

OUR FLAG MEANS DEATH
SPEC SCRIPT

"LOST AT SEA"

Written by

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TEASER

EXT. SPANISH JACKIE'S BAR - DAY

A line of grubby pirates mill about outside the door.

On the outside wall hangs a poster. It reads: CREW SIGN UP TODAY.

PIRATE (PRELAP)
Why am I a good fit?

INT. SPANISH JACKIE'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

In a dimly lit back room, a PIRATE stands alone under a skylight. He's gruesome and harried, with rotted teeth and a blind eye.

PIRATE (CONT'D)
(intense)
When I was nine, I pushed me own brother into a roaring fire. Laughed as I watched his ruddy face melt off. At birth, me own mother gave me up, as she feared I was the spawn of the Devil himself. The last man who disrespected me, I shoved me hand up his arse and made him talk like a fucking puppet. And, most importantly, I make a damn fine coffee.

IZZY HANDS leans forward on a table from the darkness. He holds a quill pen and an open registry book.

IZZY
You're hired.

TEASER END

TITLE CARD

EXT. OPEN SEA - DAY

A NAVAL SCHOONER floats peacefully in a fog. It's early morning, with no one else in sight.

EXT. NAVAL SHIP - CONTINUOUS

Two SAILORS are tying knots by the railing. Both are grimy, slack jawed and buck-toothed. SAILOR 1 is having issues tying his knots.

SAILOR 1
Can't seem to get it right.

SAILOR 2
Huh?

SAILOR 1
The knot, see?

Sailor 1 holds it up. It's a mess.

SAILOR 1 (CONT'D)
Was I supposed to... what? How'd you do yours?

SAILOR 2
Oh come on, I've already shown you once.

SAILOR 1
I need more than that to learn it right.

SAILOR 2
You got the canvas patch on the first try.

SAILOR 1
Come on, please? Please, please, please--?

SAILOR 2
Fine, fine!
(holds up rope)
You gotta remember it like this.

He holds up the first end. Sailor 1 mimics him.

SAILOR 2 (CONT'D)
You take your rabbit. Rabbit goes over the hill--

Sailor 2 moves the rope over a loop.

SAILOR 2 (CONT'D)
--Under the bridge--

He wraps it around.

SAILOR 2 (CONT'D)
--Up and over, and finally--

BOOM!

SAILOR 2 FLIES FORWARD AS A CANNON BALL SLAMS INTO HIS BACK, KNOCKING HIM INTO THE OCEAN.

The deck stirs, and Sailor 1 turns slowly. As he looks on, his face falls in horror.

A PIRATE SHIP HAS PIERCED THE VEIL OF FOG. BLACKBEARD'S FLAG FLIES HIGH.

MORE CANNON FIRE THUNDERS.

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - LATER

All of the Navy crew are thrown to their knees by a band of rough and rugged pirates. They're surrounded by piles and piles of stolen loot.

Blackbeard's pirates are a terrifying band of filthy hellions. They laugh and terrorize the captives with weapons brandished.

Izzy limps on a cane down the line of captives.

IZZY
A fine take, lads! Strip them of
all they have!

He looks up toward the bow.

BLACKBEARD stands at the front of the ship, staring out into the horizon. He's back in his signature black leather. His back is to the deck.

Izzy approaches him.

IZZY (CONT'D)
Captain, sir. You should come see
who we've caught.

Blackbeard looks over his shoulder. His beard is starting to grow back in all its glory.

Izzy leads him down the row of prisoners and they stop at the very end.

STEDE BONNET, in his usual fancy wardrobe, sits on his knees. He snivels and sobs, his hands behind his head.

Blackbeard stops. He stares in disbelief.

Stede is red faced and helpless.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. ISLAND - DAY

Stede and Blackbeard share a meal together, laughing.

EXT. THE REVENGE - RAILING - DAY

Stede and Blackbeard have a drink, sitting at the railing.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Stede and Blackbeard share their first and only gentle kiss.

FLASHBACK END

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - CONTINUOUS

IZZY (O.C.)
Well then?

Blackbeard blinks out of his daze. He looks again.

Instead of Stede Bonnet, a FANCY DIPLOMAT kneels in clothing very close to Stede's, crying and shaking.

Izzy steps in toward Blackbeard.

IZZY (CONT'D)
My guess is he's part of the gentry
or something. Probably worth plenty
of ransom.

Blackbeard is still coming out of his hallucination. Blackbeard looks at Izzy, and then at the diplomat.

FANCY DIPLOMAT
Please, sir, if it's money you want-

Blackbeard takes his pistol and SHOTS HIM IN THE HEAD.

He collapses, and Blackbeard steps away. Izzy looks at the dead man at his feet. He taps him. He's very dead.

Blackbeard walks up to their cache of loot.

JIM secures a few barrels of rum. They work with a glare, keeping their eyes away from Blackbeard.

BLACKBEARD

Nice take, isn't it, Jim?

Jim says nothing. Blackbeard leans forward on his knees, peering at them.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)

You know, if you're so intent on really being a mute, I can cut that tongue out. Get right to the point.

Jim glares. Blackbeard twitches. Realizing it isn't worth the trouble, he heads back to his quarters.

Jim notices a boarding hatchet tossed aside. With a quick look, they swipe it from the deck and hide it under their tunic.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Blackbeard steps into the empty room. It's still stripped of all its character and color. The single desk is covered with empty bottles that spill to the floor.

Blackbeard picks up a bottle which has rolled to his foot. There's still some rum left.

Blackbeard uncorks the rum with his teeth, spits it out, and takes a deep drink.

Izzy steps into the captain's quarters and closes the door behind him.

IZZY

Well, I had been hoping to get a nice sum for that powdered wig, but I guess he might still be worth something dead.

Izzy stumbles further in. Blackbeard doesn't look at him.

IZZY (CONT'D)

So what now, Captain? It was a fine take. Your crew should be nice and satisfied for the time being.

Blackbeard walks to his desk. He pushes aside the trash and looks at a few splotchy maps.

IZZY (CONT'D)
What's next in our docket, sir? The republic, perhaps?

BLACKBEARD
No.

He takes another swig of rum.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
I'm restless, Izzy.

Blackbeard finishes the rum and throws it to one side, letting it crash into an empty shelf. Blackbeard walks to his window and pulls back a curtain.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
My spark was gone for a long time.
A long, long time. But it's back now.

Blackbeard turns back to Izzy.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
Knocking over ships is child's play. I need a challenge.

IZZY
Couldn't agree more, Captain. What do you suggest?

Blackbeard looks back out the window. His eyes are blazing.

BLACKBEARD
We're taking a fort.

EXT. TINY ISLAND - DAY

Stede rows his way toward the island where his crew has been left abandoned.

BUTTONS, WEE JOHN, SWEDE, ROACH, OLUWANDE, and BLACK PETE all cheer at his arrival.

Stede ties off his row boat and steps on land. The crew pats his back and cheers at his return.

BUTTONS

(sobbing)

We thought... we thought we'd ne'er
se'a again!

Buttons wraps his skinny arms around Stede and hugs tightly.

STEDE

I'm terribly sorry, all of you. I'm
sorry I left so suddenly.

He pats Button's head and steps out of the hug. His smile is
as warm and fatherly as ever.

STEDE (CONT'D)

But I'm here now, yes?

Buttons is still whimpering, but he's happy, and nods.

STEDE (CONT'D)

Now... would someone mind telling
me why you're all on a rock?

Stede looks around.

STEDE (CONT'D)

Meditation retreat?

The crew looks at each other.

OLUWANDE

We um. We got abandoned.

STEDE

(shocked)

You what?

WEE JOHN

It's true, Captain. Izzy rowed us
out here, telling us that we were
going to do our talent show. And
then he, well...

SWEDE

They never came back for us.

STEDE

(incensed)

That is... that is unacceptable!

They all nod in agreement.

STEDE (CONT'D)

Well don't worry, boys. When we get back to the ship, I'll talk to Ed about it, and I'm sure he'll set it all straight.

The crew looks uncomfortable.

OLUWANDE

I don't think that'll help.

STEDE

What do you mean?

ROACH

Well we uh... We were all talking about it. Y'know. Had a lot of time to think it over, really. Edward was the one in charge when Izzy plopped us here.

OLUWANDE

Captain Teach ordered it, Stede. He had Izzy leave us behind.

Beat. Stede can't seem to believe what he's hearing.

STEDE

No... No that's... Are you sure? I mean, are you absolutely, positively sure? Did you see him?

They all shake their heads "no."

STEDE (CONT'D)

Did you hear him give the order?

Again, they say no.

STEDE (CONT'D)

(relieved)

Well then, I guess you can't be one hundred percent certain can you?

The crew look at one another, scratching their heads.

STEDE (CONT'D)

Don't worry, chaps. Ed would never do something like this, I know it. I have our boat here, and together we'll track him down and this will all be right again.

Wee John tilts his head.

WEE JOHN
Er, Captain...?

He gestures to the single row boat.

WEE JOHN (CONT'D)
How's we all supposed to fit in
that?

Stede also looks at it. He bounces between the tiny boat and the small crew of big men it's supposed to carry.

STEDE
Ah.

INT. THE REVENGE - GALLEY - DAY

Blackbeard's crew is enjoying the spoils of their take.

Jim eats in a corner, keeping their eye on the crowd around them.

FRENCHIE eats opposite of them. On top of his usual grubby garb, he now wears a HOT TOPIC LEATHER CROP VEST. He fiddles with the strings.

FRENCHIE
Not sure if I'm into this, being
honest.

JIM
It's stupid.

FRENCHIE
How come you ain't put on your
leather?

JIM
What kind of a pirate ship has a
uniform policy?

FRENCHIE
I mean, I think I just need to find
the vibe, you know? Kinda mess
around with some various pieces,
see what works for me.

Frenchie ties a little bow at the top of his vest. He smiles proudly.

FRENCHIE (CONT'D)
Ooh. Actually... bit posh, isn't
it?

Izzy spots Jim and Frenchie and limps over to them, a beer in hand.

IZZY

Afternoon.

Jim stays silent, Frenchie looks away. Izzy sits down. He glares at Frenchie.

IZZY (CONT'D)

Mind giving us a moment here?

FRENCHIE

Oh, well, me and Jim, we was just chatting--

IZZY

Now, dog.

Frenchie jumps and scuttles over to FANG AND IVAN. Fang gives Frenchie a sympathetic smile.

FANG

Don't take it too personally, Frenchie. At least he doesn't tug on your beard. Yet.

BACK WITH IZZY AND JIM, Izzy takes a swig of his beer. He eyes Jim. Jim glares.

IZZY

(delicate)

You know, you've come quite far for a woman in your position--

JIM

I'm not a woman.

IZZY

(blinks)

You're not?

JIM

When's the last time you heard of a woman named "Jim?"

Izzy shrugs.

IZZY

Fair point, I guess. In any case, Jim, there's a reason Blackbeard kept you around. You're a vital man to this crew--

JIM
Not a man, either.

IZZY
Now you're just being confusing.

JIM
¿Que paso? Spit it out before I
lose my appetite, pendejo.

IZZY
Fine. I want you to stop resisting
the captain.

JIM
What's that mean?

IZZY
You'd be one hell of an asset if
you actually applied yourself.
Instead of doing the bare minimum
to keep yourself alive.

Jim goes back to eating.

IZZY (CONT'D)
Listen to me. You're worth twice
the salt of any of your old crew.
Why let this stupid loyalty of
yours hold you back?

Jim slows down eating. They lean forward and spit a chicken
bone out onto the other side. They go back to eating.

Blackbeard wanders into the galley. A handful of pirates,
including Izzy, stand at attention.

Blackbeard stands tall, hands behind his back.

BLACKBEARD
Fine work today, lads. Fine work.
Enjoy the rest of your day, because
tomorrow, we sail for the nearest
royal fort to take for ourselves.

The crew bangs and cheers, all except for Jim.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
Now, are there any questions before
we make our heading?

A slim hand shoots up in the back. Blackbeard nods at them.
The THIN PIRATE stands.

THIN PIRATE

Ah, yes. Hello, Captain Blackbeard,
sir, master, Your Honor--

IZZY

Spit it out!

THIN PIRATE

R-right! Well your worship, I was
just wondering... Wasn't there
another captain on this ship before
you?

The galley goes utterly quiet. Blackbeard doesn't move.

THIN PIRATE (CONT'D)

I was just... I heard, you know.
Word travels, right? Wasn't he
that...? You know? The Gentleman
Pirate? Steve... Bonny?

Blackbeard SWEEPS toward the Thin Pirate. He shrinks back as
Blackbeard pins him to a bannister and shoves the barrel of
his gun up his nose.

BLACKBEARD

No one is to say that name in my
presence. Not you, not anyone here.
If I hear that name again, if I
think I hear that name, hell, if I
even think that you bastards are
thinking that name, there will be
consequences.

The Thin Pirate sweats and trembles. Jim, from their seat,
clutches their fork like a weapon.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)

First, I will skin you alive. Keep
you awake to feel every inch of
pain I put you through. Then, I
will take my oldest, rustiest
knife, and I will carve you open.
Every bit of muscle, every ounce of
fat, I will carve from your ribs
like a goddamn stuck pig. And when
that is done, I will rip out your
heart and roast it. Do you
understand me, sailor?

The Thin Pirate nods helplessly. Blackbeard takes his gun
away and straightens up and turns to the rest of the galley.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)

Let it be known. All of you. If I hear an utterance of the name "Stede Bonnet," you will be met with death.

EXT. TINY ISLAND - DAY

Stede's entire crew is standing in the tiny row boat, crowded together like sheep. The boat is still beached, but it's very clear they'll sink the minute they shove off.

STEDE

Right. Are we all ready?

OLUWANDE

Stede. This won't work. There are too many of us.

STEDE

Nonsense. What kind of attitude is that?

BLACK PETE

Anyone else not really a strong swimmer here?

Swede and Buttons raise their hands.

STEDE

No, no, no! You're thinking too negatively. We'll get no where with those attitudes, right?

The crew mumbles in agreement. Stede takes an oar and pushes it into the sand.

STEDE (CONT'D)

Right. Help me out, will you?

A few others brace behind him.

STEDE (CONT'D)

One... two... and...!

They push off.

The row boat GROANS under their weight, and for a moment, it looks like they're on their way.

They cheer in victory.

The minute they clear the shallows, the boat gives out under their weight, and the capsizes.

LATER:

The crew, waterlogged, drags the rowboat back onto shore. They all stretch out under the sun.

Stede sits on a rock, wringing out his sleeve. Oluwande sits next to him.

OLUWANDE

Well... we tried, I guess.

STEDE

No need to give up so quickly.
Perhaps we'll go in shifts?

Oluwande thinks for a minute.

OLUWANDE

Stede... can I ask?

Stede and Oluwande look at each other.

OLUWANDE (CONT'D)

Where did you go?

The rest of the crew all look up. The question is on everyone's mind.

STEDE

Oh. Well. Home.

He rubs his hands together, trying to find the words.

STEDE (CONT'D)

I went back to my family. My wife.
I... I thought I was doing the
right thing.

(beat)

Turns out, my family was all better
off with out me.

BLACK PETE

Oh. I'm sorry.

STEDE

Oh no I was quite relieved. No, it
just reaffirmed what I'd known all
along. That I didn't belong there.
I belong out here. With you.

Blackbeard looks up at Jim. His eyes are tired and weary.

BLACKBEARD
Oh. Hello, Jim.

Jim lingers, their hatchet in the air. Blackbeard sniffs and wipes his face.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
Come to kill me? Okay.

Jim looks confused.

JIM
"Okay"?

Blackbeard shrugs. Jim rolls their eyes and drops their hatchet.

JIM (CONT'D)
Jesus, Edward...

Jim looks in the closet with a worried frown.

JIM (CONT'D)
Wait... This is all...

Blackbeard stands up, still clutching Stede's tunic.

JIM (CONT'D)
You're a mess.

BLACKBEARD
Don't patronize me.

JIM
Why do you still have all this?

Blackbeard drops the tunic and stumbles back out into the room. Jim follows him.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

JIM
You going to answer me or what?

BLACKBEARD
Get off my case, Jim.

JIM
What even happened between you two?

BLACKBEARD
I said leave it alone.

JIM
Acting out won't bring him back.
And even if it did, what would he
think of you now--?

Blackbeard FLIPS AROUND and grabs Jim by the scruff.

BLACKBEARD
That's ENOUGH!

There's a tense moment. Blackbeard and Jim glare at each other in the darkness. The longer he lingers, the harder Blackbeard's lip quivers.

He leans forward and cries on Jim's shoulder. Jim stands there, awkwardly, not sure how to respond. They pat Blackbeard's back.

JIM
Um... there, there.

BLACKBEARD
I... I was waiting for him. I was
waiting.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. DOCK - EARLY MORNING

Blackbeard (EDWARD) lingers by his rowboat, is waiting on Stede to return.

BLACKBEARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I was waiting for hours. We were
supposed to go together.

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN SEA - SUNRISE

Edward rows his way out to sea.

BLACKBEARD (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But he never came. And so... I
left.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Blackbeard buries his face into Jim's neck. Jim is still uncomfortable, but more sympathetic.

JIM
Do you know why?

BLACKBEARD
No.

JIM
Well... that doesn't sound like Stede. I'm sure, wherever he went, he had his reasons.

Blackbeard hesitates. He pulls away and wipes his face.

BLACKBEARD
It doesn't matter what his reasons were. He left me. He left me because I'm not worth anything if I'm not Blackbeard.

Blackbeard goes back to his window and sits down.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
It never would have worked. Stede's a gentleman. And I?
(scoffs)
I'm nothing of the sort. Am I, Jim?

Blackbeard and Jim look at each other. Blackbeard goes back to staring on the horizon.

Jim sighs. They lay the hatchet at the door and walk out.

EXT. OPEN SEA - DAY

LUCIUS is passed out cold, floating under a clear, blue sky. His lips are chapped, and he's snoring.

WATER splashes over his face. He gasps and flails.

LUCIUS
(from a dream)
I didn't draw that penis!

He sits up and blinks. He's in a small boat with two DIRTY FISHERMEN. He looks around.

LUCIUS (CONT'D)
Wait. I... Where am I?

The fishermen don't answer. Lucius takes stock of the boat. His eyes light up.

LUCIUS (CONT'D)
Wait a minute. You... You're the ones! Yes! You're the fishermen we looted!

One of them narrows their eyes.

FISHERMAN 1
Say what?

FISHERMAN 2
Oh. Oh right. I think they're the idiots who stole our plant.

LUCIUS
(thrilled)
Yes! Yes, exactly! I am one of those idiots!

He laughs and claps his hands together.

LUCIUS (CONT'D)
By the way, did you know that there was basil in that plant? We've kept it alive and thriving for weeks now. Water it every day.

The fishermen seem impressed.

LUCIUS (CONT'D)
(realization)
Oh... Oh God, the plant. The crew!

He stands and spins, and immediately goes back down, nursing his head.

FISHERMAN 1
You were floating a while. Might want to stay down.

LUCIUS
I have to find them. I have to.

FISHERMAN 2
Who?

FISHERMAN 1
His other idiots.

FISHERMAN 2
Oh.

LUCIUS

Please, the ship, it's called the Revenge. My friends are on it. They might be in trouble. You've got to help me find them.

The fishermen look at each other.

FISHERMAN 1

You mean those friends?

He gestures behind him. Lucius turns and peers into the horizon. He borrows a telescope to get a better look.

Sure enough, within the dingy lens of the scope, is the TINY ISLAND with Stede and the crew.

LUCIUS

(sob/laughing)

It's a bloody miracle.

EXT. TINY ISLAND - DAY

Stede and the crew are all lounging about, trying to come up with a plan of escape.

SWEDE

What if we took turns swimming?

They all turn to look at him.

SWEDE (CONT'D)

Some got to row, some have to swim.
Then when we get tired, we switch.

The others take it into consideration.

STEDE

Might be worth a shot.

Black Pete sits to one side, depressed. He's scribbling in the sand with a stick. It's a broken heart. He lays his head on his knees and sighs.

A very faint SHOUTING catches his attention.

Slowly, Black Pete looks up. He squints.

OFF IN THE DISTANCE, Lucius is jumping up and down, waving his arms in the air as the fishermen row him closer to the island.

Black Pete is on his feet with a cry of glee.

BLACK PETE

BABY!

He dives into the water and wades out toward Lucius.

Willed by adrenaline, Lucius jumps into the water too and awkwardly dog-paddles toward Black Pete.

Neither one of them are graceful swimmers, and both of them nearly drown several times in the process.

Stede and the others look on.

STEDE

(smiles)

Well that's nice.

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - DAY

Blackbeard stands on the bow, looking through his spyglass.

A FORT is just off in the distance, ready to be taken.

Blackbeard closes his spyglass and sighs through his nose.

Izzy approaches him.

IZZY

Well?

BLACKBEARD

It's as good as any.

He hands Izzy the spyglass.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)

Make the announcement.

IZZY

Aye, captain.

Izzy turns to the crew.

IZZY (CONT'D)

(shouts)

Attention, dogs! Just up ahead is a Spanish naval fort! It will be our next target! Tonight, we claim it for Blackbeard!

The crew shouts and stomps.

Jim, suspicious, draws their own spyglass and looks on. They spot the fort. They look beyond the fort itself to see a few nesting ships.

Jim pulls back in a slight panic. They hurry to Blackbeard.

JIM

Edward are you insane? We're one ship, we'll get destroyed--

IZZY

Mind your tongue!

JIM

There are Spanish navy ships laying in wait. We fire off a single shot and we're dead.

IZZY

Don't you dare question Blackbeard again, or by God you'll get the lash for your insolence!

Blackbeard remains calm and collected.

BLACKBEARD

Don't fret, Jim. I haven't died yet, have I?

Jim doesn't look convinced.

EXT. OPEN SEA - DAY

With the help of the fisherman's boat, Stede and the crew paddle their way through the waves.

STEDE

Are you absolutely sure it was Ed who knocked you overboard?

LUCIUS

Pretty sure there's only one long haired bad boy who likes to wear your house robes.

STEDE

It just... it doesn't sound like him. It doesn't sound like Ed.

OLUWANDE

Stede, listen, I don't think he's the Ed you remember.

(MORE)

OLUWANDE (CONT'D)

At first when he took over, he was like before, just, you know... sadder.

LUCIUS

Much, much sadder.

BLACK PETE

Like, so sad. It was painful.

STEDE

Yes, all right, then what?

BUTTONS

Then he got'tae be a real knob.

Stede sighs and folds his arms.

STEDE

I just... Maybe he's acting out, you know? I never expected him to take it so badly.

Stede glances at the fishermen, who watch with rapture, but are utterly lost.

STEDE (CONT'D)

My boyfriend and I have hit a rough patch. You know. It's a bit complicated.

FISHERMAN 1

Mm. Love hurts.

Swede looks out and points.

SWEDE

Land ho!

The others follow his finger. It's a Spanish fort.

THE SAME SPANISH FORT BLACKBEARD WILL ATTACK LATER THAT NIGHT.

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - NIGHT

Izzy barks orders. Blackbeard stands in the back, watching.

JIM (O.C.)

This is suicide.

Blackbeard glances at Jim, who's at his right hand.

JIM (CONT'D)
Truly, Edward. If you wanted to
kill yourself, you shouldn't drag
us down with you.

Blackbeard goes back to watching his target.

BLACKBEARD
You're right.

Blackbeard gestures to a life boat.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
There's your exit, Jim. I'll see
you on the other side.

Blackbeard steps away, ready for the attack.

Jim glares at the back of his head. They glance between
Blackbeard and the life boat, struck with indecision.

INT. SPANISH FORT - NIGHT

A moderately staffed navy outpost. A bit run down and shabby,
but Stede and the others are given hot soup and some
blankets.

STEDE
Quite nice that they didn't bother
to arrest us.

The others agree.

ROACH
This is good. I wonder what it is.

OLUWANDE
Criadillas soup.

Roach looks up.

OLUWANDE (CONT'D)
Bull testicles.

Oluwande keeps eating like nothing's wrong. Roach and the
others stall.

They look at their soup, and the suspicious, round bits of
meat floating near the surface.

Roach shrugs and goes back to eating. The others set their
soup aside.

A COMMOTION rises around them. Stede and the others look up at the stir. They follow a group of Spanish soldiers as they hurry for a better look.

EXT. SPANISH FORT - LOOKOUT TOWER - CONTINUOUS

The crew finds themselves on the top ledge of the wall, and up a tower for a better look. It's dark, so it's difficult to make out.

Stede peers into the night.

An EXPLOSION of cannon fire sends a shot STRAIGHT FOR THE TOWER.

Stede and his crew all duck down as the cannon ball CRASHES into the stone tower. They all cover their heads as debris rains down over them.

Stede rights himself back up. The faintest outline of the Revenge is visible on the horizon.

EXT. SPANISH FORT - CONTINUOUS

The ships laying in wait begin to shove off.

EXT. SPANISH GALLEON - DECK - CONTINUOUS

Soldiers prepare the cannons, the swivels, and the mortars. Blackbeard and his single ship do not stand a chance.

EXT. SPANISH FORT - LOOKOUT TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Stede desperately runs along the fort wall, trying to find a better angle.

STEDE

It can't be... it can't be!

LUCIUS

I think it might.

STEDE

What's he doing!? Why is he attacking us?

BLACK PETE

Yeah, that's what pirates do, Stede.

EXT. SPANISH FORT - CONTINUOUS

The Spanish ships rock their way around the fort, ready to take Blackbeard on.

A mortar cannon fires the first shot.

EXT. SPANISH FORT - LOOKOUT TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Stede watches the mortar with horror as it soars straight for the Revenge -- only to crash into the EMPTY WATER.

Stede straightens up in surprise. He turns to the others. They shrug.

EXT. SPANISH FORT - CONTINUOUS

CRASH!

At RAMMING SPEED, Blackbeard has come around the island that holds the fort and crashes into the ships from behind.

EXT. SPANISH GALLEON - DECK - CONTINUOUS

The soldiers jerk forward and fall.

FLAMING CANON BALLS crash into the decks, setting the masts ablaze. Gunpowder ignites. Men go flying.

In one fell swoop, the three dangerous vessels meant to destroy Blackbeard are suddenly out of commission.

EXT. SPANISH FORT - LOOKOUT TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Stede is beside himself. He takes off running.

OLUWANDE

Stede--!

EXT. SPANISH FORT - CONTINUOUS

Stede runs as fast as he can, and climbs the opposite stairs to get close enough to speak to Blackbeard.

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - CONTINUOUS

Blackbeard holds up his sword as he commands his ship.

BLACKBEARD
On my word, storm the fort! Leave
no survivors! Ready!

The crew, their weapons out, prepares to jump over to the fort and slaughter the soldiers.

BLACKBEARD (CONT'D)
Steady!

EXT. SPANISH FORT - WEST TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Stede runs up an identical wall and leans out. He shouts with all his might.

STEDE
EDWARD!

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - CONTINUOUS

Blackbeard stops. His face falls, and his rapier lowered. He looks out beyond his deck.

There stands Stede, smiling, crying, and waving with both hands.

Stede and Blackbeard look at one another.

FLASHBACK TO:

MEMORIES

All the happy, wonderful moments of Stede and Edward together. Getting to know one another, making each other laugh.

Falling in love.

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - NIGHT

Stede gives Edward his red pocket square.

STEDE
You wear fine things well.

FLASHBACK END.

EXT. THE REVENGE - DECK - NIGHT

Blackbeard, with tears in his eyes, looks ready to secede.

Stede smiles, hopeful.

EDWARD

(quiet)

Attack.

In a surge, Blackbeard's pirates rush the fort. They swing on ropes, brandish weapons, and spill into the sanctuary like a tidal wave.

As they flood the fort, Stede and Blackbeard have not broken eye contact.

Stede's tears overflow. He's crushed. Blackbeard turns away.

A roaring fire crowns the black water as the fort falls.

END EPISODE