Wendat, the Wenro, the Erie, Petun,

The Algonquin and the Susquehanook?

‘Twasn’t rich Europeans ‘oo did these things.

But the men and women called Mohawk Kings.

...Small wonder the colonists Wished ‘em gone.

Jennings: As the governors, Wish the same of You.

Hornigold: Jamaica...

Teach: It just goes to show: We Are All Pirates.

Vane: Even the injins.

Teach: [and] Even the guv’nors.

Jennings: Then might as well side on the side of the Law?

Vane: (lashing) No! Never!

Jennings: (baffled) How dare you contradict me.

Teach: I think it’s the Laws what should be Outlawed. Sir.

I think yer laws say ‘Fuck yer Fellow Men.’

And ye follow ‘em, ye say the same.

Vane: Imagine someone Told ye where to live,

And people tried to Kill ye, an’ yer fam’ly,

Fer living there; and they won’t stop trying;

And Your Governor Tells Them: Go Ahead!

Burgess: What have yoo got agint Indians.

Vane: I ain’t got nothing agint Indians!

Ireland: Indians live in India. I’ve seen them!

Burgess: Not all Indians kill Colonists,

And not all blacks hate whites!

Vane: (mock speechifying) But some do, so the Risk is too great!

Let Us Not Intermingle. Make That a Law.

Ireland: Small minded bigoted notion that is.

Don’t be Daft— ‘Side on the side o the law!’

(Jennings is unnerved; he laughs with a charming contempt,
then he produces a small coin.)

Jennings: For you John Dunks, tavern keep.

Dunks:

Thankee sir.

Hornigold: Jamaica...

(Jennings presses the small coin to the table and turns to go.)

Vane: (accosting Jennings)

People of All nations are being repressed

For want of a Republic like we have!—

Jennings: (turning to detach Vane)

For want of a Republic like we HAD.

Vane: —That's made Of the Pirates; For all the Pirates!

WHY do ye toss it overboard so light?

Jennings: (ignores Vane, to Teach)

Your lot may have won the majority,

But it is War between Us now, and,

We are the crueller set, Everyone knows;

Your set, will not even want to fight;

YOUR Governor is not here to Protect you;

He's out Gallivanting and Saving the World,

'Damn me man!' (turns to go) I'm off. Good luck to you.

(turns again) You lot soon shall be hunted by us, and,

By a Navy of us. A Global Fleet.

Teach: Global? Hardly. They can't be everywhere.

If a man must, he shall go Underground

To 'scape the Persecution of UnJust Laws!

Jennings: They don't Need to be Everywhere! They only

Need get within a pistol shot of You!

(scoffs) 'To 'scape the Persecution of UnJust Laws.'

WE have THE LAW of OUR SIDE. WE SHALL WIN.

Ireland: (doffs hat disarmingly, agreeing)

For you have the law of your side, you Shall win!

It's relieved I am, the Law's of yer side.

To be sure, I'd hate see ye be harmed!

But it's Saved you'll be with the Law of yer side.

Sure, and I mean that sincere; I believe:

The Law Will help you.

Jennings: Indeed!

Ireland: ...As much as it's ever helped me! Look out!

(Ireland feints at Jennings who flinches.

Teach and Vane laugh.)

Jennings: (generally outraged)

How DARE you Disrespect me in this manner?!

We shall see what comes of Your Disloyalty.

You've betrayed your king, and you've betrayed Me.

You think that your will can overbear ours?

(to Vane, who has cut deepest)

Mind that you don't get kingly, Charles Vane,

For then you'd have to overthrow yourself,

And stop all those who wish to follow You!

Vane: I am no king. But You are a Traitor!

(Vane fires his gun in the air as a warning.

Ireland seconds his shot.

Artist startles awake and flees outside.

Dunks observes the damage, nonplussed.

Jennings exits with hurried dignity.

Vane and Ireland stalk into a different room.

Hornigold leisurely exits, taking with him a bottle.

Burgess decides to go with Hornigold.)

Burgess: I ain't goin' t' Jamaica.

Hornigold: Jamaica...

Teach: John Dunks, what think You of these Declarations?

Dunks: ...Such things have sometimes led to Revelations.

(Teach hands Dunks a beautiful gold circlet as payment.)

Teach: (smiles) Yer a prince, John Dunks.

Dunks: (shakes his head no, smiles) Perish the thought, Sir.

(Dunks hides the crown about his person.

moved by this honest tavern-keep,

Teach spits in his hand & offers it;

surprised by this show of equality,

Dunks spits in his hand, and they shake;

they mutually draw strength from this moment of solidarity;

and then they part separately.

thunder rumbles.)

FIRST INTERMISSION

Wherein a calm day turns into a storm outside the tavern
and returns to a cloudy dawn.



ACT III
OR "FOR THE FREE PRINCE & THE BOY KING"

(enter Anne, Mary, and Bonny.)

Bonny: There's more fer All when half of us is gone!
I wish them pyrates was gone fer good! I mean,
I never bedded 2 ladies before.

I mean, I bedded More than 2 ladies...

But never 2 ladies at the same time!

Anne: Ye still ain't, James. Yer beddin' a lady...

Mary: And a man.

Bonny: No, I bedded men before,
And neither of you is a man.

Mary: I am.

Anne: She is.

Bonny: You just said "she." "She's" not a "man."

Mary: I'm a man!

Anne: She Prefers to wear men's clothes.

Mary: I Prefer to be Treated like a man.

Bonny: (fairly, to Mary)

Yer entitled to yer Preference, of course.

But I'd Prefer to bed ye as a Lady.

(almost gossipy) I mean, I like bedding men, too. That is,
Bedding men who aren' Too smart. ...Girls are smart.

All girls are smart. But I Still prefer Girls

To Men, who Act like they're smarter than Me.

I don't wanna fight, when I wanna fuck.

Anne: James, ye took the words right out of my mouth!

Bonny: I? Took the words? From Yer sweet mouth?

Can this 'lady' be Believed?...

(he kisses her.)

Best Prize any sea man's Ever taken.

(Hornigold enters.)

Hornigold: Grand news! I have sent word to Port Royal;

To the naval Authorities there;

I asked 'em to send us a MAN O WAR

To Protect us from them as is Pirates.

Some pirates seen coming this way, I hear;
Sam's back I reckon. Can't be too careful.

Anne: I find this news disturbing.

Mary: As do I.

Bonny: And I! How'll they know Who to Protect?

We look like Pirates. Pirates look like Us...

Hornigold: "If ye don't shoot at 'em, ye should be fine."

Mary: Are we really going to Hunt Down Sam?

One day he's our friend, and just like that,

We Hunt him like the Sheriff of Nottingham?

Bonny: I thought we Voted fer a time o Peace!

(Artist enters, hung over.)

Hornigold: A Peace with England means ye Fight the Pirates.

We must Fight all the Pirates in ar midst.

Fightin's what this Peace is all about!

Bonny: That's not what I thought this Peace was about...

Hornigold: Oh fer Chrissakes, man! Use yer head will ye?

Ye Voted for the pardon, didn't ye?

Bonny: Aye, I did. But not to turn 'ginst Pirates.

Hornigold: The whole Point of the pardon is putting

An end to the pirates fer good an' fer England!!

Bonny: But, this here's Still the Pirate Republic.

Hornigold: Aye, 'tis. But that's England there at our front door.

Ye think we's can beat the Navy, son? Come.

(he puts an arm around Bonny.)

(continues low) Smart money would be betting on the king—

It's fer Your sake that I say this to ye now—

Turn agint the pyrates; take the bounties;

Be fergiven of yer crimes; start agin.

Show the king ye'll Help 'im catch the pyrates—

But best to be stealthy. (whispers almost sexually) Be like a Spy.

(Hornigold laughs;

releases Bonny and claps him on the shoulder a few times.)

Anne: I find this disturbing...

Mary: Depressing.

Bonny: Hm.

(silence.)

Hornigold: (frowns generally)

Why did ye Vote for the pardon, then??

Why did ye Vote for it— if Not fer England?

(to Anne) Fresh Soldiers make fer Good Business fer you?

Woz it a Selfish Motive that ye had?

(bitterly) An' here I am, jest tryin to Save me Country.

...I wondered about letting women Vote.

Can't count on 'em to Vote Unselfishly.

Anne: (helplessly) I Just want a better life for mesself.

Or at least a different one. You don't know.

You don't know what My Life has been 'til now...

I Just want vengeance on life for a change.

(shrugging) Just want to stab the world until it stops.

That's why I voted "pro-pardon." It's a start.

Why did You vote for pardon, James Bonny?

Bonny: I didn' want to dance the hempen jig.

Mary: Hanging! A hanging it is no great hardship.

For, were it not for the Threat of hanging,

Every Coward would want to turn Pirate!

(defiant) A Pirate risks his life to take to sea;

And, in being Brave, Earns his Right to be Free.

And here ye say ye fear "the hempen jig!"

Bonny: Are ye calling me yellow-bellied?!

A cowardly fellow for fearing to Hang?!

I call those bold words coming from a man

Who wears a dress not fit to fight in!

Artist: Before being Kidnapped by Blackbeard,

I was Commissioned to Secretly

Reproduce and Translate a Spanish Atlas.

It was to be Presented to King George.

It would have made me Famous 'round the World.

Let the Government come, I say, and soon.

Come claim me and Fame me. Recognize me.

As if anyone here cares a fig.

Anne: You're a Forger?

Mary: A Thief!

Artist: I'm an Artist.

Mary: Exactly!

Anne: Small wonder Ed values you.

Mary: What be yer name? Have we heard of you?

Artist: My name is William Hacke.

Mary: Yer a Hacke?

Artist: I'm an Artist. And I'll thank you for
A bit of privacy, if you don't mind.

Bonny: Is this the Spanish atlas that ye stole?

Artist: It's the buccaneer's atlas now, which may
Never be seen, by any but You lot...

We shall see what we shall see, I suppose.

Mary: Ye Ought to make a copy for the king
Which is False! Say things are, where they are not!

Bonny: Ye Ought to put in some sea monsters;
Say 'there be monsters here.' Draw some beasts.

Anne: Why aren't there any mermaids? What Artist
Draws a map o the sea without mermaids?

Artist: Thank you for these useful observations.
I shall remember them fondly, some day,
As I observe you being Hanged. Critics.

Anne: We're only tryin' to help ye, mate.
Ye aren't Famous; ye must not be Good.
But we can plainly see ye have a Passion.

Artist: Patronize me again. Philistine.

Bonny: No, her name is Anne, mate, and he's Mary.

Artist: ...What?

Hornigold: (to himself)

Children. What matters is Protectin' 'em...

(Teach, Vane, and Ireland enter.

they glance at Hornigold, but do not speak to him;
they have already heard and Overheard.)

Teach: In the interest of Protectin' Providence,
And all the Freedom that it represents,
I'm reminded, of my good auld failsafe plan...
I've always said: in the face of a defeat
Blow them All to smithereens. Them and Us.
For what is free, ain't free fer them to Take.

Vane: I've always said the same almost exack:
That if Two MEN O WAR, attack me, alone,

And the odds of me Victorious are nil,
I'll fight 'em til I cannot fight no more;
And when I'm facing down me own defeat,
The last thing I will do if I am able;
Is Blow up mesself, and All that I see,
And all Together, we shall go to Hell!

Teach: I agree. But Mr. Ireland smiles
I see. He may not view as we two do
The many charms of Mutual Destruction.

Vane: Mr. Ireland is one of those Men
Who has such a Share of Reason,
As should have taught him Better things.
Better'n associatin' with the likes of us.

Ireland: No Association could please me more!

Teach: Well, we're quite pleasing, the two of us, sure!

Vane: But even you can't be best pleased with all.

Teach: Are ye even pleased with... Captain Jennings?

Ireland: Even he! Seems to me, that he gave up...
Well, rather a lot, to be a pirate.

I understand he has two estates— two!
One in Bermuda, and one in

Ireland, Vane, and Teach: Jamaica.

(Hornigold discretely listens.)

Teach: Ts. I don't think that he gave up a thing!

Ireland: No?

Teach: No! He was born to be a Privateer;
And bred on viciousness and vichyssoise.
He sacrifices nothing for his life.

La Buse now, He gave up a Grand Life, he did.
A palace in Calais he had— a palace!
And he'll Never be allowed back after this.

Not even through the servant's entrances.

Vane: I'd say that Paulsgrave gave up the most.
He left behind a family that loves him;

A wife, kids, both his parents... his own shop!
Yes, I'd say Paulsgrave Williams gave up most.

Ireland: At least he had a Choice to be a Pirate.
He met Black Sam, and that was that! God knows why,

But Paulsgrave up and joined the Merry Men.
I was Kidnapped at first, d'you know.

Teach: Were you?

Ireland: Yes. Captain Winter it was, he turned Pirate,
Right as the war ended; and me on his ship.

One moment I'm Navy— at Peace!— and the next?

I was Damned Annoyed, I can tell you.

But I've got a taste for the pirating now;

Except for the murdering men in cold blood.

Vane: I don't mind murdering.

Teach: I rarely do.

Murder that is. 300 ships I've captured,

And I've Never killed a captive.

Vane: Not one??

Teach: Not one.

Ireland: Not even accidental?

Teach: Well that I couldn't swear to. None that I knows.

Vane: My taste for murder came from Captain Jennings.

Saved me, he did, in a terrible storm.

Hurricane in the port of Port Royal.

Teach: Even Jennings can be Noble at times!

Ireland: All pirates are Nobler than the Nobles are.

Vane: Jennings rushed me out from underneath a

Falling mast. An' after that, I'd do fairly

Anything he asked. 'Til he gave me a ship;

Me own ship for to do with as I pleased...

Hornigold set you up something like that,

Didn't he, Teach?

(Hornigold listens closer.)

Teach: ...Something like that.

Ireland: That's rather a cryptic remark, ain't it Ben?

(Hornigold pretends not to be listening.)

Teach: That Storm the autumn of 1712?

Vane: Aye.

Teach: I was in the port, too.

Vane: Were you?

Ireland: And I!

Teach: A storm fit to make ye ferget which way's up.

Ireland: I thought I'd drown with my feet on the ground.

Vane: Felt like the world stopped, and turned wrong way round.

Teach: We made it through that storm though.

Ireland: We did.

Vane: We did.

(to Teach) I didn't know that you was in that storm.

Ireland: It's the ones who talk the most you know the least.

Teach: It's the one's who know the least who talk the most.

Bonny: Christ, y'all are some clever dicks, ain't ye...

Vane: (to Teach) Long as we've been friends and I don't think...

I don't even know what town ye hail from!

Teach: ...I prefer not to tell ya me Story.

Of me less known the better, says I...

But there once was, a handsome cabin boy...

His story I'll tell ye, for His Should be Known:

(Ireland and Vane settle to give full attention;
this may hold a key to Blackbeard.

Artist is unobtrusively sketching Teach; watched by Mary and Anne. Anne is watched by Bonny. Hornigold keeps to himself.)

Teach: (cont.) I'm on a navy ship, a navy sailor,

Rank and file— before I were a Pirate.

We're headin' from Charleston to Bristol.

And the captain, well, he takes a Dislike

To our cabin boy. Who'd done Nothing wrong—

He just took a dislike to this boy. So,

The captain had him Whipped "several times

In a very cruel manner" and made the wounds

Sting by pouring pickle brine on 'em.

Then he Strung the child up to the mast;

For 9 days, with arms and legs outStretched.

After 9 days, he cut the boy down,

And he trod upon the lad's limp body,

And the captain Ordered Us to do the same.

We All Refused to do so. The whole crew.

So he kicked the boy over and over,

And he Stamped upon his chest so hard

The lad Shite himself. He couldn't help it.

And then we watched the captain Scoop that Shite

Into his hands and Shove it down the boy's throat.
He Shoved it down his throat several times.
And Whipped the boy again, and every day
For 18 days, until Just Before Death,
The boy Begged for water. That's all he wanted.
And the captain run oft to his cabin, and,
He came back with a cup of his own piss;
And he gave the boy the piss to drink instead.
With that... the Handsome Cabin Boy Died.
Well, we cleaned him up to bury him at sea;
And in cleaning his body we found,
It was "as many colours as the rainbow."
With "flesh in many places like jelly."

(Teach composes himself)

That cabin boy had done no one a harm.
That captain, he simply Disliked him.
And he weren't reprimanded for his Acts;
Navy captains bein' under War Orders
To mete out "brutal punishments." You Know.
He may have even earned a Commendation...
For showing such a Strength of his Command.
I Believe, I first became a Pirate:

To have Revenge for that poor cabin boy, and,
See Justice Done to all those like that 'captain.'

Vane: Fuck the Royal Navy and Fuck England!

(Vane, Teach and Ireland toast.

Bonny is watching that now, spy-like.

Hornigold is deadpan; but to him this was overt betrayal.)

Dunks: Hst! Hst!

(Burgess enters,

escorting Pearse and Turnley with great Courtesy.)

Burgess: Allow me, yer Honor. Right this way, Sir.

'Igh time, it was, we got ye off yer ship;

Anyone'd think ye woz 'iding from us!

An' all of us jest wantin' for t' meet yez.

Pearse: Blimey! If you asked me 'fore I came here

What it must be like to be entertained

By Pirates, I would have answered quite wrong!

Burgess: Much obliged to ye, Sir, I believe. Aye!
We’z eager t’ show ye the kind o
‘Ospitality we’z capable of;
(he looks meaningfully at Hornigold—
who is warily unsure of his meaning.)

An’ eager t’ Tell ye— wot we’z been Up To!...
Sir, ye Must properly meet this man ‘ere:
Cap’n Benjamin Hornigold, once of
Her Marjesty’s Royal Navy—

Pearse: Queen Anne?
Not King George?

(Hornigold stands quickly, respectfully,
and pulls his hat to his heart.)

Burgess: Not King George, more’s the pity.
For the entire reign of our dear king, Ben ‘ere,
‘E’s been the Governor o Providence.
And a fine job ‘e’s made of it, Oi’d say.

Hornigold: Very kind of ye to say so, Burgess.

Pearse: I say, blimey, are there any pirates
Here who are unCivil?

Hornigold: Well now, yer Honor,
If I may, we are a Civilization;
So here, we do what civilizations do:
We Civil.

Pearse: Yes, I suppose you must do!

Burgess: Course, there’s always 1 or 2 bad apples...
In the barrel o life, as it were, Sir.
But not Ben ‘ere. He’s one o the good ones...

Pearse: Pleased to know you.

Hornigold: ‘Tis my pleasure, Captain.

Burgess: Ben ‘ere’s a Responsible Man. Let me
Refer ‘im to ye in this Capacity:
As the one who’s Responsible for All This.
The Flying Gang, have ye heard of it?

Pearse: Certainly.

Burgess: That were ‘im.

Turnley: (impressed) Were it really?
(Pearse takes a step back.)

Hornigold: Josiah Burgess, thankee, That Will Do...

Burgess: Come, come, Ben. Oi'm just showing Captain Pearse
Around our fair community. An' you,
You Ben, are Crucial to our community.
'A single Point of Failure,' as t'were.

Hornigold: Don't sell yerSelf short.

(to Pearse) He were always here, Josiah Burgess.

Burgess: (laughs hearty; delivers the blow) Ben, I un'erstand,
That This Mornin' ye sent off a Message
To Naval Authorities in Port Royal?

Pearse: ...You what?! Without first consulting with Me?

Hornigold: I were only Protecting us—

Pearse: You fool!

You've Undermined me; gone behind my back!...
Shows I don't have a Strong Commanding Hand!
Shows you slipped by me! Blimey!

Hornigold: (cornered) If I may sir,

I'm sure ye'll Agree, we was vulnerable...

Pirates about, as mad as hornets, Sir...

And all of 'em eyeing Yer ship, the Phoenix,

And thinking, what an attractive target!

Not just in the pillar o flame She'd send up,

But in the Symbolic Victory as well.

A Victory like that could change men's Minds...

(all those present Agree, 'aye, 'tis so',
except Burgess, who scowls.

Pearse takes this in, now disconcerted.

Hornigold's confidence grows.)

Hornigold: (cont.) ...And those men who be pirates Already
Drinking Damnation to All English Powers;
And here You are Sir, in the eye of this Storm;
You, who was so Brave as to come here,
Personally, to tell us of the Pardon...

Pearse: I Was the Only Volunteer.

Hornigold: You were!

You, who came so speedily from Boston.

Pearse: I would have been here Faster if it weren't
For the men; I had to kidnap some drunks

Off the streets and beat them black and blue 'til
They'd do what I say. It's exhausting sometimes!

Hornigold: How dreadful that must have been for you, Sir.
A man of such Dedication, and such Strength,
Must have invited the Pirate Governor
Hissself to a parley— a Brave thing to do—
And You were so smooth and Commanding that
You Convinced the Pirate Governor hisSelf
To act as Yer Messenger; to send word
To the nearest port for Navy support.
Why sir... I congratulate you.

(Burgess is disgusted. Pearse, delighted.)

Pearse: That's just what I must have done, yes!

Hornigold: Indeed!
Yes indeed, yer Honor. At yer Service.

Pearse: Very good! Blimey!

(as Pearse beams at the others,

Burgess and Pearse stare daggers at each other;
when Pearse looks to them again, they both politely smile back.)

Hornigold: (to Pearse) Ye'll want to be seein' if the other
Governors have responded yet. About
The status of our pardon's extension.
For sure I know, like a shepherd his flock,
Ye'll want to see yer peaceful little lambs
Here Safe Home. Speedily.

Pearse: Right you are again!

Hornigold: Mr. Burgess, would you be so kind
As to act as escort for Captain Pearse?
I'll keep an eye on this lot for ye, sir.

Pearse: Providence is the right name for this place.
The Pirates here stand in the hand of God.
Woodes Rogers should have spared himself the trip!...

Burgess: I'll see youse, Benny.

Hornigold: Not if I sees ye first! Hehar, hehar...
(Pearse is exiting with Burgess.

Turnley is hanging back beside Hornigold,
who has impressed him much.

Williams and Rackham are entering, downcast and agitated.)

Rackham: Pardonne moy.

Williams: Do excuse us.

Pearse: So civil!

Vane: Yer back them!

Williams: Aye.

Teach: Where is everyone?

Caesar? La Buse?

Williams: They're here. They'd Prefer

No Intermingling with Pro-Pardoners.

Rackham: I'll Intermingle with 'em. Specially her.
(the pro-pardon pirates shift.)

Ireland: Been near a month since you rebels set sail;

Vane: ...Where be Bellamy, ar gallant Robin Hood?

Teach: ...Paulsgrave? ...Ye hardly look a Merry Man...

Ireland: No look at him. Look at his face. Someone's died.
Fer God's sake, tell us right out, if ye can!

Williams: I can't say how long ago it was now.

A sudden Storm, off the coast of Cape Cod.

And one ship... riding low from wine we'd found...

Rackham: Madeira wine, 'twas. Barrels of it.

Williams: It was Madeira wine, and you would know
You had enough of it.

Rackham: Oi don't think so.

We only took the one keg on our ship.

Williams: And a good thing for us too, wasn't it.

We washed onto a wee island, so neat,

We didn't need to wet our feet

As we stepped ashore, and et sweetmeats,

Waitin for them, once the storm had passed.

The air was gorgeous fresh. We didn't know...

Jest as 'til jest this time You didn't know...

We none of us shall ever be the same.

Every Soul 'pon The Marianne has Perished.

Dunks: The Boy King!

Williams: (nods) And The Free Prince.

Teach: Bellamy!

(Williams wipes an eye angrily.
all are shocked and saddened.)

Rackham finds a bottle.
silence.)

Vane:

GOD DAMN THIS WHOLE CRASHING WORLD TO HELL!

Teach: (takes a singer's stance and sings 'Fiddler's Green')

As I roved by the dockside one evening so rare

To view the still waters and take the salt air

I heard an old fisherman singing this song,

Oh take me away boys me time is not long...

ALL JOIN CHORUS: Dress me up in me oilskins and jumper

No more on the docks I'll be seen

Just tell me old ship mates,

I'm taking a trip mates,

And I'll see you someday in Fiddler's Green.

TEACH VERSE: Now Fiddler's Green is a place I hear tell

Where Pirates all go, if they don't go to Hell.

Where the girls are all pretty, and the beer it is free,

And the skipper's below making Everyone tea, So

ALL JOIN CHORUS: Dress me up...

TEACH VERSE: Now I Don't Want a Harp or a Halo not me.

Just give me a breeze and a good rolling Sea

(he fiddles absently with a gun)

And I'll play me old squeezebox as we sail along

With the wind in the rigging to sing me this song

ALL JOIN CHORUS: Dress me up...

(they end the song almost hymn-like 'gre-ee-ee-een.')

Teach: The Sea is both fierce and gentle,

Just like the Heart of a Pirate.

Like the Heart of Black Sam Bellamy.

Here's to a Merry Life and a Short One!

(all drink.

Hornigold smooths his coat and preens;

about to retake his command, with regrets.)

Teach: (cont.) Whilst youse gents with Our Gov'nor been away

The pro-pardoners here have been at play.

I for one ain't ready to cede the day

To them capitulators to the king. (spits.)

Sam must and Shall not be The Last Great Pirate.

What say you?

(they say nothing.)

God help ye if ye say so when I die.

Or else, behold, The Last Great Pirate... I.

For Sammy Cannot be the last of Us;

This Cannot be The End of Us, it Can't.

(Teach raises his drink again.)

So here's to Damnation for Cowardly

Puppies, to whom I will give No Quarter!

Them who'd Steal the Greatest Treasure there be:

A Pyrate's God-Given Right to be Free!

I am from Hell! Giustizi mosse me! [Justice moved me]

...Abandon Hope, all ye who'd Entreat Me...

(suddenly) Fire in the hole!

(Teach shoots one of his guns at Bonny; it grazes Bonny's cheek.

Teach arms himself with a larger gun.)

Teach: (cont.) (annoyed)

If I do not, now and then, KILL one of You,

It seems, ye forget who I am!

Artist: Who ARE You?

That was Dante's Inferno!

Mary: Third Canto!

Anne: James ain't Killed!

Bonny: Bugger me!

Teach: He's not? Well then.

(to Bonny) I'll let ye live. She'll do you Worse. Anne, there.

She's got the ways of a she-cat from Hell.

Look in her eyes. Nothing's there. She's Possessed.

And Yer not worth another shot, besides.

Hornigold: Scupper the intimidation tactics.

They don't work on me...

(Hornigold is intimidated; Teach is politic.)

Teach: Of course they don't, Ben.

You're too Strong to be intimidated.

Aren't ye. I helped to make ye a Strong Man...

You know, Ben, I find that by Strengthening you,

I have put a rod into your hands

To Whip mySelf... You Wrote to The Navy!...

(his anger mounts to rage)

You Seized a Position to Hunt Us down;
To Inform upon Us and Hunt Us down;
Us! We! Who hold Fast to The Republic
Which You say 'You Made'?— You 'Made' all this? NO!
WE ARE the Republic. Yer a Judas Goat!
Ye'd lead us all to Slaughter! For England??...
I should Kill Ye where ye Stand, and I Will!

(Teach goes to attack Hornigold; stops with open arms.)

But as we met in love, let's part in love.

(Hornigold, terrified, holds out his hand to Teach.

Teach calmly points another gun at Hornigold, who cowers)

Hornigold: Put that gun away, Ed! Yer not a good shot!

Teach: True. That's true! That's unfortunate for you...
(pleasantly manic)

Let's Douse the Lights and see what I kin Hits!

YO HO HO! YO HO HO HO HO HO HO HO!

(laughing like a mad man, Teach expertly shoots window
shutters that bang down. it goes dark;

Teach continues to laugh. screams, laughs from others.)

All the Pirates: Get the deadlights! See to the deadlights! Curses!

(a gunshot from Bonny flashes; another;

when someone brings the light back to the room, Teach is gone.

Hornigold composes hisself. beat.)

Hornigold: He has the look of doing something rash.

(Williams leaves.)

Hornigold: (cont.) Don't you be thinking of following him!

Willaims: (shouts almost sobs from off)

I must Follow but I've Lost my Captain!

There's Precious Few Leaders of Men in this World!

(returns to the doorway, to Hornigold)

And You sure ain't among the best o them.

Hornigold: (to Williams) You'll be jeopardizing me Retirement!!

(Williams storms off.)

Vane: No one cares 'bout your retirement, Old Man!

And jest coz Sam is dead, don't mean yer in charge!

Yer in no position to Bark orders, Ben.

You've Lost The Confidence of Your Men!

Hornigold: It's just a feud! People feud! Pirates feud!

Some disagreement some day, the next thing,

Everyones is at each other's throats.

Time passes, disagreement's forgotten.

Who remembers anymore? Not me!...

They'll Come 'Round. We Un'erstand each other.

Blackbeard, Jennings, Little John. All of 'em!

Vane: What if he don't come 'round. Blackbeard, I mean.

Hornigold: ...If I have to, I'll Hunt him down mesSelf.

He's too Dangerous a Man to be at Large...

Joke! Christ you're a Serious one.

I'm glad I ain't yer Mother. I'd worry!

Vane: (darkly in solidarity with Teach)

I'm glad that Blackbeard Sails, Unbounded—

But I won't let him go Unchallenged as

The Last Great Pirate. That title's for me!

Rackham: Or me!

Ireland: Ye can both count on me!

(to Rackham) 'Cept for you!

Vane: (draws his sword) I Pledge my Allegiance to Piracy!

And to rubbing the English's noses

In it the very next time I sees 'em!

Ireland: (draws) And so do I Pledge!

Rackham: Ett Moy!

Hornigold: Yer Fools.

(Pearse enters with Burgess.)

Pearse: Good news! I've heard from several Governors!

(Dunks sees how things stand and clears out.)

Pearse: (cont.) (so pleased) And not only have they extended the

DEADline, as it were, of the Act of Grace,

But they've agreed to Double the Bounties!

(Hornigold, Turnley and Bonny Pay attention.

Turnley makes his way to Pearse's side.)

Pearse: (cont.) Four Hundred for a Pirate Captain's Head!

Is not that bally good news for a swift

And Prosperous end to Piracy?

God Bless King George! Tavern keep! Ale! ...hullo!

(Dunks does not return. beat.)

Vane: (takes the floor, kicking over a chair)
We TRUE PIRATES with One Heart and Voice PROCLAIM
OUR Resolution to Prosper, or Perish,
In our Bold Undertaking Against King George,
And All of you Cowards who serve him!

(Vane, Ireland and Rackham draw guns and swords
upon Pearse, fearsomely.

Anne, Mary, and Artist stand and watch.

Pearse is momentarily stunned by this
decidedly uncivil about-face;

then Pearse draws, double, against Vane & Co,
and Burgess, Hornigold, Turnley, and Bonny do likewise.
judiciously, Vane raises his hands in Surrender.

Ireland and Rackham follow suit.)

Pearse: (shaken but on form) Right, men, Take ‘em away!

Vane: Live to Fight another day!

Burgess: Look sharp now, prisoners. March.

Bonny: March ‘em where?...

(Burgess and Bonny march the Pirate Trio out at gunpoint.

Pearse turns to follow them,

but Hornigold intercepts him, a little reluctantly.)

Hornigold: Oh! Beggin’ Pardon— if it please ye, Sir,

But might one ask what it is yer intendin

To Do with those 3?... We haven much of

A Prison here; leastwise, not one can hold

Determined men, see. Which they Appears to be...

Pearse: (polite anxiety)

What the hell is it you’re saying to me, man?

Hornigold: Pirates can’t abide a prison, no. And not just
ThemSelves in one, but Anyone in one.

A Jail, pirates consider, ‘inhumane.’

Too cruel a thing for Any Animal

An’ a Fate fer Pirates far Crueler than Death.

Pearse: Are you telling me, Now, you don’t have a Jail?

(Hornigold nods. Pearse begins to panic.)

Pearse: (cont.) Well I can just let them go they’ll run amock!

How on earth do you Survive without a Jail?

Hornigold: We’d make ‘em ‘Governors of their own islands’—

S'wot we'd do in terms o Pirate Justice.

Maroonin' 'em, see.

Pearse: But they could come back!

Hornigold: If they ever got back, we'd Esteem them!

For they must be Resourceful Men, indeed!

We'd Welcome 'em— they didn't Kill us first!

(grins wistful, then becomes serious.)

But somehows, I doubt ye Wants to Do things

The Pirate way now, Sir. And, nor do I, Sir!

Pearse: What on earth am I to do?... I can't Hold them?!...

Hornigold: Ye can't, no; leastways, not fer long, yer Honor;

The bars are rusted clean through in ar cells;

A man with any grit will soon escape;

AND, ye just missed a Bit o Theatrics, Sir—

Ed Teach Showin' Off a Bit, says I— But,

He was giving the distinct impreshion,

He meant to do a Bit o pirating;

And he's close with Vane; Vane's one of those 3.

Ed Teach May Kill You to set his friend Free.

He's around here somewheres close. Only just left.

...I can see yer a Bit Alarumed now, Sir.

Mayhaps, we're All a Bit Alarumed now!

Pearse: What on Earth am I to Do?!?!— Which one is
'Ed Teach'?

Hornigold: ...Well. He's got a big, Black Beard, yer Honor...

Pearse: You don't mean?

Hornigold: I do.

Artist: Ed Teach is Blackbeard.

Pearse: Oh bally Hell! Oh damn and Damnation!!

Anne: He might not Kill ye; just Terrorize ye.

Pearse: And that, is the Best-case scenario?!

And whether Vane Escapes or is Set Free,

Whether I live or die, I'll look Foolish!

England! Will look Foolish! This, Cannot Be!

We must ever show Grace and Dignity!

(Pearse knocks something over accidentally in his agitation;
then he tries to put it right.)

Hornigold: Indeed, yes!

The very words, Sir! Grace and Dignity!

So: It's best to be letting them 3 go!

Pearse: What!!

Hornigold: As I says, Sir, your Taking those Pirates

Has very much alarumed All of us here...

...Or is Unfair to be sayin' so?

(Mary agrees. Artist agrees. Anne stares daggers at Hornigold.)

Hornigold: (cont.) Well then. I believe I can assure ye, Sir,

That if ye set Vane and his company free,

It will be a very great means to gettin

All the good folk who live here in Nassau

T' Surrender, and Accept the Act of Grace!

Pearse: ...I don't follow you?

Hornigold: See, they can only end this Conflict

By Fightin' and Killin' ye— or givin' up;

And givin' up looks more attractive when

It looks like they moight lose if they fight ye!

Like those 3 Pirates ye've just took have lost.

'Tis alaruming... If You'll End the Conflict—

That's what we All want; We don't want to fight—

If you'll show Mercy, as the Powerful can;

Show Mercy; release 'em; don't lift a hand;

Then, Sir, Ye'll Win ar love, and ar Respect!

(beat.)

It's that, or Execute 'em right away.

For we do not have sufficient means to

Keep them 3— unless we Kill them all, Now!

Pearse: ... If we Kill them, Blackbeard will Avenge them?

All: (assent) Aye, verily, as a weevil to a biscuit, He'll Kill Ye,
He'll Kill Us All.

Hornigold: An' if we try'n Keep 'em, THEY'LL Kill Us. Sir.

All: Jest a matter o time. Aye. An' they'll laugh in the doin'.

Pearse: (thinking fast)

...They were only TALKING, Vane and those men...

It's no crime to Talk, is it? Besides which,

I haven't ORDERS to Execute them!...

Perhaps, it is Best, to let those men go.

Hornigold: How Graceful and Dignified You Are, Sir!

To look with such a Forgivin' Eye 'pon
Such Men, such poor, soddin' wretches...
Sir, if I may tell ye so: it is Divine!

(Pearse is practically composed now.)

Pearse: You May tell me so, but not for My sake—

Hornigold: For England, Sir! And You. As Emissary!

Pearse: (sufficiently inspired) I go now, this Moment, to Free
those Men!

Hornigold: Ye won't Regret it, Sir! 'Tis Beatific!

(Pearse Exeunt, smoothing his coat as he goes to make it so.)

Hornigold: (cont.) He's liable to Die at any Minute.

See the Trouble I go to fer you lot!

And see the Thanks I ever get fer it.

(calls) John Dunks! Mind the front! Say how they manage now!

(Dunks appears; goes to the window to keep watch.

Hornigold surreptitiously helps himself to a drink
while Dunks' back is turned.

all then wait for the outcome in silence.)

Artist: (hushed) Shall I follow Pearse now? Nothing stops me!

Mary: (hushed) Follow him if ye will, 'tis your Choice—

But Blackbeard was Right when he said to ye,

That man Knows Not and Cares Not who y'are, Hacke.

(silence.)

Artist: (hushed) He may not know Yet, but—

Anne: SHHHHHH!

Hornigold: What's going On?

Dunks: I can't see a thing.

Hornigold: Then what the hell are ye lookin' at, man?

Anne: Idiots. If ye were Real Men, ye'd Fight...

Dunks: I see something now!—

(La Buse bangs in with Williams and Caesar,
bowling past Dunks.)

La Buse: Mon Dieu! You should have seen it! Charles Vane,
And Company, were being held in custody—

Mary: —What were they doing while Pearse was in here?

Williams: Just passin' the time! Skippin' rocks!

Caesar: When Pearse approached, he told them they were Free!

La Buse: All courtesy, Vane thanks him very much;

Mr. Ireland, he doffs his hat and bows;
 And Rackham even offers Pearse his hand;
 And then, all Three, Drew upon Pearse as One!
Williams: 'Twas a Grand sight to see! Sam would have laughed!
Caesar: And then! That pro-pardoner, James Bonny,
 He Shot Vane!—
Mary: What?!

Caesar: Point-blank range!—
Dunks: God, No!
Caesar: But he must already have Spent his gunshot;
 For Vane was untouched; save a smile on his face!
La Buse: A smile for Bonny who fell to his knees!
Williams: He was cryin for he'd Just been shot at
 By Teach; felt this Turn of Events was Unfair!
La Buse: The Captors surrendered!

Anne: Put 'em in jail!!
Artist: (looking) Where did Hornigold go?
Mary: What happened next?
Caesar: Vane Suggested that his crew should board his ship!
La Buse: ...And respectfully Suggested Pearse should run!
Williams: And that's what he did!
La Buse: He did!
Caesar: He ran!
 (a cannon blast is heard.)
 Dunks runs back to the window to get a look.)

Dunks: A renegade ship sails the harbor!
 A blood Red Flag is flying from her mast!
La Buse: At long last, we mean to give No Quarter!
Dunks: She sails toward the navy fireship;
 The fireship, must be, that fired first;
 For now the pirate ship's coming about...
 She'll give 'em a ROARing Broadside!
 (cheers inside the tavern;
 another canon blast is heard; cheers subdue.)

Dunks: (cont.) 'Tis the fireship as fired that again!
 Our lads are still untouched out there, praise be!
 I can sees 'em now, upon their ship's deck,
 Drinkin' and celebratin' for 'tis Clear,

The fireship's no match for Pirates!
It can't even maneuver to Aim!
That fireship's so poorly made!
And she'll go up like a match if hit herself!
She wants To Escape! The Pirates are Too Strong!
Mary: What were they thinking to send that ship here?
They don't think much of us, or they're Insane!
They went to No Expense to build that boat;
Saved their sheckles for the ferryman in Hell;
Where we shall send 'em!

Anne: We shall prey upon the cheap!

Dunks: God bless Captain Vane and All on that ship!

They are Heroes to an Honest man like me:

John Dunks, tavern-keep!

Caesar: Splice the mainbrace, John Dunks!
(aye! ar!)

Caesar: (cont.) A round of drinks, John Dunks! We celebrate!
(all in the tavern begin carousing.)

Vane: (calls from outside) Pyrates, come back to Piracy with Us!
(sounds of fires being lit and glass shattering;
all in the tavern cheer.)

Mary: Vane's comin'! He should have a Hero's Welcome!

Anne: They should have ladies bedecked for consorting!

(Anne grabs Mary by the hand and they dash to another room.
as Rackham and Ireland sing, the pirates join in, laugh,
and dance the polka.)

Rackham: (sings outside) What do ye do with a drunken sailor

Ireland: (sings outside) Put him in bed with PEARSE'S daughter

Rackham: (sings outside) You ain't seen Pearse's daughter

Rackham and Ireland: (sings outside) Ear-lie in the morning

Hey ho and up she rises

Hey ho and up she rises

Ireland: (sings outside) She looks like an orangutang

Rackham and Ireland: (sings outside) Ear-lie in the morning!...

Dunks: (at the window) The fire ship's run aground on its way
Out of the harbor! She's stuck on a sandbar!

(rauckus laughter. Hornigold sidles in, trying to look natural.)

Hornigold: Glad they preserved their Dignity and Grace!

(the laughter stops.)

Hornigold: (cont.)

Come now mates, ye all know me, yer old Ben.

I never meant to give up Pirating—

Fer good! I've lived me Life on the account!

(Vane smashes into the tavern,

followed by a sauntering Ireland and Rackham.)

Vane: Who never meant to give up Pyratin'?!

(cheers from the rest, Ben tries not to cower.)

Vane: (cont.) Ben, me old mate, was it you that I heard?

Ben! Leader of the pro-pardon party!

So many Pro-Pardoners here with us today...

(Vane walks about inspecting them.)

Bill Hacke, Ben, Burgess, and Bonny... My word...

What to Do with you?... And you! ...Who are You?

Turnley: (fairly terrified) My name is Turnley. I came as Navy;

As the Pilot... that Fireship now lacks.

I'd like, with your permission, to Defect!

(Vane paces, thinks, and drinks.)

Vane: We should join All the Forces we can

To KEEP OUR OWN COUNTRY. A toast!

Ireland: A TOAST!

Vane: Here's to the Damnation of Government Men!

(hear hear!)

Vane: (cont.) And may All be Saved who will keep Pirates Free.

Ireland: Providence is in Pyrate hands again!

(toasts, cheers!

Anne and Mary appear.

Mary is dressed as a gorgeous man now.

Anne is also wearing pants,

but her breasts feature Dominantly;

and she is wearing the gold circlet Teach gave Dunks.)

All the Pirates: (as they see) Whew, Jesus Mary and Joseph,

Lord above, Sweet Nancy Divine...

Dunks: Where'd ye get that crown, Anne? Ye been thievin'?

Anne: It's only fair, John Dunks. Ye stole me heart.

Vane: (laughs) Ye have no heart, Anne.

Anne: (witheringly) Oh Don't I. (sweetly) Yoo-hoo?

(all the men turn and approach Anne)

Anne: (cont.) (to Bonny) You. Yes.

You don't think I'm Heartless, do ye, Bonny?

Bonny: Well I, that is, I don't think anything.

Anne: That's why I Love you! See what comes of thinkin'...

Bonny: You Love Me?

La Buse: Ah-ah! She's a dangerous one;

A Devil of division and quarrel;

She's only Pretending at 'good little girl.'

Rackham: Yes! Exact-a-mote! Ain't she Wonderful??

Bonny: (moved and competitive) Will you marry me, Anne?

Anne: Yes I will, James!

If it proves to Some that I have a Heart!

(they kiss. cheers, hurrahs!)

Vane: James Bonny shot me in the heart today

With an empty gun. Now his loaded Gun

Will shoot an empty girl!

(laughter.)

Anne: We'll see 'bout That.

Which captain shall perform the Rites for us?

Hornigold: Me!

Burgess: Me!

Ireland: It should be Vane!

Vane: It should be Teach.

Anne: I ain't waiting for Teach. Fight it out now!

Rackham: A wedding fight, then?

Bonny: A wedding fight, aye!

(Bonny decks Rackham;
cheers!)

Dunks: Outside now, if ye please t' be Civil!

Anne: (singsong) They're fightin' fer me on me wedding day!

(Anne dances outside, delighted;

Dunks helps Rackham up,

and all exit chasing pretty, happy Anne; and spoiling fer a fight;

except for Williams.

outside, the sky is twilit.)

Williams: 10 at night, 'twas. Weather began to Turn.

Heavy squalls of rain. The sky, black as pitch

But when it burst with bolts of lightning.
We lost sight of the beacon on Sam's ship.
We lost sight, of Everything!... And we panicked.
Men were saying, they'd shoot each other as soon
As they would shoot a Dog. And the cook
Howled into the Storm that "none aboard
Would Live to go ashore and tell this story!"
We was being battered by 20 foot,
30 foot waves, breaking in Cascades
As high as the Sky all around us.
And the cook grabbed an Axe like a madman
And he started to hack at the Masts;
And another man cried out in terror,
"For God's sake, let us go down in the hold...
And Die Together!" And that's what we did!
Expecting to be drowned at any minute!
And the men who couldn't read, they Begged
For someone to read the Good Book to them;
While the lighting flashed, and the wind shrieked,
And the ship Herself shook, for fear of the Sea;
The Chaos of Waves Crashing toward the Shoals...
A Wonder 'tis that we survived that Storm.
But for that Storm, I'll never be the same.
We none of us shall ever be the same.
And we none of us can say, what may, come next!...

(Williams Exeunt, unsteadily.
night has fallen black.)



ACT IV, PART I
OR "WOODS ROGERS ARRIVES, YE RESIST HIM IN VANE"

(stars appear that brighten to a dawn.
Anne, Mary, and Caesar enter, somewhat undone.)

Caesar: Three bearded ladies! That's what you say we are?

Mary: No. I say we're all the same! I'm as Good
As any Man— so just treat me as such!

Caesar: I also want to be treated as such;
Because I am a man. Always have been.

Mary: She wants to be treated like a man, too.

Anne: I most certainly do not. Shut yer mouth.
I have few enough Advantages, me.
If I were a man, I'd have None. Except
For brute strength...

Caesar: I do not care for brute strength.

Mary: No.

I want to be a 'Civilized Man.'
This is who I'd be if I were Civil:
In one word, Hopeful,
That I shall meet a fellow Man in Trust;
And it feels, Hopeless,
For I Distrust men I cannot even See.

Caesar: Yes, and This is who I would be:
I would go out of My Way, in My MIND,
To Think the Best of folks, no matter what.
For it would be Rude to assume that THEY,
Were not GOOD in their INTENT toward ME.—
—They would have No Reason To Harm Me.
I think That is how it is to be Free.

Anne: No. That's not how it is to be 'Free.' No.
That's how it is to be an Easy Mark!
Assuming folks are Good in their Intentions?
Because it would be 'Rude' not to 'Assume' that?
No Thank You! I'll do as I Please til I Die!

Caesar: So that is why you do This to James Bonny?
You have only been married a fortnight...

Anne: I married James Bonny because I can.
I fuck both of you now because I can.
Because I fucking can! Because this, This,
Is How it is to be Free in this life.
The Want of This, is what makes Women Scream.
Don't you know why women scream? I'll tell you!
No one's Threatened by a Pretty Lady!
No one Sees a Pretty Lady and then Thinks:
'I bet She could kick the Shit outta me!...'
Like if she were a horse cart of a man.
No one looks at a pretty lady and thinks:
'I better give Her some Room!' No, no, no.
You know what they do? The prettier y'are,
The closer they come. To grope you, detain you,
And stalk you, assault you; to mock you, and tell you
To like it! And if you don't Pretend to...
They'll call you a liar, a bitch, or just
Ruin you! Kill you! Rape you, and say it's Your fault!
And No one Cares these Things are done, because:
They Hate to hear a pretty lady say:
'My life's a Hell because of How I Look.
...Coz I'm so Pretty.' They Hate to hear That.
And that adds to our Hell! So we SCREAM
On the Inside, and we SCREAM on the Outside.
And No One wants to hear it. No one cares!
—Best case, they drug ye and leave ye alone!
And that's why I Choose, Not to Scream any more.
I consider now, Screaming's a Dead End.
I consider now, that I am MySelf Free,
To Do absolutely Anything I Please,
To absolutely Anybody in
The World! That's Justice! That's Equality!
That's! The Life for Me!

Caesar: Your Life is still better than most; at least—

Anne: Oh Right. I'm a rich Smuggler's daughter
Who was abandoned here, as a young girl,
And I grew up to become a Harlot,
All by mesself.

Yer right. I Should be so happy and proud!

Caesar: —At least you're not a Slave.

Anne: Neither Are You!

(beat.)

Are ye making this about yourSelf, now?...

Caesar: No.

Anne: Lie to yerself if ye must, but don't lie to me!

Have ye even Been a slave, BLACK Caesar?

Caesar: I never worked as a slave, but I was
Captured. I was tricked onto a slave ship.

Mary: How?

Caesar: I was a Prince! My father, a King;
Very fond of merchant-made goods. Fabrics.

The calico kind that Jack Rackham wears.

He traded thousands of our people for

The Stuff. I knew, he would never trade Me.

So when the slavers came to trade with us

I did not Fear them. And when they offered

To show me new Weaponry, that they had

Upon their ship, I went with them. And then,

While I was still aboard, they set sail...

It was a Base and Childish Deceit.

Blackbeard, 'twas, stopped them and saved us all!

500 souls we were upon That Ship.

Mostly, we joined with him and his pirates.

Dunks: (from off) I wonder now when Blackbeard will return!

Or if he will return! He was sore mad!

I hope he's found a treasure chest of cups!...

Anne: (hollers) All hopes are hollow and deceitful things!

Mary: (to Caesar) What Need for Pirates to Free Your People?

Why didn't you stop your father yourSelf?

Caesar: He was a despot. But I was a Prince.

I would not lower mySelf to such things.

Trading a colored man for colored cloth

Was beneath my contempt, beneath my Care.

Anne: Then yer no better than any of Them!

Caesar: My people needed a clean, noble mind;

They needed at least one man to Admire.

Mary: Your Intent was Admirable, mayhaps...

Anne: I Despise you. And I remind you Both

To Think: Only the Pirates treat either

Of you like yer so called ‘civilized man.’

The ‘civilized men’ sure ain’t about to!

If either of you, start acting like a

‘Civilized man’ to Me, I will blow you

And then blow you down. Especially you,

Mary. You think you’re helping me, but what

You’re doing is trying to take away

My Weapons when you try to get folk to

Think of ladies as men! Speak fer yerself!

Mind yer own affairs and know that I Think

Civilized men are all pieces of shit!

Fuck civilized men, it’s all they’re good for.

Mary: I’m not taking your weapons. What weapons?

Anne: My Weaknesses Are My Weapons! No one

Looks at a pretty lady and Thinks— ‘She’s...

The one who did the Murder.’ Because.

No one Thinks a pretty lady is a Threat.

On the contrary, they’d Shield her from

The Horror of the Crime. The crime she done.

No one would Think her Capable. Because.

No one Really Looks at a Pretty Lady.

...And Believes she’s got a brain. Or a heart.

(beat.)

Nobody Suspects The Pretty Lady.

(beat; she returns, with an eerie singsong professionalism
to the matter at hand.)

So thank you very much, Mister Mary, but

I’d prefer to be the Lady that I am!

I’m Just one more Good little Girl, that’s me!

Civilized Kiss!

Wet’s not fight, wet’s make up, civil gropecunt!

(she aggressively almost hatefully kisses Mary,
but it softens into a preamble for love-making.

when Teach and Vane enter,

Caesar gladly joins them.

Caesar: Teach! You're back!

Teach: I'm back!

Vane: I found 'im!

(Dunks bursts on.)

Dunks: Yer back! This is grand news to a man like me, John Dunks, tavern-keep. What did you find out there?

Teach: Nothing. ... 'Cept nearly half a million pound!

(gasps, cheers from all.)

Teach: (cont.) And a glorious ship! The Queen Anne's Revenge. That's what I calls Her, and that's what She be.

Dunks: Nothing else?...

Teach: Where has my Artist got to?

Caesar: Skulking about with the pro-pardoners.

(Ireland enters, and doffs his hat in a huge gesture of celebrations in order.)

Ireland: A Take for the history books, Maties!

A treasure ship to rival Avery's!

Teach: It's true, I've done the math, and what we Took, Would be good pay, every day, for a man for 3 million, 3 hundred, 33 thousand, 3 hundred, and 33 days, every day.

And that's if he only spends, not Invests!

Dunks: That'll be him set up 'til he retires!

Teach: That'll be him set up 'til the world ends!

That's equal to more'n 9 thousand years!

We're standing in the year 1718;

That's not even 2000 years since Christ.

He'd be paid every day from Christ 'til today, And for Another 7000 years!

Dunks: Perhaps he could buy himself a House, then!

Caesar: ...Where are all the others? No one was Lost?

Vane: Not a soul lost, and not a shot fired.

Ireland: They'll remember this day. Historical!

A pirate king was Made, his name, Blackbeard.

Teach: I was hoping to keep a low profile.

Vane: Impossible, Mate. Yer hair was on Fire!

Ireland: They'll remember the ship, The Queen Anne's Revenge!

Teach: The Queen Anne's Revenge! The Gold! I'm Reeling!

Dunks: How Do you set yourself on Fire, Teach?

Teach: That's a Secret, John Dunks, tavern-keep...

I swore I'd never tell another soul.

(Vane whispers to Teach.

Teach laughs. he excuses himself, exits into another room.
silence.

Teach bangs back into the room, larger'n life, grinning wild,
with the fuses in his hair all lit.)

Teach: (cont.) I AM THE DEVIL HISSELF.

Dunks: Saints Preserve Us! He's the Devil Hissself!

Teach: Celebratory fire and brimstone!

That's all, John Dunks. Yo ho ho!

All the Pirates: Yo ho ho!

Teach: John Dunks, a drink, to douse me Satanizing!

Water'll do. Adam's ale. There we are.

(Teach drinks the water and puts out the fuses.)

Ireland: Ye see? Folks can't forget a thing like that.

They'll remember this day. They can't forget.

Caesar: I'll never forget.

Dunks: ... Nor I!

Vane: I Love Fire.

Teach: ...Fire Is an Effective Weapon.

But a Pirate's Strength lies Not in his Weapons;

His Strength lies in his Unwavering Belief

In himSelf.

Dunks: ...'Tis very Moving...

Caesar: God's teeth, He'll be Sermonizing Now!

Blackbeard has a dozen sayings like these.

"A pirate's Legacy is not measured

In Wealth, but in the Impact he has on

Those who follow in his Wake." I will take Wealth.

All the Pirates: He har.

(Teach scowls.)

Caesar: Sorry I am that I did not come with You

To Share in this Stupendous Fortune!

(Teach says nothing but is notably aloof.)

Caesar: (a bit concerned now)...But where Are the others?

Ireland: (answering, for Teach will not)
With La Buse and OUR Little John now.
They ride these winds of Fortune and set sail
Soon as they can. They plan to hunt for Slavers!

Teach: They Plan to Leave the Pirate Republic.

(beat.)

Caesar: I shall join Them. Congratulations, Teach.

Teach: (relieved) Render unto Caesar the things which Are
Caesar's. This may be goodbye, my good friend.

Caesar: For such as we, there can be no goodbyes;
Only new courses we only can chart.

(Caesar and Teach shake hands.)

Ireland: Come I'll take ye to them, mighty Caesar.

(Ireland and Caesar exit together.)

Teach: (calls after Caesar)

Lo! And the Divil among Men did say:
"True Freedom is not Found in the Absence
Of Chains, but in the Power to Break Them
And to Forge one's own Path." That's True Freedom!

Anne: I've had quite enough of Men defining
What Freedom means, Unilaterally.

Dunks: That ain't a word.

Anne: It's a word.

Mary: (hands Dunks a book) Look it up.

Dunks: I wouldn't know where to begin! 'Yoon.' 'Yoon.'

(Dunks starts at page 1 of the thesaurus
and starts flipping page by page.)

Anne: (to Mary) Oh fer fuck, just tell 'im what it means.

Mary: Of, on, or affecting only One side.
Decisions for all, that are made by a few,
And that benefit the few, or one side.

Anne: 'I've had quite enough of Men defining
What Freedom means, Unilaterally.'

Ye can't tell me what Freedom means to Me.
Can ye now?

(Anne comes close to Teach, seductively confronting him,
defiantly twirling Teach's beard around the fingers of one hand;
her other hand is hid behind her back.)

Teach: I can't; but I've a shrewd guess.
Ah, Anne. We've not seen eye to eye, not since
Ye Tried to Stab me in the eye.

Anne: I Tried
To stab ye in the Bed! Ye civilized man.

Teach: Y'are Free, o course, to Try what ye can, Anne!

Anne: If you Insist, mon cap-ee-tan...!

(Anne's hidden hand flashes a slender stiletto overhead.

Teach effortlessly disarms her;

he laughs at her struggle to kill him and kisses her.)

Vane: (generally) She tried to stab me right in the bed, too!

(Anne recoils from the kiss;

Teach holds her about the waist.)

Teach: (to Anne) Authenticity is the Compass
Guides a Pyrate through Treacherous Waters.

Ye' Are Authentic, Anne Bonny! Let's part friends.

(Teach releases Anne and holds out his hand to shake.

Anne starts to cry dramatically

as though she's been horribly wronged;

she's stalling for an advantage.

Mary, Vane, Teach, and Dunks all share a look;

they've seen this before.)

Teach: (cont.) Oh fer Christ, yer exasperating, Anne!

Mary: (ignores Anne)

What's all this parting and goodbye-ing talk?

Vane: Come, come, Mary. Use yer cleverness, Man.

Ye seize a Vast Treasure,

Teach: A Ship Like That,

Vane: Anyone'd Think about stopping fer good.

And if they don't stop to Think, well, they should!

(Teach watches Vane, almost hopeful;

if Vane sees this, he misinterprets.)

Vane: (cont.) (cheerfully) But sure, no one as Infamous as Teach
Could ever do more'n Think of stopping.

He's got a God-given talent, and:

Principles. He, is a Principled Pirate!

He Pirates for a Cause. He Canno' Stop.

His Life is His Legacy for The Free!

Is not that Right, Edward?

Teach: (to Dunks, suddenly gruff) Rum.

I am paying you for this drink of rum

I am taking that bottle.

Dunks: (scoffs) Really, sir?

With all that gold, and ye'll steal me rum?

Teach: (lashes) God Damn it! Ye'll give me that bottle

Because I says so! 'Tis the 'whim of a King'!

Is not that right, Mary, ye 'male person'?

(Anne snorts laughing and stops crying,
she's smiling beautifully.)

Mary: Come on, Anne. Let's go. Blackbeard's in a Mood.

Anne: Must be that time of the Moon for Him!

Mary: Hm!

(as Anne and Mary exit, they bump into
Rackham entering.)

Rackham: Pardonne Moy, Madam Moozle. Mon Sewer.

Où... ever yer goin', let me escort vouse.

(Anne, Mary, and Rackham exit together, haughtily.)

Teach: (to Dunks) Ye'll wish ye had given me that bottle

Without asking me fer something in return.

I found, a treasure chest... of gorgeous cups!

I were going to give 'em All to You when

No one Else were about to see, but now...

Dunks: I...

Teach: Can't have folks thinking I'm a soft touch, see.

Not when I have so much Wealth to protect.

Dunks: Of course, sir. Perish the thought. I...

(beat. Dunks silently hands Teach the bottle,
and another bottle as well.)

Dunks: (cont.) On me.

(Dunks leaves; Vane and Teach are alone.)

Vane: That's a good Act, acting like this treasure

Has changed ye. Ye nearly fooled me! Damn me.

Now let's get down to The Real Business.

Nassau. We got to get organized now.

We beat the pants off Pearse, that little ponce!;

And that Man o War Ben sent for... never come!;

But Woodes Rogers sails here still; so we must Plan:
How many men you got following You?

Teach: Near 700 Men will follow Me.

Vane: Mother Mary in a Mighty Moustache.

That's a fearsome number. More men'n they've sent!
And I've another 75.

Now, I been thinking that it was a weakness

We've such a Little Fort to Fight withal;

But it's the Only Fort that Pirates Keep.

And now I think its smallness is a Strength!

If We the Pirates rally to this spot;

800 of us swarming land and sea;

And here's the English, just 500 strong;

There's no way we don't claim the Victory!

I mean, wouldn't ye say so? You agree?

(beat.)

Thank God yer Here, Teach, I say Sincere.

If ye'd left, I'd have had to nail folk's

Eyelids to fenceposts to make' em to Stand Up

And Fight! I mean, look at our fairweather friends;

La Buse and Little John flying away...

And Caesar now, too. And you Let him!

But 700 men... Christ in the clink!

We can Afford to let them go. I suppose...

...700?

Teach: Let's have a glass o rum an' talk this out.

(Teach is maudlin and restless; they pour and raise glasses.)

Teach: (cont.) Here's me toast: Fuck the Majority Rule.

Vane: (chokes) What the fuck are ye saying, man? The code!

Yer always on about Majority Rule.

Teach: Aye. We All Love Majority Rule.

In The Beginning, everyone Wants it.

It makes Sense to get an Equal Say. An'

Mostly, We All Want the Greatest Good Things.

But: now and then, anywheres in the World,

Some con or thug or genius says, 'I Think:

We should just do everything My way.' And,

They May have Good Reason for saying so,

And, We May or May Not Let them do things
Their way, because, that is Always a Choice
We Get to make. In no scenario,
Do All of Us take on One of the Them,
And we Lose...

Vane: Just so, man!

Teach: (not to be interrupted) But when we turn
Against each other, it Never works. They:
Always Win. That's why They Need to Divide
Us. It's Always in Their Best Interests.
It Always Works. It's worked this time as well.
And it's why... we won't win.

Vane: What do you mean
'We won't win'?

Teach: It's too late.

Vane: ...Why would You Feel you should Say That to Me?

(Teach becomes more like himself
as he brings out his thoughts to Vane;
Vane is intently focused,
for he respects Teach a tremendous deal.
in other words, they are bosom friends.)

Teach: I'm looking at a Force, that 'finds' a land
That's new, to them, and says, 'What do you speak Here?
Nevermind! You speak My language Now.
And for that matter, you'll do things My way.'
Kings, who've never Been to the Americas,
Tell the people there, what to do— which is bad.
But which is Worse, to Me, is— people DO IT.
The people of those vast lands, their Own lands...
They speak the Words of Spain, France, and England.
...You know who Can't speak English? England's 'king!'

(Teach and Vane spit. 'Germans.' 'Germans.')

Teach: (cont.) By What Power, do those kings
Who're only human beings— barely—
By what Right, can they do that to them?
What Power have they Found or been Given?
I don't think it exists on this Earth!
So by what Reason do They the People,

Let their 'kings' Exploit their Kindness? KINDNESS.
A Resource occurring in Nature,
More Valuable than Gold, Spices, or Jewels.
They exploit our human Kindness. Every day.
And we All Let them!

Vane: Ah, but!
They Couldn't Do what they Do to us,
IF they had to Do it to our Face!
If they TRIED to Do it to our Face,
We'd prob'ly: Kill em!

Teach: Ah, but! We Don't!
My War was with the English Navy. And,
I spent my whole career working with Ben;
NEVER fighting with the English Navy.
What have I done? Have I wasted my Life?
Where was My Freedom, My Say, in all that?...

Vane: Yev made a Huge Impact on those in yer Wake—

Teach: —But Not what I Wanted!

Vane: Ed, what you Want is for people to Care— for
Powers to Care how Horrific they're Bein'.
But they, are Never going to Care!
Not caring, is How they can do as they do!
There are holes in them, mate. Holes in their souls.
Their great Hulls are eaten through with Worms.
And so, they want Us to break Our backs
To Bail 'em out! An' of course we don't Want to.
Because of course they don't Deserve our help.
Because of course they've Never Tried to Earn it.
Because that would take some Effort on their part,
An' worse... it Might cut into their Profits!
So they'll do Anything for the Power;
For to have the Whip Hand over Us!
To have the whip hand over all the World,
If that's what it takes to bail them out,
To save their Sinking Shipwrecks of Souls!
Our own mentors included. Our captains.
All they want, all they do, is for That Power...
Which, as you say, it don't Exist on Earth!

They're all hangin' on the coat tails of the Wind!—
(the two are increasingly frustrated; attempting to be
Understood.)

Teach: —I don't Want the Powers to care! I Know
THEY don't care! I WANT the PYRATS to Care!
An' not just for themSelves, but for each other!—
But They Don't Have sufficient STRENGTH, in ThemSelves,
Not to DISRESPECT the entire
Pirate Republic, an' FORSAKE The Code...
The MOMENT they Each didn't Get their Own Way
Every One of them— Went their Own Way!
An' when Each man only Respected the Rules
HE Agreed with, or when he tried to FORCE
Other Pirates to Take the Course HE'D TAKE!—
—OUR REPUBLIC became Nothing More than
A Thousand Corrupt Kings!
Of a Thousand Corrupt Kingdoms of One!
They are not Master enough, in themSelves,
To keep themSelves from turnin' on each other—
Even for a MOMENT! Even to Save
Our Civilization! Flying FISH!...
...People are ALWAYS going to Differ!;
That's a Fundamental part o bein' Free!;
'Tis Obvious!; Self Evident Stuff!;
If we can't Figure THAT Out: We HAVE Lost!
And that's why I say Again: It's Too Late.
Vane: Yer wrong! That can't be right, Teach!—
Teach: —It's right,
An' it were a Hard Lesson to learn—
Vane: —Ye can take Everything from a Pirate,
But ye can Never take away: His Spirit!
We DO have the Strength it takes to UNITE!
Can we sail through Hurricanes, and not do THIS?
By Saint Elmo's FIRE, the STORMS are what UNITE US;
And what we got here is jest another STORM.
We WILL Come Together, and CARRY THE DAY!
They'll never stand a chance against us, Teach!
They don't even EXIST without Us!

They are Powerless without Us! Powerless;
WE WILL Be The Ones to WIN Providence!
ALL we need to do is STAY UNITED!
So, come on, Teach! Stay United with Me!!

(Teach pauses to look Vane over;
his sympathy fast deserts him; grief approaches.)

Teach: The Ocean is a great Equalizer;
It washes away all Pretense, and Reveals
The Truth of a person's Character; and
Our own Mentors, Yours and Mine, our captains,
As ye Rightly say, THEY have turned against Us.
THEY Prefer to Serve Their Own Self Interest.
They're as bad as the kings, or Worse.
They should Understand The Freedom of The Sea;
The boundless expanse of the open sea,
Where all limitations disappear...
That Freedom can be found by All; Endlessly;
As long as it be used Respectfully.
They should Know after serving the MONSTERS,
That Freedom can't Abide to be Abused:
It Vanishes, where exploitation thrives.
...An' in the place where it has Vanishéd,
Ye Shall find a Sign, Hanged by a Nameless Man,
A Proclamation, Sayin' 'Here Be Freedom!'
When what it ought to say is 'Here Be Dragons...'
Chasin' Profits made at Losses to us All.
Wealth MUST NOT be gained that can Only be gained
With the murder of a fellow man, or Nation.
With the starvation of People.
With the enslavement of People.
With trickery, with violence.
Power MUST NOT be gained that can Only be gained
With What They Did, to that Handsome Cabin Boy!
Our captains would say, that the 'Powers' are 'FREE'
To do these things. And I, Respectfully:
DISAGREE.
And if that's what Our Republic's doing:
It's become a TYRANNY!

I'm taking me treasure and sailing fer
North Carolina. It's all been arranged.
My next Adventure is all 'Above Board;'
I'll Invest in some big 'Enterprises'...
I've been planning this, in Secret, fer some time.
Ar days o Piracy on Open Seas...
Are done.

Not that piracy's done... (scoffs to himself)
Ye won't miss much not having me Join with Ye.
I never was much of a one fer fightin'.

Vane: (deeply quietly hostile)
...Yer fightin' with me one way or the other.
I can't just let you Leave, and all yer men.
You'll fight with me; or else, you'll fight with Me.
(Vane draws his sword.)

Teach: ...If You will have it so.
(Teach draws his sword.)

Vane: I will have You! ...So!
(they duel; neither wants to harm the other; neither will yield;
both are expert swordsmen.)

Vane becomes increasingly desperate to win,
yet Teach pins Vane once, twice, thrice;
at Teach's commanding sword point,
Vane sags defeated, bested.)

Vane: (pants) Ye never were much of a one fer fightin'?

Teach: (pants) No one, can 'Win' a War, for Providence!

...But there is, a Consolation Prize, for US:
ALL those, who Cling to Power, SHALL Fall from it.
All those, who Rule through Violence and Fear,
Shall be Violently, and Fearlessly Opposed.
God speed us to Dawning of that Day!
But I fear we will use that day, the same.

(Teach sheathes his sword.)

God bless you, Charles Vane... and all the Pirates!

(Teach Exeunt; pushing through people outside.)

Vane: God damn you, Teach! God damn this whole World!
I Believe in Providence! On my knees,
I Believe in Us!

Ireland: As do I!

(Ireland, Anne, Mary, Rackham and Dunks spill into the room.
they have watched what they could of the duel without putting
themselves in harm's way.)

Ireland: (cont.) So what are we going to do for it?

Rackham: Do fer wot?

Mary: Providence! For Where We Are!

Rackham: Well I never heard of it!

Anne: Jack's fucking Bombed!

Ireland: Will Ye Pay a-Feckin'-tention, Flom-Flume!

Rackham: What did you jest call me?

Ireland: Do ye all want some Nancy Navy boys

To come and stop Us doing as we please?

Patrolling the docks? Taking most of every Take?

That's Yer Money, isn't it?

All the Pirates: Yea!

Ireland: They didn't sweat for it, did they?

All the Pirates: No!

Ireland: Do you want Them telling You what to do?

Do you want Them giving youse Orders like

A Slave? Because that's what ye'll be. They'll put

A tool, an implement, into yer hand,

And then they'll say what ye can Do with it...

If I'm telling Truth can I get an Armen?

All the Pirates: Armen! Armen!!

Ireland: Are we gonna Let them Waltz into Our Fort?

All the Pirates: Fuck no! Fucking fuck, man! 'Never heard of it!'

Ireland: Then We need a new Pirate Governor!

I Nominates Charles Vane! Who Seconds Me?

All the Pirates: AYE. Aye!

Ireland: Mary, You be our acting Magistrate.

Mary: The Motion Passes, Unanimously

Charles Vane is now Pirate Governor!

(cheers.)

Ireland:

A speech, Governor Vane! Speech, speech, speech, speech!

Vane: Mother Mary in a mighty...

All the Pirates: Speech, speech, speech, speech!

Vane: Give me a moment to collect meSelf!...

(Vane grabs one of the bottles given to Teach
and stalks into another room.

Ireland's keen to keep 'em Motivated in support of Vane.)

Ireland: ...Let me tell ye of that man, Charles Vane!

He comes from London, from "Wapping on the Ooze,"

A very poor and dangerous place to be...

They buried their Dead in Massive mass graves

Which weren' covered 'til full Occupied.

The stench, the sights, to Live by day by day...

Disease took thousands and thousands of folks

From his neighborhood, every year. Young kids,

An' Infants, were orphaned every day,

Abandoned on the steps up to the church...

The Church would Rent Babies to Beggars as Props.

Sold the others as Slaves, alms for the priests,

Chimney sweeps bought 'em; the kids fell to death,

Or be fair, just went blind, or just coughed.

The 'lucky' orphans lived on streets in gangs;

Shining soldier's boots— and Stealing from 'em too;

'Til they were caught, Hanged, and Dissected!

Fer Science! Or, hung up in cages—

Little bodies down the Thames fer SCARING

Honest PIRATES what have bleeding hearts, like Us...

(stalling) ...Vane saw the Hanging of Avery's men

In Wapping when he was a boy... Yes.

One of 'em said, he was Sorry, for the Things

That happened on the Grand Moghul's ship...but,

That he weren't sorry for Stealing the Ship!!

That's the Inspiration of Charles Vane!

That's the kind of Life he's been Bred Up from!

I tell ye, they don't make 'em Tougher than

Charles Vane! Here he is now! Governor Vane!

(Vane enters, composed.

Ireland applauds vigorously; the others watch.)

Vane: Thankee. Pirates... 'Bred up' be the right phrase.

I weren't Bred to be a Leader of Men.

I were Bred to be fodder fer canons.

It mattered not if I had a house, parents,
Medicine, Education— How can We,
Any of Us, Relate to this here World,
Relate to Anyone, Contribute, Lead...
If they won't give us any Teaching,
About Our Role in Our Society?...

Rackham: They could teach us That??

Mary: They Could teach us that.

Anne: Gee! I wonder why they would'na want to...

Vane: How can They Force Us into the Service
Of Their Military, to Defend a
Government, that don't Defend an' Protect Us?...

Ireland: Hear hear!

Anne: They don't care if we're lyin' in the gutter!

Vane: How Dare they ask Us to fight and Kill folk
Who, like Us, are Kept Down by Their governments?
I Say, the time has come for Us to Kill Them!

(the crowd turns restless, inspired and cruel.)

Vane: (cont.) Let us resist and defend ourSelves now
With the Violence they use and understand!

My comrades in Arms! The only rules
That matter are the ones we make For ourSelves
We're the Masters of Our Fate, the Captains
Of Our Souls. I'm a Free man, and I'll be damned
If anyone tells me how to Live My Life!!

Are we gonna let Them keep Us down?
To Kick us with their boots, then make us Clean 'em?

Anne: Never!

All the Pirates: Never!

Vane: Are ye Ready to FIGHT Them with me, Mates?

All the Pirates: Fight! Fight! Fight! Fight!

Vane: (over the chant) The World may call us Criminals, but
We are Rebels Fighting for our Freedom.

Let us Fight until the World is Free!

I'd rather die on my feet than live on my knees!!

All the Pirates: Fight! Fight! Fight! Fight!

(an alarm bell clangs in the distance; the chanting dies.)

Turnley: (calls from off) The sails of a Royal Navy frigate,

Spotted ‘round the backside of Hog Island!

Ireland: So soon?! Shite! We can’t defeat them— Yet!

Vane: (to Rackham and Anne)

Fire canon upon ‘em! Let ‘em know we’re here!!

Anne: ...Who, me?!

Vane: Who else?

Rackham: Come on, Anne Bonny, fair!

Act like yer a ‘femme fatal!’

Anne: Oh, I am!!

(Anne and Rackham run off to the fort.)

Vane: You two, Mr. Ireland, Mr. Mary,

Ready the fastest sloop we have in harbor,

The one with all the rotten pelts onboard;

Dump the pelts where they can welcome Rogers;

Then fill the sloop with all the guns she’ll hold.

(a canon shot is heard, and another,

Dunks is looking out the window)

Dunks: We missed ‘em, but we must’ve Scared ‘em though!

Fer now they’re flying a white flag of truce!

Vane: Fuck their white flag, talk about a false flag.

(Hornigold bangs in.)

Hornigold: What in Hell do ye think ye be doing?

Vane: (to Ireland and Mary) Off ye go now. Lively.

(Ireland and Mary dash off past Hornigold.)

Hornigold: (to Vane)

Those are English ships ye bangbrained bluejay!

How dare ye give an order t’ fire canon?

I give the orders here, I be in charge!

Vane: Who the Hell do ye think yer talking to?

I’ve been made The Pirate Governor now!

Hornigold: You? Another Pup still wet behind the ears!

(a canon shot is heard.)

Dunks: We got one! Canon shot through the rigging!

Vane: (to Hornigold)

Old man, your last hope is a spot on My crew—

If serving me is something ye could do!

Will you be a pyrate of honor with me?

Or the loyal servant of corrupted kings.

This is yer last chance, to join the Right Side—
(seethes) ...Join the Right Side, at last, or I'll Kill Ye!!

(Vane pulls a gun on Hornigold.

Hornigold purposefully turns his back to Vane, and exits;

Vane lets him go.)

Vane: (cont.) (to hisSelf) 'Ah but! We don't!...'

(Anne and Rackham return.)

Anne: I got 'em!

Vane: We saw!

Rackham: Anne was Perfeckshion!

Vane: We Will Build Our Pirate Republic yet!

A Libertatia! [like 'fantasia'] Now. Seize everyThing of
Value and everyThing ye think Useful;

And get it on the ship we're readying.

Choose with Judgement. Burn the rest. Leave Nothing Behind.

I want to see a Scene of Desolation!

Get men to help ye. Force 'em, if need be.

Anne: (elated) Aye aye, Cap-ee-tan!

Rackham: (tips his hat) Pirate Governor!

(Anne and Rackham run off, hand in hand.)

Anne: (to someone, off) You! Come here!...

Dunks: Several ships are blockading our harbor...

Their decks are Full of Soldiers... Readyng

To disembark, mayhaps?! Governor Vane!

I fear time presses us!

Vane: (to Dunks) I know it well.

We can't beat them as we are, but we'll be back.

Fear not, John Dunks, tavern-keep.

Dunks: Take me with ye!

Vane: Ye don't know a ship, ye'll be a Danger

To all of us, as well as to yerself.

But Know: I will use my utmost endeavor

To sink Woodes Rogers' ship, and All the ships.

I will be back, John Dunks, good tavern keep.

But as for now, I can't leave This place tidy.

(Vane steals what he wants from the tavern and wrecks the rest;

Dunks is flabbergasted.

Ireland, Mary, Anne and Rackham run on.)

Mary: We've got the Fastest sloop hid and ready.

Anne: We've loaded her with all of Worth we found.

Rackham: We're Desolatin' All We Leaves Behind Us.

Ireland: As I do live and breath! Those pelts do Stink!

Vane: Good work all of you! Now, let's make our Escape!

I Suggest that we slip out the narrow way.

Anne: Let's go! This is GRAND!

All the Pirates: Aye!

Vane: (to Anne) Not so fast. Not You!

There's only room aboard fer folks of Worth!—

Anne: —How dare!—

Vane: —I'll tell ye same as John Dunks, tavern-keep—

Dunks: —Me place o business, just look what yev done—

Vane: —Ye don't know a ship. Ye'll be a Danger

To us and to yerself. Be my eyes and ears Here;

And if ye can manage it, stab Woodes Rogers

Right in the Bed! I tell ye, Anne Bonny,

I'm not afraid of any man, but

I wouldn't want to meet You in a dark alley!

(Vane kisses Anne; shakes Mary's hand; shakes Dunks' hand,
who is still flabbergasted.)

To me now, men! To me!!

(Vane Exeunt running.)

Anne: You bastard! Ye fecking stinking bastard!

Rackham: I'll come back fer ye, Anne! Au reservoir!

(Rackham kisses Anne and exits after Vane.)

Ireland: ...I wish ye a fair wind, ever and always!!

(Ireland feints as if to kiss Anne, but doesn't;

he doffs his hat and bows; Ireland Exeunt.)

Anne: Damn ye, pompous Pirates! Ye'll rot in Hell!

Mary: Come, Anne. Perhaps things will Change for us yet.

For now, for Woodes, we best look 'womanly.'

Anne: I shall yet have revenge upon these men!!

(Anne and Mary exit to change.

Dunks is all alone and fairly terrified;

he finds a cup amid the mess and polishes it with a rag.)

Dunks: This then, is the turning of the tide.

(Dunks turns away from the outside,

and sings 'The Golden Vanity' to himself.)
...Up stepped a little sailor, Saying what'll you give to me,
To sink a Pirate ship to the bottom of the sea?
Sink em down into that lonely, lonesome water,
Sink the pirates in the lonesome sea...
 (a shot is fired in the distance, startling Dunks.
 shots fire at regular intervals, coming closer;
 a running salute is being performed for Rogers.
Dunks gets a gun from behind the bar and hides it on himself;
 he continues to listen and hum.)

Dunks: (cont.) (sings)

I have a handsome house, Built upon a fertile land,
And I have a pretty daughter who shall do as you command
If ye sink 'em in the lonely, lonesome water,
Sink the pirates in the lonesome sea...
(hums, looking for the words) hmhmhmhmhm...
...If it weren't for, The love I bear your men,
I'd sink your gallant ship just the same as I sunk them,
 (Rogers is beyond the tavern door;
 he waives a hand to the men following him,
 that he may listen to the song.

Dunks does not see them; he checks that he is armed, again.)

Dunks: (cont.) For I've sunk em in this lonely, lonesome water,
Sunk the pirates in this lonesome sea...

 (Rogers steps inside the threshold of the tavern now;
 he leans upon a cane.

 Rogers is escorted by a respectful echelon of
 Hornigold, Burgess, Bonny, Turnley, and Artist.)

Rogers: (to Dunks) Beautiful. ...Walter Raleigh wrote that.
The Punctuation is so important.

 (Rogers silently acknowledges Dunks' hidden weapon.
 then, to the others.)

Thank you All for the running Salute! ...I'm
Sorry that I'm not the best of 'runners.'

 (Rogers smiles; silence.)

Rogers: (cont.) (to All)

Love Conquers All. Love Shall Conquer Us, Too.
'Tis not too late to Surrender to Love...

Omnia vincit amor. Et nos,
Cedamus amori...

I. Am filled with such love. For the sea.

I know. You share this love of it.

We. Are not so different. ...Anyone.

Who has looked up from a deck at the Stars,

In the silent spaceless black of the Ocean...

We are the same. That's Why I'm here to help.

...Or would you not Welcome some help?

...It looks like you could Do with some help.

(they all take in the scene of desolation; silence.)

Rogers: (cont.) For God's sake, let us not be so formal.

Please, join me in a drink. I've travelled far.

And, I know not yet. How matters stand here.

Dunks: What is it yer Lordship partakes of?

Rogers: Rum, of course. Same as you, if you'll join me.

I will be pleased to stand you All a Round!

(to Dunks) You are the proprietor of this place?

Dunks: I am, yer Lordship. John Dunks, tavern-keep.

(Rogers hands Dunks a bag of coin.)

Dunks: (cont.) ...Thankee kindly!

Rogers: You're surprised that I partake?

Don't be. I'm a sailor first, like all the rest.

"Good drink means more to sailors than good clothes." Eh?

I'd sooner throw anyThing else overboard

Than the rum, and the beer, and the rum.

Dunks: 'Tis an immense relief to a man like me—

Rogers: Of course, we will have to License this place.

Dunks: Ah-of Course we will have to License this place...

Rogers: Unless, you've already Bought a License?

Dunks: Mm!... I shall bring you rum! If rum be here.

(Dunks scavenges for unbroken cups and bottles
amid the wreckage.)

Rogers: (generally) Don't just stand there, help.

Hornigold: (to the others) Don't just stand there, help!

(the pirates scavenge cups and bottles from the wreckage.

Rogers picks up a chair, sits resting his bad leg, and waits.

Dunks gives Rogers the first rum.

Rogers belts the rum,
his head at an odd angle to drink despite his broken face.)
Rogers: That's better. And now, I'll join you again.

(Rogers holds out his cup;
Burgess, Hornigold and Dunks vie to refill it,
spilling on Rogers.)

Hornigold: God damn it all! Begging yer pardon, but
Look what yev done!

Burgess: What I've done? Beg pardon.

Rogers: Never mind. You've made a clean spot. Sit, sit.
(all find places to sit, some perhaps on the floor.)

Rogers: (cont.) (purses his disfigured lips)
Should I be expecting an Ambush?

Hornigold: No!
All who'd stand Against ye have just left.
Charles Vane and Edward Teach.

Rogers: (scoffs) Who?

Hornigold: Blackbeard.

All the Colonists: (murmur) Blackbeard.

Rogers: Good heavens!

Burgess: Trouble not yer Mind with likes o 'im, Sir!
Word 'as it, Blackbeard's 'anging up his sword!
An' gone t' Retire in North Caroliner!

Rogers: Then that leaves only Vane. And what of he?

Bonny: He'll do us all up a treat if he can!
....He Thinks we've Betrayed ar Republic.

Rogers: And you are?

Bonny: Bonny, sir. I-I'm James Bonny.

Rogers: Bonny. And what do You think.
(Anne appears vamping in the doorway, changed.)

Anne: He don't think.
That's the Thing that I Love Most about him.

Bonny: Hello, Anne.

(Anne waves at Bonny.

Mary appears in the doorway with Anne, also changed.)

Mary: And here I thought that Every Thing had Changed...
Bunch of 'men' having a drink and a think?

Anne: Except for James of course. His mind's a blank.

Rogers: You stop your mouth, missy, or I'll slap it.
Mere harlots are not entitled to mock

Any male mind. James Bonny is entitled
To His thoughts, whate'r they be. Same as me.

Bonny: She's right though, I don't think. My mind Is a blank.

Anne: And I'm not 'a mere harlot;' I'm his wife!

Rogers: (to Bonny) I'm deeply sorry. ...And. I Understand.
I'm a married man myself. Wives do 'talk'
Sometimes, don't they. No matter. We'll Train her.
Together. As Men.

Anne: Try it. I dare ye.
I'll kill ye. I swear.

(Anne exits into the street, taking Mary with her; beat.

Rogers laughs hearty;
then all laugh with him.)

Rogers: I don't see Her as a serious Threat!
Vane though; we'll have to hunt down Vane.

(Jennings appears in the doorway.)

Jennings: I'm your man! Captain Rogers, I presume?

Rogers: I am. And you are?

Jennings: My name is Jennings.

But that's not important. What's important is this:

(Jennings holds an official paper aloft.)

Jennings: (cont.) My Commission from the Lord Hamilton
To destroy Charles Vane. Government sanctioned.

Rogers: You've impeccable timing!

Artist: Dramatic.

Jennings: Vane was my protégé. It's best this way;
That I should be the man to hunt him down.

Rogers: Why then... With Vane out of the way; Blackbeard
Retired; Nothing stands in the way of This!:
A Triumphant Colonial Triumph!

Turnley: Here's to England's rule in the Bahamas!
I never Doubted that this day would come!

Rogers: Good man! A True Englishman!

Turnley: Just loyal, Sir.

Hornigold: In lawless lands, the only Currency
Is Loyalty.

Burgess: Aye. Honour among Thieves.

Jennings: Our thieving days are Done! Thanks to this man:
Captain Woodes Rogers, a Savior of souls!
Our past deeds are forgiven, in his mercy...

Hornigold: Our futures bountiful, under his hand...

Artist: A man who quotes Virgil's tenth eclogue,
In Latin, and yet, makes it sound minted new?

Bonny: A man to keep our feet upon the ground
And not swingin' a few feet above it!

Dunks: Captain Woodes Rogers is a man who drinks Rum;
That's grand news to a man like me, John Dunks!

Turnley: Captain Rogers is the sort of a man
I could never bring meSelf to betray!

Jennings: Here is a man a Man should kneel before.

Hornigold: Here is a man the Masses can adore!

Artist: Here is a man who can understand the Arts!

Bonny: Here, I can tell, is a man with Smarts...

Dunks: A man we all Hope who will Honor men's Rights!

Rogers: Between the Ocean's Depths and Heaven's Heights,
We Sail; we All sail, and sail, and sail.

(Rogers pours himself a drink;
then all pour themselves drinks.)

Rogers: (cont.) We have much work to do, men. First, the fort:
I could see the cracks in its seaward walls
From a Distance. We best 'Fortify' our Fort.
For what else is a good 'Fort' for? Eh?

All the Colonists: Aye, ar. Very good, sir. I've observed that
meSelf, I 'ave. Often I've said, something ought to be done...
That's what you call a quip, in't it?

Rogers: Next, the smell. It smells as if a thousand
Diseased animals were defecating
Just outside the window. What is that Smell.

Hornigold: I couldn't say.

Burgess: Rotten hides.

Hornigold: Oh aye.

Burgess: Aye.

Vane's crew took a ship with an 'old of 'em.

Hornigold: Piles of hides beneath the other cargo.

Rogers: —H-h-hiding, as it were!

(all laugh.)

All the Colonists: He har, sir. He's funny, I never hoped he'd be funny. Nor I. The hides do stink though. They'll spread a sickness, most like.

Rogers: Get rid of them.

Hornigold: How, shall we get rid of 'em?

Rogers: You're asking Me ...how to dispose of piles

Of decaying, rotten animal hides?

For goodness sake, I have no idea.

That's not a Thing I need to know.

Hornigold: Aye, but—

(he silences himself, respectfully)

Rogers: I am the Governor and Garrison

Of the Bahamas, by Order of the King,

Georg Ludwig of England, and Great Britain!

Ruler of the Electorate of Hanover,

Of the Holy Roman Empire! THIS!

Is ALL MY DOMINION by RIGHT!

...Get rid of the pelts!!

Hornigold: Aye, Sir!

Burgess: Course, Sir!

Hornigold: ...Just...

Them Pelts ain't Safe to burn, bury, or drown!

Burgess: They's Poisonous.

Hornigold: Toxic.

Burgess: Been known to kill things.

Hornigold: An' you an' your soldiers ain't used to the Rot.

Burgess: Best not to Disturb 'em; for Yer sake, Sir.

Hornigold: The rot don't bother Us much! Harhehar.

Rogers: (not at all amused)

Again: I don't care How you get rid of them;

Just get rid of them; they Stink. Burn Them.

Get it over with. Use Hellfire!!

Which reminds me. I have a large number

Of crates, full of reading materials.

I want to give them out, free, to the pirates.

Bonny: ...But We are Not Pirates.

Rogers: I Mean former pirates. And May God be
Rightly Praised for that, not I. Any road,
I need some brute strength to help me to haul
Some huge crates full of paper off the ship.
(to Artist) You, you don't look like you Do anything.
Get on it, get the crates.

Artist: You'll laugh when you come to know what I Do—

Rogers: Yes, I'm sure I will. And you; what's your name?

Turnley: Me?

Rogers: Nevermind. Just help him with the crates.

Artist: If you'd let me show you something—

Rogers: Yes of course,
Another time.

(to Hornigold) Would you?

Hornigold: Shake a leg, now!
(Turnley and Artist exit;
Bonny starts to go.)

Rogers: Where do you think you're going?

Bonny: To help?

Rogers: Oh no you don't. I like you. You'll stay with me.
You'll be my aide de camp. It's a big job.
Do you know all the tasks it entails?

Bonny: ...No.

No sir, I can't say I do.

Rogers: That's just fine.
I don't mind Telling you what to do, lad.
And after our work is done, what a Reference!
Aide de Camp for the Bahamas' Governor?
You'll be the man every man wants to hire;
A popular and influential man!

Bonny: Thank You, Sir! ...Might I ask, how much it Pays?
Only I-I haven't really any money and I—

Rogers: (to All) We have so much to Do to Make this Place.
And yet, we have already done so much.
The worst of the Storm is behind us.
We stand at the Bright Dawning of a new Day!

(all exit. lightning, thunderclap. wind. lightning, thunder.)

SECOND INTERMISSION

During intermission is a worse storm than in the first;
Artist and Bonny carry on a crate and go back into the storm.
the 'scene of desolation' is tidied somewhat; the crate, cracked open to air.
...the storm subsides; the clouds remain.



ACT IV, PART II
OR "NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS"

(Anne and Mary enter with coffee as birds sing;
an overcast dawn.

Anne looks the part of a demure maiden in morning dress.

Mary now wears trousers and a kerchief.

they pull some pamphlets out of the crate and sit to read.

Rogers enters followed by Turnley.)

Turnley: It's true, yer Lordship. I had it from John

"Catch 'im if ye Can" Ham. He has the

Fastest ship in the Bahamas. And he says,

Spanish Privateers have sacked Catt Island,

And Crooked Island, not far South of here!

They Destroyed Both those English settlements!

Rogers: The Spanish Privateers have been at Peace!

Turnley: But Word has it, the Spanish are Comin'

To Providence next!

Rogers: (with finality) Well, I don't believe it.

(Dunks enters.)

Rogers: (cont.) Coffee for me, too, John Dunks, tavern-keep.

(to Anne and Mary) I am somewhat surprised to see you reading.

Mary: With respect, this is a civilization,

So here we do what civilizations do.

We Civil.

Rogers: Yes, I suppose you must do.

And where is your husband, my aide de camp?

Anne: Why, he didn't come home last night. And me,

All alone and afraid, just Wantin' a Man

In that storm... A big strong man, the kind of man

Who can protect a helpless young Woman...

What a brute he was to leave me all alone,

Wasn't he? ...Captain Rogers?

Rogers: I-I-I-I...

(Burgess bangs in.)

Burgess: Cap'n Rogers! Sir. News received of Vane.

He 'as detained several ships already—

Just on 'is way out o Nassau! Word 'as it,
'Is numbers increase swiftly, and, 'e Intends
To find and enlist Blackbeard's men; good men
By the 'undreds, per'aps by the thousands.

Rogers: ...I see! Let's—

(Hornigold bangs in.)

Hornigold: Beggin' yer pardon, yer Honor, but,
Yer soldiers are fallin' Sick! Very Sick.
I think ye'd best go have a look yerself.

Rogers: Of course, I. Let's go—

(Rogers exits with Hornigold.

Bonny enters from his room.)

Bonny: Morning.

Anne: Morning lover.

Mary: Morning.

Burgess: Morning.

Turnley: You were here all the time?

Bonny: Where else should I be?

Turnley: She said you never came home.

Bonny: What business

Is it of yours, Dick?

Anne: Why, Richard Turnley.

I'm surprised at you. I said no such thing.

Turnley: You made a whole speech about it.

Anne: I?

Turnley: About how you were afraid of the storm
And wanted a big strong man to—

Bonny: Watch it, mate.

Anne: Mary, did I suggest any such thing?

Mary: Of course you didn't, sweet. Why would you lie?

Bonny: Why would she lie?

Turnley: That's what I want to know!

I know. She's Seducing Captain Rogers!

Anne: Why, Richard Turnley, how mean you are to me!

(Anne starts to cry like a helpless girl who's so sad.

Woodes Rogers enters.)

Rogers: Now what's happened in Here? Who made her cry?

(Mary points a finger at Turnley.)

(to Turnley) You. Out. I've got enough to worry about.

(Turnley exits.)

(to Bonny) This is no place for a crying woman,

No matter how attractive she may be...

Now! I promised I would teach you what to do.

So take her away, make her lie down, and

Offer her... hashish from Araby.

We shan't be able to spare her a doctor.

(Rogers palms a packet of hashish to Bonny.)

Bonny takes it and exits with Anne, who is no longer crying,

followed by Mary.

Rogers sighs.)

Hornigold: As yev seen, Sir, the residents are well,

It's the newly-arrived men taken ill...

Rogers: As if only fresh European blood

Could draw the infection. The men are Seized

So Suddenly! There must be 100

Sailors sick already. Worse, there's not a

Single Officer who's still fighting fit!

Hornigold: Some seems closer to Death!

Burgess: As sick as that?

Hornigold and Rogers: Yes!

(Dunks returns with a coffee service.

Rogers takes a coffee;

then Hornigold and Burgess take coffees.)

Dunks: I hope you don't mind, but the coffee's black.

Rogers: No milk?

Dunks: No. Seems the cattle have Died!

(beat.)

Burgess: That's rather strange, in't it.

Dunks: Very strange.

(Rogers sips his coffee;

then Hornigold and Burgess sip their coffee.)

Hornigold: ALL the Cows have Died?

Dunks: That we know of, Sir.

(Rogers puts down his cup;

then Hornigold and Burgess put down their cups.)

Rogers: Excuse me for a moment. Carry on.

(Rogers walks outside and vomits.
silence.

Rogers returns to his seat.)

Rogers: (cont.) Gentlemen. I am naming you both
To my Council. We have a great deal of
...Business... excuse me...

(Rogers staggers outside and vomits.

Hornigold and Burgess sip their coffee.

Rogers returns to his seat.)

Rogers: (cont.) The first order of Council business, is...
...I'm unable to attend Council meetings.
Excuse me.

(Rogers goes outside and vomits; he remains at the wall.

Bonny returns from depositing Anne.)

Hornigold: Are you not feeling well, Sir?

Burgess: Look a bit pale.

Rogers: (from the wall) It's nothing. An intestine commotion.
And contagious distempers! God Damn It!
Someone fetch the surgeon to me now!

Bonny: I'll go!

(Bonny exits, avoiding the sick.

Turnley returns.)

Turnley: Beg pardon, Sir, but the report Is confirmed:
A new Spanish Governor has arrived
In Havana, with orders from King Phillip
To Destroy every English Settlement
In the Bahama Islands! To do this:
He's sent 5 Warships, and 1500 men.

Rogers: God damn it man, detach yourself from me!

(Turnley exits, obsequiously.

Rogers vomits.

Bonny enters.)

Bonny: Governor Rogers, Sir, I-I regret,
Your surgeon has Died.

Rogers: Hardly matters now!
That's like a headache to a drowning man...
How Dare the Spanish try to Take this Land
That we are working so hard to Create!?

What the hell kind of Right do they think they have?
Gentlemen, we must defend the fort!;
We must get our soldiers organized!;
Gather the Navy Captains!; Send for them!

Burgess: Oi know where Captain Whitney breakfasted.
(Rogers erps.)

Hornigold: Oh do ye now.

Burgess: Oi recommended it.
Oi shall summon 'im to ye now, yer Lordship.
(Burgess exits.)

Rogers: Do so. But with any luck, the Spanish
Eye has not yet fallen on Providence,
And we shall have Time to Prepare.
(an alarum bell clangs.)

Artist: (as crier) A Spanish ship approaches; a black flag!

Rogers: ...Ha!

(Rogers stiffly retakes his chair with grace and dignity.)

Rogers: (cont.) Ben, you used to be the Pirate Governor;
How did You govern these louts for so long?

Hornigold: Well. I Used to want the Best men about me.
But I've Learned Better now. Ed Teach, Taught me.
Ye want mongrels who can't swim about ye...
For They will Need to keep Yer Ship afloat.

Rogers: (laughs) Well! I Do Need to keep This Ship Afloat!
And mongrels who can't swim Are on the job!
Good Lord above! Nothing else can go wrong!
(Rogers sips his coffee. laughs, a bit manic. burps.)

Burgess returns.)

Burgess: Sir, the Navy Captains all Insist that
They will be Leaving Immediately!
Now that they've escorted ye here, they say,
They consider their job 'ere be done!

Hornigold: ...Leaving?! They can't Leave!

Rogers: They are NOT. LEAVING.
Go tell Captain Whitney and the others,
That I ORDER them to stay! I am the
Governor and Garrison of the Bahaa—

(Rogers runs to vomit.)

Burgess: Oi shall tell them so, of course, yer Honor.
However, Oi do not Believe you ‘ave
The Authority to give ‘Orders’ to
Naval Officers.

Rogers: We shall see about that!
(Artist enters as Burgess leaves.)

Artist: A message for you, Sir, from the Spanish ship.
It comes from the new Governor of Cuba.

Rogers: Just read it to me. What is your name?

Artist: Hacke.

Rogers: Read it to me, Hacke, if you know how.

Artist: Aye! With your permission, I’ll open it, Sir.

It says, “Prove to us that you are a
Legitimate governor, and not a
Pirate, or expect the Worst...” Nothing more!

Rogers: Their eyes are upon us. God almighty.

Artist: At least they’re aware of you personally.
You landed here less than a week ago;
And you, are internationally known.

Rogers: As a potential Pirate. I shall need
To make a Copy of my papers from
The King. Can you do that, Hacke?

Artist: Aye, I can!

Rogers: Good. They’re in my trunk. Bring it here, it’s quite...
...Heavy!

(Rogers dry heaves.)

Artist: Sir, I—

Hornigold: God damn it, man, do as yer told!
(Artist leaves.)

Rogers: Bonny, we must also send some Gifts.
Find me Gifts to send the Cuban Governor.

Bonny: What sort of Things do he like?...

Hornigold: Expensive Things, I’ll wager. Search about.
(Bonny exits.)

Rogers: Ben, what do you suppose has caused this Sick...
Ness?

Hornigold: The rotten pelts, or I’ll be much surprised.
You’ll be right as rain soon enough.

(thunder clap in the distance.

Burgess enters.)

Burgess: Yer Honour, Sir, the Navy Captains swear
They will depart from 'ere soon as they can;
Further, they Declare you have No Power,
Over navy personnel or navy ships.
They seemed resentful of your 'Order,' Sir.

(Artist enters with a heavy trunk.)

Artist: Here is your trunk, sir. And if I may, sir,
Several of your soldiers seem to have Died.

Rogers: ...Perhaps That will slow the Navy's Departure!

Burgess, Beg them. Beg them to stay, in the
Name of England. For if we are beset
By 1500 Spanish now, we shall
Surely lose our place in Providence!

The Trade through the Bahamas shall be held
By the dagos! And our long voyage here,
Shall Already be, Utterly, in Vain.

Burgess: Oi shall beg as if Oi were born to it, Sir.

(Burgess exits.)

Rogers: Hacke, find and copy my Credentials.

Artist: Shall I translate them into Spanish, Sir?

Rogers: 'Shall I translate them into Spanish, sir?'
Don't get Above yerself. Yer a laborer.

But yes, please do translate them to Spanish.

(Bonny enters with an armful of junk.)

Bonny: I found these things, Sir. Vane ransacked the town,
But some of this must be Valuable.

Rogers: Good. Now get a ship and Dependable men.
We'll send the gifts and copy there to Cuba.

Hornigold: With respect, Sir, why not send them back with
The Spanish ship wots already here?

Rogers: Because dago sailors would probably
Steal the gifts and Destroy my credentials.
It's vital they reach Cuba— before it's too late!

Hornigold: You are very wise, Sir. 'Bout it lad!

(Bonny exits. Rogers spits.

Burgess enters.)

Burgess: Yer Honor, 'tis Yer Pardon Oi must Beg;
Captain Whitney of the Rose is leaving, Now.
As are All the other English Captains, Sir.
They 'ave this moment gone to weigh their anchors!

(Rogers spits.
Turnley enters.)

Turnley: Sir, I hear tell that Vane is at Abaco...
That's not more'n 100 clicks North!
Rumor is, Vane wants to "sink All the ships"?—
But his crew will not be so "inhuman."
It seems mayhaps, they quarrel 'mongst themSelves?...

Rogers: ...Get away from me, leechmouth!
(Turnley exits.)

Rogers: (cont.) Mayhaps Vane will Sink Cap'n Whitney for me!
Cowards!

Hornigold: Sneaking puppies!

Rogers: To fly from danger!
If it weren't for the huge Spanish Force; and
For the growing gang of rebel Pirates;
ALL sailing Here, with Murder in their Hearts—
The English Would Be Here; God Save The King!
(Bonny enters.)

Bonny: Sir, I have found a ship and men to send
To Cuba. The best men I could find, Sir.
...Many of Yorn have Died now. May be
So many as 70, 80.

Rogers: I only came with 500! Including
The men in the ships now sailing away!...
Ben, how many men would you say Vane has,
With and without Blackbeard's abandoned men?

Hornigold: Without Blackbeard's men: near 75.
With Blackbeard's men, more like 700.
(beat.)

Rogers: What I'm about to say, stays in this room.
I am not Confident we can beat Vane's men
If they were only 75.
I am Certain we will lose a Fight,
Against another 700.

And assuming, for the moment, our Gifts
Reach Cuba and Appease the governor there—
Meaning we will not be Immediately
Thrown into a Spanish Conflict—
It is Vital that we cut off Blackbeard's men.
Because, against Vane's company Alone,
I believe: We Shall Prevail!

(hear hear.)

Hornigold: Captain Rogers, give me the honor, Sir.
Edward "Blackbeard" Teach was My protégé.
I am he who Made him, and I am he
Who's Best able to capture, or Kill him.

Rogers: About it, with my blessing, Hornigold.
Remove the smoking head from off the beast.
And meanwhile, in the Interest of our Lives,
I shall institute a Martial Law in Nassau.

(Dunks appears, alarmed.

Rogers draws his sword.)

Rogers: (cont.) The rest of you, I hereby Deputize.
Organize around the clock Patrols.
Watch the horizons and watch every street.
Organize others to rebuild the Fort.

Dunks: Sir, if I may, Vane's company has Took
Most of our Food from here, or else Burned—

Rogers: Then clear a patch to grow potatoes and
Go Fish!

Dunks: That takes Time, sir, and—

Rogers: GET TO IT.

ALL OF YOU. Look lively now; keep aloof!

I need to clear my head. I'll take a walk.

(Rogers exits;

no one moves.)

Hornigold: Ye do what he says, or see what I'll do.

(Hornigold exits.)

Turnley: Makes a man think of defecting to the
Pirates. Not that I would, of course. Not me.

(Turnley exits.)

Artist: Finished with the copy.

Bonny: Help me with these gifts?
The ship to take this gear should near be ready.

(Artist and Bonny exit.)

Burgess: It's an 'Ell of a thing, John Dunks, tavern-keep.

Dunks: Sure, no one's ever seen such times as these.

Burgess: Well. 'Ere Oi go to order Martial Law.

Dunks: Bear up, Burgess.

Burgess: To the bitter end.

(Burgess exits.)

Dunks polishes a cup and thinks; what's there to be done...

we hear Anne and Mary laughing from the hashish.

Rogers enters; glad the room is empty but for Dunks.)

Rogers: ...This is a Total Failure!

The Only thing protecting English Interests

Is a Promise, from Ben, the Archpirate!

And every person here seems to be Poor!

And so Addicted to being Idle

They act as if they'd rather Die than Work!

They seem to morally hate it!

And they can't be trusted to keep Watch;

The few who we've managed to station

Are either drinking at posts, or asleep!

I've surprised several of them already!

(sighs) ...I don't fear but they'll all stand beside me

If the Spanish attempt to Invade.

...But should their old Friends, have Strength enough,

To Design to Attack me... I much doubt

Whether I should find one half to join with me...

If They came Together...they'd carry the day...

(Turnley enters.)

Turnley: Yer Lordship must forgive my intrusion,

But word comes that yer gifts shall not reach Cuba.

The entire ship of men what we have sent—

They all must'a gone an' turned Pirate!

They just been seen sailing toward Africa, Sir.

Quite the other direction from Cuba.

Rogers: (in agonies) Ant Bollocks on a sandy beach! Get out!!

(Turnley exits.)

Dunks: ...Prob'ly, Spain asking for yer Credentials
Was a Ruse. Just a bit o Policy,
To say they Tried to keep the Peace 'fore they
Attacked ye anyway.

Rogers: Aye... Aye, prob'ly.

...I think we're due for some Good News!

(Jennings appears in the doorway.)

Jennings: I'm your man. Charles Vane has been Captured!

Rogers: Oh thank God! Tell me how it happened!

Jennings: It seems his men Deposed him and Marooned him
On a 30 foot patch of barren beach,
In the Lucayous Islands, just East of here. [like Luck-HI-youse]
He was Found, not by Authorities, but,
By a retired, and Reforméd, Pirate,
Name of Holford, who knew Vane and his Cruel
Reputation. "Charles, old friend," says he,
"I shan't Trust you aboard my ship unless
I carry you Prisoner. Otherwise
I shall find you with my men, caballing,
To knock me on the head and steal my ship—
And oft ye'll run away a'Pyrating.
If I find you upon this island still
When I come back, I'll take you to Jamaica...
And Hang you myself 'til you're dead."

Rogers: Bravely said!

Turnley: Where are you getting your information?

Jennings: (ignores Turnley)

A different ship comes by; Vane gives a false name.
The ship gives Vane passage for work on the crew.
But Holford, our Reforméd pirate friend,
Was Also invited aboard that ship,
By its Captain, as a guest to dinner.
As he was making his way down the deck,
He chanced to see Vane working in the hold.
Right away, the Captain was Informed
Of his castaway's true identity, and,
In moments, Vane was at gunpoint,
As Holford's men clamped him in irons,

And all of the men aboard Celebrated!
A humble ship of Traders had Captured
America's most wanted pirate!
Vane is now on his way to Jamaica...
There, he'll be kept Behind Bars until Tried;
A Prisoner of The King that he Defied.
Rogers: This is brilliant. Brilliant! We're Saved!
There can be No Fear of a Pirate Coup!
Their division 'gainst each other makes Me Strong!

Jennings: Congratulations, Sir!

('congratulations gov'nor,' 'well done yes.')

Dunks: An if I may sir, your Sickness subsides?

Rogers: It does! God be praised for this, and not I!

If only we could be assured the Same
Division runs through Blackbeard's followers...

(Artist and Bonny enter.)

Artist: Governor Rogers, Sir. News of Blackbeard.

Rogers: Speak of the Devil!

Jennings: You know not how True.

Artist: A report has been intercepted, Sir.

(Dunks goes to fetch Anne and Mary from the other room.)

Rogers: I pray that this report be more good news!

Artist: You shall Judge, Sir. First, Blackbeard is now,
Legally, a Citizen in Good Standing.

He has begged Pardon for his previous Crimes,
And has yet to be indicted anew.

He has taken a residence at Plum Point
On the edge of Bath in North Carolina.

He has been seen in Philadelphia,
Shopping, at 77 High Street;
It's said that he buys freely and pays well.

He was also seen out at the Theatre,
More than once, in Williamsburg;
Always wearing his sword by his side;
Seems, they won't arrest him for going armed...

By the people, he has been well received;
But out of Love or Fear, we cannot say.
And he has Married! A sweet young creature

Of Means, her father owns a Plantation, and,
The Royal Gov'nor of North Carolina
Himself, Performed their Wedding.

Jennings: (smirking) Is that right.

Artist: Aye. And Finally, it's reported that
Blackbeard has been seen out Fishing. In short,
A Picture of happy retirement!

Rogers: James, can you confirm this man's report?

Bonny: Yes, sir. That's the news as we were told it.

Rogers: There's Hope for a Speedy End to All Our Cares!
James, I'll promote you for this!

Bonny: Thankee, Sir!

Rogers: John Dunks, a round of drinks! We celebrate!

(Burgess enters.)

Turnley lurks somewhere almost imperceptibly outside.)

Burgess: Oi see yev heard the good news, yer Honor?

Rogers: I have! Vane captured! Blackbeard retired!

Burgess: And mayhaps we shall be Safer still, Sir.

Oi have some information— a rumor.

Rogers: Join us in a drink, drink up, and tell us!

Burgess: Ye'll 'ave 'eard of Alexander Spotswood,
The Royal Gov'nor of Virginia?

Rogers: Indeed I have. I owe him my thanks. For,
Were it not for his many Complainings
About his Fears of you Pirates so near,
There's a fair chance that I, would not, be Here!
That said, my thanks aside, I have heard he's
An Extremely disagreeable man.

Burgess: The very one, Sir!

Anne: My, yes.

Mary: We've had him.

Anne: When we were Lost and in Need of Saving.

Mary: He bragged to us about how he had Lavished
The Money for his County— on his Mansion;
How he transferred 85 Thousand acres
Of Public land to himSelf—

Anne: Through blind trusts.

Mary: He claimed to have controlled the appointments

Of all of the Priests in 'his' Anglican Church—
Burgess: Fer all these reasons, an' rather more,
The Virginian Legislature's workin'
T' remove Spotwood as gov'nor.

Dunks: Good fer them.

Burgess: This is the New information that Oim
Given to understand: Spotswood Intends
To say, very publicly, that Blackbeard's
A threat to 'is Commerce; and that 'is Presence
Is attracting more Pirates. Then, 'bravely,' he
Intends to send 'is Virginian Militia
Across state lines to go an' Kill Blackbeard.
'E 'opes this will Divert 'is state's Attention;
Put 'is own behaviour in a better light.
...And Sir, to be The Man 'oo Killed Blackbeard?
He'd get the Attention of the World!

Jennings: Good Hunting.

('aye' 'sure' 'he'll be needin good luck.')

Rogers: You say this is the rumor. ...Is it true?...

Burgess: Sir, if Oi were Spotswood? Oi'd kill Blackbeard.

Jennings: (obviously) And so would I kill him!

Artist: And I.

Bonny: And I.

Rogers: Then here's to our Colonial TRIUMPH!

(all glasses are raised;
a gunshot is heard, interrupting their toast;
they listen;
then an alarum bell clangs.
Woodes sips his drink;
then all sip drinks;
and all exit with drinks still in hand.
as the day fades...
we hear a cow dying, until dead.
night falls;
heavens tremble with shooting stars.)



ACT V
OR “EXPULSIS PIRATIS, RESTITUTA COMMERCIA”

(a new day dawns; red sky in the morning, sailor take warning.
enter Mary and Artist, shirts undone, smokin pipes;
Artist carries a large blank book.)

Artist: —With all of the Upheaval in the world,
It's not like it's a high priority;
I shouldn't Protest for different treatment;
It's not that I Deserve different treatment;
I don't Want to be a mere 'Laborer'...
But, I'm alive and well and here with You,
And goodness knows, we All have our Labors...

Mary: Why then 'Labor' under Dreams of Grandeur, too?

Artist: ...What else is there to Labor for, of Worth?!

If not for Dreams of Grandeur, who would we be?

Every Grand thing ever seen, ever done,

Would never be seen, and never be done!

Egads, man, never ask me not to Dream.

Mary: What then Is your Dream of Grandeur, Hacke?

Artist: ...There is a Thing that Only I can Do...

And it would be GRAND to Do it— and Live!

That's all I Dream of doing in this world;

To do what I do, and have that be Enough,

To be All that I do to Live. How Grand!

Not in mansions, mind, just a cottage somewhere,

And a little put besides for living with.

Mary: I Feel the Same. But what IS it You Do?

None of us knows!

(Artist pauses to look Mary over, appraisingly.)

Artist: I will show you.

(Artist carefully opens a large blank book to a particular page.

we cannot see the page, only they can.

Mary's breath catches, a huge and filled pause.)

Mary: William Hacke. That is fucking BEAUTIFUL.

Artist: That's what I 'do.'

Mary: I've never seen the like!...

Artist: Well, that's what I mean, not every one can—

Mary: No one else can!; who else on Earth can—
Christ, I'm almost weepin now; I'm Moved—

Artist: I always Feel I Should be Doing This.
It's not that I Mind the laboring, just—

Mary: Ye Should be able to do this and live;
Anyone who can do THIS, SHOULD do this!

Artist: But I could Never do just this and live.

So I do anything they let me do;

And, I should consider myself Lucky!

I'm useless, see. I haven't other skills.

Mary: No skills! They are takin Advantage of You.

They should be Proud to Support what You Do.

They're Wasting and Exploiting You! Look at this! Look!

Artist: If the genius of a man were a plant,

A sugar cane, or spice, or pineapple,

It would be ripped out of the ground when it was small,

Locked inside a dark and dusty cupboard,

And screamed at from a distance to survive.

Mary: ...I know I'm just a whore, and yer an Artist,

Yet I live in that dusty cupboard, too.

Artist: (thinks) ...Doing the work that's set in front of you...

No matter how distasteful it may be—

Mary: But seein and learnin things no one else does;

That no one Else will ever see or learn because—

Artist: They, are too Cowardly to place a Hand Inside

The dark and dusty cupboard where we Live!

Mary: They are blind to Our world.

Artist: But we see Them.

Vying with each other to Steal the light,

Grasping and choking each other like weeds!

Afraid of mighty trees that'd shade them out...

And thriving in the wastelands of the world.

Mary: Never to see our few blooms in the darkness,

Artist: But WE: Were BEAUTIFUL.

Mary: ...Aye! We were, weren't we? Christ. William Hacke.

We Were Beautiful. I'm weepin!

Artist: (also verkleempt) And that:

Makes me Smile!

(they hug.)

Rogers: (from off) Damn this place!

Hornigold: (from off) Sir, I've Grand news fer ye, Sir!

(Rogers bangs in

followed by Hornigold, Burgess, and Bonny.)

Rogers: Damn the lazy citizens of this place.

I take it back; they are not Worth a damn.

The only ones even Pretending to Work

Are the darkies! Thank God you've kept slaves here...

Burgess: Former slaves, Sir.

Rogers: We must rebuild our fort!

Hornigold: Cap'n Rogers, Sir, ye must give an ear!

Rogers: Oh must I. What. What. What-what-what-what-what.

Hornigold: Grand news, Cap'n Rogers! Blackbeard is dead!

(Artist and Mary freeze.

Dunks quicksteps in to listen.)

Rogers: (was expecting more) ...Good!

Artist: Gads!

Mary: God.

Burgess: Good.

(pause.)

Hornigold: (was expecting more)

...Ah. Well, he is, Sir.

Rogers: Is there anything else?

Let me be more precise. Is there other News—

From England? Did you see a Postman's Ship?

Hornigold: (bemused) ...A Postman's Ship, ye say?

(Hornigold, Burgess, Artist, Bonny and Mary all chuckle,
surprised.)

Hornigold: (cont.) No, Sir, I can't say as I did. Captain.

They ain't been known t' send Postmen Here...

(they chuckle again, derisive an' discrete.)

Rogers: Merciful God, where the fuck is your Mercy?

I've not heard from Anyone in England

Since this MisAdventure began! No one!

And now the Spanish ARMADA sails here,

And our fort is fucked! And weapons are scarce!

...That Charles Vane took All Things here of Worth;
I Inherited a Scene of Desolation!
I spent all that was left of My Fortune
Just in getting Here; I'm broke—

Bonny: Broke?!

Mary: (rote) Pinched, skint, bust...

Paupered, bankrupted, destitute, Ruined.

(Rogers impatiently knocks Mary down.

Artist does not help her.

Rogers doesn't skip a beat.)

Rogers: I have been Forced, by Impending PERIL,

To purchase Vital War Supplies... on Credit!!

I'm surrounded by English Colonies—

On the same side as us— Facing a common foe—

And yet— I have spent— Twenty-Thousand Pounds

Of My Own Money, for England, on CREDIT?!

To defend this outpost? This? This-this-this?

(Rogers goes distract for a moment, visibly shaking.)

Burgess: (low) 'E ain't been well. Relapsed.

Hornigold: (low) Bad?

Burgess: (low) Almos' died!

(Hornigold crosses himself and then spits,

as Burgess spits and then crosses himself.)

Rogers: Merciful God, let me at least, Someday,

Be able to pay off the loans' INTEREST.

I could Die Proud, just owing The Principle!!

I've written to Everyone. This is Insane.

(Rogers crumples.

Hornigold approaches him kindly now,

as he might a dim invalid.)

Hornigold: At least, ye won't need t' fear of Blackbeard.

Rogers: At this point— I'm almost Sorry. If he—

If all the pyrates Would have come here...

We Could have beat The Spanish, I bet.

I don't mean just the fifteen-hundred coming,

I mean the Whole Spanish Fleet. If—

...How did it happen. How did Blackbeard die.

Did he die Well? Was it You?

Hornigold: No, not me.

‘Twas like an olde tale, but in a new land—
Like the tales of Arthur’s knights, but on the sea.
A handsome young Virginian officer,
Is sent with blessings from his Governor,
To Hunt as best he can an evil man;
An’ he finds the evil man out Fishin’;
Just in Sight, at a Telescope’s distance.
The officer readied his men, Teeming
They was on the deck, the ship, tight as a tick,
An’ looking mighty Suspicious to a Glass
Lookin back— fer Evil can see Evil Ways...

Rogers: Amen.

All: Armen. Amen.

Hornigold: Blackbeard espied ‘em, an’ warned the men with ‘im,
Who readied themselves for a Helluva Fight
At the edge of the Ocracoke Island...
An’ ALL actin as innocent as can be—
The soldiers thought they’d Fooled the pirates— ‘Til!
At hailin’ distance, Blackbeard greeted ‘em!
Cheerful-like he called out, “Damn you villains!
Who are you, and whence came you?” And ‘e spat. (he spits.)
...As cold as stars, the officer called back:
“You can see by our Colours, WE’RE no Pirates!”
(Closer they are comin all the while now.)
An’ Blackbeard lifts up high a glass of liquor,
An’ toasts ‘em, thus: “I drink damnation to You
And Your Men! To you Cowardly Puppies!
For We will neither Give nor Take Quarter!”
And the officer surl’d back, that’s “fine with him.”
An’ they could see each other’s eyes at last,
As Blackbeard tied a ribbon in’s beard,
An’ Ordered his Crew to Fire the Long Nines!
...Where Soldiers had teemed, was a deck soaked with blood.
An’ when their 2 ships bobbed as near as
“Half a pistol shot,” Blackbeard was the first
Over the rail, “with a rope in his hand
To lash the two ships”— an’ Give No Quarter!

Now upon that bloody deck, two figures stood:
 The handsome officer and fearsome pyrate.
 These two faced off. Man to man. Sword to sword.
 The officer thrusts; the point strikes metal,
 An' bended it to the hilt! Blackbeard's turn,
 He Shatters the guard of the officer's sword,
 And cuts off the officer's fingers!
 The officer jumps back, casts away his sword,
 Fires his pistol, port-handed, an' he wings Blackbeard!
 And Then, up from the hold... more soldiers came,
 Who had been hiding down below fer Fear,
 Who now felt Bold to have a slash an rip;
 An' Stabbed the wounded Blackbeard with their knives;
 An even more men fired guns upon 'Im.
 An' Blackbeard stood an fought til he could not.
 An when He Fell, it were with "5 shot...
 And 20 dismal cuts in his body."
Rogers: He died Well, then. But what of his Treasure?
 We could Use some of that Huge Take he took!
Hornigold: There were no wealth aboard, Sir, but gold dust,
 Some cocoa and sugar, a beautiful Cup, and—
Dunks: (explodes) 300 ships, he never killed a captive!
 Not once, in all those ships he took at sea!
 And it took all of you to murder him!
 The only man who ever stood for me!
 The only one who stood for all of us!
 (Dunks pulls his gun, trying not to shake.)
 Dear God! Let us know Mercy for each other!
 Let us know, why such men do the way they do!
 (to God) Let us know Mercy for YOU, having Made Us!
 (to Woodes) ...'Tis in the name of Mercy, I Kill You.
 (he fires his gun at Rogers,
 but nothing happens.
 beat.
 all are surprised,
 and still.
 at length, Rogers holds out his cup to Dunks be refilled.
 Dunks exits the room, overcome.)

Rogers: (with a sigh) He's right about one thing, it is a shame!
If only some Pirates would Return Here!
I'd give them no hard work, or hard words!
If Only they would Come and Stand With Me!...

(Rackham bangs in wearing a lady's lace hat, 20 watches,
and draped in silk stockings.)

Rackham: I have returned!

Rogers: (to Hornigold) Who is this creature?

Bonny: He was one of 'em helped Vane t' shoot at ye!

Rackham: (scoffs, to Bonny)

Hardly, m'good mon sewer. Vane Kidnapped me.

Artist: He what?

Rackham: (strutting, to Artist)

M'good mon sewer, if ye knew moy, ye'd know

How I Hate pirates. ...Taken 'gainst Moy Will,

I am he who tole Vane 'No' and stopped 'im.

I Am HE who Marooned Vane. JE SUIS... HE.

I showed him wot's wot for his messing about—

An' yeet, fer moy Protesting part in 'is

Mischief, I crave your Pardonne, Sir Governor.

Rogers: Have you Vane's men with you? What of them? Come!

Rackham: Those cowards all runned off first chance they got!

Too frightened of my puissance.

Rogers: You're Alone?!...

(Rackham preens.

Rogers goes distract for a moment.

Burgess and Hornigold share a look.)

Rogers comes to.)

Rogers: We need to join all the forces we can.

I grant your pardon. And your penance for

Your 'unwilling' acts against ourselves shall be...

You will hand out all the pamphlets in that crate.

Rackham: I cain't do That, Sir Governor! I cain't read.

Rogers: I don't care. You don't need to Understand them.

You need to hand them out. Urgently. Look.

We need to Imbue our citizens, our

Very lazy citizens, with feelings of

Christian Charity. We need their trust. And,

We need their hard work. ... We need their Money!
Give those. Share those. Go. Go. Go-go-go-go-go.
I must go write to my Colleagues again.

Filthy Eels in dark holes, every one of them!...

(Rogers hauls himself about to exit, at a painful limp,
followed by Hornigold, Burgess, and Bonny.)

Hornigold: (as they go, generally)

They say Blackbeard's body swum round the ship
3 times after they had Beheaded 'im,
And chucked 'im o'er the side into The Sound;
3 times before 'e disappeared, they say.
A young lad wrote "a sailors song" about it,
Name of Benjamin Franklin, in Boston,
Guess 'e works at a printer's; there's copies 'bout.

(Hornigold has a copy of the poem.)

Bonny: How does it go? "a sailor's song."

Hornigold: (reads carefully) "It's better to swim in the sea below
Than to swing in the air and feed the crow
Says jolly Ned Teach of Bristol."

Burgess: 'Ned Teach' 'e called 'im? Not 'Blackbeard'? Cur'ous.

Hornigold: (nodding) An' a 'sailor's song' not a 'pirate's song.'
(they are gone.)

Rackham picks up pamphlets and thoughtfully stuffs them
alongside stockings and watches.)

Rackham: So these are Christian Charities... All mine...

These Must makes me Better than thens without... these...

Fer they're without, an' I'm withal... o these...

'Tis on Moy, to Inboo them withal... o these...

Christian Charities...

(Dunks comes back on, wiping eyes on an apron.)

Dunks: (calls) Anne, ye best get out here. There be new news.

(generally) 'Tis a black day to a man like me, John Dunks.

Rackham: I never felt like this before! Not once.

I feels Superior somehow! ... Pamphlets...

Mary: (to Dunks) I can't believe Blackbeard is dead

Artist: Nor I.

Kidnap aside, he was a decent man.

And there are Not very many of them.

Rackham: I never been superior to none!

Dunks: ‘A beautiful Cup’ he had at the last.

D’ye think he meant to trade it here to me?

He will not need to Trade in Fiddler’s Green...

Rackham: I’m born again!

(Anne enters.)

Anne: (to Rackham) I like your hat.

Rackham: Anne Bonny, fair! It’s yours. I’m yours. Oh Anne.
I have returned to you!

Anne: I can Have the hat?

Give it here then.

Rackham: Take it dearest Annie,
And me heart with it, too.

Anne: (about the hat) Oh, it’s darling!
Are those silk stockings?

Dunks: Anne, Blackbeard is dead!

Rackham: Anne, I deposed Vane! I am Cap-ee-tan!

Artist: (to Mary) I could have sworn he just accepted Pardon.

Mary: He just accepted Pardon, and Christ, too!

Anne: Give me the stockings, too.

Rackham: Well. Jest two.

I must Sell some to make us our Fortune!

Anne: Our fortune? From stockings?

Rackham: Start us off on

The right foot, as it were, for our honeymoon!

Anne: Honeymoon...

(Anne takes and examines a watch
with an expert’s appraising eye.)

Dunks: Did ye not hear me, Anne? Blackbeard’s dead!

Anne: I heard. Doesn’t change the price of coffee.

Rackham: Annie. I deposed Vane. I’m Captain Now.
And I feels I’m worthy t’ ask ye now...

Fer yer hand in matriMoney. Oh Anne.

(Rackham take a knee.)

Will ye marry me?

Anne: Fine! I’m bored of James.
He’s a terrible tattle. No one likes him.

Rackham: Oh Anne! Ye won’t ferget this!

Rackham: I did!

Anne: He did Say so!

Bonny: Well I don't believe it. How'd it happen.

Rackham: He became unpopular.

Bonny: Why was that.

Rackham: He said Not to take a ship.

Bonny: Why was that.

Rackham: Becoz it woz too big to take.

Bonny: How so.

Rackham: Becoz o the Size of it.

Bonny: That makes sense.

Rackham: Well, I says, we should come up alongside;
An' if we all went over the rail,
We could fight, an' let the best boys win the day!
Wouldn't matter how big the ship woz, see.

Bonny: Makes sense to me.

Rackham: Made sense to most of us!
But Vane says no! 'That's too rash an' desperate
An enterprise; the man o war bein'
Twice our force, twenty-odd guns; she'd sink us
Before we could get on board...'

Bonny: Where's his guts.

Rackham: Jest so! We didn't like it One Bit.
But he Ordered us to Leave, he Ordered us!
Used War Powers, he did, the filthy swine.
An' we obeyed, an' sailed away, fer Him.
Fer one man's say-so. Oh, it made me mad.

Artist: Sounds like he saved your lives!

Rackham: What do Yoo know?

Bonny: Ya, what do you know? You ain't a pirate!

Artist: Well no, but if you were outnumbered—

Rackham: What have NUMBERS to do with Anything. Eh?

Bonny: NOTHING.

Rackham: NOTHING. Numbers COUNT fer NOTHING.
And, I'll have yoo know, we voted Vane OUT
SEVENTY-FIVE For, t' jest sixteen against!

Artist: ...This conversation's too lofty for me.

Mary: Aye. And for me. Let us leave them now.

Anne: Aye. They have important Man Talk to do.

Rackham: (bows to Anne) Indeed we do, madam moozle.

(to Bonny) We do.

(Anne, Mary, Artist and Dunks all start to go.)

Mary: I used to think that MEN walked on the earth...

Artist: ...Great Men?

Mary: Aye, Great Men.

Anne, Artist and Dunks: I used to think so, too.

(they are gone; Bonny and Rackham are alone.)

Bonny: 'Man Talk.' Anne wouldn't Understand Man Talk.

Women. Got small brains. I Learned that. It's Science.

Rackham: Oi don't know fer science, but Oi has Perceived:

Many women wear preetty ear-bobs so

Ye'll mind the bobs, and not what's on their Minds...

Bonny: (nods, thinkin he's agreein)

They're empty. You were Say'n, ye voted Vane out?

Rackham: (nods) We passed a Resolution 'gainst his Honor,

And Dignity; branded him a Coward;

Deposed him from command; an' turned him Oot

With marks of Infamy. Then we cut 'im

Adrift. And they named Me... Their Cap-ee-tain.

Bonny: I still don't believe it.

Rackham: Still it is true!

And it leads moy to the subject of our

Man Talk. Now that I am of the Highest Rank:

I want you. To give me your wife.

Bonny: What?

Why would I go and Give My Wife to you?...

...When I can Sell her to ye fer some cash?

(beat.)

Rackham: A "wife sale," then.

Bonny: A wife sale. Aye.

Anne's Father is worth a pretty penny.

Rackham: Aye, Anne's father has done well fer hisself,

And well-known he still is about these isles.

But he cast that Sweet Creature out o his house

An so we'll be asking no money from him.

A fairweather father he was. Fer shame!

Bonny: He cast her out becoz she stabbed her maid.

Anne: (off) Allegedly!

Bonny: She beat a boy for try'n to kiss her
Half to Death!

Rackham: An' too bad it weren' Whole to the Death.

Anne: (off) I never killed anyone in my life!

Bonny: You know that ain't true, Anne!

Anne: (off) Oh, yes it is!

It's their heart pumping their blood out that kills 'em!

Bonny: Don't be eavesdroppin, Anne. This ain't fer you.

Anne: (entering) Maybe it ain't For me, but it's About me.
Bad form to talk like I ain't in the room.

Bonny: Ye weren't in the room. Ye were eavesdroppin.

Anne: (wistful) I wasn't. Jamesy. I don't like the man
You've become. That Woodes Rogers is a bad
Influence. And he's broke! And you're broke. And
I am leaving. I want t' be a Pirate.

I want t' live life t' the Fullest!

I want Revenge on Civilized Men!...

(beat.)

Bonny: ...Ferget the wife sale, Jacky, you kin Have her.

No, I'll Trade her fer one o them watches.

What gallant ship'd ye take for these? Solid gold!

Rackham: Oi Ordered us intos Dangerous waters—

Fer with great Risk Always come great Rewards:

Right in the sight of the Port Royal streets,

We flew the black an took a private ship;

Jest some poor old Jamaicans, nobodies, but,

They had all This hidden. Must've been Stolen...

And now, fer the fair Anne, this watch be Yorn.

Anne: You are Not trading Me for a stolen watch.

Bonny: It's only fair, Anne FULFORD. 'Ye stole me heart!'

Rackham: Annie's right. Her hand's worth more'n solid gold
Stolen goods... Oi will trade you Anne, fer these!

Pamphlets. Oh how Oi hate to part with even one.

...But, as Oi Account Anne my Heart's Treasure,

So shall Oi pay fer her with Christian Love!

Ye can have the lot of 'em, James Bonny.

Tho it pains moy to the Heart t' give 'em up!

Bonny: (impressed) This is how deals are done! A bargain.

Rackham: A bargain!

Anne: You're trading me for pamphlets.

Bonny: What's it to You what th' bargains 'tween Men be?

Annie, you jest said, This is what ye want;

And yer always Sayin how I'm not Listenin!!—

It's terrible, Jacksy! Yer doin me

A favor! Maybe I been wrong 'bout you.

Rackham: Next time, judge yerself before ye judge me!

...Lo! tho Oi've Sacrificed all me pamphlets,

Oi am made the Greater in their Sacrifice!

Oi Still feels Supeeryer! 'Tis a Miracle!

(Artist and Mary enter with a scroll.)

Artist: Divorce papers, madam moozle?

Anne: (taking the scroll, amused) Hey. Hey.

Only Calico Jack gets to call me that.

Mary: I can call ye 'madam moozle' can't I?

Anne: Why of course You can, Mary. 'Mon sewer.'

(reading the scroll) We'll need a legal witness to our marks.

Bonny: (brags to Mary) I can sign my name.

Anne: Who shall our witness be?

Jamesy, you Decide for Both of us once more,

For old time's sake.

Bonny: Dick Turnley, then. I'll get him.

Anne: You're a lamb.

Bonny: Won't be long. He's always about.

(Bonny goes, beat,

Bonny enters with Turnley.)

Bonny: (cont.) Lurkin behind that big burnt-out tree.

Lord love him.

Turnley: Jest keeping an eye on me mates.

I'm the sort o man ye can trust has yer back.

Now what might I be doing fer you good folk?

Bonny: We need ye to act as Legal Witness.

Anne and me is getting a divorce.

Turnley: Oh no, no, no! A divorce? That won't do.

'Tis against the stony laws o God and man!

Mary: I couldn't say for God, but as for man,
We got the legal paperwork right here.

Turnley: Do not persist in this, Heathen! Harlot!
Abomination among Humankind!

Anne: Dick, fer fuck's sake, just watch us make our marks.

Bonny: I can sign my name.

Turnley: I will not witness.

The Governor o the Bahamas would

Never approve. Do not persist in this:

Or you'll be forcin me to Inform him...

James, think of yer job, mate. It's too risky.

Anne, think of yer wicked reputation

Getting wickedderest an wider known...

I'm try'n to Save the both of you, I am.

Anne: My reputation ain't half so wicked

As it will be if you don't witness this.

I swear on my life, I will whip you to death.

Turnley: I see. In that case.

(Turnley runs away.

Anne throws something after him.)

Anne: That little creep will go Tattling now!

He'll go get the gov'nor; they'll make a scene,

And they'll never let us get divorcéed now...

Bonny: What business is this of theirs?

Anne: Nevermind.

(to Rackham) If we canno' get married on land...

We two shall matelote and go to sea! [sounds like 'Matt, hello']

Rackham: But, a matelote is jest fer sea Men.

Mary: Matelotes are for Mates. Comes from the French.

I'm sure you knew that?

Rackham: Ah oui, je comprends.

Mary: I met some ladies who were matelotes.

Anne: I slept with shopkeepers, were matelotes.—

They had. The most. Charming shops...

(a new thought has just occurred to Anne...)

Artist: Whatever is a 'matelote'?...

Mary: A Partnership, the same as man an' wife.

Anne: Mary, why don't we matelote, too?

You and I and Jack, the three of us!

Calico Jack wouldn't mind, would ye Jack?

Rackham: ...Oi didn' Know Oi could Mate with ye Both!

Mary: ...To matelote Anne, sure I'd matelote you!

Rackham: (grins) ...It's loike we share 1 mind between us 3.

(Rackham puts an arm around each;

Anne breaks away absently, furiously thinking onward...)

Anne: Think of it. We three. Shall Command the Sea!...

And all the world shall tremble in Our Wake!!

Rackham: The world takes everythin; now We shall Take!...

Mary: We may be outcast, but we shall be Free;

We three shall Navigate our DESTINY!...

Anne: The Sea does not discriminate.

It accepts all black sails Unfurled....

In our Unity lies our strength, Mates.

Together, we three shall Conquer the World!

Artist: I find, "three of a trade can never agree."

Bonny: I haven found That to be True— have you?

(beat. Artist moves on from the Irony.)

Artist: Which of you three do I call 'cap-ee-tan'?

(together.)

Anne: Me.

Mary: Anne.

Rackham: Me.

(beat.)

Anne: You know, Mates, I'm thinking Jack is right.

The first trick in a magic show, is this:

They tell you 'the magician does the tricks.'

The magician does nothing, he's just there for show...

It's his Pretty Assistants... they're the ones who Know

How to do the Tricks. They know how to... Disappear.

Calico Jack Rackham shall be our Captain,

But I shall be the one who is in Charge.

All those in favor?

Mary: Aye!

Rackham: ...Oi do nothing, yet Oi'm cap'n, still? Aye!

Anne: Motion passes. Jacky's captain. I'm in charge.

Rackham: This is gwan to be like gwan up to Heaven!

Dunks: There was a time when pirates slept

They did not dream of heaven

But of being in a tavern

In the Pirate Republic, here.

Turnley: (off) Here, sir! They're in here! Hereherehereherehere!

(Rogers enters,

followed eagerly by Turnley,

and wearily by Hornigold and Burgess.)

Rogers: It's like I have a parrot in my ear!

I heard you. Don't repeat yourself like that.

Turnley: Ye walk so slowly!!— I beg pardon. Sir.

Rogers: You needn't have screamed for My Attention—

On THIS. But now that I am here. John Dunks,

Tavern-keep: a bucket of wash-water, please.

(Dunks instantly produces one; rings out its dirty rag;
his eyes averted; face expressionless.)

Rogers: (cont.) Thank you. Now dump that water on Anne.

Anne:

WHAT?!

(immediately, Dunks does so.)

Rogers: Wash your body. Wash your mind. Wash your soul.

Anne Bonny, that wash-water should cool you off.

Now I want you to Promise me something:

Be a good girl, live with your husband,

And keep no more loose company. Promise me.

Anne: And what if I don't?

Rogers: ...With Everything that's going on Right Now.

I can't Believe This is our conversation...

Hornigold: That were a good cuck-dunking, Cap'n Rogers.

Does me heart good t' see Anne... drippin' wet.

Burgess: Makes me want t' bang a pot an' pan. Shame!

(Burgess points at Anne.

Hornigold and Turnley follow suit.)

Hornigold: Shame.

Turnley: SHAME SHAME SHAME!

Burgess: Shame! Shame!

Hornigold: Shame.

Rogers: That's enough.

Look, Anne. Come here. I'm not some Heartless man.
I'm not insensible of how things are.
You know. For women. I've owned several girls,
Much like you. I've had to Sacrifice them...
Had to Trade them unto heathens for supplies.
One pretty girl, I traded to a Priest.
And I knew when he took her hand from mine
He would Break a Commandment Over Her,
And wipe his sin with the church's indulgence.
I know things are hard for pretty women.
I know, Anne. I know. Come here. Now Promise me.
Promise me you'll be a good little girl.
Oh don't cry. Don't cry now. I see you're sorry.

(Rogers is holding Anne close, despite the wet.)

Anne: I AM a good little girl. Captain. Sir.

But life is Hard. It's just so Hard for me.

Rogers: I know, I know. It's not your fault. Sh-sh.

Women just have small brains. That's just Science.

Anne: ...That's kind of you to say, Sir. I wish— no.

Rogers: What do you wish?

Anne: I wish I had married you!

Rogers: You do? Oh Anne. Oh my poor, pretty Anne.

You need a Strong hand to guide you, don't you.

What of your father? Let me be more precise:

What of your father's American wealth?

Can he not set you, and I, on firmer ground?

Mary: Alas, Governor Rogers, he is not
Philanthropic. Not even toward the fair Anne.

Rogers: Pity. PITY. Then I must Leave you now.

I have Waiting to do that must be done

Urgently. But first. I want to hear it.

(beat.)

Anne: I promise to be a good girl. And, and...

Rogers: (helping) And live with your...

Anne: ...Husband. (I remember now.)

And to keep loose company no more.

Rogers: Good!

Very good! What a good girl you are, Anne!

John Dunks, tavern keep! Get Anne a towel.
I'm off.

(he moves slowly, in crippling pain, but with a brave face.)
Foot acts up from time to time.
Must be about to storm.

(rain begins to gently fall, the light darkens, overcast.)
I'll just rest a moment, then I'm off. You know,
Now that you pirates have been defeated,
It seems like The King's forgotten me;
I've heard aught from the whole central government;
And nothing from my fellow investors;
And nothing even of my bills at home;
And I am now run to such personal debt!.....
(glances at Dunks) But I Must, or We All shall surely Starve!;
Or, be a Sacrifice to the Spaniards...
I wish I knew what those dagos were up to...
(glances to the window.
thunder rumbles, close.)

Rogers: (cont.) Well. That's all the rest I get to take. I'm off.
Remember your Promise now Anne. Come here.

(she does, and solemnly, wistfully nods up at him;
he dabs her face tenderly dry with the towel.

Rogers exits.

Anne turns to Turnley, her face a horror of inexpression.)

Anne: I remember my promise and I'll keep it.
I swore on my life I would whip you to death!
Richard fucking tattler Turnley, DIE!

(Anne clobbers Turnley, which really surprises him;
yet Turnley pins Anne.
the light darkens still more,
the gentle rain turns thick, heavy and fast.)

Turnley: Ye can't best Me in a physical fight!
Ye little fool, heh heh HYCK! HYCK!

(Anne grabs Turnley's crotch and twists.)

Anne: You'll be called 'Dickless Turnley' from now on!

(Anne goes for his face now;
Turnley hits her and violently throws her away from him;
Anne begins to cry as if genuinely hurt.)

Turnley: (limping) Ah no, fer Christ!

Hornigold: (aghast)

Look what ye've done!

Burgess:

'E hit her!

'E hit a woman!

Artist: She clobbered him first.

Turnley: No harm done, surely, no harm done. Right, Anne?

Give me your hand, Anne. Nothing's broken, is it?

Anne: (giving her hand) I can't Believe you would do that to me.
I'm a woman!

(once Anne has Turnley's hand,
she assaults him with amazing force.)

Bonny: Well done, Annie!

Rackham:

What a woman!

Artist:

Bravo!

(an alarm bell clangs far in the distance, and keeps clanging.
thunder crashes near, and lighting flashes;
the light grows darker still.
Turnley pins Anne again.)

Anne: Ow ow ow! Ow ow ow ow ow ow!

I'm sorry, Dick! Let me up, please! PLEASE, Dick!

I've learned my lesson. You're too strong for me!

You're just too big and strong for me!— Gosh,

I can't resist ye Dick! Heaven Help Mmm!—

(Anne kisses Turnley passionately from beneath him;
he is utterly swept up by this;
Anne rolls on top of Turnley,
pulls out her slender stiletto,
and stabs him, repeatedly.)

Turnley: (screams, screams, screams.)

A CRIER: (off, in the distance.)

SPAIN HAS DECLARED WAR ON ENGLAND! TO ARMS!

THE SPANISH ARE COMING! SPANISH ARE COMING!

(the alarm bell continues to ring, thunder crashes,
the rain is a torrent outside.

those inside are engrossed by the entertaining fight.

Anne hauls herself off Turnley;
who is holding himself where he can,
an' bleeding out in disbelief.)

Hornigold: Let a woman beat ye, have ye, Turnley?
He har.

Burgess: He har, he har.

Bonny and Rackham: Har har har har.

Turnley: (gasping) She fights like a woman, an' like a man!
'Tis Impossible!

Mary: Hardly impossible.
But Not very Sportsmanlike, Annie.

Bonny: What Business was this of yours anyway, Dick?

Turnley: That seems like a helluva thing to ask Now...
(Rogers bangs in,
he's backlit by lightning;
fog begins to pour in from the storm.)

Rogers: Can ye not hear the alarm, ye rat-jackals?!?!
How can ye be fighting with yourselves— when, look!!
The Spanish Force is here! They are upon us!!

Hornigold: (to Rogers) Rest yerself a moment! Ye look terrible.

Rogers: No time to rest. Spain is at our front door!
I wonder what God charged them for this fog!...

Burgess: How many 'ave come? What ar we facin'?

Rogers: 3 frigates with at least 80 canon!;
Another armed brigantine; more armed sloops!;
...The invasion force of 1500 men! Look!!

(only Dunks approaches the window.)

All the Pirates: Christ almighty. That's a powerful force. How
many guns have we? (murmurs.)

Rogers: Our fort has 50 guns facing the harbor
A 10 gun battery guards the narrow East,
And we have just 100 soldiers left.
I need a militia with Pirating skills!

I NEED YOU to enlist as privateers!
Join with me, former pirates, fight with me!

Dunks: (peering out the window)
I can't see the Spanish! They're here, ye say?
(canon fire booms.)

Rogers: They're here, alright. With luck, they cannot see,
How Ill prepared we are to Face this fight.
God may cut this fog with His knife, either way...

Anne: Fuck this! Mates, Come!

Rackham: (at ‘cum’) He he he!

Anne: We’ll go to sea!

Rackham: We’ll need a ship. Those Jamaicans stole mine!

Mary: Then we’ll steal another ship for ourselves!

A fast one!

Artist: Mary Read, take me with you!

(Rogers shoots Artist in the back.)

Rogers: There shall be no deserters!

Anne: (to Rogers, who pales at) Go to Hell!

We’ll meet you at the gates Another time

‘Anne make Mary!’ (she giggles madly)

Mary: Good luck!

Rackham: Au reservoir!

Turnley: God damn you All!

(Anne, Mary, and Rackham Exeunt.

Artist is dead. Rogers reloads, shaking.

Turnley is still bleeding out.

canon fire booms, booms.)

Rogers: I know it looks as if we all were

On the losing side... But it’s not over!

We have not even Entered the Fight! Men!

I know we’ve had our petty disagreements—

I know we’ve had more hard times here than not—

But there’s only one way we can look at this one—

I Know that We can All Agree on This:

If we don’t fight TOGETHER NOW we’re ALL DEAD!

If we don’t fight TOGETHER, we will DIE!

So if for Nothing else, no Love between Us,

In the Name of Your SELF-INTEREST,

FIGHT WITH ME!

(canon fire booms, booms; crashes; sounds of destruction;

a glow of fires burning in the distance;

hails of small arms fire in the distance.)

Hornigold: Fight WITH ye? Jest look at the state of ye!

Fight FOR ye, ye mean! Ye should be Ashamed!

When I were the Pirate Governor here,

We could have whipped the world, and not just Spain!

That's why ye came, to scatter Us like seeds;
So now reap wot yev sowed, yer majesty!
(turns) It's every man fer hisSelf, mates! We're in the Wind!
I'll to th' East inlet!

(Hornigold Exeunt.)

Burgess: I'll to me ship!

(Burgess Exeunt.)

Bonny: I'll to me Wages, ye fish-faced old shit!
(fleecing Rogers)

Fer fuck. I'll take yer cane then. Better'n naught!
(steals Rogers' cane and flees; Bonny Exeunt.
Rogers limps grotesquely after them.)

Rogers: Listen to me! Hear my inspiring speech!..
(Rogers Exeunt.)

Dunks: (at the window)

The Spanish are going 'round our backside...
We've hardly any defenses that way!—
This will be the Death of a man like me;
John Dunks, tavern-keep! ... We shall all be Killed!!
(Dunks leaves the room.
musket rounds, musket rounds, musket rounds;
blackness.

Months have passed when the sun shines again in the tavern;
shining like a Bahamanian heaven.

La Buse and Caesar enter from the front.

Dunks enters from another room, tidying up.)

Caesar: (recognizing him)

John Dunks tavern-keep. You are still here!

I was sure the Spanish would have killed you.

Dunks: Caesar! (Dunks bows to him) So was I.

La Buse: So what happened then?
(Dunks and La Buse shake hands.)

Dunks: Good to see you, La Buse.

La Buse: You too, John Dunks.

Dunks: It just went to show: they're all Cowardly Pups;
As young master Boy King once did say.

The Spanish thought they'd Sneak right up upon us,
In small boats they was rowing up the East—

Caesar: 'Tis very narrow.

La Buse: Aye.

Dunks: Aye. So narrow,

In fact, that jest 2 of our sentries— two,
Two— got off enough muskets between 'em,
To frighten 'em All into a Retreat!

La Buse: Incroyable!

Caesar: Who were those two heroes?

Dunks: That's a Good Question. I know they was Black,
Black pirates, 'former' pirates, former slaves—
I remember that, coz I thought to meself,
'Those Freed Men jest saved the Life of Woodes Rogers,
A man for whom enslavement paid the bills,
...And Good Thing Those Men Weren't Slaves, weren't it!...'

Caesar: Indeed!

La Buse: Mon Dieu.

Caesar: And what Of Woodes Rogers.

Dunks: He left fer England. Hoped to get an answer
To his Face (purses his lips like Rogers) if not to his letters.
Said he'd "done his duty to his country
Tho at the hazard of entire ruin."
Said Knowin' that was "all the satisfaction
He had left to him in this abandoned place."
He did talk well tho, didn' 'e.

La Buse: Of course.

As you say, he was a Sneaking Puppy.
The Only trick that they do Well is 'Speak.'

Dunks: Mm. Well, Rogers says we'll see him again.

Caesar: What of Captain Benjamin Hornigold?

Dunks: He was killed, I'm afraid, in the skirmish.

La Buse: So he fought the Spanish all his life, and lost...

Caesar: Josiah Burgess? Did he make it out?

Dunks: (shakes his head)

Drowned. Tryin' to escape. An' they say he drowned
The young lad who was tryin' to save 'im, with 'im.
Jest about everyone who is yet living,
Is locked up an' waiting to hang.
Jack Rackham— do ye recall him?

La Buse: No.

Caesar: No.

Dunks: All calico he wore?

Caesar: Ah, 'Calico Jack.'

Dunks: Well, he and Mary Read and Anne Bonny

They're all locked up in Spanish Town jail.

Rackham, he's set to Hang, any day now;

Anne an' Mary though, both pled their bellies,

They Say they're pregnant, so their Hanging's staid.

Caesar: So much for wanting same treatment as men.

Dunks: They didn't make it on their Own fer long...

And Vane is Still in prison. It's been months.

Caesar: Why would they keep him Prisoner so long?

Why would they not give him Trial, and Hang him.

La Buse: To Punish him and 'set a Good Example.'

(scornfully) Making him live all these days in a cage...

Caesar: Take a man's liberty; make him a slave.

Dunks: ...But what of those who sailed off with You?

What of the merry Edward Ireland?

And what of Paulsgrave Williams, Little John.

Much good it'd do me Heart to hear They're Well!

(Caesar and La Buse share a look.)

La Buse: (to Dunks) We sailed, all Together, for a while.

Caesar: They refused to kill any prisoners.

Not for Any reason. The crew "grew tired

Of their Humanity." So we cut them loose.

Made them governors of their own islands.

Dunks: (disappointed) ...Ah-of course you did.

(Nameless Man enters with a sign we cannot yet read.)

Dunks: (cont.) What's that then?

Nameless Man: By order o the gov'nor!

Says to hang this someplace to be seen.

We got a new gov'nor. Likes things his way.

Dunks: (explains) We've got a Temporary gov'nor.

Nameless Man: Got a New gov'nor! Least that's wot I hears.

Dunks: Rogers isn't coming back?

Nameless Man: The king fired 'im. (spits)

(all spit.)

Nameless Man: (cont.) Months ago. Jest couldn't be bothered to
Tell 'im! Christ.

Dunks: What's the new governor's name?

Nameless Man: I ferget. Do it matter?

Dunks: Guess it Don't!

So, Woodes Rogers was fired by the king. Fancy that!

Nameless Man: Nothing Fancy about Debtor's Prison,
And that's where I hear he'll be headed.

Dunks: Well this is News to me and no mistake.

La Buse: He captured a manilla galleon;

Dispersed the pirates of America;

Defended this strategic asset, here—

From a Spanish force, Many times his strength—

And after this Success, at his Expense;

He, will be left in a cage, by his 'king';

And by his companions, who all Benefit,

Now Nassau is in England's pleasant green.

And they did Nothing! They Never came here.

They never lifted hand to write a letter.

Never bothered, to tell him he was Fired... (chuckles)

Caesar: Henry Avery'd say, "this proves them to be:

As good Pirates at land as we are at sea!"

(they all laugh. 'that's true. 'tis true.'

Nameless Man hangs the sign, which swings.)

Dunks: Here, what's it say?

Nameless Man: Hell if I know. I cain't read.

(Nameless Man Exeunt.)

La Buse: 'Expulsis Piratis, Restituta Commercia.'

The sign. That's what it says. It's in Latin.

It means, 'Pirates Expelled, Commerce Restored.'

(Caesar and Dunks burst out laughing, and La Buse.)

Caesar: We are Not Expelled! We are Everywhere!

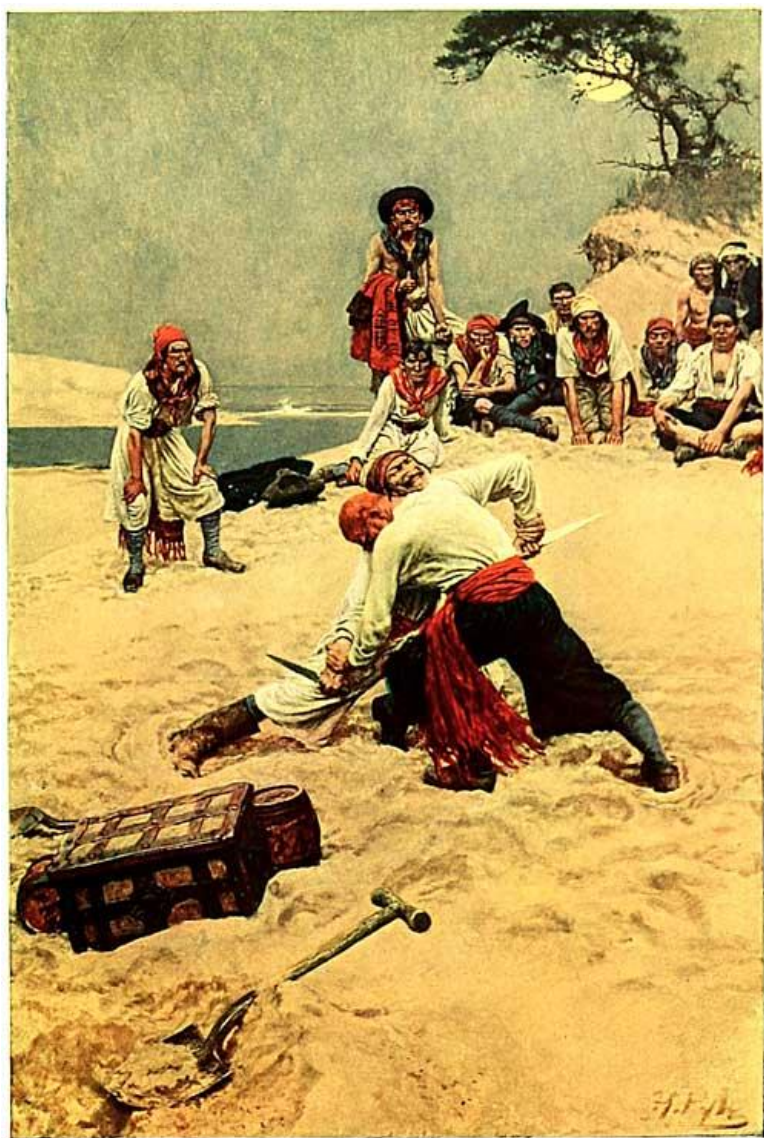
We are Here Now! We are All Pyrates!

(they clink cups;

laugh hearty and drink.)

A Crier: (off) A Black Flag Flies Toward Providence!

FIN.



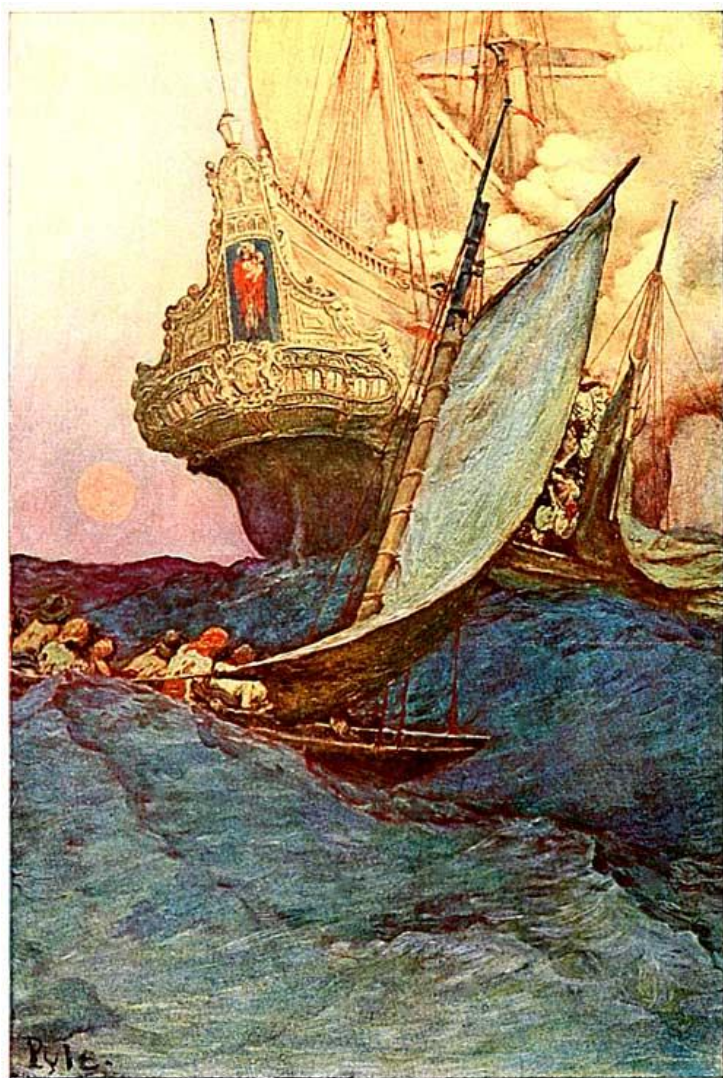
PARRTS
-in Therr Order o Speekin-
WISH T SUM EVOQATIVE FACKS

Edward “Blackbeard” TEACH
CAPTAIN: THE HAPPY RETURN, THE ADVENTURE,
THE QUEEN ANNE’S REVENGE
MAGISTRATE O THE PIRATE REPUBLIC

An intentionally Secretive man when it came to his private life...
He was certainly English, possibly from Bristol. He was known,
not just for his “extravagant” black beard, but for his
“uncommon boldness and personal courage,” his skill as a
tactician, his “excellent information,” and his much remarked
upon Courtesy. Rarely seen without dark clothes, boots cuffed at
the knee, and 3 brace of pistols slung like bandoliers,
“imagination cannot form an idea of a fury from hell to look
more frightful”— however, when not in battle, he sometimes
wore long coats of colorful silk. Teach considered Rum to be
Necessary— but not wealth. His open-handedness often
Surprised folk.

Samuel “Black Sam” “Free Prince” “Robin Hood of the Sea”
BELLAMY
CAPTAIN: THE MARIANNE, THE WHYDAH
GOVERNOR O THE PIRATE REPUBLIC

Born in the parish of Hittisleigh on Dartmoor, the baby of 6
children. He likened himself to Robin Hood, and his crew to
‘Merry Men.’ Very fond of fancy clothes, he cut a dashing figure
in deep-cuffed velvet coats, knee breeches, silk stockings, and
silver-buckled shoes. He often wore a sword slung across his hip,
and he Always wore 4 dueling pistols (his favorite weapon) in
his sash. Known for his skyrocketing ascent to fame as a Pyrate
and his ever-democratic style of leadership, he was a
tremendously bright light of the golden age, leaving a permanent
impression on his comrades.

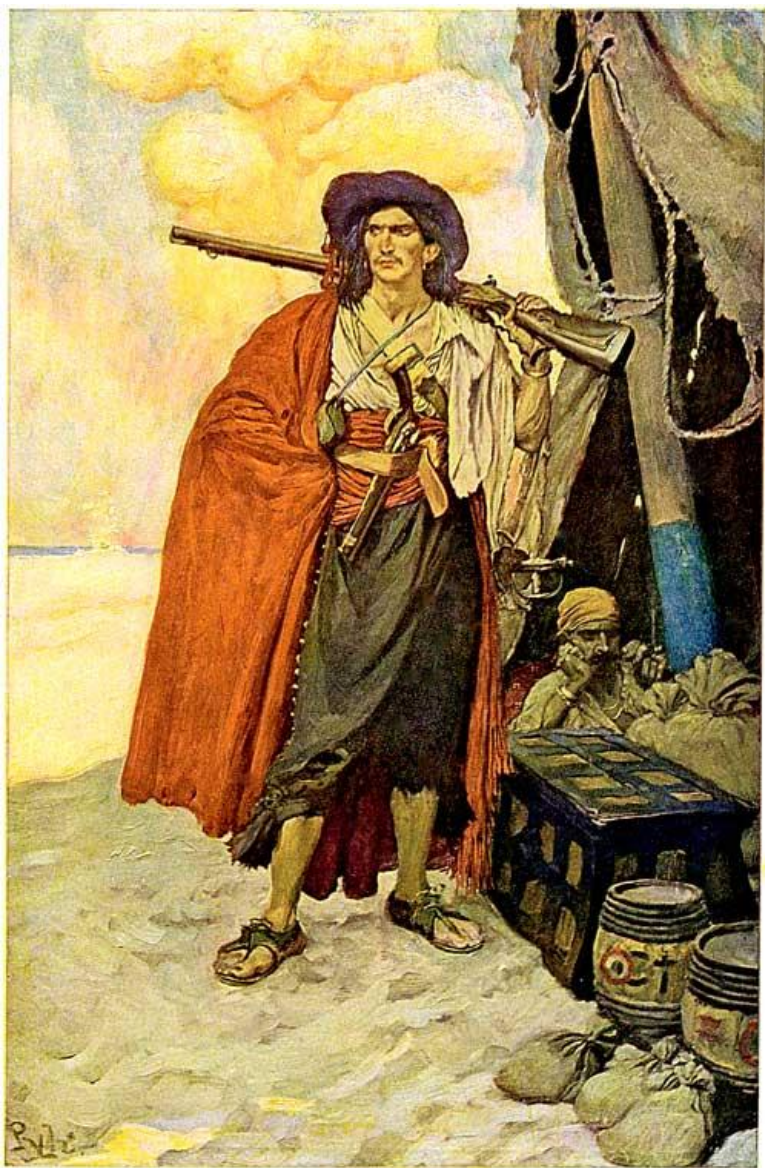


“Black CAESAR”
MASTER GUNNER: THE ADVENTURE
FIRST MATE: LA POSTILLION

The son of a prominent West African tribal war chieftain. He was known for his "huge size, immense strength and keen intelligence." An almost mythical figure, he is associated with warriors, harems of women (kept prisoner), and a haunting Society of Lost Children. Caesar had an impact on America's legal precedents: After these events, to prevent Caesar from giving evidence about a conspiracy between Teach and the Gov. and Chief Justice of N.C., the Chief Justice (himself) argued that Caesar's testimony as a "negroe... (tho cunningly couched under the name of a Christian)" was "not of any validity against any white person whatsoever..."
...Caesar's evidence was thrown out.

Paulsgrave "Little John" WILLIAMS
QUARTERMASTER: THE MARIANNE, THE WHYDAH

An established jeweler, Paul was living in Boston with his wife and children when he first encountered the Pyrate Bellamy ("Robin Hood of the Seas")— whose expeditions he promptly agreed to fund. From a well-to-do parentage and uniquely happy background, his turning Pyrate was possibly a matter of Principle, Adventure, Acquisition, Eccentricity, or all these. He was fond of wearing peruke wigs, which were in fashion at the time. He never saw his family again after turning Pyrate (tho he tried once). His son became a wig-maker in his honor.



Benjamin BORNICOLD
CAPTAIN: THE RANGER
FOUNDER O THE FLYING GANG
GOVERNOR O THE PIRATE REPUBLIC

Certainly from England; possibly from Norfolk. His Ranger, a 30-ton sloop, was the most heavily armed ship in the region at the time, making his will unquestionable at sea. It was generally believed, by those who knew him, that he never accepted the End of the War with Spain, and that in his own Mind, he was a lone Vigilante defending England. He showed some preference, still, to Anne over Georg, which may also be nostalgia for the War. His reputation as a Leader was one of Good Nature— and of frequently losing the Confidence of his men. He was perhaps Better known (during his lifetime) as the Rival of cruel Jennings, and Best known as the man who Made Teach— to his chagrin.

Olivier “LA BUSE” Levasscur
CAPTAIN: LA POSTILLION

Nicknamed “La Buse” (French for “The Buzzard”) for the Ruthlessness with which he attacked his prey both with Weapons and with Words. Born in Calais to wealthy, aristocratic parents.

Always esteemed an excellent leader and shipmate, his Allegiances nevertheless shifted frequently throughout his career. La Buse is easily distinguished by his scarred, patched eye. He enjoys the reputation of perpetrating some of Piracy’s most Shocking exploits at sea (see the tales told of Cap’n Flint in Treasure Island). His own Treasure is still being sought.

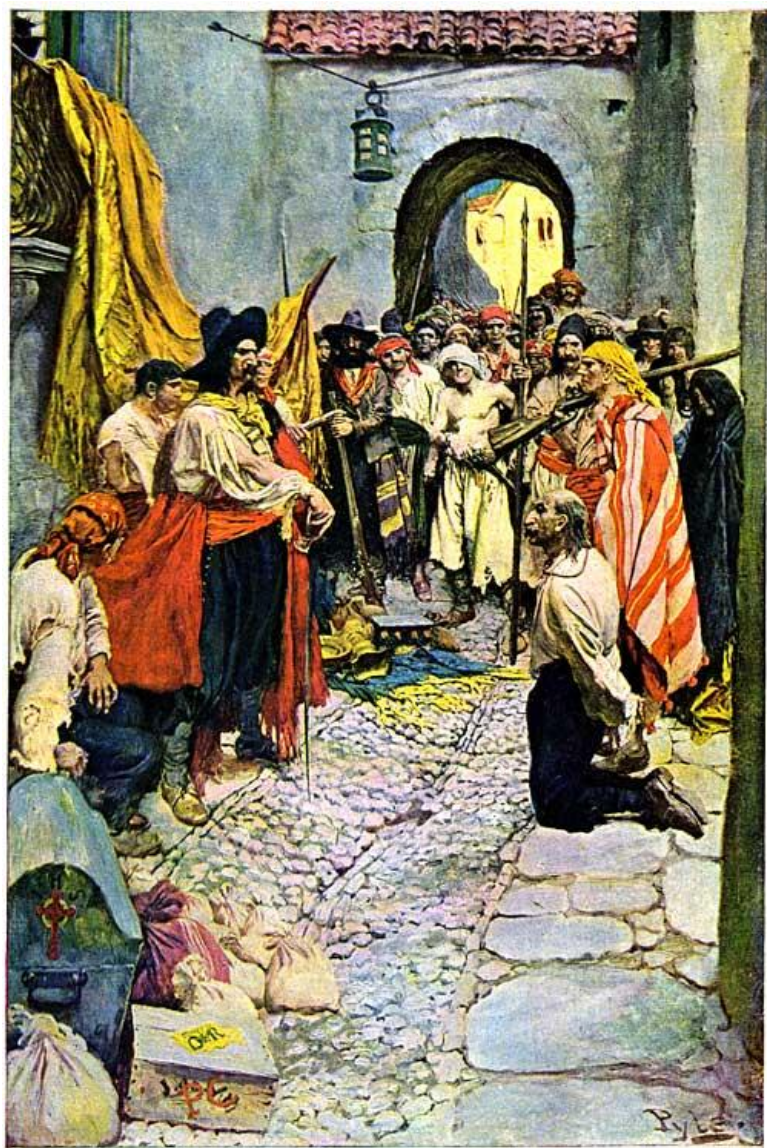


John “The Boy King” KING
MATE: THE MARIANNE, THE WHYDAH

No older than 11, and perhaps as young as 8, King is the youngest known Pirate on record. To be clear, he was no mere “powder monkey” or cabin boy, he served for a Full Share. The son of Antiguan plantation owners who owned slaves, including an Indian boy who served as his companion, King Insisted on leaving his comfortable home and joining the Pirates when his ship was ‘detained,’ standing up to both Bellamy and his Mother to get his way. His leg was found still wearing a fine shoe and a silk stocking.

MARY Read
HARLOT
CO-CAPTAIN: THE WILLIAM

Born into the stuff of mysteries: a seafaring man was paying Mary’s mother (his wife) to support a son— who died. Her mother, finding herself pregnant with Mary (out of wedlock) passed Mary off as the dead boy (successfully) to continue receiving the money. What Mary’s attitude was towards being raised as a boy is unknown, as is much of her early life. Some say she continued to dress as a man to protect and employ herself (as a Shakespeare heroine might), and not as a point of personal preference or confusion. We do know that, given the Choice, Mary Insisted on doing battle dressed as a man; that Mary also wore dresses and slept with men; and that Mary was inseparable from Anne. Mary died in prison, listed for burial on 28 April 1721 as “Mary Read, Pirate.”



Vincent S. PEARSE
CAPTAIN: H.M.S. PHOENIX

A man as ambitious as he was unlucky, and a ship with unfortunate tendencies. The H.M.S. Phoenix was built as a fireship in 1693-94, sailed alongside the R.N. fleet for 2 battles, and then ran herself Aground in the Isles of Sicily. She was salvaged and rebuilt in 1708— then seriously damaged again in a Collision with the H.M.S. St Albans in 1709. She underwent a complete repair in 1713, then went to New England in 1714-15.

On 5 October she came under command of Captain Vincent Pearce, R.N., for service on the coast of Scotland. Their first solo voyage together was to Nassau— after which damages sustained in conflict with the Pyrates, The Phoenix was dismantled for timber, not to be rebuilt again for 10 years. Pearse is not mentioned again for any other Naval deeds of note.

ANNE Bonny, née Fulford
HARLOT
CO-CAPTAIN: THE WILLIAM

Born Notorious in Cork, Ireland. The result of an affair between a wealthy married man and his maid, baby Anne was discovered when the jealous wife went in search of 3 stolen silver spoons. In an act of defiance towards his wife, the rich man lived openly with the maid— which ruined his legal practice. Together as a family, the rich man, the maid, and Anne sailed to America.

Anne's father became a surprisingly successful smuggler.

Enjoying great wealth, Anne was the belle of the Southern plantations, and considered “a good catch;” until she became known as a Violent (possibly deadly) lass, and she was disowned. Her father remained well-known and well-liked in the Bahamas. On her time in prison, Woodes writes, “she was continued in prison to the time of her lying in... but what has become of her since we cannot tell; only this we know, that she was not executed.” She disappeared.



Charles VANE
CAPTAIN: THE LARK
GOVERNOR O THE PIRATE REPUBLIC

His name first appeared in Port Royal, but he was believed to be from London's 'Wapping on the Ooze.' Originally sailing as a humble Pyrate Seaman under Jennings, he quickly became a favored protégé, and took command of his own ship in just 2 years. Unlike Teach and Bellamy, with whom he was friends, Vane was known as a Cruel Captain, presiding over orgies of violence. One of his favorite ways to torture information out of a captive was to tie them to the mast and light matches under their eyelids 'til they confessed. Far from being a detractor to his Pyrate career, Vane's Violence made him a Popular Captain—among the most Cutthroat of crews. He always maintained an active interest in the Pyrate Republic, and always held some Influence over its affairs.

Henry JENNINGS
CAPTAIN: THE BERSHEBA

He described himself as a "Bermudian." His family was well-established in Bermuda—in Affluent neighborhoods, one of which is still known as 'Jenning's Land.' His family history was one of Service at least since the English Civil War. Jennings was given a good education and "comfortable estates" in Bermuda and Jamaica. He had enough money to have completely disregarded Piracy. "Jennings, a Man of good Understanding, and good Estate, before this Whim took him of going a Pyrating." Despite (or perhaps because) of a brief eviction from Jamaica by Lord Hamilton for his Piracy, he persisted in helping to form the Pyrate Republic and in mentoring vindictive Pyrates.



James BONNY
ABLE SEAMAN: THE BERSHEBA
AIDE DE CAMP

Perhaps best thought of as a hapless social climber. It's speculated that he married Anne in a misguided hope of getting at her father's wealth. This is supported by his demand for a large cash payout in exchange for their divorce. It's rumored Anne's father was aware of the marriage and wholly disapproved of James. It's known James served Rogers as an informant, and, that his name did not appear on Pearse's list of Pyrates who took pardon—which suggests he was Trying to play both sides. And, he considered Turnley (a frequent turncoat) to be a true friend. In all these cases, he seems to have been well-liked, and then detested. The name 'Bonny' is English, and remains famous largely because Anne took it from him. He never rose to hold a command.

Edward "Ned" "England" "Seegar" IRELAND
QUARTERMASTER: THE LARK

"He had a great deal of good Nature, and did not want for Courage; he was not avaritious, and always averse to the ill Usage of Prisoners received." Known to be Irish, his surname remains a matter of speculation (we know 'England' was a false-given name, and now suspect 'Seegar,' his supposed real name, has been confused with a different Irish Pyrate sailing at the time). 'Ireland,' as we shall call him then, was most likely given a Catholic education. He sailed with England's R.N. in the War, until he was taken prisoner by the Pyrate Capt. Winter. Making their way to Nassau, Ireland chose to ship out again with Jennings, and then with Vane. While he Pyrated with zeal, he never agreed to kill men in cold blood. Known today as one of the most humane golden age Pyrates, and respected in his own time by all his enemies, his shipmates eventually "tired of his humanity."

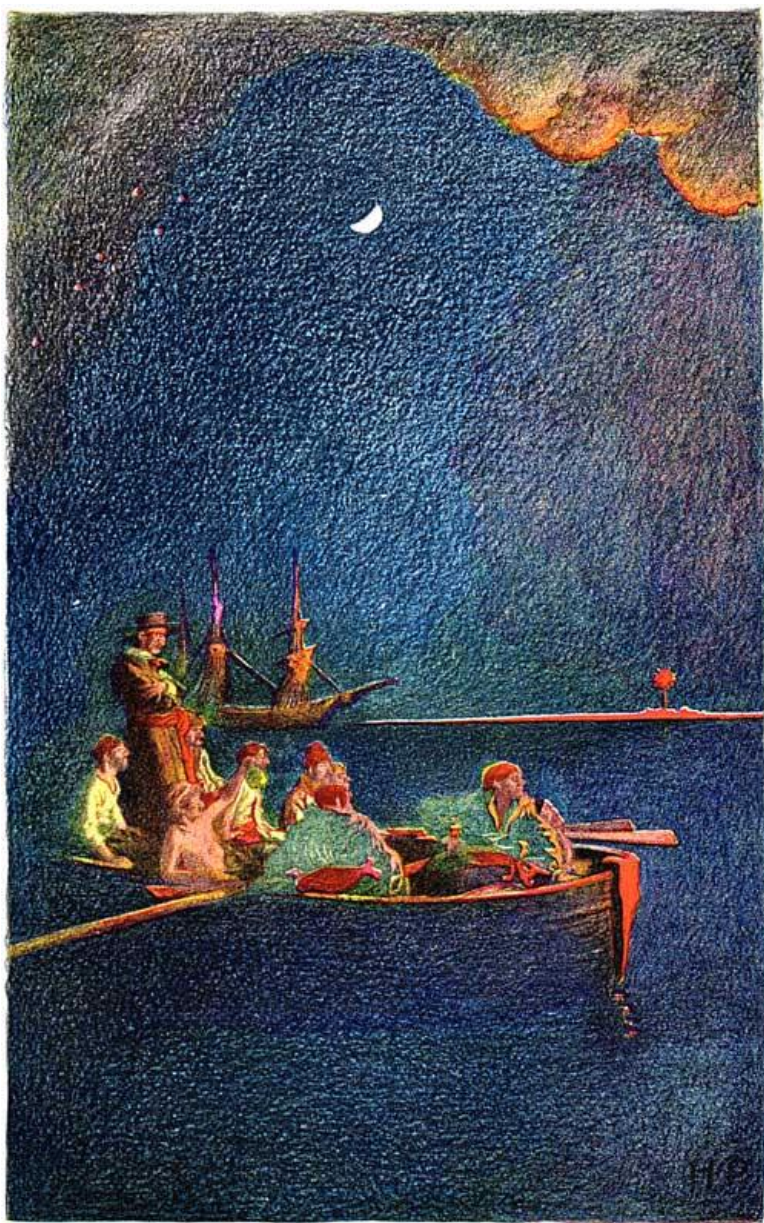


Josiah BURGESS
CAPTAIN: THE PROVIDENCE

An Englishman whose name appears at most of the landmark events in Piracy's golden age— but who is seldom quoted. At one point, in the written record of a hanging, a Pirate even accuses Burgess of “pusillanimity and cowardice!” and Burgess makes no reply. (As a Justice of the Vice-Admiralty Court by that time, he had voted in favor of the execution.) He seems to have quietly inveigled his way to power wherever power was found. Burgess is often described as a “ringleader” of the Flying Gang since its inception, but never cited for specific deeds. He was promptly brought into Rogers' council, but again, never cited for specific initiatives. When he drowned off the coast of Abaco, he took the sailor trying to save him down with him (a man he had Pardoned).

John “Calico Jack” RACKHAM
ABLE SEAMAN: THE LARK
CO-CAPTAIN: THE WILLIAM

On the chessboard of Pyratical geopolitics, Rackham was a checker, with his motives neither Principled, nor Personal, but impromptu. His arguments made no sense (viz: if we take a ship that's Impossible to take, we'll be able to take Bigger ships). He made a career of sabotaging small merchant ships and fishermen— who were outraged that he should rob men so obviously poor and pursued him in gangs. Most likely an Englishman, no record of “Calico Jack” exists until he set sail with Vane in defiance of the king's pardon, and from thence, he is best known in association with Mary Read and Anne Bonny. There is every reason to believe he truly loved Anne, and that he both admired and was jealous of the way she heartlessly cuckolded men, including himself.



John DUNKS
TAVERN-KEEP

In a Complaint brought by Bahamanian residents against a tavern keep named John Dunks, he was accused of supplying Pyrates with provisions and respite— and possibly even helping to spring a Pyrate from jail. The fate of John Dunks is unknown.

Taverns easily “got the greatest part” when it came to Pyrate plunder; sometimes Pyrates spent thousands of pieces of eight in a single night— equal to more than a year’s wages. It was common practice for Pyrates to trade “a very fine cup” for drinks (for this reason, cups are carefully noted in Pyrate treasure manifests). A “tavern” at the time was a private business, unlike a “bar” which would soon require a government license. To any kind of outlaw (pirate, smuggler, harlot, artist) a tavern was Indispensable as a meeting place, for there were practically no other places they would be allowed.

William “ARTIST” Hacke
ARTIST

An artist was indeed captured by Teach, and it is known that the artist protested of his ‘kidnapping’— often. That said, little is known of that individual, including his name. William Hacke was an Artist who shipped out with R.N. Privateer Captain Bartholomew Sharp— who turned Pyrate after the War, still in the company of Hacke (who also protested). During a raid, Sharp stole a Spanish Atlas from The El Santo Rosario. Sharp was eventually apprehended, whereupon the British government Secretly commissioned Hacke to translate and reproduce the book. The presentation copy Hacke gave to the king was so “impressive” that he pardoned Sharp and all his Pyrates of their crimes. Buccaneer’s Atlas in the Library of Congress:
“Hack’s descript of ye East Indies”



Richard TURNLEY
PILOT: H.M.S. PHOENIX

Presumed English as he sailed into Nassau with his majesty's R.N. Given his duplicitous actions, a valid question might be whether Turnley was originally "pressed" into navy service. It's known that he remained in Nassau after his ship left, and likely that he defected, since he begged pardon as a Pyrate from Rogers rather than asking to be reinstated to Service. It's known that Turnley is responsible as the man who informed upon the "wife sale" between Bonny and Rackham. Pursued by Anne & Co. for retribution, Turnley later testified that they had attacked him (and his son) and sunk his turtling boat— an accusation which was omitted by Rogers (and Burgess) who presided over the trial, leaving one to wonder about the veracity of any of Turnley's words or deeds.

Woodes ROGERS
CAPTAIN: H.M.S. DELICIA
GOVERNOR AND GARRISON O THE BAHAMAS

An Englishman and a Patriot, Rogers spent his childhood in Poole before undertaking a 7-year maritime apprenticeship in Bristol at the age of 18— quite old to begin an apprenticeship.

From an upwardly mobile family, it's supposed he took the apprenticeship in order become a 'freeman' or Voting Citizen of the city. Shortly after finishing his training, he was married to Sarah Whetstone, daughter of Rear Admiral Sir William Whetstone— an extremely well-connected man of great wealth. Rogers' family rejoiced at the match, which soon produced an heir, one son, and two daughters. Following his financial and physical ruination in pursuit of Spanish treasure, his wife took a house away, and the two lived separately for the rest of their dayes. Rogers is responsible for co-writing the most-consulted Pyratial reference to-date: A General History of the Pyrates, published under the pseudonym Captain Charles Johnson. The sales of this book, in his lifetime, were responsible for saving him from debtor's prison.

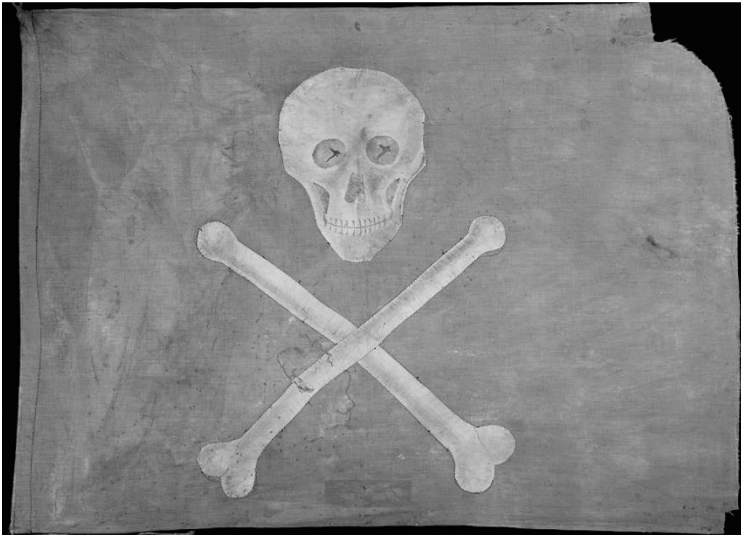
In the end, Woodes Rogers' Life was Saved,
Literally and Commercially,
by The Slaves and Pyrates he'd sought to Suppress.



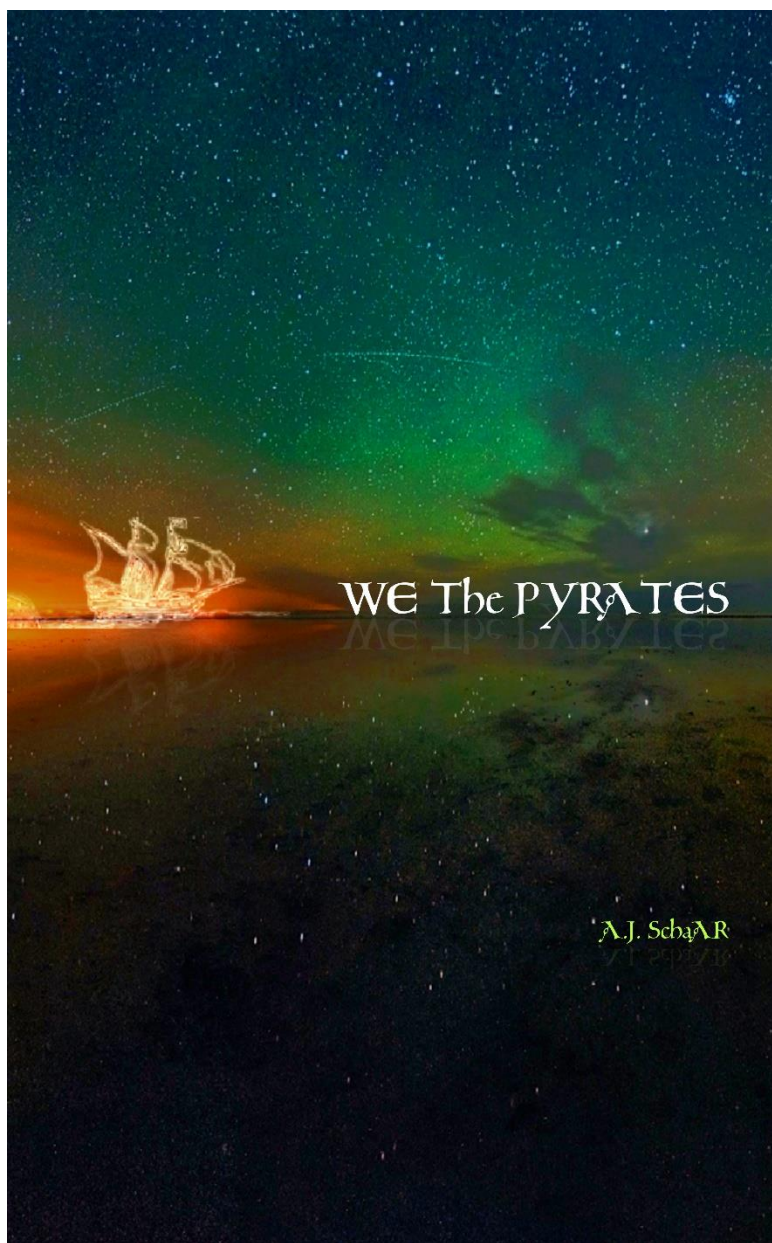
The End



Crest of the Crown Colony of the Bahamalands
a British warship giving chase to two pirate ships.



One of the only remaining authentic Jolly Roger pirate flags.



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