

PIRATE LATITUDES

THE MINISERIES: PART I

"PORT ROYAL"

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INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BEDROOM - DAWN

SIR JAMES ALMONT (51) stirs restlessly in bed. He sits up, rubbing his right foot -- swollen from the gout.

The governor hobbles to the window overlooking the Jamaica Colony.

EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - DAWN

An impressive brick structure with red-tile roofing overlooks all of Port Royal.

From the third-story window, Sir James watches as the English settlement wakes.

SUPER: Port Royal, Jamaica
September 7, 1665

EXT. PORT ROYAL - DAWN

LAMPLIGHTERS make their rounds, extinguishing lights from the night before.

A patrol of GARRISON SOLDIERS collect DRUNKS and DEAD BODIES from the muddy streets.

WATER CARRIERS rumble by on horse-drawn carts, toting CASKS OF FRESH WATER.

Beyond the crammed streets, the harbor is stocked with various-sized vessels.

Anchored past the cay near an offshore reef, an English merchant ship, the *Godspeed*, waits.

Two longboats put out from port to tow the SEAMEN in.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

RICHARDS (40s) enters the room.

RICHARDS
Good morning, Your Excellency. Here
is your claret.

Richards hands the governor a GLASS, who immediately drowns it in a *GULP*.

RICHARDS (CONT'D)
Warm day for a hanging.

SIR JAMES

Eh.

Richards sets out Sir James' articles of toilet: FRESH BASIN OF ROSEWATER, BASIN OF CRUSHED MYRTLE BERRIES, SMALL BOWL OF TOOTH POWDER, and a TOOTH-CLOTH.

Sir James applies the myrtle berries to his balding head. Then, rinses his head in the rosewater.

RICHARDS

(peering out the window)

They say the merchantman's the
Godspeed, sir.

SIR JAMES

Oh yes?

Sir James rubs his finger across his teeth with the tooth powder -- checking his appearance in a FINELY-CRAFTED MIRROR.

The governor spits and dries his teeth with the elegant tooth-cloth.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

The *Godspeed*, you say?

RICHARDS

Aye, sir.

SIR JAMES

Is my new secretary on board?

RICHARDS

I believe he is, sir.

Sir James applies make-up -- first, daubs on CERISE. Then, a FUCUS to his lips and cheeks.

RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Will you be wishing to postpone the hanging?

SIR JAMES

No, I think not.

Richards hands Sir James a spoonful of MEDICINAL OIL who swallows it in another swift *GULP*.

RICHARDS

Commander Scott is waiting with your carriage, Your Excellency.

Sir James twinges from the pain in his foot. Or was it at hearing the commander's name?

SIR JAMES

Very good.

Richards dresses his master.

INT. CARRIAGE - MORNING

Perspiring in his heavy ornate doublet, Sir James sits across from COMMANDER SCOTT (40s) who brushes a speck of dust from his uniform.

COMMANDER SCOTT

I trust Your Excellency enjoyed an excellent evening, and is even now in good spirits for the morning's exercises.

SIR JAMES

(abruptly)

I slept well enough.

Commander Scott touches a PERFUMED HANDKERCHIEF to his nose, inhaling lightly -- undoubtedly from the heinous filth from the streets.

COMMANDER SCOTT

I am given to understand that the prisoner LeClerc is in complete readiness and that all has been prepared for the execution.

Sir James frowns.

SIR JAMES

Very good.

COMMANDER SCOTT

It has also come to my attention that the merchantman *Godspeed* is arriving in anchor even as we speak, and that among her passengers is Mr. Hacklett, here to serve as your new secretary.

SIR JAMES

Let us pray he is not a fool like the last one.

COMMANDER SCOTT

Indeed. Quite so.

The coach pulls into the High Street Square where a large CROWD has gathered.

EXT. HIGH STREET SQUARE - MORNING

A scatter of *CHEERS* erupt as Sir James and Commander Scott exit the coach.

Sir James nods briefly. The commander gives a low bow.

COMMANDER SCOTT
I perceive an excellent gathering.
I am always heartened by the
presence of so many children and
young boys. This will make a proper
lesson for them, do you not agree?

SIR JAMES
Umm.

They make their way into the shadow of the gallows.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Where is the prisoner?

The governor clasps his hands impatiently. The stout NOOSE sways in the wind.

A *LOW DRUMROLL* presages the arrival of the cart. The crowd parts with *SHOUTS* and *LAUGHTER* as the cart comes into view.

Standing erect is LECLERC (20s), hands bound behind his back. His gray tunic is spattered with garbage thrown from the crowd. Yet, LeClerc holds his chin high.

COMMANDER SCOTT
(leaning over)
He does make a good impression,
Your Excellency.

Sir James *GRUNTS*.

COMMANDER SCOTT (CONT'D)
I do so think well of a man who
dies with finesse.

The executioner, HENRY EDMONDS (50s) bows to the governor.

HENRY EDMONDS
A good morning to Your Excellency,
and to you, Commander Scott.
(MORE)

HENRY EDMONDS (CONT'D)

I have the honor to present the
prisoner, the Frenchman LeClerc,
lately condemned by the Audencia--

SIR JAMES

Get on with it, Henry.

HENRY EDMONDS

(wounded)

By all means, Your Excellency.

Henry bows again and slips the noose around LeClerc's neck.
Then, he walks next to the MULE pulling the cart and waits,
and waits ... stretching rather too long.

HENRY EDMONDS (CONT'D)

Teddy, damn you, look sharp!

TEDDY EDMONDS (7) begins a rapid *DRUMROLL*. Henry raises a
SWITCH high in the air and strikes the mule with a single
blow.

The cart rattles away. LeClerc is left kicking and swinging
in the air.

Sir James watches the man struggle, listening to the *HISSING*
RASP of LeClerc's choking.

LeClerc's face goes purple and he kicks even more violently,
swinging a foot or two above the muddy ground. His eyes
bulge, his tongue protrudes. Body beginning to convulse.

SIR JAMES

All right.

Immediately, two *STOUT FELLOWS* rush to their friend's side.
They grab at LeClerc's kicking feet, yanking hard on his
body.

The death throes continue for some seconds until the men are
finally successful. *CRACK!* Their weight snapping LeClerc's
neck, ending his misery.

The men step away. Urine trickles down LeClerc's pant's legs
into the mud.

LeClerc hangs lifelessly, swaying back and forth in the wind.

COMMANDER SCOTT

Well executed, indeed.

Grinning broadly, Commander Scott tosses a *GOLD COIN* to the
executioner.

Sir James climbs back into the coach. Commander Scott close on his heels.

INT. CARRIAGE - MORNING

The governor and commander settle in.

 COMMANDER SCOTT
Well?

 SIR JAMES
I'm hungry.

The carriage moves on.

FADE OUT.

EXT. DOCKS - DAY

The coach pulls up to the port. The COACHMAN opens the door. Sir James steps out, wincing.

 CHARLES MORTON
Your Excellency.

CHARLES MORTON (early 30s) bows before Sir James.

 SIR JAMES
Whom do I have the pleasure of
addressing?

 CHARLES MORTON
Charles Morton, sir, captain of the
merchantman *Godspeed*, late of
Bristol.

Charles presents his PAPERS. Sir James doesn't even glance at them.

 SIR JAMES
What cargoes do you carry?

 CHARLES MORTON
West Country broadcloths, Your
Excellency, and glass from
Stourbridge, and iron goods. Your
Excellency holds the manifest in
his hands.

Pain riles in the governor's foot.

SIR JAMES

Have you any passengers?

CHARLES MORTON

I carry Mr. Robert Hacklett, the new secretary to Your Excellency, and his wife. I carry eight freeborn commoners as merchants to the Colony. And I carry thirty-seven felon women sent by Lord Ambritton of London to be wives for the colonists.

SIR JAMES

(dryly)

So good of Lord Ambritton.

COMMANDER SCOTT

And where is Mr. Hacklett?

CHARLES MORTON

On board, gathering his belongings with Mrs. Hacklett, Your Excellency. Mrs. Hacklett had a most uncomfortable passage, Your Excellency.

SIR JAMES

I have no doubt.

(irritated)

Does Mr. Hacklett carry messages for me?

CHARLES MORTON

I believe he may, sir.

SIR JAMES

Be so good as to ask him to join me at the Government House at his earliest convenience.

CHARLES MORTON

I will, Your Excellency.

SIR JAMES

You may await the arrival of the purser and Mr. Gower, the customs inspector, who will verify your manifest and supervise the unloading of your cargoes. How many deaths to report?

CHARLES MORTON
Only two, Your Excellency, both
ordinary seamen. One lost overboard
and one dead of dropsy. Had it been
otherwise, I would not have come to
port.

Sir James hesitates.

SIR JAMES
How do you mean, not come to port?

CHARLES MORTON
I mean, had anyone died of the
plague, Your Excellency.

The governor frowns.

SIR JAMES
The plague?

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Your Excellency knows of the plague
which has lately infected London
and certain of the outlying lands
of the land?

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
I know nothing at all. There is
plague in London?

CHARLES MORTON
Indeed, sir, for some months now it
has been spreading with great
confusion and loss of life. They
say it was brought from Amsterdam.

Sir James *SIGHS*.

SIR JAMES
I will hear more of this news.
Please join me at dinner this
evening.

CHARLES MORTON
With great pleasure. Your
Excellency honors me.

SIR JAMES
Save that opinion until you see the
table this poor colony provides.
One last thing, Captain. I am in
need of female servants for the
mansion.

(MORE)

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

The last group of blacks, being sickly, have died. I would be most graceful if you would contrive for the convict women to be sent to the mansion as soon as possible. I shall handle their dispersal.

CHARLES MORTON

Your Excellency.

With a final nod, Sir James climbs painfully back into the coach.

COMMANDER SCOTT

A dismal malodorous day.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - DINING HALL - DAY

Dressed in lighter clothing, Sir James enjoys a POACHED FISH, WINE, and COFFEE.

One of the governor's aides, JOHN CRUIKSHANK (50s) enters.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

The convict women are here, Your Excellency.

Sir James grimaces at the thought.

SIR JAMES

Send them along. Are they clean, John?

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

Reasonably clean, sir.

SIR JAMES

Then send them along.

The CONVICT WOMEN enter the dining room *NOISILY* -- pointing and staring at each article.

Sir James pushes away from the table and the women fall silent.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

You are as ugly, tangled, and scurrilous a collection as I have ever seen.

Sir James stops before one of the convicts, CHARLOTTE BIXBY (30s).

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
What is your name?

CHARLOTTE BIXBY
Charlotte Bixby, my lord.

SIR JAMES
And your crime?

CHARLOTTE BIXBY
Faith, my lord, I did no crime, it
was all a falsehood that they put
me and my--

JOHN CRUIKSHANK
(reading from a list)
Murder of her husband, John Bixby.

Charlotte falls silent. Sir James moves on to another, LAURA
PEALE (20s).

SIR JAMES
Your name?

LAURA PEALE
Laura Peale.

SIR JAMES
What is your crime?

LAURA PEALE
They said I stole a gentleman's
purse.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK
Suffocation of her children ages
four and seven.

Sir James scowls.

He moves down the line when he lands on someone who looks out
of place among the others -- ANNE SHARPE (15), her eyes glued
to the floor.

SIR JAMES
And your name, child?

ANNE SHARPE
(in almost a whisper)
Anne Sharpe, my lord.

SIR JAMES
What is your crime?

ANNE SHARPE
Theft, my lord.

Sir James glances at John; the aide nods.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK
Theft of a gentleman's lodging,
Gardiner's Lane, London.

SIR JAMES
I see.

After a long pause.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
I have need of a woman-servant in
my household, Mistress Sharpe. I
shall employ you here.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK
Your Excellency! A word, if you
please.

They step a short distance away. John is clearly agitated.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK (CONT'D)
Your Excellency, it says here that
she was accused of witchcraft at
her trial.

Sir James *CHUCKLES* good-naturedly.

SIR JAMES
No doubt, no doubt.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK
Your Excellency.
(full of Puritan spirit)
It says here that she bears the
stigmata of the devil!

Sir James is not convinced.

SIR JAMES
See that she is dressed and bathed.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK
Your Excellency, may I remind you,
the stigmata--

SIR JAMES
I shall search for the stigmata
myself later.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK
As you wish, Your Excellency.

For the first time, Anne looks up from the floor to face Sir James. She smiles the slightest of smiles.

FADE OUT.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - OFFICE - DAY

Sir James sits behind his desk rubbing his temples, his throbbing foot propped on a PILLOW.

ROBERT HACKLETT
Speaking with all due respect, Sir James, I must confess that nothing could have prepared me for the shock of my arrival in this port.

ROBERT HACKLETT (36) paces up and down the room. His wife, EMILY HACKLETT (30) sits rigid in a chair.

ROBERT HACKLETT (CONT'D)
In the capital of His Majesty's Colony of Jamaica in the New World, I naturally anticipated some semblance of Christian order and lawful conduct. At the very least, some evidence of constraint upon the vagabonds and ill-mannered louts who act as they please everywhere and openly. Why, as we traveled in open coach through the streets of Port Royal, if they may be called streets, one vulgar fellow hurled drunken imprecations at my wife, upsetting her greatly.

SIR JAMES
(with a sigh)
Indeed.

Emily nods silently.

ROBERT HACKLETT
And further, we were everywhere treated to the spectacle of bawdy women half-naked in the streets and shouting from windows, men drunk and vomiting in the streets, robbers and pirates brawling and disorderly at every turn, and--

SIR JAMES

Pirates?

ROBERT HACKLETT

Indeed, pirates is what I should naturally call those cutthroat seamen.

SIR JAMES

There are no pirates in Port Royal.

Sir James's voice goes hard.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

There are no pirates in this Colony. And should you find evidence that any man here is a pirate, he will be duly tried and hanged. That is the law of the Crown and it is stringently enforced.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Sir James, you quibble over a minor question of speech when the truth of the matter is to be seen in every street and dwelling of the town.

SIR JAMES

The truth of the matter is to be seen at the gallows of High Street where even now a pirate may be found hanging in the breeze. Had you disembarked earlier, you might have seen it yourself.

Sir James's patience wears thins.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

Sit down and keep silent before you confirm yourself in my judgement as an even greater idiot than you already appear to be.

Hacklett sits quickly in a chair next to his wife. She touches his hand reassuringly.

Sir James stands, grimacing in pain.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

Mr. Hacklett. I am charged by the Crown with expanding the Colony of Jamaica and maintaining its welfare. Let me explain to you certain pertinent facts relating to the discharge of that duty. First, we are a small and weak outpost of England in the midst of Spanish territories. I am aware that it is the fashion of the Court to pretend that His Majesty has a strong footing in the New World. But the truth is rather different.

Sir James hobbles to a displayed MAP OF THE NEW WORLD.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

Three tiny colonies, St. Kitts, Barbados, and Jamaica, comprise the entire dominion of the Crown. All the rest is Philip's. This is still the Spanish Main. There are no English warships in these waters. There are no English garrisons on any lands. There are a dozen Spanish first-rate ships of the line and several thousand Spanish troops garrisoned in more than fifteen major settlements.

This does not sit well with Hacklett ... he goes pale.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

King Charles in his wisdom wishes to retain his colonies but he does not wish to pay the expense of defending them against invasion. I am charged with protecting this Colony. How am I to do that? Clearly, I must acquire fighting men. The adventurers and privateers are the only source available to me, and I am careful to provide them a welcome home here. You may find these elements distasteful but Jamaica would be naked and vulnerable without them.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Sir James--

SIR JAMES

Be quiet! Now, I have a second duty, which is to expand the Jamaica Colony. It is fashionable in the Court to propose that we instigate farming and agriculture pursuits here. Yet no farmers have been sent in two years. The land is brackish and infertile. The natives are hostile. How then do I expand the Colony, increasing its numbers and wealth?

Sir James waits for an answer never to come from Hacklett.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

With commerce. The gold and the goods for a thriving commerce are afforded us by privateering raids upon Spanish shipping and settlements. Ultimately this enriches the coffers of the king, a fact which does not entirely displease His Majesty, according to my best information.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Sir James--

SIR JAMES

And finally, finally, I have an unspoken duty, which is to deprive the Court of Philip IV of as much wealth as I am able to manage. This, too, is viewed by His Majesty, privately, privately, as a worthy objective. Particularly since so much of the gold which fails to reach Cádiz turns up in London. Therefore privateering is openly encouraged. But not piracy, Mr. Hacklett. And that is no mere quibble.

ROBERT HACKLETT

But Sir James--

SIR JAMES

The hard facts of the Colony admit no debate.

Sir James reassumes his seat, propping his foot on the pillow once more.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

You may reflect at your leisure on what I have told you, understanding, as I am certain you will understand, that I speak with the wisdom of experience on these matters. Be so kind as to join me at dinner this evening with Captain Morton. In the meanwhile I am sure you have much to do in settling into your quarters here.

The interview is clearly at an end. Hacklett and his wife stands, bowing stiffly.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Sir James.

SIR JAMES

Mr. Hacklett. Mrs. Hacklett.

The two depart and John, the governor's aide, enters.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

God in Heaven...

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

Do you wish to rest now, Your Excellency?

SIR JAMES

Yes, I wish to rest.

Sir James stands. John escorts him out of the room.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - CORRIDOR - DAY

On the way to his chambers, Sir James stops outside a bath room. He hears the sound of *SPLASHING WATER* and *FEMININE GIGGLING*.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

They are bathing the woman-servant.

SIR JAMES

Hmm.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

You wish to examine her later?

SIR JAMES

Yes, later.

John is evidently still frightened by the witchcraft accusation.

The governor smiles, amused. Then carries on to his chambers.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
The fears of the common people. So
strong and foolish.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BATHE ROOM - DAY

Anne relaxes in the water. A black SERVANT-WOMAN (20s) bustles around the room.

Anne closes her eyes. *CHIMING CHURCH BELLS* ring in her head.

FADE TO:

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

The city is gray and murky. A younger, more naive Anne (14) walks through the haze.

MEN and WOMEN hurry to and from, avoiding others.

Anne watches as several INFECTED huddle together -- boils blistering their face and hands.

EXT. LONDON MARKETPLACE - DAY

GROCERS and BUTCHERS sell their goods.

Anne watches as PATRONS collect their goods and transfer their COINS into BOWLS OF VINEGAR ... no coin ever passed hand-to-hand.

More INFECTED crowd the marketplace, begging for food.

A dead-cart rolls by -- piled high with BODIES.

COLLECTOR
Bring out your dead!

Naked bodies are dumped onto the pile.

Beyond the marketplace, plagued dead bodies are dropped into a ditch.

Anne sickens at the horrible scene.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Anne hurries to her employer's house. A WEALTHY MAN (60s) falls dead in the street before her.

Anne stops. Stares. This wasn't some commoner, this was someone of wealth and importance.

A MONEY PURSE still gripped in his hands.

Anne hesitates, then turns into her employer's home.

INT. EMPLOYER'S HOME - DAY

Anne enters.

A SERVANT-BOY (10) locks the door. Then, he and Anne's EMPLOYER (55) nail the door shut.

EMPLOYER

Plague has run rampant. We must not leave.

Anne stares in horror as the *COUGHS* and *SCREAMS* from outside overwhelm her senses.

INT. EMPLOYER'S HOME - NIGHT

Anne peers out the second-story window. The Wealthy Man's body still lies in the street, untouched.

The Servant-Boy *COUGHS* mildly in the corner.

INT. EMPLOYER'S HOME - DAY

Anne dabs a WET-CLOTH on her Employer's forehead. He is sick with plague, moments from death.

A tear falls down Anne's cheek. She frowns. The Employer takes his last and final breath.

Anne looks around, now alone -- the only one of the household to survive.

She scoops up some GOLD ARTICLES and pockets some COINS.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - DAY

Anne enters the deserted streets. The Wealthy Man's body now a month-old rotten corpse. She hurries off.

EXT. LONDON STREETS - NIGHT

Anne sleeps in an alleyway.

A CONSTABLE (40s) grabs the back of Anne's head. He wakes her violently.

CONSTABLE

Get up!

The Constable spots the gold articles.

CONSTABLE (CONT'D)

And where did you acquire these, I wonder?

INT. BRIDEWELL PRISON - DAY

Anne is clapped away with other YOUNG GIRLS.

INT. BRIDEWELL PRISON - DAY

Moldy SCRAPS OF BREAD are tossed into the cell. Several GIRLS, including Anne, fight to get a piece.

Anne is bruised and dirty from weeks of incarceration.

INT. BRIDEWELL PRISON - NIGHT

Huddled into a ball, Anne is kicked in the ribs by a GUARD (30s).

GUARD

On your feet!

INT. EMPTY CELL - NIGHT

Anne lays quietly as the Guard rapes her. She has lost all feeling to this routine, barbaric behavior.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A JUDGE (60s) stares feverishly at Anne, who does not make eye-contact.

EXT. BRIDEWELL PRISON - DAY

Anne and other CONVICT WOMEN are escorted out of the prison, clasped in IRONS.

INT. GODSPEED - BRIG - DAY

The WOMEN sit bunched in the bowels of the merchant ship.

EXT. DOCKS - DAY

Anne and the others are escorted off the merchantman *Godspeed* and onto the docks of Port Royal.

She is a completely different person than she once was only months before. Now, she is dogged, hardwearing, and devious.

BACK TO:

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BATHE ROOM - DAY

The Servant-Woman dresses Anne in a fine, cotton blouse. The servant opens the door of the room.

ANNE SHARPE
Where are we going?

SERVANT-WOMAN
To the governor.

Anne is ready.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BEDROOM - DAY

Richards allows Anne into the room. She finds Sir James in a nightshirt standing by his bed, YAWNING.

SIR JAMES
Ah, Mistress Sharpe. I must say,
your appearance is considerably
improved by your ablutions.

Anne curtsies, unsure of the governor's meaning.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Richards, you may leave us.

Richards nods and leaves the room.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Don't be frightened, my dear. There
is nothing to fear. Come over here
by the window, Anne, where the
light is good.

She does as she's told. Sir James studies her for some
moments.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
You know at your trial you were
accused of witchcraft.

ANNE SHARPE
Yes, sir. But it is not true, sir.

SIR JAMES
I'm quite sure it is not, Anne. But
it was said that you bear the
stigmata of a pact with the devil.

ANNE SHARPE
(agitated for the first
time)
I swear, sir. I have nothing to do
with the devil, sir.

SIR JAMES
I believe you, Anne. But it is my
duty to verify the absence of
stigmata.

ANNE SHARPE
I swear to you, sir.

SIR JAMES
I believe you. But you must take
off your clothes.

ANNE SHARPE
Now, sir?

SIR JAMES
Yes, now. You can put your clothes
on the bed.

ANNE SHARPE
Yes, sir.

Sir James watches her undress.

Anne is not afraid; in fact, she has grown quite comfortable
without her clothing.

SIR JAMES
You are a beautiful child, Anne.

ANNE SHARPE
Thank you, sir.

Sir James steps forward, placing his spectacles on. He scans her naked body.

SIR JAMES
Turn around, slowly.

She does.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Raise your arms over your head.

She does.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
The *stigmata* is normally under the arms or on the breast. Or on the pudenda. You don't know what I am talking about, do you?

Anne shakes her head.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Lie on the bed, Anne.

And she does.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
We will now complete the examination.

Sir James drops his head between Anne's legs. Trying not to insult, but Anne can't help but *LAUGH*.

Sir James looks up angrily for a moment, and then he, too, *LAUGHS*.

The governor removes his nightshirt and Anne allows him to have his way with her.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BEDROOM - LATER (NOT MUCH LATER...)

Sir James and Anne lay together in bed.

SIR JAMES
Do you have any family?

ANNE SHARPE

Two brothers, sir. Both died from the plague.

SIR JAMES

And your voyage to Jamaica. How was it?

ANNE SHARPE

The women amused themselves, with each other and the crew.

Sir James looks at her horridly.

ANNE SHARPE (CONT'D)

(lying)

But not me, sir.

He relaxes back onto his pillow.

ANNE SHARPE (CONT'D)

...There was a storm just as we sighted land in the Indies. It buffeted the voyage for two day. A proper lady on board did not do well in the storm.

Sir James loses interest.

ANNE SHARPE (CONT'D)

One day after the storm had cleared, Captain Morten sighted land with a harbor. And a fortress. And a large Spanish ship in the harbor. Captain Morten was very worried of attack by the warship. It had certainly seen the merchantman, but it never pursued.

SIR JAMES

What?

Sir James leaps out of bed.

ANNE SHARPE

What's wrong?

SIR JAMES

A Spanish warship saw you and didn't attack?

ANNE SHARPE

No, sir. We were much relieved, sir.

SIR JAMES

Relieved? You were relieved? God in Heaven, how long ago did this happen?

ANNE SHARPE

Three or four days past.

SIR JAMES

And it was a harbor with a fortress, you say?

ANNE SHARPE

Yes.

SIR JAMES

On which side was the fortress?

Anne shakes her head.

ANNE SHARPE

I don't know.

Sir James throws on his CLOTHES in a haste.

SIR JAMES

Well as you looked at the island and the harbor, was the fortress to the right of the harbor, or the left?

ANNE SHARPE

(pointing with her right)
To this side.

SIR JAMES

And the island had a tall peak? A very green island, very small?

ANNE SHARPE

Yes, that's the very one, sir.

SIR JAMES

God's blood. Richards! Richards!
Get Hunter!

Sir James dashes out of the room -- leaving Anne lying there, naked on the bed. Certain she displeased him, she begins to CRY.

INT. MRS. DENBY'S INN - ROOM - AFTERNOON

There is a *KNOCK* at the door. CAPTAIN CHARLES HUNTER (38) rolls over in bed.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Go away.

A *WHORE* alongside him shifts her position, not waking. The *KNOCK* comes again.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

Go away, damn your eyes!

The door opens, MRS. DENBY (50s) sticks her head in.

MRS. DENBY

Begging your pardon, Captain Hunter, but there's a messenger here from the Governor's Mansion. The governor requests your presence at dinner, Captain Hunter. What shall I say?

Hunter rubs his eyes.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

What is the hour?

MRS. DENBY

Five o'clock, Captain.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Tell the governor I will be there.

MRS. DENBY

Yes, Captain Hunter. And Captain?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

What is it?

MRS. DENBY

That Frenchman with the scar is downstairs looking for you.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Uh. All right, Mrs. Denby.

The door closes. Hunter rolls out of bed. The whore still sleeps, *SNORING* loudly.

Hunter begins to dress, pausing to urinate out of the window onto the street below.

COMMONER (O.S.)
(from down below)
Filthy swine!

Hunter smiles and continues to dress: his only good doublet, a pair of hose with only a few snags, and a gold belt with a SHORT DAGGER.

As an afterthought, Hunter primes a PISTOL. Slips it under his belt.

He takes one last look at the sleeping woman and exits the bedroom.

INT. MRS. DENBY'S INN - MAIN ROOM - AFTERNOON

Hunter enters. As warned, LEVASSEUR (40s) sits in the corner, hunched over a TANKARD OF GROG.

LEVASSEUR
(thick drunken voice)
Hunter!

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Why, Levasseur. I didn't see you.

LEVASSEUR
Hunter, you son of an English mongrel bitch.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Levasseur.
(stepping out of the light)
You son of a French farmer and his favorite sheep, what brings you here?

Levasseur stands.

LEVASSEUR
Hunter, I want my money.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I owe you no money.

LEVASSEUR
You cheated me at cards.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
You were too drunk to know the difference.

LEVASSEUR
 You cheated me. You took fifty
 pounds. I want it back.

Hunter is careful with every step he takes, slowly creeping
 on the Frenchman.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
 How did I cheat you at cards?

LEVASSEUR
 How? Who cares a damn for how?
 God's blood, you cheated me.

Levasseur raises the tankard to his lips.

Hunter seizes the moment to lunge. He pushes his palm flat
 against the upturned tankard, ramming it back against
 Levasseur's face, which *THUDS* against the back wall.

Levasseur *GURGLES* and collapses to the ground, blood dripping
 from his mouth. Hunter grabs the tankard and crashes it down
 on Levasseur's skull.

Hunter shakes the wine off his hand.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
(sighs)
 I'm getting too soft.

He turns and walks out of Mrs. Denby's Inn.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - DINING HALL - NIGHT

The dinner is soon to over. Captain Hunter looks as bored as
 one can be.

CHARLES MORTON
 All have remarked upon the comet,
 seen over London on the eve of the
 plague. There was a comet before
 the plague of '56, as well.

SIR JAMES
 So there was. And what of that?
 There was a comet in '59, and no
 plague that I recall.

ROBERT HACKLETT
 An outbreak of the pox in Ireland
 in that very year.

SIR JAMES

There is always an outbreak of pox
in Ireland. In every year.

The only thing that seems of any interest to Hunter is the
new serving girl, Anne Sharpe. His eyes follow her as she
fills the GLASSES.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Does your taste run to servants,
Mr. Hunter?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

When they are pretty. And how does
your taste run?

Hacklett drops his eyes to his DINNER PLATE, coloring deeply.

ROBERT HACKLETT

The mutton is excellent.

SIR JAMES

Hunter. Captain Morton and his crew
faced a harsh storm on their
Atlantic passage.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Is that so?

CHARLES MORTON

Aye. A two-day tropical storm. One
man lost to the sea.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Sounds eventful.

CHARLES MORTON

As it was.

ROBERT HACKLETT

I'd say, perhaps, the fiercest
storm of the year, by my reckoning.
Why, Mrs. Hacklett became quite ill
from the white water.

Mrs. Hacklett nods confirming the story. Hunter grows
increasingly bored, topping off his WINEGLASS.

CHARLES MORTON

Well then, after two days of this
most dreadful storm, the third day
dawned perfectly clear, a
magnificent morning.

(MORE)

CHARLES MORTON (CONT'D)

One could see for miles and the wind was fair from the north. But we did not know our position, having been blown for forty-eight hours. We sighted land to port, and made for it.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

(under his breathe)

A mistake.

CHARLES MORTON

Huh?

Hunter smiles.

CHARLES MORTON (CONT'D)

We came round the island, and to our astonishment we saw a warship anchored in the harbor. Small island, but there it was, a Spanish warship and no doubt of it. We felt certain it would give chase.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

And what happened?

CHARLES MORTON

It remained in the harbor. I should like to have a more exciting conclusion to the tale, but the truth is it did not come after us. The warship remained in the harbor.

Hunter sits up, growing more interested now.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

The Don saw you, of course?

CHARLES MORTON

Well, they must have done. We were under full canvas.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

How close were you?

CHARLES MORTON

No more than two or three miles offshore. The island wasn't on our charts, you know. I suppose it was too small to be charted. It had a single harbor, with a fortress to one side. I must say we all felt we had a narrow escape.

Hunter turns slowly to look at Sir James, who is staring at him with a slight smile.

SIR JAMES

Does the episode amuse you, Captain Hunter?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

You say there was a fortress by the harbor?

CHARLES MORTON

Indeed, a rather imposing fortress, it seemed.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

On the north or south shore of the harbor?

CHARLES MORTON

Let me recollect... north shore. Why?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

How long ago did you see this ship?

CHARLES MORTON

Three or four days past. Make it three days. As soon as we had our bearings, we ran straight for Port Royal.

Hunter *DRUMS* his fingers on the table, frowning at his now empty wineglass.

Sir James *CLEARs* his throat.

SIR JAMES

Captain Hunter, you seem preoccupied by this story.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Intrigued. I am sure the governor is equally intrigued.

SIR JAMES

I believe that it is fair to say the interests of the Crown have been aroused.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Sir James, would you edify the rest of us as to the import of all this?

SIR JAMES

Just a moment. What terms do you make?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Equal division, first.

SIR JAMES

My dear Hunter, equal division is most unattractive to the Crown.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

My dear Governor, anything less would make the expedition most unattractive to the seamen.

Sir James smiles.

SIR JAMES

You recognize, of course, that the prize is enormous.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Indeed. I also recognize that the island is impregnable. You sent Edmunds with three hundred men against it last year. Only one returned.

SIR JAMES

You yourself have expressed the opinion that Edmunds was not a resourceful man.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

But Cazalla is certainly resourceful.

SIR JAMES

Indeed. And yet it seems to me that Cazalla is a man you should like to meet.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Not unless there was an equal division.

SIR JAMES

But if you expect the Crown to outfit the expedition, that cost must be returned before any division. Fair?

ROBERT HACKLETT

Here, now. Sir James, are you bargaining with this man?

SIR JAMES

Not at all. I am coming to a gentleman's agreement with him?

ROBERT HACKLETT

For what purpose?

SIR JAMES

For the purpose of arranging a privateering expedition on the Spanish outpost of Matanceros.

CHARLES MORTON

Matanceros?

SIR JAMES

That is the name of the island you passed, Captain Morton. Matanceros. The Don built a fortress there two years ago, under the command of an unsavory gentleman named Cazalla. Perhaps you've heard of him. No? Well, he has a considerable reputation in the Indies. He is said to find the screams of his dying victims restful and relaxing.

Mrs. Hacklett goes pale.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Cazalla commands the fortress of Matanceros, built for the sole purpose of being the farthest eastward outpost of Spanish dominion along the homeward route of the *Treasure Fleet*.

There's a long silence. The dinner guests look uneasy.

SIR JAMES

I see you do not comprehend the economics of this region. Each year, Philip sends a fleet of treasure galleons here from Cádiz. They cross the Spanish Main, sighting first land to the south, off the coast of New Spain.

(MORE)

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

There the fleet disperses,
traveling to various spots,
Cartagena, Vera Cruz, Portobello,
to collect treasure. The fleet
regroups in Havana, then travels
east back to Spain. The purpose of
traveling together is protecting
against privateering raids. Am I
clear?

Most-to-all of them nod.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

Now, the *Armada* sails in late
summer, which is the onset of the
hurricane season. From time to
time, it has happened that ships
have been separated from the convoy
early in the voyage. The Don wanted
a strong harbor to protect such
ships. They built Matanceros for
this reason alone.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Surely that is not sufficient
reason. I cannot imagine--

SIR JAMES

It is ample reason. Now then. As
luck would have it, two treasure
naos were lost in a storm some
weeks ago. We know because they
were sighted by a privateer vessel,
which attacked them unsuccessfully.
They were last seen beating
southward, making for Matanceros.
One was badly damaged. What you,
Captain Morton, called a Spanish
warship was obviously one of these
treasure galleons. If it had been a
genuine warship, it would surely
have given chase at a two-mile
range, and captured you, and even
now you would be screaming your
lungs out for Cazalla's amusement.
The ship did not give chase because
it dared not leave the protection
of the harbor.

CHARLES MORTON

How long will it stay there?

SIR JAMES

It may leave at any time. Or it may wait until the next fleet departs, next year. Or it may wait for a Spanish warship to arrive and escort it home.

CHARLES MORTON

Can it be captured?

SIR JAMES

One would like to think so. In aggregate, the treasure ship probably contains a fortune worth five hundred thousand pounds.

There is a stunned silence around the table.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

I felt that this information would interest Captain Hunter.

ROBERT HACKLETT

You mean this man is a common privateer?

SIR JAMES

Not common in the least. Captain Hunter?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Not common, I would say.

ROBERT HACKLETT

But this levity is outrageous!

SIR JAMES

You forgot your manners. Captain Hunter is the second son of Major Edward Hunter, of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He was, in fact, born in the New World and educated at that institution, what was it called?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Harvard.

SIR JAMES

Umm, yes, Harvard. Captain Hunter has been with us for four years, and as a privateer, he has some standing in our community. Is that a fair summation, Captain Hunter?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
(grinning)
Only fair.

Mrs. Hacklett looks at Hunter with new interest.

ROBERT HACKLETT
The man is a rogue. A common rogue.

SIR JAMES
You should mind your tongue.
Dueling is illegal on this island,
yet it happens with monotonous
regularity. I regret there is
little I can do to stop the
practice.

ROBERT HACKLETT
I've heard of this man. He is not
the son of Major Edward Hunter at
all, at least not a legitimate son.

Hunter scratches his beard.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Is that so?

ROBERT HACKLETT
I have heard it! Further, I have
heard he is a murderer, scoundrel,
whoremonger, and pirate.

At the word "pirate", Hunter's arm flicks across the table
with extraordinary speed. It fastens in Hacklett's hair and
plunges his face into his half-eaten MUTTON.

SIR JAMES
Dear me. I warned him about that
earlier. You see, Mr. Hacklett,
privateering is an honorable
occupation. Pirates, on the other
hand, are outlaws. Do you seriously
suggest that Captain Hunter is an
outlaw?

Hacklett gives a *MUFFLED RESPONSE*.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
I didn't hear you, Mr. Hacklett.

ROBERT HACKLETT
(half audible)
I said, 'No.'

SIR JAMES

Then don't you think it appropriate
as a gentleman to apologize to
Captain Hunter?

ROBERT HACKLETT

I apologize, Captain Hunter. I
meant you no disrespect.

Hunter releases the man's head. Hacklett sits back, wiping
gravy from his face with his NAPKIN.

SIR JAMES

There now. A moment of
unpleasantness has been averted.
Shall we take dessert?

Hunter looks around the room. Captain Morton is looking at
him with open astonishment.

Then Hunter catches Mrs. Hacklett's eyes, she licks her lips.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Hunter and Sir James sit alone, drinking BRANDY.

SIR JAMES

He makes my life no simpler and I
fear it may be the same for you.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

You think he'll send unfavorable
dispatches to London?

SIR JAMES

I think he may try.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

The king must surely know what
transpires in his Colony.

SIR JAMES

That is a matter of opinion. One
thing is certain, the continued
support of privateers will be
assured if it repays the king
handsomely.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

No less than equal division. I tell
you, it cannot be otherwise.

SIR JAMES

But if the Crown outfits your ships, arms your seamen--

CAPTAIN HUNTER

No. That will not be necessary.

SIR JAMES

Not necessary? My dear Hunter, you know Matanceros. A full Spanish garrison is stationed there.

Hunter shakes his head.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

A frontal assault will never succeed. We know that from Edmunds expedition.

SIR JAMES

But what alternative is there? The fortress at Matanceros commands the entrance to the harbor. You cannot escape with the treasure ship without first capturing the fortress.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Indeed.

SIR JAMES

Well then?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

I propose a small raid from the landward side of the fortress.

SIR JAMES

Against a full garrison? At least three hundred troops? You cannot succeed.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

On the contrary. Unless we succeed, Cazalla will turn his guns on the treasure galleon, and sink it at anchor in the harbor.

SIR JAMES

I hadn't thought of that.

Sir James sips his brandy.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Tell me more of your plan.

EXT. GOVERNORS MANSION - NIGHT

Hunter steps out the front doors to the mansion. Mrs. Hacklett slips forward from the shadows.

EMILY HACKETT
Captain Hunter.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Yes, Mrs. Hacklett.

EMILY HACKETT
I want to apologize for the
inexcusable conduct of my husband.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
No apology necessary.

EMILY HACKETT
On the contrary, Captain. I think
it entirely necessary. He behaved
like a boar and an oaf.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Madam, your husband apologized as a
gentleman on his own behalf, and
the matter is concluded. Good
evening.

EMILY HACKETT
Captain Hunter.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Yes, Madam?

EMILY HACKETT
You are a most attractive man,
Captain.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Madam, you are very gracious. I
look forward to our next meeting.

EMILY HACKETT
I as well, Captain.

Hunter turns on his heels and walks down the cobble street
away from the mansion.

As he does, he passes the cookhouse, still brightly lit, the SERVANTS working inside.

Through the open windows, he sees Anne. He waves at her. She waves back and returns to her work.

EXT. MRS. DENBY'S INN - NIGHT

Hunter watches CHILDREN throw rocks. TRENCHER (16) sits nearby, drinking with his one good arm.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Trencher.

TRENCHER
(eager)
What is it, Captain?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I want you to find some mates for me.

TRENCHER
Say who they shall be, Captain.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Lazue, Mr. Enders, Sanson. And the Moor.

Trencher smiles.

TRENCHER
You want them here?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
No. Find where they are, and I'll seek them out. Now, where is Whisper?

TRENCHER
In the Blue Goat. The back room.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
And Black Eye is in Farrow Street?

TRENCHER
I think so. You want the Jew, too, do you?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I am trusting your tongue. Keep it still now.

TRENCHER
Will you take me with you, Captain?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
If you do as you are told.

TRENCHER
I swear by God's wounds, Captain.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Then look sharp.

Trencher runs down the muddy street. Hunter goes the other way, towards the Blue Goat.

INT. THE BLUE GOAT - NIGHT

Hunter enters the respectable inn/tavern. Only Port Royal's FINEST drank here.

The manager, MISTRESS WICKHAM (late 40s) jerks her thumb to the back room.

MISTRESS WICKHAM
In there, Captain.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Thank you, Mistress Wickham.

Hunter crosses to the back room.

INT. THE BLUE GOAT - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark, lit by a single CANDLE.

Hunter is slow and hesitant to enter. His eyes finally adjust and he spots WHISPER (50s) sitting in the far corner -- his PISTOL aimed at Hunter.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
A good evening, Whisper.

WHISPER
(low and raspy)
A good evening, Captain Hunter. You are alone?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I am.

WHISPER
Then come in. A touch of kill-
devil?

Whisper points to a BARREL beside him.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
With thanks, Whisper.

Whisper pours two GLASSES of dark-brown LIQUID. In the dim light, Hunter sees the ARCING SCAR beneath Whisper's chin.

WHISPER
What brings you, Captain?
Matanceros?

Hunter is startled.

Whisper laughs in a haunting *WHEEZE* -- not much left in his voice from his throat being cut only a year ago.

WHISPER (CONT'D)
I startle you, Captain? You are
surprised I know?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Whisper, do others know?

WHISPER
Some. Or they suspect. But they do
not understand. I heard the story
of Morton's voyage.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Ah.

WHISPER
You are going, Captain?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Tell me about Matanceros, Whisper.

WHISPER
You wish a map?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Yes.

WHISPER
Fifteen shillings?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Done.

Whisper produces a SCRAP OF OILCLOTH and a BIT OF CHARCOAL.
He sketches rapidly.

WHISPER

The island of Matanceros, it means
slaughter in the Donnish tongue. It
has the shape of a U, so. The mouth
of the harbor faces to the east, to
the ocean. This point--

Tapping to the left side of the drawn U-shaped island.

WHISPER (CONT'D)

Is Punta Matanceros. That is where
Cazalla built the fortress. It is
lowland here. The fortress is no
more than fifty paces above the
level of the water.

Whisper *GURGLES* a sip of kill-devil.

WHISPER (CONT'D)

The fortress is eight-sided. The
walls are stone, thirty feet high.
Inside there is a Spanish militia
garrison.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Of what strength?

WHISPER

Some say two hundred. Some say
three hundred. I have even heard
four hundred but do not believe it.

Hunter nods.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

And the guns?

WHISPER

On two sides of the fortress only.
One battery to the ocean, due east.
One battery across the mouth of the
harbor, due south.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

What guns are they?

Whisper gives a *CHILLING LAUGH*.

WHISPER

Most interesting, Captain Hunter.
They are *culebrinas*, twenty-four-
pounders, cast bronze.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

How many?

WHISPER

Ten, perhaps twelve.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

So it is well made. Who is the
gunnery master?

WHISPER

Bosquet.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

I have heard of him. He is the man
who sank the *Renown*?

WHISPER

The same.

Hunter frowns.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Whisper, do you know if the
culverins are fix-mounted?

Whisper rocks back and forth in his chair for a long moment.

WHISPER

You are insane, Captain Hunter.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

How so?

WHISPER

You are planning a landward attack.

Hunter nods.

WHISPER (CONT'D)

It will never succeed.

(tapping the map)

Edmunds thought of it, but when he
saw the island, he gave up the
attempt. Look here, if you beach on
the west there is a small harbor
which you can use.

(MORE)

WHISPER (CONT'D)

But to cross to the main harbor of Matanceros by land, you must scale the Leres ridge, to get to the other side.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Is it difficult to scale the ridge?

WHISPER

It is impossible. The ordinary man cannot do it. Starting here, from the western cove, the land gently slopes up for five hundred feet or more. But it is a hot, dense jungle, with many swamps. There is no fresh water. There will be patrols. If the patrols do not find you and you do not die of fevers, you emerge at the base of the ridge. The western face of Leres ridge is vertical rock for three hundred feet. A bird cannot perch there. The wind is incessant with the force of a gale.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

If I did scale it, what then?

WHISPER

The eastern slope is gentle, and presents no difficulty. But you will never reach the eastern face, I promise you.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

If I did, what of the Matanceros batteries?

WHISPER

(with a little shrug)

They face the water, Captain Hunter. Cazalla is no fool. He knows he cannot be attacked from the land.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

There is always a way.

WHISPER

Not always.

(rubbing his scar)

Not always.

INT. WORKSHOP - NIGHT

DON DIEGO DE RAMANO (60s) -- also known as BLACK EYE or THE JEW -- holds a PEARL between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand ... the only two remaining fingers he still possesses.

DON DIEGO
It is of excellent quality. I
advise you to keep it.

Don Diego hands Hunter back the pearl.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)
You did not need me to tell you
this, Hunter.

Don Diego wipes at his right eye, which is painted by a large black spot near the pupil.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
No, Don Diego.

Don Diego nods and closes the door to his shop.

DON DIEGO
Well?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
How is you health, Don Diego?

DON DIEGO
My health, my health. My health is
indifferent as always. You did not
need me to tell you this, either.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Is the shop successful?

GOLD JEWELERY is displayed throughout the shop.

DON DIEGO
Hunter, you are vexing. Speak your
mind.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I was wondering if you still worked
in powder?

DON DIEGO
Powder? Powder?

Don Diego looks around the room.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)
No. I do not work in powder. Not
after this.

He points to his blackened eye.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)
And after this.

He raises his fingerless left hand.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)
No longer do I work in powder.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Can your will be changed?

DON DIEGO
Never.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Never is a long time.

DON DIEGO
Never is what I mean, Hunter.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Not even to attack Cazalla?

Don Diego *GRUNTS*.

DON DIEGO
Cazalla? Cazalla is in Matanceros
and cannot be attacked.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
(quietly)
I am going to attack him.

DON DIEGO
So did Captain Edmunds, this past
year. Matanceros is invulnerable,
Hunter. Do not let vanity obscure
your sense. The fortress cannot be
overcome. Besides, there is nothing
there.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Nothing in the fortress. But in the
harbor?

DON DIEGO
The harbor? The harbor? What is in
the harbor? Ah.

(MORE)

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

It must be the treasure *naos* lost
in the August storm, yes?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

One of them.

DON DIEGO

How do you know this?

COMMANDER SCOTT

I know.

DON DIEGO

One *nao*?

(thinking)

It is probably filled with tobacco
and cinnamon.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

It is probably filled with gold and
pearls. Otherwise it would have
made straight for Spain, and risked
capture. It went to Matanceros only
because the treasure is so great it
dared not risk a seizure.

DON DIEGO

Perhaps, perhaps...

Don Diego is a great actor.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

Suppose you are right. It is of no
interest to me. A *nao* in Matanceros
harbor is as safe as if it were
moored in Cádiz itself. It is
protected by the fortress and the
fortress cannot be taken.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

True. But the gun batteries which
guard the harbor can be destroyed.
If your health is good, and if you
will work in powder once more.

DON DIEGO

You flatter me.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Most assuredly I do not.

DON DIEGO

What has my health to do with this?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
My plan is not without its rigors.

DON DIEGO
(frowning)
You are saying I must come with
you?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Of course. What did you think?

DON DIEGO
I thought you wanted money. You
want me to come?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
It is essential, Don Diego.

Don Diego stands up abruptly.

DON DIEGO
(with sudden excitement)
To attack Cazalla.

Don Diego paces back and forth across the room.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)
I have dreamt of his death each
night for ten years, Hunter. I have
dreamt--

He stops pacing; looks at Hunter.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)
You also have your reasons.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I do.

DON DIEGO
But can it be done? Truly?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Truly, Don Diego.

DON DIEGO
Then I wish to hear the plan and I
wish to know what powder you need.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I need an invention. You must
fabricate something which does not
exist.

DON DIEGO
Tell me. Tell me.

INT. BARBER-SURGEON SHOP - NIGHT

MR. ENDERS (late 40s) applies a LEECH to a PATIENT's neck -- face covered with a TOWEL. The patient GROANS. The leech instantly begins to fill with blood.

Enders HUMS quietly to himself.

MR. ENDERS
There now. A few moments and you will feel much better. Mark me, you will breathe easier, and show the ladies a thing or two, as well. I shall just step outside for a breath of air, and return in a moment.

With that, Enders leaves the shop.

EXT. BARBER-SURGEON SHOP - NIGHT

Enders approaches Hunter.

MR. ENDERS
Are you needing a shave, Captain?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
A crew.

MR. ENDERS
Then you have found your surgeon. And what's the nature of the voyage?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Logwood cutting.

Hunter grins.

MR. ENDERS
I am always pleased to cut logwood. And whose logwood might it be?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Cazalla's.

Enders drops his bantering mood.

MR. ENDERS
Cazalla? You are going to
Matanceros?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Softly.

Hunter glances around the street.

MR. ENDERS
Captain, Captain, suicide is an
offense against God.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
You know that I need you.

MR. ENDERS
But life is sweet, Captain.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
So is gold.

Enders falls silent for a moment.

MR. ENDERS
Perhaps you will explain?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
It is better that I do not.

MR. ENDERS
When will you sail?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
In two days' time.

MR. ENDERS
And we will hear the reasons in
Bull Bay?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
You have my word.

Enders extends a hand; Hunter shakes it. A writhing *GRUNT*
comes from within the shop.

MR. ENDERS
Oh dear, the poor fellow.

Ender rushes back into the shop. Hunter stays to listen.

MR. ENDERS (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Now, now, do be calm, Your
Excellency.

SIR JAMES (O.S.)
You are nothing but a damned pirate
and rascal.

INT. BAWDY HOUSE - NIGHT

LAZUE (20s) is surrounded by GIGGLING WOMEN.

LAZUE
Hunter! Hunter, join us.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
A word in private, Lazue.

LAZUE
You are so tedious.
(kissing each girl in
turn)
I shall return, my sweets.

Lazue and Hunter cross to a far corner.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Are you drunk, Lazue?

LAZUE
Not too drunk, Captain. Speak your
mind.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I am making a voyage in two days.

LAZUE
Yes?

Lazue seems to instantly sober up.

LAZUE (CONT'D)
A voyage to what end?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Matanceros.

For such a slight body, Lazue laughs a deep *GROWL*.

LAZUE
Matanceros means slaughter, and it
is well-named, from all that I
hear.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Nonetheless.

LAZUE

Your reasons must be good.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

They are.

LAZUE

Are the reasons as good as the dangers are great?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

They are.

Lazue searches Hunter's face.

LAZUE

You want a woman on this voyage?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

That is why I am here.

Despite dressing, speaking, and acting like a man, Lazue is actually a woman.

Lazue *LAUGHS*.

LAZUE

You are mad, Hunter, to attack Matanceros.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Will you come?

LAZUE

Only because I have nothing better to do.

Lazue walks back to her giggling whores.

INT. GAMING HOUSE - DAWN

Hunter finds BASSA (30) -- also called THE MOOR -- playing a hand of gleeck with two DUTCH CORSAIRS: drunken dandies, elegantly dressed in fine hose and embroidered silk tunics.

The Dutchmen bet recklessly, joking and *LAUGHING* in high spirits.

Bassa sits impassively. With his turn, he draws three CARDS alike, shows them, and scoops up the Dutchmen's MONEY.

The two fools stare in silence a moment.

DUTCHMAN 1
Cheat! Cheat!

DUTCHMAN 2
You cheat us, you black oaf!

The men continue shouting, yet Bassa remains impassive.

A SERVING BOY (12) comes over, and Bassa hands him a single GOLD DOUBLOON.

SERVING BOY
Aye, sir.

The serving boy steps back and waits for the action to begin.

DUTCHMAN 1
(now standing)
YOU CHEAT!

Dutchman 1 brandishes a DAGGER in front of Bassa's face.

DUTCHMAN 1 (CONT'D)
HAND OVER MY MONEY, PIG!

Bassa shakes his head, still impassive.

Dutchman 2 stands and tugs a PISTOL out of his belt. With that, Bassa springs into action.

Bassa grabs the dagger in the Dutchman's hand and swings the blade down -- burying it three inches deep in the tabletop.

He strikes the second man in the stomach; the man drops his pistol and bends over *COUGHING*. Bassa kicks him in the face and sends him sprawling across the room.

Bassa returns to the first Dutchman, eyes now wide with terror. Bassa picks him up, carries him to the door, and hurls him outside into the mud.

Bassa returns to the table, plucks out the dagger, slips it into his own belt, and crosses the room to sit next to Hunter.

Only then did he allow himself a smile.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
New men.

Bassa nods. Then points at Hunter, questioningly.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
I came to see you.

Bassa shrugs.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
We sail in two days.

BASSA
(pursed lips, mouthing)
Ou?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Matanceros.

Bassa looks disgusted.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
You're not interested?

Bassa smirks and draws a forefinger across his throat.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
I tell you, it can be done. Are you
afraid of heights?

Bassa makes a hand-over-hand gesture. Shakes his head.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
I don't mean a ship's rigging. I
mean a cliff. A high cliff, three
or four hundred feet.

Bassa scratches his forehead. He looks to the ceiling,
imagining the height.

Finally, he nods.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
You can do it? Even in high wind?

He nods again.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
Good. Then you'll go with us.

Hunter starts to get up, but Bassa pushes him back into his
chair. Bassa *JINGLES* the COINS in his pockets and points a
questioning finger at Hunter.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
Don't worry, it's worth it.

Bassa smiles, allowing Hunter to leave.

INT. WHORE HOUSE - DAWN

Hunter *KNOCKS* on the bedroom door. From inside, he hears a *GIGGLE*.

He *KNOCKS* again.

SANSON (O.S.)
Damn you to hell and be gone.

Hunter hesitates, and *KNOCKS* a third time.

SANSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
God's blood, who is it now?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Hunter.

SANSON (O.S.)
Damn me. Come in, Hunter.

Hunter opens the door, letting it swing wide, but does not enter.

A moment later, a CHAMBER POT and its CONTENTS fly through the open door.

SANSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Cautious as ever, Hunter. You will
outlive us all. Enter.

Hunter does.

Sitting up in bed is SANSON (40s) and a BLONDE GIRL (late teens).

SANSON (CONT'D)
You have interrupted us, my son.
Let us pray that you have good
reason.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I do.

There is a moment of awkward silence. Sanson scratches at his beard.

SANSON
Am I to guess the reason for your
coming?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
No.

Hunter glances at the girl.

SANSON

Ah.

(kissing at her
fingertips)

My delicate peach. Go.

The girl immediately scrambles naked out of bed, hastily grabbing her clothes, and bolts from the room.

SANSON (CONT'D)

Such a delightful creature. She is French, you know. French women make the best lovers, don't you agree?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

They certainly make the best whores.

Sanson *LAUGHS*.

SANSON

Can I not entice you to agree that French women are superior to English women?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Only in the prevalence of disease.

Sanson *LAUGHS* again, heartily.

SANSON

Hunter, your sense of humor is most unusual. Will you take a glass of wine with me?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

With pleasure.

Sanson pours two GLASSES OF WINE. Hunter takes one and raises it in a toast.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

Your health.

SANSON

And yours.

They drink. Neither man taking his eyes off the other.

SANSON (CONT'D)

Well, my son. Tell me what troubles you?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I am leaving in two days' time. For
Matanceros.

Sanson doesn't laugh.

SANSON
You want me to go with you to
Matanceros?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Yes.

Sanson pours more wine.

SANSON
I do not want to go there. No sane
man wants to go to Matanceros. Why
do you want to go to Matanceros?

Hunter says nothing.

Sanson frowns at his feet at the end of the bed. He wiggles
his toes.

SANSON (CONT'D)
It must be the galleons. The
galleons lost in the storm have
made Matanceros. Is that it?

Hunter shrugs.

SANSON (CONT'D)
Cautious, cautious. Well then, what
terms do you make for this madman's
expedition?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I will give you four shares.

SANSON
Four shares? You are a stingy man,
Captain Hunter. My pride is
injured, you think me worth only
four shares--

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Five shares.

SANSON
Five? Let us say eight, and be done
with it.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Let us say five, and be done with it.

SANSON
Hunter. The hour is late and I am not patient. Shall we say seven?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Six.

SANSON
God's blood, you are stingy.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Six.

SANSON
Seven. Have another glass of wine.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Seven, then.

SANSON
My friend, you have great reason.

Sanson extends his hand. Hunter shakes it.

SANSON (CONT'D)
Now tell me the manner of your attack.

Hunter leans in close and *WHISPERS* into Sanson's ear for some time.

Finally ... Sanson slaps his thigh.

SANSON (CONT'D)
It is true what they say: about Spanish sloth, French elegance, and English craft.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I think it will work.

SANSON
I do not doubt it for a heartbeat.

EXT. DOCKS - DAY

DOCK WORKERS load provisions onto a sloop, the *Cassandra*.

DOCK WORKER 1
I hear he's attacking Campeche.

DOCK WORKER 2
No! Captain Hunter will sack
Maricaibo.

DOCK WORKER 1
I don't believe it.

DOCK WORKER 2
Panama?

DOCK WORKER 1
Even as Drake had done.

MR. GOWER (50s) who is double-checking the MANUSCRIPT chimes
in.

MR. GOWER
A long sea voyage implies heavy
provisioning. Captain Hunter
requested such few supplies. My
guess, Havana.

DOCK WORKER 1 & 2
Havana?

DOCK WORKER 1
How about Black Eye, the Jew?

MR. GOWER
How about him?

DOCK WORKER 1
I hear he's buying up rats from the
children. And the entrails of pigs.

MR. GOWER
Hmm. The entrails of pigs might be
used for divination, but surely not
by a Jew.

DOCK WORKER 2
And the rope, don't forget the
rope.

MR. GOWER
What rope?

DOCK WORKER 1
Mr. Whitstall received an order for
more than a thousand feet of rope.

DOCK WORKER 2
What do you make of that?

MR. GOWER
I do not know. But this morning a fisherman brought in a hammerhead shark. In its belly contained the remains of a Spanish soldier. One thing is for sure, it is an omen. Captain Hunter is attacking the Spanish.

The two dock workers seem frightened by Mr. Gower's theatrics.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - OFFICE - DAY

Sir James interrogates a French rascal, L'OLONNAIS (30s).

L'OLONNAIS
Faith, some plague or calamity must have fallen it. But 'twas a goodly ship, sire, and I felt a service to the Crown to bring it back to port, sire.

SIR JAMES
You found no passengers at all?

L'OLONNAIS
Not a living thing.

SIR JAMES
No dead aboard the ship?

L'OLONNAIS
Nay, sire.

SIR JAMES
And no clue as to its misfortune?

L'OLONNAIS
Nary a one, sire.

SIR JAMES
And the cargo--

L'OLONNAIS
As your own inspectors found it, sire. We'd not touch it, sire. You know that.

Sir James clearly does not believe this man's story.

SIR JAMES

Very well. I shall formally state to you that the Crown is much displeased with this capture. The king therefore shall take a fifth--

L'OLONNAIS

A fifth!

SIR JAMES

Indeed. His Majesty shall have a fifth, and I shall formally state to you further that if any evidence reaches my ears of dastardly conduct on your part, you shall be brought to trial and hanged as a pirate and murderer.

L'OLONNAIS

Sire, I swear to you that--

SIR JAMES

Enough. You are free to go for the moment, but bear my words in mind.

L'Olonnais bows elaborately and backs out of the room. John, the governor's aide, stands stiffly by the door.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

John, find some of the seamen of L'Olonnais and see that their tongues are well oiled with wine. I want to know how he came to take that vessel and I want substantial proofs against him.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

Very good, Your Excellency.

SIR JAMES

And John, set aside a tenth for the king, and a tenth for the governor.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

Yes, Your Excellency.

SIR JAMES

That will be all.

JOHN CRUIKSHANK

Your Excellency, Captain Hunter is here for his papers.

SIR JAMES
Then show him in.

John bows and exits the room. Hunter strides in only a moment later. He shakes Sir James's hand.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
You seem in good spirits, Captain.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I am, Sir James.

SIR JAMES
The preparations go well?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
They do, Sir James.

SIR JAMES
At what cost?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Five hundred doubloons, Sir James.

Sir James tosses Hunter a SACK OF COIN from his desk.

SIR JAMES
This will suffice.

Hunter bows.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
Now then, I have caused to be drawn up the paper of marque for the cutting of logwood at any location you deem proper and fitting.

Sir James hands Hunter the PAPERS.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
(slowly)
I must advise you that we cannot countenance any attack upon any Spanish settlement, in the absence of provocation.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I understand.

SIR JAMES
Do you suppose there shall be any provocation?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I doubt it, Sir James.

SIR JAMES
Then of course your attack on
Matanceros will be practical.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Sir James, our poor sloop
Cassandra, lightly armed and by the
proofs of your papers engaged in
commerce, may suffer to be fired
upon by the Matanceros guns. In
that instance, are we not forced to
retaliate? An unwarranted shelling
of an innocent vessel cannot be
countenanced.

SIR JAMES
I will not betray your confidence.

Hunter turns to go.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)
One last thing. Cazalla is a
favorite of Philip. Cazalla's
daughter is married to Philip's
vice chancellor. Any message from
Cazalla describing the events at
Matanceros differently from your
account would be most embarrassing
to His Majesty King Charles.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I doubt that there will be
dispatches from Cazalla.

SIR JAMES
It is important that there not be.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Dispatches are not received from
the depths of the sea.

SIR JAMES
Indeed not.

The two men shake hands.

EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - DAY

As he descends the steps to the Governor's Mansion a BLACK
WOMANSERVANT hands him a LETTER. Hunter stops to read it:

EMILY HACKETT (V.O.)

*My dear Captain-
I am lately informed that a
beautiful fresh spring can be found
on the main portion of the Jamaican
island, at the place called
Crawford's Valley. To acquaint
myself with the delights of my new
residence, I shall make an
excursion to this spot in the
latter part of the day, and I hope
that it is as exquisite as I am to
believe.*

*Fondly, I am,
Emily Hackett*

Hunter slips the letter into his pocket and mounts his HORSE.

EXT. INLAND PARTS OF JAMAICA - DAY

Hunter rides up to a bizarre scene: DEAD ANIMALS of all sorts lay everywhere, FRAGMENTS OF BROKEN GLASS lay glinting in the tall grass.

Don Diego's clothing is smeared with BLOOD and the DUST OF EXPLODED POWDER.

Hunter dismounts.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

What in God's name have you been doing?

DON DIEGO

You will not be disappointed. Here, I will show you. First, you gave me the task of a long and slow-burning fuse. Yes?

Hunter nods.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

The usual fuses are of no use. One could employ a powder trail, but it burns with great swiftness. Or contrariwise, one could employ a slow match. But that is very slow indeed, and the flame is often too weak to ignite the final materials. You take my meaning?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

I do.

DON DIEGO

Well then. An intermediate flame and speed of burning is provided by increasing the proportion of sulfur in the powder. But such a mixture is notorious for its unreliability. One does not wish the flame to sputter and die.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

No.

DON DIEGO

I tried many soaked strings and wicks and cloths, to no avail. None can be counted on. Therefore I searched for a container to hold the charge. I have found this.

Don Diego holds up a thin, white, STRING-SUBSTANCE.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

(smiling happily)

The entrails of a rat. Lightly dried over warm coals, to remove humors and juices yet retaining flexibility. So, now when a quantity of powder is introduced to the intestine, a serviceable fuse results. Let me show you.

Don Diego takes one length of INTESTINE -- 10 feet long, whitish, with a faint dark appearance of powder inside -- sets it on the ground, and lights one end.

The fuse burns slowly and *QUIETLY*, with little sputtering -- consuming about an inch per minute.

Don Diego smiles broadly.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

You see?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

You have reason to be proud. Can you transport this fuse?

DON DIEGO

With safety. The only problem is time. If the intestine becomes too dry, it is brittle and may crack. This will happen after a day or so.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Then we must carry a quantity of rats with us.

DON DIEGO

I believe as much. Now I have a further surprise, something you did not request. Perhaps you cannot find a use for it, though it seems to me a most admirable device.

(he pauses)

You have heard of the French weapon which is called the *grenadoe*?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

No, a poisoned fruit?

DON DIEGO

In a sense. It is so called because of the seeds within the pomegranate fruit. I have heard this device exists, but was dangerous to manufacture. Yet I have done so. The trick is the proportion of saltpeter. Let me show you.

Don Diego holds up an empty, small-necked GLASS BOTTLE. He pours in a handful of BIRDSHOT and a few fragments of METAL.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

(as he works)

I do not wish you to think ill of me. Do you know of the *Complicidad Grande*?

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Only a little.

DON DIEGO

It began with my son... In August of the year 1639, my son had long renounced the faith of a Jew. He lived in Lima, in Peru, in New Spain. His family prospered. He had enemies. He was arrested on the eleventh of August and charged with being a secret Jew. It was said he would not make a sale on a Saturday, and also that he would not eat bacon for his breakfast. He was branded as a Judaiser. He was tortured. His bare feet were locked into red-hot iron shoes and his flesh sizzled. He confessed.

Don Diego packs the glass with POWDER, and seals it with DRIPPING WAX.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

He was imprisoned for six months.
In 1640, in January, eleven men
were burned at the stake. Seven
were alive. One of them was my son.
Cazalla was the garrison commander
who supervised the execution of the
auto. My son's property was seized.
His wife and children...
disappeared.

Don Diego wipes away the tears from his eyes.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

I do not grieve, but perhaps you
will understand this.

He raises the GRENADOE, and inserts a short FUSE.

DON DIEGO (CONT'D)

You had best take cover behind
those bushes.

Hunter hides behind some nearby bushes. Don Diego sets the
bottle on a rock, lights the fuse, and runs madly to join
Hunter.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

What is to happen?

DON DIEGO

Watch.

A moment later, the bottle *EXPLODES* -- glass and metal
blasting in all directions. Hunter and Don Diego duck to the
ground as FRAGMENTS soar through the foliage.

Hunter raises his head, he is pale.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Good God.

DON DIEGO

Not a gentleman's apparatus. It
causes little damage to anything
more solid than flesh. The Don has
earned such attentions. What is
your opinion of the *grenadoe*?

Hunter pauses.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Build me a dozen. Box them for the voyage, and tell no one. They shall be our secret.

Don Diego smiles.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

You shall have your revenge, Don Diego.

Hunter mounts his horse, and rides away.

EXT. CRAWFORD'S VALLEY SPRING - DAY

Hunter arrives on a ridge looking down at Mrs. Hacklett and her two SLAVES. He rides down to the other HORSES and ties his horse.

Undetected by Mrs. Hacklett, Hunter presses a finger to his lips and tosses the slaves a SHILLING. They quickly dismiss themselves.

Mrs. Hacklett is splashing in the water.

EMILY HACKETT

Sarah, do you know that Captain Hunter, in the port?

Captain Hunter sits next to her CLOTHES on the shore.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

(high-pitched voice)

Umm-hmmm.

EMILY HACKETT

Robert says he is nought but a common rogue and pirate, but Robert pays me so little attention. I was the favorite of the king, now there is a merry man and no mistake. But this Captain Hunter, he is so handsome. Does he have the favors of many women in the town, do you know.

Hunter says nothing.

EMILY HACKETT (CONT'D)

I expect he must do. He has that look in his eye which melts the hardest heart. And he is obviously strong and brave;

(MORE)

EMILY HACKETT (CONT'D)
no woman could fail to notice that.
And his fingers and nose are of
goodly length, which bodes well for
his attentions. Does he have a
favorite in the town, Sarah?

Again, Hunter does not answer.

EMILY HACKETT (CONT'D)
His Majesty had long fingers, and
he is wonderfully well-suited for
the bedroom.
(giggles)
I should not be saying this, Sarah.
...Sarah?

Mrs. Hacklett turns to see Hunter grinning at her.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Don't you know it is unhealthy to
bathe?

She splashes angrily.

EMILY HACKETT
All that has been spoken of you is
true! You are a dastardly, utterly
foul man and truly no gentleman.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Were you expecting a gentleman
today?

EMILY HACKETT
Certainly I expected more than a
common sneak and thief. Leave this
spot now, so that I may dress
myself.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I find this spot amiable.

EMILY HACKETT
(angry)
You refuse to leave?

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Indeed, I fear I do refuse.

EMILY HACKETT
Then sir, I have misjudged you. I
thought you would extend common
courtesy and ordinary good manners
to a woman at a disadvantage.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
What is your disadvantage?

EMILY HACKETT
I am plainly naked, sir.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
So I see.

EMILY HACKETT
And this spring is cold.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Is it?

EMILY HACKETT
It is indeed.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
You have just perceived this?

EMILY HACKETT
Sir, I shall ask you once more to
cease this impertinence and allow
me a moment's privacy to dry and
clothe myself.

In reply, Hunter walks down to the water's edge, takes her hand, and hauls her onto the rock, where she stands dripping and shivering.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
You'll catch your death of chill.

EMILY HACKETT
Then let us be equal.

Mrs. Hacklett abruptly pushes Hunter into the spring. He lands with a *SPLASH*, floundering about for breath.

Mrs. Hacklett *LAUGHS*.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Madam! Madam, I beseech you!

Hunter struggles in the water.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)
Madam, I cannot swim. I pray you to
help--

Hunter's head bobs under for a moment.

EMILY HACKETT
A seafaring man who cannot swim?

She *LAUGHS* some more.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
Madam--

Hunter sinks again, splashing and kicking with no coordination. Mrs. Hacklett looks at him with concern. She extends her hand. Hunter kicks and sputters towards her.

He takes her hand and pulls hard, flinging her over his head into the water.

Hunter *LAUGHS* and helps himself onto the warm rock.

EMILY HACKETT
You are nothing but a bastard, a
rogue, a cutthroat vicious rascally
whore-son scoundrel.

Hunter pulls her onto the rock.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
At your service.

And he kisses her.

EMILY HACKETT
(breaking away)
And forward.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
And forward.

He kisses her again.

EMILY HACKETT
I suppose you intend to rape me
like a common street woman.

Hunter strips off his wet tunic.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
I doubt that it will be necessary.

It was not. They embrace once more.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - OFFICE - DAY

Hacklett confronts Sir James.

ROBERT HACKLETT

The town is rife with rumor that Captain Hunter, the same man with whom we supped yesterday past, is now organizing a piratical expedition against a Spanish dominion, perhaps even Havana.

SIR JAMES

You place credence in these tales?

ROBERT HACKLETT

Your Excellency, with the greatest respect I must inform you that, by rumor, you have countenanced this excursion, and indeed may have made pecuniary gestures of support.

SIR JAMES

(irritably)

Do you mean I paid for the expedition?

ROBERT HACKLETT

In words to that effect, Sir James.

Sir James *SIGHS*.

SIR JAMES

Mr. Hacklett, when you have resided here a little longer, let us say, perhaps, a week, you will come to know that it is always the rumor that I have countenanced an excursion, and have paid for it.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Then the rumors are groundless?

SIR JAMES

To this extent, I have given papers to Captain Hunter authorizing him to engage in logwood cutting at any convenient place. That is the extent of my interest in the matter.

ROBERT HACKLETT

And where shall he cut this logwood?

SIR JAMES

I have no notion. Probably the Mosquito Coast of Honduras. That is the ordinary place.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Your Excellency, may I respectfully remind you that in this era of peace between our nation and Spain, the cutting of logwood represents an irritant which might easily be avoided?

SIR JAMES

You may so remind me, but I judge you to be incorrect. Many lands in these parts are claimed by Spain and yet have no habitation-- no town, no colonists, no citizenry on these lands. In the absence of such proofs of dominion, I find the cutting of logwood to be unobjectionable.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Your Excellency, can you not agree that what begins as a logwood-cutting expedition, even granting the wisdom of what you say, may easily turn into a piratical venture?

SIR JAMES

Easily? No easily, Mr. Hacklett.

Mr. Hacklett studies Sir James' face and temperament for several moments.

ROBERT HACKLETT (V.O.)

To his most sacred Majesty Charles, by the grace of God, of Great Britain and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, etc. The humble petition of the Deputy-Governor of His Majesty's plantations and lands in Jamaica, in the West Indies.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Hacklett writes and reviews his LETTER to King Charles.

ROBERT HACKLETT (V.O.)

Humbly sheweth that I, Your Majesty's most loyal subject, having been charged by Your Majesty with the promulgation of the Court's feelings and desires on the matter of piratical ventures in the West Indies; and having been made known by delivery of epistle and oral pronouncement to Sir James Almont, Governor of the aforementioned land of Jamaica, these same feelings and desires, I must report that little attention is given to the cessation and suppression of piracy in these parts. On the contrary, I must sadly if honestly state that Sir James himself consorts with all manner of rogue and villain; that he encourages by word, deed and coin the continuance of dastardly and bloody raids on Spanish lands; that he permits use of Port Royal as a common meeting place for these cutthroats and knaves, and for the dispersal of their ill-gotten gains; that he shows no remorse cessation; that he is himself a man unsuited to high capacity by virtue of poor health and lax moral outlook; that he abides all manner of corruption and vice in the name of His Majesty. For all these reasons and proofs, I most humbly implore and petition Your Majesty to remove this man from his position, and to choose, in His Majesty's great wisdom, a more suitable successor who shall not daily make a mockery of the Crown. I most humbly implore Your Majesty's royal assent to this simple petition, and shall ever pray. In that continuance, I am, your most faithful, loyal and obedient servant,

Robert Hacklett

GOD SAVE THE KING

Robert is pleased with his work.

ROBERT HACKLETT

Child.

Anne steps forward.

ROBERT HACKLETT (CONT'D)
I wish you to see that this letter
is dispatched on the next boat to
England.

Hacklett gives her a COIN.

ANNE SHARPE
(with a curtsy)
My lord.

ROBERT HACKLETT
Treat it with care.

ANNE SHARPE
Does my lord wish anything else?

ROBERT HACKLETT
Eh?

Anne licks her lips.

ROBERT HACKLETT (CONT'D)
No. Be gone now.

And with that, she leaves.

EXT. DOCKS - DAWN

Hunter supervises the final loading of provisions to the
Cassandra.

MR. ENDERS
Not heavily armed.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
No. We shall rely on speed and
maneuverability, Mr. Enders.

MR. ENDERS
Very good, Captain. I'll see to it.
The crew has been examined of
disease.

CAPTAIN HUNTER
And?

MR. ENDERS
They are ready to set sail when you
are, Captain.

Don Diego carries CASES stored in an OILSKIN SACK. He nods to Hunter, who watches him place it belowdeck.

TRENCHER

Beg pardon, Captain, but there's a one-legged beggar's been lingering by the warehouse for the better part of the night.

Hunter peers at the building.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

You know him?

TRENCHER

No, Captain.

Hunter studies the BEGGAR from far.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Bassa.

The huge form of Bassa materializes at his side.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

You see the beggar with the wooden leg?

Bassa nods.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

Kill him.

Bassa walks away. Hunter turns to Enders.

MR. ENDERS

It's best, I think, Captain. Better a voyage begin in blood than end in blood.

EXT. CASSANDRA - AFT - MORNING

The *Cassandra* maneuvers out of the harbor. Hunter looks back at the docks once more, the town still sleeping peacefully.

Floating facedown in the water, he sees the body of the one-legged beggar -- rocking back and forth with the tide.

Hunter sets his sights onward.

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BEDROOM - MORNING

Sir James sits in his dressing gown, reading Mr. Hacklett's LETTER. Anne stands nearby.

SIR JAMES

'Consorts with all manner of rogue and villain, encourages... the continuance of dastardly and bloody raids on Spanish lands'-- good God, 'dastardly and bloody,' the man is mad. 'Permits use of Port Royal as a common meeting place for these cutthroats and knaves... unsuited to high capacity... abides all manner of corruption...' Damn the man.

Sir James waves the letter in his hand.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

Damn the rogue and villain. When did he give you this?

ANNE SHARPE

Yesterday, Your Excellency. I thought you would want it, Your Excellency.

SIR JAMES

Indeed I do.

Sir James gives her a COIN.

SIR JAMES (CONT'D)

And if there is more of the same, you shall be further rewarded, Anne. Has he made advances?

ANNE SHARPE

No, Your Excellency.

SIR JAMES

As I thought. Well, we shall devise a way to settle Mr. Hacklett's games on intrigue, once and finally.

Sir James walks to the window of his bedchamber.

From beyond, in the early light, the *Cassandra*, rounds the point and raises her main sail -- heading east, gaining speed.

EXT. CASSANDRA - DAY

The *Cassandra* stops in the waters at Bull Bay. Enders puts the ship into irons.

EXT. CASSANDRA - MAIN DECK - DAY

The CREW gathers on the main deck. Hunter steps forward.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

As tradition, we stop at Bull Bay.
I call for a vote that I, Captain
Charles Hunter, be named captain of
this vessel. How do you vote?

CREW

AYE!

Captain Hunter nods.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

For the rules: no drink, nor
fornication, and no looting without
my order or by penalty of death.
How do you vote?

CREW

AYE!

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Here are the divisions: as captain,
I will take thirteen shares. Sanson
will have seven.

Some *GRUMBLES* come from the crowd. Sanson sneers.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

Mr. Enders will take one and a half
shares. Lazue will take one and a
quarter. Black Eye will take one
and a quarter. And the rest will be
equally distributed amongst the
crew.

CREWMEMBER

Captain, are you taking us to
Matanceros? It is dangerous.

CAPTAIN HUNTER

Indeed it is, but the booty is
great. There will be plenty for
every man.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

Any man who sees the danger as over-
much will be put ashore here, in
this bay, and none the worse in my
estimation. But he must go before I
tell you the treasure that is
there.

Hunter waits. No one moves or speaks.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

All right. Matanceros harbor holds
a Donnish treasure *nao*. We are
going to take her.

At this, there is an enormous *UPROAR* among the crew.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

Are you with me?

Another *SHOUT* from the crew, gold in their sights.

CAPTAIN HUNTER (CONT'D)

Then, on to Matanceros.

FADE TO BLACK.