

Teach

*A Musical Play By
McNeil Johnston*

v.2.0

To Lisa, Nicole & Lizette

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Cast of Characters

Principals:

Edward Teach, aka Blackbeard: Very tall, thin with a strikingly full black beard. Extremely charismatic, 27; baritone

Israel Hands, A beggar, formerly first mate to Captain Edward Teach: wiry, shifty, appears in his fifties and at age 25; tenor

Robert van Wraak: Romantic lead, 20; tenor

Aurelia Belmont, Fiancee of Robert van Wraak. 19: soprano

Caesar, Helmsman and confidant to Capt. Teach. An escaped slave: large black man of noble bearing, with a pronounced African/Island accent, about 25; bass

Major Stede Bonnet, An aristocratic pirate-wannabe: a retired Army Major; short and fat, jolly and naive, 40; baritone

Supporting Cast:

Mary Ormond, Teach's legitimate wife: Wholesomely pretty, 17: soprano

Secretary, Spotswood's secretary

Agatha Belmont, Aurelias sister – Gluttonous, vacuous

Benjamin Hornigold, Teach's pirate mentor: Jovial, paternal: distinguished, 35; baritone

Charles Johnson/Daniel Dafoe, Author and pirate scholar. 60

Charles Eden. Governor of North Carolina: Understatedly elegant, 50: tenor

Alexander Spotswood, Governor of Virginia: Vindictive, shallow, meticulously dressed, Napoleonicly short, 40; basso profundo

Lt. Maynard, Leader of the force pursuing Blackbeard under Spotswood: the oldest lieutenant in the Royal Navy, paunchy, with a weak chin. 45; tenor

Clemency, A stunningly beautiful prostitute of mixed racial heritage. 20's: Mezzo-soprano

Tobias Knight, Teach's government man on the inside, dapper, bespectacled and smokes a straight briar pipe, 35: tenor

Mr. Richards, An officer of Blackbeard's crew: Average height, lean and mean, but cannot hold his liquor. 20; tenor

The Ensemble, Mixed Hispanic, black and white men and women covering the parts of prostitutes, pirates, British naval and merchant crewmen, Bahamian and Honduran locals, secretaries and society dinner guests.

Songs, Act I:

1. Israel Hands At Your Service
Israel Hands

2. Swing
Hornigold and crew

3. Swing, Reprise 1
Teach

4. Love Knows Not
Robert and Aurelia

5. A Gentleman Goes To Sea
Teach and crew

6. A Particular Kind Of Hell
Caesar, Teach, Hands and the crew

7. The Marrying Kind
Clemency and the ladies of the evening

8. Brethren Of The Coast
Teach, Caesar, Clemency, ensemble

9. Often
Teach and Clemency

10. A Soldier Goes To Sea
Bonnet

11. Contrapuntal Reprises
Principals

12. A Twist Of Fate,
Robert

12a. Swing, Reprise 2
all

13. How Many Pounds
Teach

13a. A Gentleman Goes to Sea, Bridge, Reprise

The Crew

Songs, act II

14. Betrayed (working title)
Teach

15. A Gentleman Goes To Sea, Reprise
Aurelia

15A. Belmont's Song (w.t.)

16. Anything That I Can Do
Aurelia, Robert and Belmont

17. You'd Better Think Twice
Teach

18. I Have Intelligence
Spotswood

19. You'd Better Think Twice, Reprise
Caesar

20. Bigger Than Life (w.t.)
Knight

21. Something In Your Eyes
Teach and Mary

22. Aurelia and Robert's Duet 2 (w.t.)
Aurelia and Robert

23. What Do You Say To That, Sir?
The Burgesses

23a. Letter To Eden {w.t.}
Spotswood, Belmont, Secretary

24. Recitative
Teach

25. Teach and Mary, Duet 2 (w.t.)
Teach and Mary

26. Brethren Of The Coast, a capella reprise

Landing crew

27. True To His Word
Robert

28. Finale (Brethren Of The Coast, A Gentleman Goes to Sea,
Step Lively Lads, A Particular Kind Of Hell)
All

ACT I

Prologue

London, 1750. Dusk in London fog, a busy, somewhat worn down street. ISRAEL HANDS, age 55 is begging for food. He is in rags and has a pronounced limp and carries a makeshift crutch. That notwithstanding, he is possessed of a defiant dignity.

HANDS (Calling out to no one in particular)
Help an old seaman! A shanty song for your trouble... tales
of the sea.... Israel Hands at your service!
(Mutters, aside) Far too disagreeable a night to be cajolin' this miserly lot.

(a young passerby - a STUDENT - stops and regards Hands with great interest during this, then hurries off. Hands begins humming melody to 'Israel Hands At Your Service' as the passing foot traffic thins to nothing. Suddenly, while HANDS is preparing to leave, still humming, a commotion arises as the young passerby returns with a JOHNSON in tow.)

STUDENT
I tell you, Mr. Johnson - 'tis he.

JOHNSON
And I tell you, my boy, it cannot... (seeing Hands) good God!... (to Hands) Beg pardon, my good man, but may we inquire just how it is that you came by your... misfortune?

HANDS
Misfortune, is it? (bitterly) The unfettered liberty with which I stroll these boulevards enriching the lives of all I meet with tales of fabulous wealth won and lost...

STUDENT
We were referring to your wound, sir.

HANDS (dramatically)
My wounded soul, not yet healed after thirty years...

JOHNSON
Come come, man your leg!

HANDS
Oh that! Damnedest thing - 'tis the one part of me not amenable to the cold - especially when compounded by extreme hunger and thirst!

JOHNSON

Enough! Plain and simple sir - would your name be Israel Hands, mate to the infamous Blackbeard?

HANDS

Plain? No. Simple? No. Israel Hands? (pauses, then with an exaggerated bow) At your service, m'lord!

STUDENT

You see?! You see?!

Introduction of 'Israel Hands At Your Service' begins.

JOHNSON

Yes, yes. Now then, Mr. Hands. I am Charles Johnson. I have long been a student of the sea. More to the point, I have written a volume on the more famous pirates, which is long overdue for revision. You would do me a great service if you would agree to accompany us to my flat for...

HANDS

Is there a square meal and a flask in it?

JOHNSON

But of course!

STUDENT

Let me help you, Captain Hands! (takes Hands by the elbow as they start walking)

HANDS

No, no, that won't do - 'tis nigh on thirty years since last I commanded a vessel... No, Israel will do nicely, thank you... and kindly unhand me elbow - 'tis one of me better functioning joints, yes?!

set transforms into JOHNSON's study.
(Music swells)

No. 1, Israel Hands At Your Service
(Israel Hands)

HANDS

ISRAEL HANDS AT YOUR SERVICE, M'LORD,
PUT YOU AT EASE FOR A PRICE.
ISRAEL STANDS BY HIS STORY M'LORD,
ONLY REVISED IT ONCE OR TWICE.

Hands sits in a large chair opposite Johnson's desk. A serving girl brings him food. Student and Johnson are also seated, Johnson at his desk.

TRUTH IS THE COIN OF HISTORY,
SPEND IT WISELY HERE.

STAMPED IN THE IMAGE OF VICTORY,
AND ONLY OCCASIONALLY INSINCERE.

NOW WITH NOTHING BUT NOTHING TO LOSE,
STRAIGHT AND TRUE IS THE COURSE THAT I CHOOSE,
ISRAEL HANDS AT YOUR SERVICE, M'LORD,
WITH JUST AS MUCH TRUTH AS YOU CAN AFFORD.

(Serving girl brings out a decanter and glasses, all help themselves.
Johnson takes up a quill, dips it in the inkwell...)

SO MIND WHAT YOU SCRIBBLE IN INK, M'LORD,
'TIL YOU'VE HEARD WHAT I'VE HAD TO SAY.
NONE OF IT'S PLAIN AS YOU THINK, M'LORD,
ONLY SLIGHTLY COLOURED BY DRINK M'LORD,
ISRAEL HANDS AT YOUR SERVICE, M'LORD,

(Scene change begins.)

SHALL WE GET UNDERWAY?!

Scene 1.

(Music continues)

1714, Dusk, at sea off Barbados aboard a French merchant ship.

(The audience is meant to infer, due to the deplorable state of affairs on board, that this is a pirate ship. As the scene begins, the ship flies no flag.)

General chaos reigns here as...

Pantomime action over music: First mate grabs a sailor caught pilfering rum. The mate grabs the crewman by the hair and forces his head back, opening his mouth. The merchant captain pours rum into it until the man begins to choke, then he is lashed to the mast and is flogged.

Elsewhere on deck, sailors are fighting amongst themselves, being berated by officers, etc. Their lookout is fast asleep in the crow's nest, a bottle tipping out of his hand.

General discord and mayhem, ad lib.

They are all too engrossed to notice as another ship, this one spotless and orderly, its gunners at the ready, silently looms up out of the fog behind them, strikes it's Union Jack, simultaneously hoisting a large Black Flag, emblazoned with a skull and crossed cutlasses in blood red.)

MERCHANT LOOKOUT (in French)
(panic stricken) Captain! To starboard...

MERCHANT CAPTAIN (Fr.)
Holy Jesus - Square away! Run up the colors!

(shoving the nearest crewman towards the stern.
The crewman manages to hoist the French flag amid the chaos)

MATE (Fr.)
Square away... bloody Hell...

(Unable to respond in time, the merchant crew scatters as the crew of the pirate ship casts lines over the side in preparation to board their vessel, cutlasses at the ready.)

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN HORNIGOLD (calmly, from the pirate ship)
I say, captain, shall I give my gunners the order?

MERCHANT CAPTAIN (suddenly humble and civilized speaking accented English)
I entreat ye, sir. Spare my noble crew - all we possess be thine, sir.

HORNIGOLD
Indeed. By order of Her Royal Majesty Queen Anne, (then to his crew) Transfer the stores, men.

(Hornigold's crew boards the merchant ship in an orderly fashion.)

EDWARD TEACH (Hornigold's mate)

(To gunnery officer, IRAEL HANDS) Mister Hands, stand down!

HANDS

(To his gunners) Stand down, yes?!

(Hornigold's crew lets up a cheer as 'Step Lively, Lads' begins.
During the song, the merchant crew cowers as the pirates politely
take what they will and return to their own ship.)

No. 2, Swing

(the crew, Hornigold and Teach)

Verses: CREW

OUT OF THE DARK AND INTO THE LIGHT,
OVER THE SIDE AND READY TO FIGHT!
WE'LL HAVE YOUR GOLD, YOUR SILVER AS WELL,
BUT GIVE US YOUR STEEL AND WE'LL SEND YOU RIGHT TO HELL!

LOOSE THE HATCHES AND DOWN WE GO,
CAPTAIN'S CLAIMIN' WHAT'S BELOW.

CREWMAN SOLO

WHAT'S THAT HEAVENLY SCENT, IS IT RUM?

ALL

HEAVEN SENT! WE'LL BE HELPIN' OURSELVES TO SOME!

Bridge: HORNIGOLD

HOLD 'EM NOW AT POINT OF PISTOL,
PUT THEM IN MIND OF THEIR DAUGHTERS AND WIVES.
THEN SHOULD ANY INSIST ON RESIST-
ANCE, KINDLY DEPRIVE THEM OF THEIR LIVES!

(While some of the men hold pistols on their hosts, the others
form a human chain, passing loot over to the
waiting officers of Hornigold's ship.)

Chorus: ALL PIRATES

STEP LIVELY LADS, THE DAY IS OURS,
AS LONG AS THE BLACK FLAG FLIES.
STEP LIVELY LADS, WHILE THE ENEMY COWERS,
THEIR SHIP A-FOUND'RIN' LIES.

STEP LIVELY LADS, HOLD 'EM AT BAY
AS LONG AS THE CAPTAIN WILLS.

STEP LIVELY LADS, CARRY THE DAY,
AND BY THE AMOUNT OF RESISTANCE ENCOUNTERED,
WE MEASURE THE BLOOD WE SPILLS!

(Almost done loading, the men are beckoned back to Hornigold's ship by Teach☺)

Verse: TEACH
ALL IN A DAY'S DISHONEST WORK,
A DAY AHEAD OF THE HANGMAN'S JERK.
SWIFT AND SURE AS IT WAS BEGUN,
STEP LIVELY LADS, OUR WORK THIS DAY IS DONE!

Chorus: ALL PIRATES
STEP LIVELY LADS, THE DAY IS OURS,
AS LONG AS THE BLACK FLAG FLIES.
STEP LIVELY LADS, WHILE THE ENEMY COWERS,
THEIR SHIP A-FOUND'RIN' LIES.

HORNIGOLD
STEP LIVELY LADS, AND DOFF YOUR TOPPERS,
TO THEM THAT'S JUST BEEN HAD,
STEP LIVELY LADS, AND COUNT YOUR COPPERS,
FOR OUT OF THEIR POVERTY SPRINGS OUR PROSPERITY,
THEREBY REWARDING OUR SKILL AND ALACRITY,
ME LIVELY STEPPIN' LADS!

Coda: ALL (begins on Hornigold's last note ('LADS'))
STEP LIVELY, LADS, HEY OH,
STEP LIVELY, LADS, STEP LIVELY LADS!
(STEP LIVELY LADS, WEIGH HO!)

Lyric, August 13, 1998

HORNIGOLD
I thank you for your hospitality, Captain, and now I suggest you make sail!

HORNIGOLD'S CREW
<Catcalls, ad lib.>

MERCHANT CAPTAIN
Make sail, make sail!

Hastily hoisted sails billow out on the merchant ship as she exits.

{S L L resumes}

HORNIGOLD (calling across the deck)
Mister Teach!

TEACH (drawing near) {note: at this point Teach appears unshaven but beardless}
Here, captain...

HORNIGOLD
Ah, Edward... my God, man - do you ever shave?

TEACH
Sorry, sir, can't seem to keep up with it, sir.

HORNIGOLD
Quite. Walk with me Edward...

(As they walk, HORNIGOLD produces two silver cups and a flask of rum.
He pours and hands a cup to Teach)

HORNIGOLD, cont.
To the Queen!

TEACH
Queen Anne, and her lovely little war!

HORNIGOLD
Aye, the Queen indeed... It seems we shall soon be toasting that idiot German George if the rumours concerning our fair mistress' health are true.

TEACH
No doubt, sir, and when his bloody worship sues for peace with Spain and France, we noble privateers, well, what then? (with mock concern) We'll be outlaws! (laughing)

HORNIGOLD
We'll be pirates – a border we'll cross soon enough on our present course, Edward. After all if this 'livelihood' of ours, by stroke of royal pen should suddenly become a hanging offense, what's to keep us from seeking British prizes, eh?

TEACH
I hadn't thought of that...

HORNIGOLD
No, it's a few battles past time for me to depart this way of life – before politics and heads of state make it unlivable!

TEACH
I, sir, am somewhat less concerned with the contents of the heads of state as those of my pockets. Besides - the pendulum may swing back to our favour!

HORNIGOLD

(not so subtly bringing his hand around his throat) Swing indeed, my friend...

No.3, Swing, Reprise 1
(Teach)

(During the song, time passes.
Several sea battles, a storm, etc. are depicted in a kind of surrealistic montage.
By the end of the song it is evening beneath a vivid sunset.)

TEACH

YESTERDAY'S HERO, A VILLAIN TOMORROW
AND KNIGHTED THE DAY AFTER THAT,....(more)

(A lookout has sighted a ship and calls out from the crow's nest to Israel Hands.)

LOOKOUT

Ship off the starboard bow, Mister Hands!

HORNIGOLD (calling to Hands)

Israel! Her flag?

HANDS (spyglass in hand)

(Gleefully) French sir! A guineaman, from the look of her, sir, and a ruddy giant at that!

TEACH

We'll have to cut 'er down to size then won't we!

HORNIGOLD

(Preoccupied) Quite right, well, off you go lads, do your worst!

TEACH

You heard the Captain!

HANDS

Gunners make ready, full load!

(The crew scrambles to action.)

HANDS

Fire!

(Cannonfire erupts along with the cheering of the pirate crew. HORNIGOLD exits quietly)
Lights FADE OUT.)

Scene 2.

(The following morning aboard the captured ship, Concord, in calm waters. HORNIGOLD paces the deck as crewmen work. HORNIGOLD's ship can be seen in the distance)

HORNIGOLD (distracted)
A fine bit of work yesterday, Edward. You'll command well someday.

TEACH (tentatively - searching between the lines)
Thank you, sir!

HORNIGOLD (to crew)
Longboats away?

HANDS
No froggies a-hoppin' here, sir, yes?!

HORNIGOLD
Right, then... Drill 'er!

TEACH
But captain...

HORNIGOLD
Edward, my time is at hand. This ship is to be scuttled along with my career, and let that be the last of it!

TEACH (blurts out:)
Then give 'er to me sir...

HORNIGOLD
(Wheels angrily to face Teach eye to eye, softens, then, regarding Teach as though they have just met, says quietly:)

Introduction for Swing, Reprise begins

Yes - you'll command well.

as he says this, he holds up his hand, stopping the drillers from holing the great ship.

No. 3a, Swing, Reprise
(Teach and Hornigold)

YESTERDAY'S MATE, TOMORROW A MASTER,...(more)

(They shake hands solemnly and Hornigold departs. As he does so, lights FADE OUT as Teach, in spotlight, continues...)

TEACH
{Last verse}

(lights ramp up to reveal Teach's new crew refitting the Concord.
They are doubling the complement of cannon, and a crewman is hoisted
out over the bow and repaints the name of the ship in blood red: Queen Anne's Revenge.
At some point during this, Teach is transformed; his dress is more flamboyant
and he now has a short black beard.)

{Chorus, joined by crew.}

After the song, Teach addresses the crew.

TEACH
The Queen is dead...
(Most of the officers, aware that Queen Anne has in fact died, do not react. Some of the men,
however, look back and forth at each other, muttering.)
Long live Queen Anne's Revenge!

the crew cheers

AN IRISH CREWMAN
And death 'n' damnation to our shite-eaitin' German King!

(an even bigger cheer.
Teach holds a large parchment aloft.
This has the effect of instantly silencing the crew.)

TEACH
Know then what ye have all signed here today!

(music)

Know that these Articles of Piracy are as a blood oath amongst brethren. Each word herein a
venomous thorn in the side of a government that has, with a stroke of the pen, named us
outlaws... So be it! We shall govern ourselves.

(cheers)

Mr. Hands!

HANDS
As stated in the Articles, our leader shall be chosen by vote. All in favour of Captain Teach - will
ye say aye?!

ALL
Aye!

HANDS

Right, then. As stated in the Articles, goods and coin taken in seizure shall be distributed in shares. One and one half share to officers, one share to a man of the crew, yes?! A wounded man shall be compensated by half shares for loss of limb... (fade as music swells and eventually drowns out Hands' speech; lights FADE OUT.)

Scene 3.

Dinner table in the home of Cornelius Belmont, in Portsmouth, Virginia. A large window overlooking Portsmouth harbor dominates the rear of the set. Seated are Robert van Wraak, his fiancée, Aurelia, her parents, Cornelius and Faith Belmont her sister, Agatha and Governor Alexander Spotswood. A black butler and serving girl circulate among them.

SPOTSWOOD

...And so, in my latest letter to His Majesty, I point out that not only are pirates the bane of trade, but a threat to the very moral fibre of the great colony of Virginia!

BELMONT

To be sure, Governor, and how was your letter received?

SPOTSWOOD

Oh, I assure you, that when one in my position... that is to say... well...

(awkward pause)

FAITH BELMONT

The Stilton's quite good!

AGATHA (mouth already full)

Yes, delicious! (taking another huge portion)

AURELIA

(proudly) Robert's putting out to sea again!

SPOTSWOOD

Really, m'lad?

(before van Wraak has time to respond, the butler has offered Spotswood more wine over his right shoulder. Gesturing with his right hand at that precise moment, Spotswood jostles the bottle.)

Pour from the left, you fool!

(he's wrong, and the butler knows it)

BUTLER

Yes, sir.

SPOTSWOOD

And speak when you're spoken to! Where was I? Oh yes. The King seems to feel that the Crown owes a debt of gratitude to the pirate - that these marauding butchers are kin to the privateers in the wartime service of his predecessor...

VAN WRAAK

Begging the Governor's pardon, but are they not one in the....

SPOTSWOOD

They are most assuredly not, my boy. Ye would do well to remember this: What one is and what one was are two very different things! Why, 'tis said that one of these, Thatch - Treach, or some such, has crossed so far over the line as to have engaged a ship of the line - the Scarborough in a running battle simply for sport. (pauses and takes a sip of wine for effect)

FAITH (innocently)

Who won?

SPOTSWOOD (choking)

Well... hrumph...

awkward pause

BELMONT

So, Robert, you'll no doubt be chasing the likes of this... Thack, was it? all over the high seas, eh?

AURELIA (proudly, before van Wraak has a chance to reply)

Robert will be ship's carpenter aboard the Adventure!

SPOTSWOOD

An adventurous carpenter!

all laugh except Aurelia, who doesn't get it, and Robert, who is mortified.
(Faith rings for the servants.)

AGATHA

My William is an officer! An Ensign aboard the Trident...

BELMONT

Triton, dear...

AGATHA

Quite right daddy... and we're to be wed right here when his tour of duty ends.

(awkward pause)

SPOTSWOOD

Yes... well isn't that just... grand!

FAITH (hissing at the butler and serving girl)

Can you not see that we have finished?

SERVING GIRL

Yes mum.

The servants hastily begin to clear the table.

SPOTSWOOD (gesturing towards the servants)
What can one expect, really?

AURELIA
Mother, might Robert and I be excused?

FAITH
Of course, dear.

SPOTSWOOD (producing a huge cigar, and with great ceremony cutting and lighting it while prattling on...)

Introduction to {song} begins

So... Even as some of the Burgesses plot against me, I've made it my business to inform, by post, all of my fellow Governors of the dangers of the potential for escalation of piracy in colonial waters... (his voice fades out ad lib. as Robert and Aurelia's song begins)

No. 4, Love Knows Not
(Robert and Aurelia)

ROBERT
How can you stand to be seen with such an idiot!

AURELIA
Spotswood? Oh, you get used to him...

ROBERT
No!
(sings)
HOW CAN YOU STAND TO BE SEEN WITH SUCH A FOOL,
A TINKER...

AURELIA
A BUILDER, AN ARTIST...

ROBERT
A FOOL, WHOSE HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS ARE THE STUFF OF RIDICULE?

AURELIA
ROBERT, NO!

ROBERT
WHO DARES UPSET THE BALANCE OF SOCIAL RULE.

AURELIA
WHEN FIRST I SAW YOU,

I NOTICED NOT THE TILT WITH WHICH YOU SET YOUR HAT,
NOR THE CUT OF YOUR COAT, NO NONE OF THAT.
INSTEAD I FOUND MYSELF SEEING STRAIGHT INTO YOUR HEART,
AND THERE RESOLVED THAT COME WHAT MAY, NEVER WOULD WE PART.

(One by one, the others exit.
Robert and Aurelia at the window...)

ROBERT
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU,
I SAIL THE OCEAN WIDE PERCHANCE TO MAKE MY NAME,
TO CARVE OUT MY FORTUNE, ERASE MY SHAME.
AND SO, STILL FULL OF HOPE I MIGHT TRANSFIGURE IN SOME WAY,
I AM RESOLVED I'LL NOT RETURN UNTIL THAT DAY.

AURELIA
IF YOU MUST PROVE YOUR WORTH TO ME
MOVE THE EARTH FOR ME,
THEN GO, THE BEST PART OF YOU IS WITH ME.

BOTH
LOVE KNOWS NOT DISTANCE OR TIME,
KEEPS NO ACCOUNT OF REASON OR RHYME.
UNCERTAIN AS TOMORROW IS,
HOLD FAST TO WHAT IT PROMISES.
THEN, ONCE AGAIN I WILL MAKE YOU MINE.

Spoken:

ROBERT
She's a fast ship, Adventure is!

AURELIA
She could never be fast enough, Robert.

ROBERT
My share in the profits will go a long way to...

AURELIA
You just don't see, do you?...

Sung:

AURELIA
I CARE NOT HOW MUCH GOLD WITH WHICH YOU FILL YOUR PURSE,
ROBERT
WOULD YOU HAVE US POOR? WHAT COULD BE WORSE?

AURELIA
TO LIVE WITHOUT YOU,
ROBERT
THAT COULD NEVER BE,
YOU KNOW THAT LOVE WILL ALWAYS BIND YOU TO ME.

I WILL PROVE MYSELF TO YOU,
MOVE THE EARTH FOR YOU,
BOTH
AS I/YOU GO, THE BEST PART OF YOU LIVES WITHIN ME.

(reveal, at sunrise, the stern half of a sloop
docked at a busy pier, with gang-plank extended.)

BOTH
LOVE KNOWS NOT DISTANCE OR TIME,
KEEPS NO ACCOUNT OF REASON OR RHYME.
UNCERTAIN AS TOMORROW IS,
HOLD FAST TO WHAT IT PROMISES,
THEN, ONCE AGAIN, I WILL TAKE YOU,
ONCE AGAIN, I WILL MAKE YOU MINE!

(as the chorus ends, Robert, picking up his pack, boards the sloop
and moves towards its bow out of view, leaving Aurelia to sing the coda solo.

AURELIA
AND SO RESOLVED THAT COME WHAT MAY, NEVER WOULD WE PART.
Lyric August 5, 1998

(Lights FADE OUT.)

Scene 4.

On deck aboard Queen Anne's Revenge, at anchor south of New Providence Island, The Bahamas. Hands and Teach are seated, drinking. Teach's beard is noticeably fuller.

HANDS

A glorious battle, captain!

TEACH

Aye, but not a farthing to show for it.... Still, such a skirmish is of value to us.

HANDS

How so, sir?

TEACH

Israel, you astound me! Do you think that every lily-livered swabbie aboard the mighty Royal Navy frigate Scarborough has the patriotic discretion to be quiet about being thrashed to within an inch of sinking by bloodthirsty pirates?

HANDS

Ahhh! The waves have ears, yes?!

TEACH

That they do, my friend... and eyes as well!

HANDS

I sense a diabolical scheme a-brewin'!

TEACH

I ask ye, Israel... How many killed at Eleuthera?

HANDS

Not a soul, cap'n, you know that...

TEACH

Aye - and half the crew clambered aboard to sign the Articles. And Antigua?

HANDS

No, no, there were casualties there, sir... a broadside - we dismasted that little beggar before she surrendered.

TEACH

Right - but that was war! Rather than respect the black flag, her master, God rest 'im, chose to fire on us - muskets versus forty cannon! He would have done better to fling his own ballocks at us!

(they laugh heartily)

HANDS
I still fail to see....

TEACH
And in the following days every brig, sloop and dinghy within a hundred miles...

HANDS
Run a-screamin' for shore or surrendered on the spot!

TEACH (very pleased with himself)
Aye! (pauses for effect, then)
We'll never run from a fight, my friend, but if our noble adversary yields without one....

HANDS
Gentlemen pirates! Is that what we are to be, then?

TEACH
With the most vile and murderous reputation our victims care to pass along. I've yet to see a merchant crew that wasn't a heartbeat away from mutiny. Most would happily join us, and those who, by whatever moral defect, choose to fight, and live... well it would be in their best interest to portray us as the most horrible of monsters, would it not?

HANDS
How better to explain the loss of their cargo, yes?!

TEACH
Right! Now then! What do ye make of these?

(Teach has produced a handful of fuse cords used for lighting cannons.)

HANDS
Fuses, I'll wager.

TEACH
Aye, but soaked in lime water so as to burn slowly!
(He lights them and holds them up to his beard)

HANDS
Not bad, not at all bad.

TEACH (with a 'classic' pirate snarl)
AAARRRRHHH!

HANDS
What's that supposed to be, then?

TEACH
No?

HANDS
No.

TEACH
Well what say ye to this?

(he turns and from a hook on the wall produces two slings
in which are strapped three pistols each. He swings them on along with a
huge cutlass.)

HANDS
Much better!

TEACH
Now my friend - the topper!

(he pulls a small bottle with a short fuse stuck in
the neck out of his coat.)

What do ye make of that?! (beaming with pride)

HANDS
I've a feelin' I'll know in a second.

TEACH
I call it a grenada!

HANDS
Pomegranate, eh? Looks delicious!

TEACH
Delicious indeed! A big bang, a lot of smoke, and the battle ends before it begins!

HANDS
You've got it all figured, Captain Teach! No, no - that won't do, will it?...

(he stands and circles Teach, regarding him, then, dramatically bowing to Teach...)

Captain Blackbeard!

(music)

TEACH

Blackbeard!

HANDS
Yes?!

TEACH
Aye!

No. 5 A Gentleman Goes To Sea
(Teach)

as the song begins, they leave the cabin and go topside,

TEACH
A GENTLEMAN GOES TO SEA,

HANDS (spoken)
Eh?

TEACH
A GENTLEMAN LIKE ME.

HANDS (spoken)
Oh.

TEACH
WHILE THE LADIES SIGH,
AND THE CHILDREN CRY,
THE GENTLEMAN MUST BE FREE.

THE GENTLEMAN TAMES THE GALE,
BENEATH A CLOUD OF SAIL,
HIS PENNANT FLY-
IN' THROUGH THE SKY,
TWISTING LIKE THE DEVIL'S TAIL.

CREW
HEY, CAPTAIN, GIVE THE COMMAND,
SHOW US THE WORLD AND ALL OF ITS GLORIES,
HO, CAPTAIN, OUR TIME IS AT HAND.
WE ARE THE STUFF OF LEGENDS AND STORIES.

HEY, CAPTAIN, FIND US A PRIZE.
FRENCHMAN OR SPANIARD, NO MATTER.
WHATEVER THE COLOUR OF FLAG THEY FLIES,
WE'LL TIP 'EM OUR HATS, THEN BLOW 'EM RIGHT OUTTA THE WATER!

DANCE: A brief dance segment as the crew jubilantly fires the cannons and engages in mock hand to hand combat.

TEACH (to crew)
GOVERNMENTS COME AND GO, MY BOYS,
LIKE THE SHIFTING SAND.
STARBOARD OR PORT OF THE LAW, MY BOYS,
A GENTLEMAN STEERS WITH A STEADY HAND

THE GENTLEMAN STAYS THE COURSE,
DESPITE OPPOSING FORCE,
STANDS WITH HIS MEN,
TO THE BITTER END,
AND NEVER WITH REMORSE!

A GENTLEMAN GOES TO SEA,
A GENTLEMAN LIKE ME.
YET GOOD KING GEORGE MAY DISAGREE,
THAT WHEN A SAILOR SUCH AS ME,
HOISTS HIS SAILS, ONE TWO THREE...
THAT A GENTLEMAN GOES TO SEA!

Lyric 08/03/98

Scene 4a.

Mid-day, on the deck of Queen Anne's Revenge:

RICHARDS is seated at a desk swearing in recruits signing the Articles of Piracy one by one. All are awestruck at the grandeur of the QAR. The last of the recruits, a huge black man (CAESAR) is about to sign on. TEACH and HANDS, looking on, are amazed at his sheer size.

RICHARDS
Name?

CAESAR
Caesar.

RICHARDS
Surname?

CAESAR
Sir Caesar!

RICHARDS (intimidated)
Right. Sign or make yer mark.

(underscore: 'A Gentleman Goes To Sea')

TEACH
Call him over.

HANDS
You there!

CAESAR
Aye.

TEACH
And what skills might you possess, my good man?

CAESAR
Helmsman of the Flyer, captain...

HANDS
Blackbeard!

CAESAR (smiling broadly)
Captain Blackbeard, sir!

TEACH
Indeed! And this day shall ye commence the noon to dusk watch at the helm of Queen Anne's Revenge! Square 'im away, Mr. Richards!

(exit RICHARDS & CAESAR)

HANDS
Helm, cap'n?

TEACH
Flyer was a slave ship, Israel. WAS a slave ship. Need I say more?

HANDS
He'll do!

(music ends - (they turn to face the newly augmented crew, who gradually quiet down. TEACH grasps the black flag.)

TEACH
Gentlemen! You now stand aboard the grandest pirate vessel ever to draw wind!

(crew cheers in agreement)

I am your duly elected Captain,

(looks over at HANDS)

Blackbeard! At my right hand, Mr. Hands, first mate. Yonder, Master at arms, Mr. Richards....
Is there a carpenter among you?

(silence)

Right, no matter... On the 'morrow, we put in at Nassau harbour for provisions and... recreation!

(cheers, introduction to 'A Particular Kind of Hell' begins)

TEACH
Gentlemen, our flag!

(more cheers as TEACH unfurls the flag and holds it out in his arms for all to see.)

Death and the Glass; that all who spy us will know that time, both theirs and ours, is
precious short!

(cheers)

Prepare to make way!

HANDS
Prepare to make way! (to CAESAR at the helm) Make your course West by Nor'west.

(the crew leaps to action, hoisting sails, etc. as music swells)

Scene 4b.

No. 6, A Particular Kind of Hell
(the crew)

Introduction

TEACH
THE PIRATES EARTHLY LIFE IS SHORT,
YOU'VE HEARD THAT TUNE BEFORE!
AND LIKE AS NOT, ST. PETER,
WILL NOT LET US THROUGH HIS DOOR.
WHAT'S TO BECOME OF THE LIKES OF US,
ONCE OUR LABOURS HERE ARE DONE?
I TELL YE ONE AND ALL, MY FRIENDS,
WE'LL ONLY HAVE JUST BEGUN!

V1

OFFICERS AND TEACH
IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF HELL,
WHERE ONLY THE FINEST DEMONS DWELL,
WHERE YOU CAN SOAK UP SO MUCH RUM,
YOU CAN SHOOT FIRE OUTTA YOUR BUM,
IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF HELL.

V2

HANDS
IN A CERTAIN PART OF THE UNDERWORLD,
WHERE THE SKULL AND GLASS IN BLACK UNFURL,
WHERE YOU CAN SKEWER A HUNDRED MEN,
WAKE UP IN THE MORNIN' AND KILL 'EM AGAIN,
IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF HELL.

Bridge

During the bridge, lighting darkens into a kind of Hell.
It continues to darken and become more and more
surreal as the set comes apart in preparation for Scene 5.

ALL
LASH THE BOW TO THE HURRICANE'S EYE,
RUN UP THE MAIN AND LET 'ER FLY,
IS THERE A BETTER TIME TO DIE,
THAN IN THE MIDST OF THE BATTLE CRY?

TEACH
SO AWAY TO THE DEVIL, ALL OF YE LOT,
I'LL BE ALONG ONCE REVENGE HAS BEEN GOT,
REVENGE FOR WHAT, IT MATTERS NOT,
ALL
IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF HELL!

V3

CAESAR
IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF HELL,
IT'S A TRIFLE HOT BUT YOU STILL LIVE WELL,
OFF THE SPOILS OF BATTLES WON,
NO UNDOING WHAT'S BEEN DONE,
ALL
IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF HELL.

V4

IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF HELL,
AS SUITS THE DISCERNING NE'ER-DO-WELL,
ALL IS FORGIVEN,
AS LONG AS YOU'RE LIVIN'
IN A PARTICULAR, IN A PECULIAR, IN A PERNICIOUS,
IN A PARTICULAR KIND OF.... direct segue>

(Crossfade)

Scene 5.

No. 7, The Marrying Kind
(Clemency and the ladies of the evening)

Fade In on brothel interior.

There are several large mirrors, and a large window to the rear through which several pirate ships can be seen at mooring and coming into shore, unloading, etc. A group of prostitutes is scurrying about readying themselves for their evening duties....

intro:

CLEMENCY

(Direct segue) from No. 6>

HELP...

ME ELIZABETH, LUCY LEND A HAND!

THERE, THROUGH THE WINDOW, SHIPS COME IN TO LAND.

TIE ME INTO THIS AND YOU THERE, GIVE ME THAT,

OH MY LORD, COULD I BE THAT FAT?

ALL

JUST A TOUCH OF RED FOR A HINT OF YOUTH,

NOT TOO MUCH, MUSTN'T BE UNCOUTH!

CLEMENCY

NOW WHAT... SHOES! WITH THE BRIGHT BRASS TACKS,

ALL

ALL OF THIS JUST TO END UP ON OUR BACKS!

V1

CLEMENCY (at the window)

ALL OF MY DAYS, I SEARCHED FOR HIM,

THE ONE WHO WOULD TAKE ME AWAY.

BUT DAY AFTER DAY, MY HOPE GROWS DIM,

AND I'D SETTLE FOR ONE WHO'D JUST STAY!

RIDICULOUS BAUBLES AND BRACELETS AND RINGS,

ARE ALL THAT I HAVE TO SHOW,

FOR THE ENDLESS PROCESSION OF MEANINGLESS FLINGS,

WITH BLOKES I DON'T EVEN CARE TO KNOW!

V2

ALL OF MY DAYS, THERE'S A DREAM IN MY HEAD

OF A HOUSE WITH A GARDEN GREEN.

WITH CRISP WHITE LINENS UPON A BRASS BED

AND LOTS OF SERVANTS TO KEEP THEM CLEAN!

ALL I WOULD NEED WOULD BE ONE LUCKY CHANCE,

A GENTLEMAN FROM AMONG THIEVES,
I NO LONGER EVEN REQUIRE ROMANCE,
AS LONG AS THE GENTLEMAN NEVER LEAVES!

chorus

ALL
THE MARRYING KIND, THAT'S THE MAN FOR ME!
THE MAN WHO LOVES ME MORE THAN LOVES THE SEA!
THE MARRYING KIND, COULD BE TALL, COULD BE SHORT,
WHO CARES AS LONG AS HE STAYS IN PORT!

V3

TWO GIRLS IN HARMONY
ALL OF OUR NIGHTS WE'VE SPENT IN VAIN
HOPING FOR SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE HAD.
ONLY TO HOLD OUT HOPE ONCE AGAIN,
MAYBE OUR LIVES ARE NOT SO BAD!

CLEMENCY (*wistfully, slower*)
ALL I WOULD NEED WOULD BE ONE LUCKY CHANCE,
SOMEONE WHO FEELS THE WAY THAT I DO.
A CUDDLE, A KISS, A DRINK OR A DANCE,
WHATEVER IT TAKES TO GET NEARER TO...

chorus (*still slower*)
THE MARRYING KIND, THAT'S THE MAN FOR ME!
THE MAN WHO LOVES ME MORE THAN LOVES THE SEA!
THE MARRYING KIND WITH THE HEART OF GOLD,
(*a tempo*)
PLEASE DEAR GOD, BEFORE I GET TOO OLD.

ALL
THE MARRYING KIND, THAT'S THE MAN FOR ME!
THE MAN WHO LOVES ME MORE THAN LOVES THE SEA!

(Transform brothel into 'pub')

SO RAISE YOUR GLASSES TO YOUR FUTURE WIVES!
YOU'RE IN FOR THE EVENING OF YOUR LIVES!

Scene 5a.

No. 7a, The Marrying Kind, Dance

Blackbeard and several of his men enter. Among them are Israel Hands, Caesar and Richards. Teach is the only one in the room with the good manners to remove his hat as soon as he realizes there are 'ladies' present.

RICHARDS (loudly to the nearest girl, who happens to be Clemency)
Wench! Rum for me mates and the great Captain Blackbeard!

TEACH
Mr. Richards! Mind your manners, sir, this may be your future bride!

RICHARDS (sheepishly)
Sorry, sir.

TEACH
Not to me, y'lout, to the lovely lady!

RICHARDS
Aye - me 'umble apologies, mad..., ma'am... er, miss...

CLEMENCY (bored)
Clemency.

TEACH (while pushing Richards gently aside, plucking his hat from his head, and handing it to him in one swift motion)
Lady Clemency! If you would be good enough to provide a table and some rum for my men and I....

(music begins - hints of The Marrying Kind)

CLEMENCY (obviously flirting)
Captain Blackbeard, sir, t'would be an honor!

TEACH
Thank you my dear! (to his men) Come, lads, we've much to talk about!

PIRATE 1
Captain Blackbeard is it?! (to Teach)

HANDS
And who wants to know?

PIRATE 1 (to Teach)
Husk is my name, of the pirate sloop Neptune, under John Rackham.

TEACH
And how is old Calico Jack?

PIRATE 1
You know of us, then?

TEACH
Alas, son, I know only your master as we served a brief stint together off the Canaries in aught nine!

PIRATE 1
Tell me, sir, is't true that ye once made a man to eat 'is own lips for lyin' to ye about the whereabouts of 'is purse?

TEACH
To be sure, lad, but not before I fried 'em up first - t'would have been uncivilized otherwise!

(Hands and Richards look at each other quizzically. They are soon joined by several other young pirates of various crews.)

PIRATE 2
And did ye not send the heads of the crew of the Donnybrook to the Governor of New York?

TEACH
Individually wrapped, of course!

(Blackbeard's men begin to realize that he is going along with these outlandish tales to further his 'image'.)

RICHARDS
Aye, and their feet to the Admiralty House at Philadelphia!

TEACH (to Richards, under his breath)
Don't push it, Tom!

(Clemency appears with a tray full of drinks, several of which have been purchased for Teach and his men by other pirates throughout the room. They do their best to acknowledge each of their benefactors. Soon, their table is surrounded by well-wishing pirates, all calling for some words of wisdom from the great Blackbeard, who obliges them by rising and beginning...)

No. 8, Brethren of the Coast
(Teach, Caesar, Clemency, the crew)

(Teach and his men drink a toast after each section)
{intro, Teach. v1 Teach's men, v2 Teach, chorus Pirates, v3 Clemency,
During Clemency's verse, she dances suggestively and flashes her breasts at Teach.

*Whether or not the audience gets to see them is at the producers' discretion!
v4 Caesar, Chorus All.}*
*during the remainder of the song, Blackbeard and Clemency 'get together'.
Towards the end, a young boy, a postal 'runner' enters the establishment,
searching for the addressee of the envelope he carries, Capt. Edward Teach.
He is seen asking several men who eventually direct him to
Blackbeard's table once they have sufficiently tortured him.*

POST BOY (arriving at Blackbeard's table just as the song ends)
Captain Teach?

Blackbeard is too preoccupied with Clemency to respond verbally, but waves the boy off.

HANDS
Give it here, boy!

(he takes the envelope and hands the boy a
gold coin - boy bows hastily and runs off.)

HANDS
From a Tobias Knight, Esquire, Cap'n.

TEACH (bolting upright nearly dropping Clemency off his lap)
Tobias, b'Jeezus!

CAESAR
And what, pray tell is a Tobias Knight Esquire?

TEACH
Only a simple country lawyer in the Carolinas - and a partner in mischief from a misspent youth
in Bristol!

RICHARDS (drunkenly)
To Tobias Esquire, then

TEACH (laughing)
Tobias Knight!

HANDS
Esquire, Yes?!

(They drink. Teach then takes the envelope from Hands and is about to
open it when he realizes his men are fading fast. He puts the envelope in his pocket.)

TEACH (cont.)
M'lads, you're all looking a trifle green about the gills! Remember, on the morrow, we make for
Turneffe Island, and I'll need at least one eye open from each of ye!

HANDS (very drunk)
And we were going to Tur... Tun... Honduras for....

TEACH
For a final refit, careening and to take on a few of those fat Honduran pigs you're so fond of gnawing on, y' sot! We can't subsist on Bahamian rum alone, much as I know ye'd like to try!

CAESAR
Aye, but all the way to...

TEACH
All right then, here it is, straight, boys: I assume the name Hornigold still reverberates with some familiarity in those spirit soaked brains of yours, does it not?

RICHARDS (raising his head and glass from their resting place on the table)
To Captain Hornigold! (then immediately passes out)

ALL
Captain Hornigold! (they drink)

TEACH
Well, his appointment as Admiral Protector of The Bahama Islands begins immediately upon his arrival sometime this very week! As I've no desire to cross swords with a former master and mentor, nor to sign my livelihood away with the King's pardon, I'll take the prudent course and put a little ocean between us, thank you very much!

(By the end of this sentence, Blackbeard realizes that all of his men have passed out!)

TEACH (to Clemency)
And now, my dear, where were we?

(music swells)
(lights FADE OUT)

No. 8a, Scene Change: Brethren of the Coast, Instrumental Reprise

Scene 6.

Dawn (lights ramp up, gulls and sea birds are heard) aboard Queen Anne's Revenge. In the stillness, Israel Hands is seen standing on the foredeck with a large Bible in hand opposite CLEMENCY in a simple white dress including veil. The crew looks on, extremely hungover. Some shield their eyes from

the bright sun, others are asleep on their feet, while others whisper....

June 30, 1998

CREWMAN 1

Wot's that, now - number eight?

CREWMAN 2

'E'll never learn!

CREWMAN 1

And wot's she to say when we sail in an hour?

CREWMAN 3

Hush yer jabberin', y' fools - 'e's comin'!

(Blackbeard emerges from belowdecks smiling broadly. He is dressed all in white. He arrives at the woman's side and tenderly raises her veil. She smiles warmly at him, then they both turn towards Israel Hands.)

HANDS

Dearly beloved, it is my pleasant task as first mate aboard this great ship to offer up this fine couple to the eyes of God in holy matrimony. Do you Captain Edward Teach take this woman to be thy wife?

TEACH

I do.

HANDS

And do you, Clemency... your surname, dear...

CLEMENCY

Welles

HANDS

Do you, Clemency Welles take this man to husband?

CLEMENCY

I do!

HANDS

Then by the power vested in me by the solemn Articles of Piracy, I pronounce you man and wife!

(Teach and Clemency mile at each other)

Oh do kiss her, Captain!

(introduction to No. 9 OFTEN begins. Laughter and cheers as the crew dissipates in preparation for the departure to Honduras. Those moving in the direction of the couple wish them well as they pass.

CLEMENCY

Such a beautiful morning, Edward - what could be troubling you?

TEACH

My dear... Clemency... I'm not a man who frets over what the world thinks of me, but... what you must think of me...

CLEMENCY

Edward...

TEACH

No, you must let me finish. You know that before the day is out, I must sail for Honduras, and....

CLEMENCY

Edward, did you think I didn't know that?

No. 9, Often
(Clemency and Teach)

V1

CLEMENCY

DID YOU THINK I KNEW NOT WHO YOU WERE?
DID YOU THINK I UNDERSTOOD SO LITTLE OF YOUR HEART,
THAT I'D SACRIFICE THE HERE AND NOW,
TRY TO MAKE YOU CHANGE SOMEHOW,
AND FAILING, CURSE YOUR NAME WHEN WE PART?

V2

TEACH

CAN IT BE YOU {UNDERSTAND SO WELL}?
CAN IT BE THAT EVEN AS WE SPEAK I TURN TO GO?
YET I'D GLADLY STAY WITH YOU
IF THE FATES ALLOWED ME TO,
BUT GO I MUST, STILL I MUST HAVE YOU KNOW...

Chorus

BOTH

OFTEN IN THE STILL OF NIGHT,
MY DREAMS WILL BE OF YOU
OFTEN I WILL WONDER FROM AFAR,
ARE YOU DREAMING AS I DO,
(MORE)

{dialogue as Clemency departs via longboat during song with a huge cache of cash!}
{also, during last verse (Teach solo), we hear the order to make way, and the crew sings along,
time passes, or FADE OUT}

Scene 7.

Music

Aboard Queen Anne's Revenge on the high seas in a stiff breeze en route to Turneffe Island, Honduras.

LOOKOUT
Ship in the offing!

HANDS
Where away?

LOOKOUT
Off the starboard beam, sir! A Sloop... She alters to meet us, sir!

(a sloop has appeared and approaches.)

HANDS
A bit o' fun, yes?!

LOOKOUT
Runnin' up colors, sir... (pauses) Mr. Hands, sir - the black flag!

HANDS (opening a spyglass)
Caesar, on my command - come about, ninety degrees to starboard!
(to crew at large) Prepare to come about!

checking the other ship's progress through the glass

CREWMAN
Prepare to come about!

HANDS (waiting for the ship to come into position, then with a wave of his arm)
Come about!

CREWMAN
Come about, aye

(the crew scrambles efficiently to comply and executes the tack perfectly.)

HANDS
Run up the black flag and get the Cap'n!

(Out of the brief excitement TEACH materializes as if by magic.)

TEACH

Right smartly done, Israel - now what's all the fuss, eh?

HANDS

Betimes I think you be the Devil himself, Captain - Right... this fellow here seems to be a Brother, sir.

TEACH

Well, let's hear what he has to say!

(QAR's company peer over the side, indicating that the other smaller ship is now alongside)

MAJOR STEDE BONNET (offstage)

Who might I have the pleasure of addressing?

TEACH

Blackbeard, Captain - and you are

BONNET

Stede Bonnet, sir... Major... retired! Permission to come aboard?

TEACH

By all means, do!

(Teach's crew begins snickering, and soon we see why; Major Stede Bonnet is short and fat, to the point of being roughly spherical. He practically rolls over the side rail onto the deck of QAR, accompanied by his first mate, a tall skinny flunky. Bonnet quickly rights himself to attention, and a crisp military salute. His mate follows suit. They are impeccably dressed as if for dinner, not as men of the sea! Perriwigged and clean-shaven, they are grossly out of place. Teach's crew can barely contain their laughter. Teach is amused and dumbfounded by their appearance. He waits for Bonnet to speak...)

BONNET

(Peering about as if falling out onto the deck of a strange ship were an everyday occurrence, then turns to run his hand along the perfectly straight rail he has just come over...)

Got a bit of a bow in it.

(Teach's crew is no longer able to hold back their laughter, and let loose. Bonnet eventually joins in, finally seeing the humor in the situation.)

Right! Now then, I've had my boys plowing these waters for weeks without sight of a prize. And how have you fared, Captain Blackbeard?

TEACH

We make for Turneffe Island, Captain, seeking no prizes, as in these parts, a great current sweeps them all along a hundred leagues north of us.

BONNET

By gum, that explains it, then!

Introduction to No. 10 begins

TEACH

Yes, we're quite out of the shipping lanes here!

BONNET

Lanes? There are lanes? Of shipping? Extraordinary!

(Teach's crew looks back and forth at each other in amazement at this revelation that their new colleague has no idea what he is doing.)

No. 10, A Soldier Goes To Sea
(Bonnet)

BONNET

A SOLDIER GOES TO SEA,
A SOLDIER JUST LIKE ME,
HAVING BEEN TO WAR,
HEARD THE CANNON'S ROAR,

Produces a small portrait of Queen Anne from his waistcoat pocket.

IN SERVICE OF HER MAJESTY!

Teach's crew nods and 'ahhh's' in their mutual admiration for the former queen.

....(more)
July 2, 1998

THEN... THE SOLDIER TAKES A WIFE,
ATTEMPTS CIVILIAN LIFE,
AND THOUGH THE FIRE'S CEASED,
THE FIGHT'S INCREASED,
AMID DOMESTIC STRIFE!

SO... THE SOLDIER FLEES TO SEA,
THAT SOLDIER BEING ME!
AND HERE I STAND, A SEA-SICK BRIGAND!
A ONCE-PROUD LAND-LOCKED FIGHTING MAN,
UNENCUMBERED BY A WEDDING BAND!
(shows his ringless left hand, wiggling the fingers.)
A SOLDIER GONE TO SEA!

Upon hearing this, Teach and his crew rally around Bonnet.
There is much backslapping and commiserating ad lib.

TEACH

Your ship looks like a scrappy little sea-witch; can she run?

BONNET

Well, let me see... Kingston to Port Au Prince in... hmm...

BONNET'S MATE

43 hours, sir.

TEACH

Excellent, Captain! And perchance, have you a carpenter on board?

BONNET

Alas, no - the fever took our last one.

TEACH

Well, never you mind...

He puts his arm around Bonnet's shoulder and propels him to the companionway wall on which he spreads a large nautical chart.

I've a proposition; join up with us - we'll round Cabo San Antonio, er, that's the western end of Cuba, and make straight for Turneffe Island off Honduras to regroup, and then, well I've a few tricks up my sleeve!

As he says this, he traces the course with his hand; diagonally upper-right to lower-left. (It is very important that the audience see this clearly)

BONNET

By gum, I like it!

he pulls a small speaking trumpet from his coat, smiling at Teach, and calls out to his crew:

Gentlemen, we make for Cabo san...

looks over at Teach

TEACH

Antonio.

BONNET

Yes, quite right, Cabo San Antonio - make your course...

TEACH (prompting him)

West by....

BONNET
West by south...

TEACH (emphasizing the idiomatic pronunciation)
SOU'west

BONNET (triumphantly)
West by sou'west, if you please!
Lights to black amid cheers and laughter.

Scene 8.

(In limbo (silhouette), we witness the hanging of four pirates. Then; interior – a British Royal Naval command office, the Bahamas HORNIGOLD with back to audience)

GOVERNOR

A fitting end to the likes of these!

OFFICER

Indeed - methinks it a particular kind of Hell these poor bastards inhabit now!

ADMIRAL

Right, well, on to this (disdainfully) Blackbeard - shall we, Governor Rogers?

GOVERNOR

Captain Hornigold!

HORNIGOLD (turning around to face them)

This man Blackbeard - I believe he was a mate of mine during my service to Queen Anne as privateer. A fierce and cunning fighter, wholly without fear, and a master at seamanship to boot.

ADMIRAL

We are glad to hear that you think so highly of him, sir.

GOVERNOR

Now, now... (to Hornigold) Benjamin, do you know where we might find him? He was last seen in Nassau not two days gone...

HORNIGOLD (as he speaks, he walks over to the wall on which a large map of the Caribbean and Atlantic is displayed)

Indeed I do, your lordship! I know him like the back of my own hand. At this time of year he means to careen his ships and debauch himself in cooler climes. I tell you he beats north by northeast to Bermuda.

(as he says this, he traces the course from the Bahamas to Bermuda on the map, diagonally lower left to upper right, which is, of course, the exact opposite of the direction in which Teach is actually heading.
Fade Out)

Scene 9.

*Careening: Mid-day, the shore of Turneffe Island.
A portion of the great hull of the Queen Anne's Revenge is seen as she has been grounded on her side for barnacle scraping and sealing with molten tar.
We see Bonnet's sloop, the Revenge at anchor just offshore.*

In the foreground, Blackbeard, dressed in somber black is seated in a large 'throne' decorated with palm fronds. He is being fanned by crewmembers. The throne is under a tree, a large branch of which has a hangman's noose attached to it. Off to one side, a drunken crewman is asleep with rum bottle in hand, a beatific smile on his face.

Caesar stands near the throne with a large scroll in hand. He is wearing Bonnet's powdered wig, which, of course, is much too small. Mr. Richards, wearing a black hood with eye cutouts holds the bound arms of a 'condemned' man. The remainder of the crew looks on with solemn faces.

Oblivious to the mock trial that is about to take place, Bonnet, whom we now see is bald, strides up to Blackbeard, shadowed, as usual by his first mate...

BONNET

Captain Blackbeard! I must protest the placing of Mr. Hands in command of (pointing out to Revenge) my ship, sir. Highly irreg...

TEACH (in good humor)

Hold, sir, can you not see that a matter of grave import is about to be addressed?

BONNET

But Captain, I....

TEACH

The posting is temporary sir, I assure you, and 'your' ship, as you call it, well, (struggling to keep a straight face) it could not be in better... Hands!

Laughter.

Now would you please attend! Mighty Caesar - will you read the charge!

CAESAR

M'lord...

BONNET

By Gum - that's my wig!!

he starts towards Caesar amid peals of laughter only to be stopped by Teach placing a calm but firm hand on his arm.

CAESAR

M'lord, this has been a particular nasty boy! It seems this man has willy nilly attacked many vessels at sea for personal gain, causing injury to some and incontinence to many. He is, therefore, charged with (whispers) Piracy!

TEACH

Gentlemen of the court, what say ye?

CREWMEMBERS (all at once, while displaying 'thumbs down'.)

Swing him!;
Death!;
etc., ad lib.

(With this, Mr. Richards places the noose around the crewman's neck while another crewman begins rhythmically beating a large drum. This commotion wakens the sleeping sailor, who leaps to his feet...)

DRUNKEN CREWMAN

Hold!! Or I'll blow ye all to Kingdom Come in the name of Blackbeard - Commodore of the Coast!

(he has produced a grenade which he proceeds to light. He is quickly overpowered by crewmen who put out the grenade's fuse just in time, and clap him in irons. All the while, laughing. He realizes that this has been a big joke and joins in. Bonnet is not laughing.

(A musket shot rings out from the Revenge.)

REVENGE LOOKOUT (offstage)

Ship in the offing!

BONNET

Captain, this is really too much!

TEACH (losing patience)

Really, Mister Bonnet - watch and learn!

BONNET (exasperated)

MAJOR Bonnet!

TEACH (roars:)

You're a seaman now, or hadn't ye noticed, MISTER Bonnet!

(Bonnet fumes for a moment, then storms off, followed quickly by his first mate...)

BONNET'S MATE (as they exit)
Terribly rude, sir - I see no reas...

BONNET
By gum man, will you shut up... and get my wig!

BONNET'S MATE
Sir!
(he does a crisp about face, and quick-marches towards Caesar, suddenly
looks up and taking note of Caesar's bulk, shudders and slows a bit as lights FADE OUT.)

Scene 9a.

Same set, at dusk. Torches light the set eerily, creating dancing shadows on the ghostly hull of Queen Anne's Revenge. Now, the Revenge is joined at anchor by the captured ship.

Teach is, once again seated at his 'throne', now in shirtsleeves. Israel Hands has returned triumphantly with the crew of the captured sloop Adventure being prodded along by crewmen of the Revenge. He brings them before Teach...

TEACH

Who among you is Master?

DAVID HARRIOT

I am, Captain Blackbeard, sir. David Harriot, of the trading vessel Adventure, at your service.

TEACH

Captain Harriot, sir, what is your business in these waters?

HARRIOT

We sail out of Hispaniola bound for the Yucatan to take on bananas and cane, sir.

TEACH

No longer, I fear. Here it is, then: I mean to have your vessel. She seems fit and fast enough. Any objections?

(Adventure's crew mutters 'no'.)

Capital! Now then, any man wishing to join in our... ventures... he shall retain his present position and rank under my overall command. Those who wish to depart may do so at first light. They shall have longboats, fresh food and water, muskets and chart 'n' compass. Fair enough?

flabbergasted by Blackbeard's largesse, the prisoners brighten and chatter amongst themselves.

TEACH, cont.

Speak now, then!

in response, Harriot and a majority of his officers step forward, followed by most of the crewmen. They stand beside Teach and Hands, who begins to write down their names and swear them to the Articles of Piracy. Those that remain stand with heads bowed.

TEACH (to the remainder)

Now now, men, no long faces tonight - I said no harm would come to you, and I meant it! Eat! Drink! (smiles broadly) You've got a long day ahead of you!

Laughter

Captain Harriot!

HARRIOT
Sir?

TEACH
Damn near slipped my mind! You wouldn't by any chance happen to have a carpenter in your service, would you?

HARRIOT
Why, indeed I do! A bright enough young fellow - a trifle serious for my tastes but... 'strewth! - he's, well... over there sir.

(he indicates a tall blonde youth amid the group that has chosen to be put adrift. It is, of course, Robert van Wraak.)

TEACH
You there!

(van Wraak turns with a 'who me?' look)

TEACH, cont.
Yes, you! Come here, lad.
I'm sorry about this, boy, but I am in need of a carpenter. I'm afraid...

VAN WRAAK
Oh no - I beg of you, sir, I'm to be... I must...

TEACH
What you must do is afford me the honor of your service as carpenter!

VAN WRAAK
Aye... captain

TEACH
Bravo! You'll take charge of the careening immediately! Mr. Richards! Give him the makings!

(Richards is seen explaining carpenters' duties to van Wraak, pointing to the hull of QAR occasionally.)

Music.

The ensemble in groups: Blackbeard and his officers, including those from Adventure, (not including Bonnet, Richards or Hands); a work detail going down to the QAR led by Richards and van Wraak; other crew dancing and carousing. Stede Bonnet and Israel Hands each stand alone... All begin a contrapuntal reprise:)

No. 11, Contrapuntal Reprises
Principals

segue to:
No.12, A Twist Of Fate (w.t.)
Van Wraak

VAN WRAAK
LIKE A SWORD THROUGH THE HEART,
LIKE THE TURN OF THE BLADE,
A LIFE TORN APART,
BY A TWIST OF FATE....(more)
July 9, 1998

(van Wraak leads a work party upstage to the QAR and flings himself into his work. Under his direction, the work party stokes fires under huge cauldrons of molten tar and begin swabbing the stuff onto the hull, singing 'Swing' as they work.)

No. 12a, Swing, Reprise

{note: this serves as background to the following dialogue...}

(In the foreground, we see Teach and his officers, including Bonnet, seated around an overturned dinghy, which Teach is using as a table. He has spread a large map out on its hull. In his hand is the letter he received earlier from Tobias Knight. Israel Hands is conspicuously absent.)

TEACH
Let's get down to it, then.... Where the devil is Israel?

RICHARDS
Saw 'im yonder jawin' with some o' them blokes from the Adventure, sir.

TEACH (only slightly suspiciously)
Did you now? (pause) Right, well, here it is, men: You may recall that while in Nassau, I received this letter from my friend Tobias Knight. You may also recall that I was, at the time, a trifle... distracted!

(laughter)

Well, lads, the time's at hand for me to lay our future course. Look here:

(he points to a spot on the map)

CAESAR
The harbor at Charles Town.

TEACH

Yes - Charles Town, South Carolina! I mean to sail our fast growing fleet there and blockade the channel!

BONNET

My God, man - it can't be done!

TEACH

Aye but it can, I say! You see here... and here? Where there should be cannon and fortifications? There are none! Our friend Mr. Knight tells us that the construction of same has been delayed - something about budgets and such - can you imagine?!

(Hands joins the party.)

TEACH, cont.

Ah! Mister Hands - good of you to come.... The Governor of South Carolina summons in Charles Town. He'll be there to see his precious harbor squeezed for every farthing with not a bloody thing to be done about it! By the time his shorebound army arrives to repel us, we'll be long gone... here.

(points to another spot on the map.)

TEACH, cont.

Through the Ocracoke Inlet and safe haven in the charming town of Bath in North Carolina!

BONNET

But Captain - a blockade? We'll bring every colonial government down upon ourselves... I really must protest... No, I cannot be a part of such a scheme...

TEACH (roars)

Then ye shall not, sir!

BONNET (amazed)

I beg your pardon, sir?!

TEACH

As of this very moment, Mr. Richards here shall assume permanent command of the Revenge. You, Mister Bonnet, are relieved!

Both Hands and Richards look up, surprised.

BONNET

But...

TEACH

RELIEVED, sir!

BONNET (meekly)

As you wish, sir.

TEACH

Now then. Caesar - you are to take charge of training this rabble in the finer points of close combat. And see to it that the beggars from Adventure are issued cutlasses! Those navy issue swords they have are toys! Mr. Richards - instruct our fine young carpenter to fit Adventure with as many nine pounders as she'll stay afloat under. That is all! Mr. Hands, with me, if you please!

(they stand and disperse, leaving Teach and Hands alone.)

Really, Israel, what was so bloody important...

HANDS

Sorry, cap'n, I was, er... well...

TEACH

Bloody Hell, never mind.

(awkward pause)

HANDS

I wonder, Captain, what we need with a safe haven, as you put it, that's three hundred miles from Charles Town. I wonder if this wouldn't be another one of your, ah, double...

TEACH (surprisingly good naturedly)

Double-dealin's? Is that what ye mean? Well, as a matter of pure fact... it is!

HANDS (quietly)

Oh no!

TEACH

Tobias Knight...

HANDS

Esquire!

TEACH

The same! Tobias informs me that Charles Town Harbour is indeed a sugar-plum ripe for the pickin'. And once we've done with 'er, there'll be nothing left for them to pursue us with! No, Israel, it's not from them we run, but from ourselves!

HANDS

Now you've done it, sir, me brain's cooked solid!

TEACH

I put it to ye thus:

No. 13, How Many Pounds

TEACH

v1.

HOW MANY POUNDS OF DIAMONDS AND RUBIES SHALL ONE MAN HAVE WON?
HOW MANY CROWNS AND DUBLOONS AND PIECES OF EIGHT 'TIL HE'S DONE,

HANDS (spoken)

More than I've got, I'll wager!

IN ORDER THAT HE SHOULD BE SATED AND FREE TO BE RID OF ALL CARE?
HOW MANY POUNDS MAKE UP THE ACCOUNTS OF THIS ONE MAN'S SHARE?

v2.

HOW MANY PORTS AND HARBOURS AND COURTS SHALL ONE MAN HAVE SEEN?
HOW MANY SLOOPS AND FRIGATES AND SNOWS SHALL HIS HOME HAVE BEEN,
PERCHANCE THAT HE MIGHT TAKE PLEASURE AT NIGHT IN SOME PEACE OF
MIND?
HOW MANY PLACES AND HOW MANY FACES MIGHT HE HAVE LEFT BEHIND?

Chorus: (tbw)

v3.

HOW MANY ROUNDS OF SHOT....(more)

Release.

THE BLOCKADE OF CHARLES TOWN WILL SURELY PUT US OVER THE TOP
AND AS FOR ME, OVER THE TOP IS WHERE I STOP...

v4. (tbw)

Chorus: (tbw)

HANDS (with disbelief)

That's a pretty bit of business - you mean to accept King's pardon!

TEACH

Now you've got it! I'll do the unthinkable - quit while I'm ahead... or rather, while I have a head!

HANDS

And what of the men - and me?!

TEACH (a little irritated)

Come now, Israel. You'll command Adventure through the blockade. The men shall address you as Captain Hands.

(Turning towards Adventure, offshore at anchor.)

TEACH, cont.

And afterwards, take your pick of the fleet, but leave Adventure to me - 'tis all I ask! (wistfully)
Something about her... (long pause) Tobias tells me that there's a friendly fellow in North Carolina called Charles Eden.

HANDS

The Governor?

TEACH

He seems to have his head screwed on straight as concerns Blackbeard and his hellish horde. Loves a touch of larceny himself, he does. So you see, it's a comfy berth I'll be slippin' into, my friend, a comfy berth indeed!

HANDS (somewhat defiantly)

The men and I...

TEACH (angrily, but under control)

The men, is it? And you, is it?

HANDS

That's right, Captain Blackbeard, the men. Here you go, off on one of your high-minded schemes all the while keeping the men in the dark, well they'll have somethin' to say about....

TEACH (angrier)

The men may speak when the time comes, and you with 'em! The Articles so provide! And now, sir, I'll have my leave of ye - I've an action in Charles Town to plan!

Teach leaves in a huff, as he does so, Hands also storms off towards the shore. As he approaches van Wraak, he says...

HANDS (to himself)

King's ruddy pardon! Action, indeed, yes?!

(Music swells ominously.)

No. 13a. A Gentleman Goes to Sea, Bridge, Reprise

The Crew

(As song ends...

Distracted, HANDS and VAN WRAAK collide. HANDS continues off without another word. VAN WRAAK, having heard HANDS' last remark is left standing alone with a look on his face combining anger, confusion and self-pity.)
Curtain.

End of Act 1.

July 14, 1998

Act II

Entr'acte.

During the Entr'Acte, curtain rises to reveal shadowplay or projected: Blackbeard's fleet under full sail

engaged in a running battle with a pair of ships on the high seas.

Blackbeard triumphs and one of the ships is sunk while the other is taken in tow and it's Spanish flag is replaced by the black skull and glass flag of Blackbeard's fleet.

Scene 1.

(A simple interior set appears as the Entre'Acte ends and we find ourselves in the office of the Governor of South Carolina, Robert Johnson. The office has a large window overlooking Charleston Harbor, and features a large South Carolina Colonial flag, an equally sized Union Jack, and a desk, at which the Governor is seated. It is a quiet morning.)

MORLEY (to secretary, unseen, as he enters)

Out of my way, you fool... Governor Johnson, Sir! It's horrible!

JOHNSON

What!

MORLEY (pointing to the window)

Look there, sir, just beyond the bar - pirates! Thousands of them! In some twenty ships! They say its... Blackbeard!

JOHNSON

Blackbeard! Good Lord help us!

They both rush over to the window. Johnson has taken up a spyglass and surveys the scene.

MORLEY

They've taken the pilot boat, sir! No ships enter or depart! Who knows how many they've killed!

JOHNSON

Really, Morley, I've not heard any shooting, have you? And yet... yes, there's the pilot boat... she appears to be adrift.... Six, no, eight ships under the black flag at the head of the channel...

(he stumbles back to his desk and sits down with his head buried in his hands. Morley pulls up a chair opposite the desk. Presently, Johnson holds up a letter. That meddler Spotswood was right after all. Morley, it seems we are... blockaded.)

MORLEY

Dear God, sir - what's to be done?

JOHNSON

Not a thing, Morley, not a thing.

Scene 2.

Aboard Queen Anne's Revenge, three days later. Van Wraak is seated on deck writing something. He hurriedly puts it away as he hears Caesar, Teach and the Charleston Harbor Pilot approaching...

CAESAR

Only three days and we're fully loaded, Captain!

TEACH

We owe a debt to our guest here, Captain Williams, Pilot of Charles Town Harbor!

(after sufficient backslapping and laughter, they seat themselves near van Wraak. Suddenly, from the crow's nest of Revenge...)

REVENGE'S LOOKOUT (spyglass in hand)

Ship in the offing!

(We can barely see a ship on the horizon.
Teach and Caesar spring to their feet...)

TEACH (calling to Revenge)

Call it out, lad!

LOOKOUT

Royal Navy, sir... Second rate... ten... no, sixteen guns, sir... closing fast!

TEACH (to Pilot)

Look here - you made no mention...

PILOT

No Navy on my manifest, captain - I swear it!

TEACH

Very well, then. (to Revenge) Mr. Richards, are ye sober?!

RICHARDS (from Revenge)

Aye sir!

TEACH

Then swing round and engage this sow where she lies. Don't come back until she sits on the bottom, do you hear?!

RICHARDS

It'll be a pleasure, sir! (to his crew) Make sail - helm, make your course eighty degrees...

(Teach wheels around to face his companions, furious - we can see Revenge hoisting sail and heading out to engage the navy vessel.)

TEACH (to no one in particular)
Royal Navy, is it? Someone's left a trail, aye a trail for the sniffin'. And I've got a bloody fine notion who!

(he suddenly turns back towards the Naval ship and roars:)

Well you're dead now! All of ye! What do ye think o' that!

No. 14 {betrayed, w.t.}

(he turns back slowly and sits, stewing for a moment, then:)

Caesar, you were saying...

CAESAR
I was saying we are nigh on fully loaded.

TEACH (having regained his composure)
Yes, yes. Mr. van Wraak, have you constructed the barrels for perishables we've taken on?

VAN WRAAK
Yes, Captain, and the fore and aft bulkheads aboard Revenge have been doubled as you ordered.

TEACH
Right, then, you're dismissed... and good work, boy.

VAN WRAAK (perfunctorily)
Thank you sir.

TEACH (slipping back into a foul humor)
A trail for the sniffin'.

(just then a distant but mighty cannon volley breaks the silence, immediately followed by another less impressive one, then another, the loudest of the three, then silence.)

And now the trail grows cold.

Scene 3.

The Belmont home. To one side, Belmont writes at a desk, to the other, Aurelia sits with a guitar accompanying herself in a melancholy version of 'A Gentleman Goes to Sea' with Love Knows Not theme intertwined.

No. 15, A Gentleman Goes To Sea, Reprise

AURELIA
A GENTLEMAN GOES TO SEA,
NO FINER MAN THAN HE(more)

(The song is interrupted by the housekeeper who enters with mail.)

BELMONT (taking letter)
Thank you Millicent.... Ah – from your sister Agatha! Seems all is well with the wedding plans – Hmm, I shall have to call in some debts... oh my... September – when his hitch is up. Fine time of year! Well, Millicent, she'll be married right out on the veranda there – why, we'll have Governor Spotswood himself perform the ceremony!

HOUSEKEEPER
Yes Mr. Belmont, sir (crosses over)

AURELIA
A wedding – here! Oh how I wish it could be mine If only Robert...

HOUSEKEEPER
Miss Aurelia – for you...

(Aurelia reads the envelope and gasps, clutching the letter to her breast.)

No. 15A Belmont's Song (a short moving ode to the fatherhood of girls [in suspended time])

BELMONT
News from your Robert, no doubt!

AURELIA
Oh father!

She hurriedly rips the envelope open and begins to read...

"My dearest Aurelia, who knows when this will reach you. I only hope it finds you and your family well. If you should have occasion to speak with Governor Spotswood again, you may tell him that I have been an adventurous carpenter indeed. Aurelia, I am...."

She trails off at this point gazing more intently at the letter, first in disbelief, then in horror as she cries...

AURELIA, cont.
Father! Oh, dear God... Robert!

BELMONT (alarmed)
What is it, my dear?

AURELIA
Pirates, father - they've taken the Adventure and forced Robert to serve aboard her!

BELMONT
Filthy wretches. Is he all right?

Intro to No. 16 begins

AURELIA
He writes...

No. 16 Anything That I Can Do

VAN WRAAK (in limbo)
AURELIA, I LOVE YOU,
AND ONE MORE DAY WITHOUT YOU,
PASSES INTO NIGHT,
DIMINISHES THE LIGHT,
THAT IS THE HOPE THAT SEES ME THROUGH.

AURELIA, I'M SORRY,
AS ONE MORE DAY WITHOUT YOU,
BRINGS ME NO MORE NEAR
AND THOUGH NO LESS DEAR,
I FEAR THE THOUGHT OF LOSING YOU.

AND ANYTHING THAT I CAN DO,
TO ONCE AGAIN BE NEAR TO YOU,
STEAL AWAY INTO THE NIGHT,
STEEL MY HEART AND TURN TO FIGHT,
ANYTHING THAT I CAN DO.

AURELIA
HE SAYS HE LOVES ME,
WON'T REST UNTIL HE HOLDS ME,
SO I CAN ONLY WISH AND PRAY
THAT HE'LL COME THROUGH THAT DOOR ONE DAY,
THAT IS THE HOPE THAT SAVES ME.
...(more {van Wraak and Aurelia together, then ending with Belmont and Aurelia together
possible segue to A Twist of Fate, reprise})

Scene 4.

On deck aboard Queen Anne's Revenge, night. Teach, Caesar, Richards and Hands are at the rail, drinking by the light of a lantern hanging from the nearest boom.

CAESAR

...And did you feel that silk? Like butter!

RICHARDS

Don't forget the grain stores on that poor scow from Portsmouth!

HANDS

Yeah, how could I? Damn spiders everywhere - I still say we should've sunk that beastie to the bottom!

CAESAR

What, and no hard biscuits for the next year or so?

TEACH

All right, lads, so we've done well - I'd hoped to be gone by now. Tomorrow, it's up anchors and off to Bath!

HANDS

Sorry sir, but there's one thing...

TEACH (suspiciously)

Now what, Captain Hands

HANDS

The wounded, sir

TEACH

Aye, and what about 'em?

RICHARDS

That ruddy navy bitch sunk 'er teeth into a couple of the lads right hard, Captain, and surgeon says we're out of...

(he fishes in his pocket and comes up with a piece of paper)

'mercurical and sulphuric medicinals for the staying of infectious wounds'...

HANDS

We've taken the liberty of...

TEACH

The liberty, is it... Have I suddenly proven myself incapable of administering my own fleet?

HANDS

We had to act quickly to hold to your schedule, Captain!

TEACH

Go on - I'm stupefied with anticipation!

CAESAR

We took several passengers from the Crowley and stashed 'em belowdecks.

HANDS

A couple of bigwigs aboard that little skiff! There was a Mr. Marks, a lawyer, or some such, and Mr. Wragg, a Council member, no less!

TEACH

Hostages, eh. Well I don't like it. (pause) The good doctor can't do without this stuff?

HANDS

I fear not, sir.

TEACH

Very well. At daybreak, this Marks is to see the Governor. Mr. Hands, Mr. Richards, you go with him... Oh, and take that carpenter boy with you - he seems a sober fellow - I don't want any fun and games while you're gone. Tell his excellency that we're to have these medicines rounded up by mid-day or we'll start loppin' off the heads of our guests, starting with this Wragg fellow. God damn it, I mean to set sail for Bath by nightfall! Hostages, b'Jeezus... All right then!

(They disperse quickly. Teach, the last to leave, unhooks the lantern and carries it with him towards the companionway. Along his way, he detects a flickering of candlelight emerging from behind the large canvas draped over a longboat.)

TEACH

What the devil...

(He rips the canvas aside and discovers VAN WRAAK, crouched, writing a letter. VAN WRAAK clumsily hides the letter behind his back, but Teach is too preoccupied to notice.)

TEACH

Always the writin' to that girl o' yours, eh lad?

VAN WRAAK

B-b-beg pardon, sir?

TEACH

Oh aye - I've loved and lost enough to know the look! Aww, pay me no mind, son, just havin' ye on... But you - you're always... Look, lad, I know it's been... difficult for you, and I cannot give you back what I've taken from you, but I'll tell ye true, it'll be over soon... sooner than you think.

(he places his hand on van Wraak's shoulder)

Good night... Mister van Wraak

VAN WRAAK (unable to help being somewhat touched by Teach's sincerity)
Good night... captain.

(Teach departs below while van Wraak stands bewildered as lights FADE OUT.)

Scene 4a.

Mid-day. Teach is slowly pacing the deck. It is very quiet. He is joined by Mr. Wragg, the hostage.

TEACH

Did you see the sunrise this morning, Mr. Wragg?

WRAGG

Quite lovely... captain.

TEACH

Red... (to himself) sailor take warning.

(Bonnet emerges from below, incongruously dressed in a smoking jacket and slippers – sees Teach and tries to duck back down...)

Mister Bonnet, sir...

BONNET

Captain?

TEACH (quietly, while staring out across the water)

Major Bonnet, how long would it take for a battery of artillery to be mobilized to Charles Town Harbor from the garrison at Sumter?

BONNET

Well, hmmm, four days march in good weather, I should think.

TEACH

Thank you.

BONNET (eager to go about his business, having had no intention of being seen so attired)

Very welcome, sir.

(He turns, as confused as usual, to go back down below.

Teach lets him get halfway there, his gaze never leaving the sea, before...)

TEACH

I've decided to reinstate your command of Revenge, Major Bonnet.

BONNET (flabbergasted, but at least smart enough to not make a fuss)

Thank you, captain.

(He gives Teach a smart salute, waits for it to be returned, but presently realizing that Teach has not seen it, goes below. We hear a single ring of the ship's bell. Teach waits a good while before...)

TEACH (very quietly)
Your time is up, Mr. Wragg.

WRAGG (in the best stiff upper lip, detached fashion)
It would appear so, captain. (as if truly curious) What do you mean to do?

TEACH (turning to look Wragg in the eye)
Only what I must, sir.

(Caesar, upon hearing the bell, has come on deck.)

Caesar, take Mr. Wragg here below. See that he has a civilized meal with drink of his choosing from my locker. Then you are to...

(Something off in the distance has caught his eye.)

Well well, Caesar, what do ye make of that?

CAESAR
It's a dinghy, sir... but it's not ours.

TEACH
Oh what now, by Christ!

CAESAR
Sir?

TEACH
A strange boat, our Mr. Marks, and no medicine!

(By now, Marks is within shouting distance.
Others of the crew are emerging from below to see for themselves.)

Tell me something good, Mr. Marks!

MARKS (offstage)
I've negotiated successfully for the medicinals you need, captain.

TEACH
Well, that's a start...

MARKS
They are convinced you mean to burn every vessel in the harbor if your demands are not met. And even as the medicine chest sits ready, they still think you're going to bombard the city!

TEACH
I will beat this town about their ears if they've arrested my boys, I'll tell you that, sir!

MARKS (quickly)

No no.... no, sir, they've not! You see, Mr. Hands and Mr. Richards, well it seems they met up with some... friends, captain, and they are nowhere to be found!

TEACH

And the tall yankee?

MARKS

Young van Wraak – yes, he's with the medicine, sir. The chest was too large for the two of us, so he stayed with it!

No. 17 {Teach's song (just when you think) maybe a 'Swing' reprise}

after each verse, the ships bell tolls another hour, lights go to black and up again with the sun having moved a bit in the sky, and the actors having changed positions on the deck. Each time, it gets a little darker, a vivid sunset and finally, a starry night.

(As the song ends, we hear the commotion of the very drunk Hands and Richards along with the very sober van Wraak hoisting a large chest aboard QAR

(exit VAN WRAAK)

HANDS and RICHARDS sit, exhausted and drunk on the medicine chest. Enter TEACH, CAESAR, BONNET, and BONNET's MATE)

Scene 4a.

BONNET

I'd have laid odds it could have never been done!

RICHARDS

Come on, now, Major - 'ow can a bloke with a belly like yours 'ave so little stomach for action, eh?

(he prods Bonnet's gut - all laugh, including BONNET.)

TEACH

All in all, a ruddy fine piece o' work, this!

CAESAR

Here here!

TEACH

Mister Richards, I assume we're all loaded to the gills?

RICHARDS

Aye - not another drop for me!

CAESAR

You idiot, he means the loot, the booty, ill gotten gains!

RICHARDS (attempting to retort with a clever insult, all he can come up with is...)
So ye say, you big.... brown.... mountain.

HANDS

The only empty vessel we've got is a capture. A sloop called Fortune.

TEACH

Right, well, on the morrow, Caesar, take this Fortune into Beaufort Inlet. She's probably the only ship we've got that won't drag bottom!

(laughter)

You'll escort the Revenge. Mr. Bonnet and company mean to retire aboard her, honest men!

They all cheer Bonnet.

BONNET

'Tis true! Mr. Blackbeard has generously returned my ship to me so that I may accept King's pardon and depart this life of piracy, for which I just may have been... ill suited!

(the others try to hold back, but eventually burst into good-natured laughter, which Bonnet joins.)

Well lads, Captain, I've a long day ahead, and some packing to do... Good night to you all! (to mate) Come, Percy!

(exit Bonnet and mate)

TEACH (pleasantly)
So, Israel... You had some fun in Charles Town this day, did you?

HANDS
Aye, we met up with...

TEACH (with almost imperceptible sarcasm)
I'll wager your gold was no good in the taverns today, being a big man in Blackbeard's crew, eh?

HANDS
As a matter of fact....

TEACH
That's just fine! Fine indeed, Israel

(Caesar and Richards sense the tension and get to their feet. Teach gets up, reaches for a pair of the pistols. Caesar and Richards notice this and redouble their efforts to depart. Hands does not notice, as he has rocked back looking up at the stars, quite inebriated.)

And the little tete a tete on Turneffe?

HANDS (still distracted by the sky)
Captain?

Teach cocks both pistols, unbeknownst to Hands

TEACH
Aye, and that navy ship two days gone.... not much to say about that either, I'll wager, you bleedin' piece of

(the expletive is deleted by shots from both pistols, one of which hits Hands squarely in the left knee. Hands falls over and writhes in agony on the deck, clutching the wound and moaning. Teach calmly rises, replaces the pistols and walks over to Hands, towering over him.)

I'll be taking command of Adventure now, Mr. Hands.

(Teach bows to his former mate, puts his hat on and exits.
FADE OUT.)

Scene 6.

*Interior, the office of Alexander Spotswood, Governor of Virginia.
Spotswood is seated at an ornate desk. He is dictating a letter. His adjutant
is seated opposite him writing as fast as he can...*

No. 18, I Have Intelligence

SPOTSWOOD
...AND FURTHERMORE, I HAVE INTELLIGENCE,
ARRIVED AT THROUGH PERSPICACIOUS DILIGENCE,
THAT BLACKBEARD THE PIRATE, CLAIMING REFORM,
SEEKS OUT A GOVERNOR, AS IS THE NORM,
TO TAKE THE KING'S PARDON, ACCEPT THE KING'S GRACE,
AND I HAVE INTELLIGENCE THAT NAMES THE PLACE!

AND FURTHERMORE, I HAVE INTELLIGENCE,
THAT ERODES ANY SENSE OF CONFIDENCE,
THAT BLACKBEARD THE PIRATE COULD MEND HIS WAYS,
AN ERRONEOUS NOTION, MY TRUSTED SOURCE SAYS.
INSTEAD, THIS PARDON IS ONLY A SHAM,
AND I HAVE INTELLIGENCE THAT SPELLS OUT HIS SCAM:

Chorus
GOVERNOR EDEN, HE'S ONLY MISLEADING YOU,
HE'S BLACKBEARD, A PIRATE, ONCE AND FOREVER.
GOVERNOR EDEN, HEREIN I'M ENTREATING YOU,
MAKE SWIFT ACTION YOUR COURSE OF ENDEAVOR.

IN SUMMARY, I HAVE INTELLIGENCE,
OF SINGULAR TIMELY RELEVANCE,
THAT BLACKBEARD INTENDS TO ESTABLISH A BASE,
A LOATHSOME PIRATICAL JUMPING OFF PLACE,
IN THE NORTH CAROLINIAN PORT OF BATH
AND YOU'LL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE AFTERMATH!

Chorus 2
GOVERNOR EDEN, HE'S ONLY MISLEADING YOU,
HE'S BLACKBEARD A PIRATE, FOUL AND MEAN.
SO GOVERNOR EDEN, HERE'S WHAT I'VE BEEN LEADING TO...
IF YOU WILL NOT ACT, VIRGINIA WILL BE FORCE TO INTERVENE!

'I Have Intelligence' music modulates and continues to end of scene as underscore.

Signed, A. Spotswood, Governor, Virginia, and so on. Quite right. Now, to his Majesty, King George.

Spotswood's adjutant fumbles with the papers, struggling to keep up.

Quickly, quickly...Your highness, etcetera, etcetera, your humble servant is pleased to report that the scourge of piracy in colonial waters is about to be dealt a crushing blow. The hated pirate

SPOTSWOOD, cont.

Blackbeard has been betrayed to me by one of his own crew in a series of letters spirited forth from the very midst of.....

Spotswood's voice fades away as lights FADE OUT music transitions to scene change.

July 21, 1998

Scene 7.

Aboard Adventure, sailing through Ocracoke Inlet on the way to Bath, North Carolina. Van Wraak is on deck repairing a large spar and its tackle. Presently, Caesar comes up from below. As he passes van Wraak with a nod, van Wraak calls to him:

VAN WRAAK
Mr. Caesar...

CAESAR
Just Caesar.

VAN WRAAK
Sorry... would you be good enough to hold one end of this thing whilst I attach the rig?

CAESAR (grasping one end of the spar)
Here, Mr. Carpenter?

VAN WRAAK
Just Robert!

CAESAR
Robert, then.

he watches van Wraak deftly working the wood with his tools for a time, then:

I'm relieved to discover you are not a mute after all, Robert!

VAN WRAAK
Don't see as I've all that much to say.

CAESAR
Ooooh - conscripted against your will and feelin' a bit sorry for yourself, are ye?

VAN WRAAK (suddenly stopping work and looking Caesar in the eye)
And what would you know or care of it?!

CAESAR
Gooood! Rage against it, boy...

VAN WRAAK
I am no boy....

CAESAR
So you say! But I do not see you proving otherwise!

Van Wraak, now frustrated beyond reason, stands as if to fight with Caesar...

CAESAR (calmly as he slowly stands)
Is your quarrel really with me, Robert?

VAN WRAAK
What business of yours is it where I direct my hate!

As he says this, he rushes Caesar who easily sidesteps him and catches him by the scruff of the neck and hauls him down, pinning him effortlessly to the deck. Van Wraak flails helplessly.

CAESAR
I only steer the ship, Robert...

Caesar shifts his grip

Mm hm... This is how I crushed the throat of the slaver Captain who took me from everything I loved.

Van Wraak, hearing this, stops struggling.

VAN WRAAK
I had no idea...

CAESAR
He begged for his life, but not for forgiveness, and that... is why I killed him.

VAN WRAAK
Am I meant to ask forgiveness, then?

CAESAR (after a pause)
Good God, man! You are meant to do your duty, no more, no less! You've really no sense of humor at all, have you?!

Caesar picks van Wraak up and brushes him off

Up you go. Now then... (looking at the spar, then at van Wraak) looks as though we're finished here...

A group of crewmen have come up on deck

CREWMAN 1
Caesar! We'd like a word!

Van Wraak pushes past the arriving crewmen, lifting the spar and placing it near the rail)

VAN WRAAK (aside)

My duty indeed!

CREWMAN 2 (to Caesar)
...so he shot 'im - just like that?...

CREWMAN 1
Aye, is 'e mad, sir?...

CREWMAN 2
Where is Captain Hands, anyhow, I'd like to know?...

CREWMAN 3
Aye! Is 'e alive?

CREWMAN 1
We've a right to know....

they do not notice that Teach is coming up from below.

TEACH (roaring)
A right, is it?

they all wheel about to face him.

So be it - my answer is this. If I did not kill one of ye every now and again, ye'd forget who the Devil I am! (pause) And yes, he lives... he lives on an island off the Beaufort sound! (jerking his thumb astern.)

Caesar chuckles to himself

No. 19, You'd Better Think Twice (working title) tbw

the song addresses the following:

1. Hands' alleged betrayal of Blackbeard
2. His subsequent marooning
3. The betrayal of Bonnet (Revenge returned to him emptied of loot)
4. Teach's plan to accept pardon and break up the fleet.

As the song begins, Teach exits below. As the song develops, the crew, in anticipation of untold wealth, and in admiration of Teach's nefariousness, begins to warm up. The song ends among cheers.

while all of this is going on, a crewman sees a small sailboat approaching from more or less head on. Through a spyglass, he makes note of the boats single occupant and immediately goes below to fetch Teach, who presently emerges with him, as the song ends.

TEACH (while coming up on deck, strapping on his cutlass)
...spectacles, you say? Smoking a straight briar, you say? Are you sure?

he grabs the spyglass from the crewman as they near the bow and sees...

Tobias Knight, b'Jeezus, it's Tobias! (to the crew) Come into the wind, lads and close reef!

CAESAR

You heard the man, come about and shut 'er down!

Adventure turns into the wind, losing ground and eventually
'stopping' as the crew takes in all sail.

TOBIAS KNIGHT, ESQUIRE

Permission to come aboard, Captain?

TEACH

Granted, Mr. Knight! Help him up, lads! By God, that's Tobias Knight!

(Knight deftly negotiates the rail and jumps aboard. He is dapper, but in no way foppish, wears glasses and has a straight briar pipe in his hand, which he knocks out once aboard, and stashes in a coat pocket.)

KNIGHT (singing to Teach, a capella/ad lib, as if an old school song)
WHO IS THE MASTER OF THE SEA?

TEACH (replying in kind)
WHO IS THE KNIGHT OF JUSTICE BLIND?

TOGETHER (shouted ad lib as a cheer)
'TIS I! 'TIS HE! BRISTOL BORN AND BRED ARE WE!

laughter

KNIGHT
By God, it's good to see you, Edward!

TEACH
And you! Tobias, my friend - so respectable!

KNIGHT
You've no idea! (gesturing across the waters) Edward, you're at the very gates of paradise here!

TEACH
How now?

KNIGHT (with tongue-in-cheek bravado)
Flawless climate, a protected harbour, and a free thinking government run by men of true vision!

TEACH

Why do I sense that you might be one such fellow?

KNIGHT

I could never fox you, my friend. 'Tis true - this fine populace has seen fit to appoint, nay, elect me, are you ready?... Secretary of the Colony, Collector of Customs, AND Chief Justice!... I think it may have something to do with marrying the widow of a former governor!

TEACH

Dog!

KNIGHT

Wolf!

TOGETHER

Aye!

they bear hug each other, during which they realize they've drawn a crowd.
They separate and brush themselves off awkwardly...

TEACH

Right. Well...

KNIGHT

Indeed...

music for {song} begins.

(turning to the crew) And what do these fine gentlemen truly know of their Captain Blackbeard, I wonder?

No. 20, Knight's Song (working title)

KNIGHT

LET ME TELL YOU A TALE OF A BRIGHT YOUNG {BOY}
BRISTOL BORN AND BRED.
...(more)

KNIGHT

So, my friend, I trust you have a... (eyeing Teach's flamboyant dress up and down) plain suit of evening clothes - we've an engagement, you and I!

TEACH

What, who?

KNIGHT

Why, with none other than Governor Charles Eden at home! I've a feeling you'll like him, Edward, and his company!

TEACH

Eden's Eden! Paradise indeed, where the likes of me might sup with the Governor himself and his ilk!

KNIGHT

Don't sell yourself short, Edward, you're something of a legend around here! It's to do with that pioneer spirit of the Americas and all that, don't you know. But I'm afraid the way is not entirely clear.

TEACH

What do you mean?

KNIGHT

Well it's nothing, really... It seems that this idiot Spotswood...

TEACH

The Virginia Governor?

KNIGHT

The same. This Spotswood claims to have received correspondence from among your own ranks that your acceptance of King's Grace is a mere excuse to don the trappings of respectability while continuing in your current role as scourge of the Atlantic Coast...

TEACH

Letters, eh? So that's how he did it...

KNIGHT

Did what? Who?... well, furthermore, he claims to have 'intelligence' that you mean to use these lovely waters as home for some sort of pirate colony. Imagine!

TEACH

Interesting as this is, I tell you it's been taken care of... with a single shot (pantomimes shooting a pistol, then blowing the smoke from the 'barrel').

KNIGHT (holds up his hand)

As your solicitor, I am certain I don't want to know! Then only one thing remains, Edward.

TEACH

Now what?

KNIGHT

That infernal beard of yours - do you even own a pair of scissors? Or perhaps a scythe!

TEACH

Come here laddie, and I'll show you a scythe (drawing his cutlass)

(exit TEACH & KNIGHT)

Lights FADE OUT.

July 27, 1998

Scene 8.

Music: Party underscore.

Night: The summer home of Governor Charles Eden of North Carolina at Bath.

Elegant dinner party. The servants, including the butler, are all black, and are well-treated by all.

VAN WRAAK (on threshold w/Teach & Knight)

I really must protest, sir...

TEACH

Nonsense, boy – these are your people...

VAN WRAAK

Precisely sir – if I should be recognized...

KNIGHT

Right, here we go, then...

BUTLER (announcing the new arrivals)

Mr. Tobias Knight, Esquire, Captain Edward Teach and guest.

(as they enter, Governor Eden and wife come over to greet them. Van Wraak melds into the crowd avoiding introduction)

EDEN

Our honored guest! Welcome, Tobias, and at long last, Captain Teach!

TEACH (bowing smartly)

I assure you sir, ma'am, the honor his wholly mine!

BUTLER

The Cornelius Belmonts of Virginia

(enter Cornelius, Faith, Aurelia and Agatha Belmont – Agatha makes straight for the buffet table)

EDEN

Tobias tells me you've a matter of some urgency to attend to here in Bath!

TEACH

I came not to interrupt your festivities...

EDEN'S WIFE

Nonsense! Captain, you are the very reason for the festivities!

(Eden suddenly turns on his heel and calls out to the guests)

(Music ends.)

EDEN

Ladies, gentlemen, if you please...

(music stops, party quiets down quickly.)

Thank you. Ladies and Gentlemen, our guest of honor has arrived. Please welcome Bath town's newest citizen, Captain Edward Teach - otherwise known as the mighty corsair, Blackbeard!

(On hearing this, Aurelia wheels around in shock and starts towards Teach. She is intercepted by Van Wraak's arm from within the crowd. He pulls her discreetly aside.)

GUESTS

Here here! (etc., ad lib)

AURELIA

Robert! How on Earth...

VAN WRAAK

My love, I beg you – softly!

AURELIA

But there, that's – he – he's...

VAN WRAAK

Captain Teach

AURELIA

Blackbeard!

VAN WRAAK

Yes.

AURELIA

Here – father's here – he can help us... we'll run for the...

VAN WRAAK

No... No my love, I...

AURELIA

You what?! Your letters speak of revenge against this man. Your eyes speak of...

VAN WRAAK (lost in his own thought)

No – I must see this through – my way.... My letters?

AURELIA

Father takes them straightaway to Governor Spotswood.

VAN WRAAK

And?

AURELIA (exasperated)

And, he intends to lay a trap for this Blackbeard of yours – a ship loaded with sugar, or some such set adrift. Really, Robert – I’ve had just about enough of this...

(they are jostled by EDEN and TEACH walking to center stage, and VAN WRAAK breaks away to hide again)

AURELIA

... Wait – I have to tell you...

(VAN WRAAK disappears into the crowd)

AURELIA (to herself)

... I love you.

EDEN (to the entire room)

Captain Teach, I have here a document that may be of interest to you!

(he produces a parchment to which is affixed a large ribboned seal and begins to read from it....)

By the grace of his royal majesty King George, as witnessed by the Colonial Governor of North Carolina, Charles Eden, be it known that from this day forth Captain Edward Teach, or the pirate Blackbeard, having duly sworn abstinence in all future piratical acts, is hereby granted full and absolute pardon of all past acts, actual or alleged, as a pirate of the high seas.

(he turns to face Teach)

Captain Teach, do you swear before me, the company present, and our Lord God that you will abstain, from this moment forth, from piratical activity of any kind.

TEACH

I swear it, sir.

EDEN

Then welcome to Bath, sir!

GUESTS

(cheers, ad lib.)

Music resumes - a jaunty sea-shanty - as Teach and Eden sign the proclamation. Tobias Knight, beaming, looks on. The guests begin clamoring to speak with Teach.

JAMES FRANKLIN (with a slight bespectacled boy at his side)

A pleasure to meet you, sir...

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

What stories you must have!

TEACH

And every opne of `em true - who might you be, good young sir?

JAMES FRANKLIN

I'm James Franklin, of Boston – printer, by trade, and this is my nephew...

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Benjamin! Benjamin Franklin – and someday I'm going to write your story, Mr. Blackbeard, sir!

TEACH

You do that, young Ben Franklin – I expect great things...

MRS. BELMONT (pushing ahead)

Captain, so courageous, coming forward like this, but no doubt courage is a commodity with which you are amply blessed, having been...

BELMONT

There are those that would say you are little more than a common thief, sir. What say you to that?

TEACH (pleasantly and discreetly)

There are those who would say our own King is a foreign spy and a great poofter to boot - I say 'tis no concern of mine... or yours!

(Belmont, speechless, hurries away, his wife on his arm. She looks back over her shoulder at Teach longingly. Those who have witnessed the prior exchange are greatly amused, nodding to each other acknowledging Teach's wit. Next in line are the Ormonds: William and Winnifred and their beautiful daughter Mary.)

KNIGHT

Edward, may I present the chief Constable here in Bath town, William Ormond, his lovely wife Winnifred and their enchanting daughter, Mary.

TEACH (to Mary)

Enchanting indeed, (to the Ormonds) Constable, Mrs. Ormond, 'tis a pleasure!

(from this point on, Teach's eyes seldom leave Mary)

WILLIAM ORMOND

Likewise, Cap'n. Now look 'ere; don't pay any mind to the likes o' that Belmont fellow. Yer bound to run into the likes of 'im now and again, but as an officer of the law, I'd rather break bread with an honestly reformed pirate like yerself than a self important git like 'im any day o' the week, know wha' I mean!

WINNIFRED

William, such talk! (to Teach) The reality of it is, Captain, that since you and your men have

arrived in our waters, acts of piracy therein have all but ceased! We believe we have you to thank for this!

KNIGHT

To be sure; any pirate worth his salt knows not to stir up any mischief in a port occupied by Blackbeard the pirate - sorry - Edward Teach the... well what is it to be? Edward Teach the farmer? Or perhaps the Clergyman!

TEACH (bowing)

Edward Teach, yachtsman, at your service! As a matter of fact, as soon as I am able, I mean to set sail in Adventure on a pleasure cruise!

EDEN

No you don't.... Not without this!

he has another document

TEACH

How now?

EDEN

In this Colony, one cannot very well be allowed to sail off willy-nilly in an unregistered craft dubiously obtained!

ORMOND

Wouldn't quite be legal-like!

EDEN

Right, and so it gives me great pleasure to bestow upon you the clear legal title to the armed sloop Adventure, having been previously declared... missing...and now happily... found! May she swim well, Captain!

all within earshot applaud as Eden hands the Title to Teach.

TEACH (genuinely moved)

Gentlemen, I am truly in your debt.

Presently, the stage orchestra strikes up a Gavotte.
Their music is gradually augmented by the pit orchestra.

A Gavotte? Now there's a sound I've not heard in a long long time! Constable, might I ask for your lovely daughter's hand... in this dance?

ORMOND

I'm sure it's the girl ye should be askin', not 'er simple father!

MARY ORMOND (confident but in no way brazen)
Captain Teach, I should be delighted!

(She takes his arm and they glide towards the other dancing couples.
Mary and Teach talk as they dance...)

MARY
You dance remarkably well, Captain!

TEACH
I am as a dray ox in the company of a gazelle, Miss Ormond!

MARY
Really, sir, modesty does not become you! And you needn't flatter me, sir, I dance with whom I choose!

(Music swells mightily as everyone joins in the elegant but spirited dance {with the possible exception of the Belmonts}.)

No. 21, Something In Your Eyes, (working title){Teach, Mary, Ensemble. tbw}

{Ensemble sings snippets like 'isn't he so intriguing', etc.}
(During the song, to indicate the passage of time, there are lighting changes, and the crowd thins as we see several groups bid Eden and wife good-night and depart. After the song, the music changes to another dance tune with the same chord structure as No. 4, Robert and Aurelia's duet. Teach and Mary leave the dance floor to talk alone on the balcony as Eden, Knight and Ormond, looking on, provide a contrapuntal reprise of No. 4 over the dance music.)

segue to No. 21a, Love Knows Not, Reprise
Knight, Eden and Ormond. tbw

<Scene 9 deleted>

Scene 10.

*A sand bar, early morning, off Philadelphia.
It is extremely misty, eerily calm and silent except for
Music. A derelict sloop lies listing to one side, aground, its torn
sails draped limply. She is flying a tattered French flag. We see Teach
standing alone on the deck of Adventure, peering out over the water at the
derelict expectantly. After a short while, Caesar, van Wraak and Richards
shatter the calm as they burst out from belowdecks on the derelict and shout to Teach...*

RICHARDS
She's a sugar ship, Cap'n... Sugar and cocoa, more than we can carry!

TEACH

Did you find a log?

CAESAR

No, sir, this one's a mystery. She's got enough spare canvas to sail, though!

VAN WRAAK

Aye, and I think I can shore up her timbers and get her seaworthy, sir.

TEACH

All right then, I'll claim 'er under rights of salvage. As I recall, Governor Eden has a bit of a sweet tooth, after all!

CAESAR

Save some as a dowry for that Constable's daughter you never shut up about... Captain!

TEACH (laughing heartily)

I'll take that under advisement, my friend!

CEASAR

Ahh – seems like old times, eh Cap'n?

(Intro to Marrying kind reprise)

TEACH

I'm sure I've no idea what you mean!

#23: Reprise: The Marrying Kind (Caesar & Teach)

(Lights to black.)

Scene 11.

*A meeting of the Virginia House of Burgesses,
Governor Alexander Spotswood, presiding.*

BURGESS 1

...and, Governor, is it not true that levies and taxes due the Crown in excess of two thousand pounds are unaccounted for this season?

BURGESS 2

And what of the border dispute to the north? Do you intend to allow the Maryland legislature free reign in deciding our boundaries? I submit that your obsession with piracy in Colonies other than our own renders you unfit and impeachable! Will you respond, sir?

(general rumblings of assent from the assembly as Spotswood just sits there, an oddly confident look on his face.
Music)

No. 22, What Do You Say To That, Sir? (working title){the Burgesses}

(They finish their song with a great deal of finger wagging as they exit - all except Belmont, who approaches Spotswood and his secretary with a letter in hand.)

BELMONT

Nasty business, this, Excellency.

SPOTSWOOD (now somewhat impatient)

Yes, yes, what have you got there, Belmont?

BELMONT

The latest from the van Wraak boy.

SPOTSWOOD

Give it here! (reading) hmm, a pirate colony at Bath... (reads on) Damnation, Belmont! That blackguard Eden has granted Blackbeard King's Pardon!

(He rips and dashes the letter to the ground, enraged. Presently, he regains his composure and...)

SPOTSWOOD (to his secretary)

Pick that up! And take a letter, to Charles Eden, Governor, North Carolina, etc. - Hurry it up, man!

No. 23, {Letter to Eden, w.t.}, {to the tune of I Have Intelligence, Chorus}

(SONG is a comic trio: the actual text of the letter, with every line contrapuntally repeated by secretary, and commented on by Belmont. It relays the scheduling of an armed intervention by both ground troops and a naval force on Okracoke inlet. Midway through, dialogue☺)

BELMONT

And don't forget my Agatha's wedding – you're presiding at our home on the 17th...

SPOTSWOOD

How could I forget something as miraculous as the marriage of your... lovely... little girl!

(SONG resumes)

SECRETARY (exhausted, and holding his aching wrist)

Will there be anything else, sir?

SPOTSWOOD

Why yes, as a matter of fact! You are to copy out this letter (indicates the ripped letter) and send it along as a supporting document. Eden may come to his senses after all - if he has proof!

BELMONT

Brilliant, Excellency!

(They exit together, leaving the embattled secretary scribbling away.)

Scene 12.

Interior, the home of Charles Eden, night. As the scene begins, Teach is off to one side, his arm about the shoulder of Ormond, as Caesar looks on at a discreet distance. They talk earnestly for a time then burst in to laughter and backslapping and finally shake hands and embrace warmly. Knight and Eden enter.

KNIGHT

Well, it's official! The Admiralty court has condemned the sugar ship as derelict, and according to the rights of salvage, Governor Eden, as Captain General and Admiral of North Carolina has been awarded sixty hogshead of sugar, I, as Collector of Customs, twenty. The remainder is awarded to you Edward, to keep or disburse as you see fit!

(They all come to center stage and sit at a table.)

TEACH

Splendid. As a matter of fact, Caesar here has had a fine notion as to its dispensation, eh, Caesar?

CAESAR

Aye, Captain!

ORMOND (grinning from ear to ear)

Gentleman, I can contain m'self no more!

EDEN

What is it, man, you look as though your face is about to crack!

ORMOND

It seems that Mr. Teach here has designs on my daughter...

(they look at each other, somewhat bewildered)

ORMOND, cont.

He means to marry 'er! If she'll 'ave 'im, that is!

EDEN

By God, that's wonderful, William, Captain! When the time comes, you'll allow me to perform the ceremony, I hope!

TEACH

Let's not get ahead of ourselves, gentlemen. The lady must first acquiesce!

KNIGHT and EDEN

Quite right (etc. ad lib. as Ormond laughs good naturedly).

ORMOND

All right then, one more point of business. The sugar ship herself, Captain...

TEACH

...leaks like a stuck pig, sir. She nearly foundered twice on the return! As I fear she might sink at the mouth of the harbour, I mean to burn her where she lies if that meets with everyone's approval.

KNIGHT, EDEN and ORMOND
(general agreement, ad lib.)

TEACH (preparing to stand)
Good. Then are we adjourned?

EDEN
I fear we've a bit of unpleasantness at hand.

(Knight produces three letters and places them before Teach)

That first, there, is from Spotswood to me. Another threat of an armed action to apprehend you and your pirate band.

KNIGHT
An illegal action, of course...

EDEN
Aye, and apparently it makes no never mind to him what's legal or not, he wants your head, Teach.

KNIGHT
And as a supporting document, he includes this (pointing to the second letter) copy of a letter he claims to have received from a member of your crew.

TEACH
Hands, that bastard.

EDEN
Well, it's unsigned, but essentially it states that your pardon is a scheme to establish a beach-head here...

TEACH
I've heard all this before - I've taken steps to...

ORMOND
And then there's the third...

EDEN
and by far the most... distressing.

KNIGHT (indicating the first two letters)
When we received this pair, we lay in wait for riders headed for Portsmouth.

ORMOND
On my Constabulary authority...

KNIGHT
On the second day, we intercepted this. Again, unsigned...

EDEN
...a detailed account of the sugar ship incident. Go ahead, read it, I think you'll find it fascinating!

(Teach picks up the third letter and begins reading)

TEACH
... 'sugar and cocoa', yes, yes... 'fog and mist' mm-hmm... 'boarded by force after a gun volley'
what?!... 'Slew all hands and absconded'... What the Devil!!

Music

KNIGHT (gently)
Edward, whom have you told of your discovery of the sugar ship?

TEACH
No one - my men, of course... dear God...

He looks up at Knight Ormond and Eden, his face contorted in anguish.

Israel!!

KNIGHT
Wasn't there...

TEACH (standing, highly agitated)
It's been a month since I...

EDEN
Steady on...

(Lights ramp down, spot on Teach)

No. 24, Recit.

TEACH (with fervent resolve)
Mark me, gentlemen, (sung a la recitative:) THE DAY THAT I COME EYE TO EYE WITH
THE AUTHOR OF THIS LIE, THAT DAY SHALL HE SURELY DIE!

(Blackout)

Scene 13.

Music

The vast beach at Ocracoke Island. Mid-day, bright and sunny. Under a 'cabana', a small group attends as Captain Teach and Mary Ormond are married. Charles Eden officiates. The onlookers include Knight (as 'best man'), Caesar, Richards, van Wraak, and William and Winnifred Ormond. On the periphery are the rest of Teach's remaining men...

Music fades out

EDEN

...then by the power granted me by His Royal Majesty King George, and in the sight of our Lord God, I pronounce you husband and wife. What God hath here joined, let no man put asunder.

(cheers)

No. 25, {duet, Teach and Mary}(working title)

(as the song ends, a ship flying the black flag passes, firing a gun salute as it does so.)

MARY (frightened but, as always, poised)

Edward, what's happening?

TEACH

Caesar, your glass!

(Caesar hands Teach a small spyglass which Teach uses to look after the ship which has passed out of view of the audience. He begins to laugh, at first in disbelief, then heartily...)

TEACH, cont.

'pon my soul, Mary, Tobias, you're about to meet... oh dear (to Eden) I'm sorry, Excellency, I had nothing to do with...

EDEN

And who's to say I did not?

CAESAR (turning to face Eden)

You?... You invited these... these...

Music

EDEN

Brethren of the Coast, I believe is the term, is it not Captain Teach?

(The captain and crew of the passing ship has landed and are approaching the wedding party on foot. As they do, they are singing...)

No. 26, The Brethren Of The Coast, a capella Reprise.

(Even as this happens, two more ships appear, following the path of the first, also flying the black flag, and also saluting as they pass. The first wave of pirates is under the command of the notorious John 'Calico Jack' Rackham. His flamboyant, multicolored dress includes a large hat with an ostrich plume...)

RACKHAM (loudly)
Captain Blackbeard, I would speak with thee!

TEACH
Calico Jack Rackham - Gave old Rogers the slip, did you?!

RACKHAM
To be sure - each in our own way, eh landlubber?

TEACH
That's me all over. Now come and meet my wife, you old fool!

RACKHAM
I'll do more than that, farmer boy!

(he doffs his hat, approaches Mary, kneels and kisses her hand for a loooong time. Laughter.)

John Rackham at your service, my dear Mrs. Teach! (after rising, to all:) I've a boat load of rum and beef yonder (indicating his ship). A wedding gift to Mr. and Mrs. Landlubber here!

(pandemonium as Teach's men join Rackham's running back to the ship to unload her. Teach and Rackham shake hands. Teach and Mary retire to within the cabana. Van Wraak exits by himself. Rackham Knight and Eden stand on the beach looking out to sea as yet another ship approaches. The second shipload of pirates arrives on the scene and are seen filing past the cabana paying their respects.

Music swells as a host of activities takes place: The crews of the landing vessels are now all intermingled. Some pitch makeshift tents and lean-tos, while others set up barbecues with whole sides of beef on spits. Still others dance and engage in mock swordplay. This action constitutes a dance production piece which also incorporates...)

No. 25a, The Brethren of the Coast, Reprise

(The song ends abruptly as a mysterious band of pirates comes up the beach towards the cabana. Teach comes out to see what the fuss is all about and runs face to face into the badly limping Israel Hands. Behind Hands is an older man whose identity is shrouded by his large hat and high collar. One could hear a pin drop as...)

TEACH (to Hands)
Israel... for once... words fail me...

(long pause.)

HANDS (as a broad smile slowly crosses his face)
And here, I thought I'd find you in a better humor than when last I saw you, yes?!

(he limps forward slowly and finally completely breaks the tension by suddenly embracing his former captain warmly and sincerely. Teach, stiffening at first, eventually returns the embrace to the cheers of all present.)

You see, things didn't turn out so bad for me. I've a new master now, a gentleman of your acquaintance, I believe. May I present my present captain...

(with that, the mysterious figure behind him removes his hat and gazes into Teach's face. It is none other than Benjamin Hornigold.)

HORNIGOLD
Edward.

TEACH (rushing forward to shake Hornigold's hand)
Captain!

(they are too much the teacher/student to hug, but greet each other as warmly as otherwise possible, ad lib.)

I thought you had become a pirate hunter!

HORNIGOLD
Aye, Edward, in the Bahama Islands! And even there, only when it suits me! When I heard tell of your... retirement, well I had to see for myself. And what do you think of my new first mate?
(nodding at Hands)

TEACH
There's none better in all the seven seas, Captain.

HANDS (lightheartedly)
He says that now, he does!

TEACH
Come and meet the wife, then! (to the remainder of Hands' party) And you men, welcome! Eat, drink, dance!

(the three men enter the cabana to see Mary. At the same time, we see van Wraak enter from stage right with an envelope in hand. He chases down a young boy and slips the envelope to him along with a gold coin. At that instant, Caesar calls to him in a booming voice...)

CAESAR (a little drunk and, as always, intimidating)
Hey there, carpenter... Robert!

(van Wraak stops dead in his tracks, certain he's finally been caught in his betrayal...)

VAN WRAAK
Caesar... I... I was just...

CAESAR
Captain wishes to invite you to supper tomorrow night aboard Adventure. A celebration of your liberty, he says.

VAN WRAAK
Why thank you, Caesar, I will be there!

CAESAR (loudly)
Wait!! (pause, then softly) I did'na tell you what time... Prompt at eight bells! Ta!

he staggers off. van Wraak falls into a crouching position, head in hands. As he slowly rises, he begins...

No. 27, True To His Word

VAN WRAAK
Who am I, that I judge without knowing?

(He walks as he sings. Everyone he passes acknowledges him with pleasantries and nods. {He refers to them as his mates in the song. Midway through the song, as he passes the cabana, he overhears (sung as a middle section of the overall number) Mary entreating Teach not to go out to Adventure the next day. She has a premonition of disaster. vK realizes that her premonition is probably true and that he is the cause of it.})

SONG is interrupted by...
(Enter Richards and another crewman, drunk)

RICHARDS
...So then 'e says "Spotswood don't care nothin' for the law no more – it's me 'ead 'e's after. And soon as 'es done performin' this wedding...

CREWMAN
Weddin'? Wot weddin'

RICHARDS

Damned if I know – wait - yeah that's it – some spinster name o' Belmont it was – doin' a nice kinda weddin' at 'ome – should be quite lovely, actually.

(SONG resumes after modulating to tumultuous minor mode, now that VK has heard this, thinking it's Aurelia whose getting married one of the verses of this is: "SHE HAD SOMETHING TO TELL ME, I'LL BET SHE DID!" As though Teach's word is true, Aurelia's is not)

(He hears Teach explain that he is not a monster , etc. and that his motivation has always been a love of the sea and care for his men. etc. Song resumes and culminates with his vow to stand beside Teach no matter what.})

Scene 14.

On deck, aboard Adventure, night. The ship is anchored very near the shore of Ocracoke Island, (where the festivities in the prior scene took place). Teach, Caesar, Richards, van Wraak, and two merchant traders have just finished a meal under the stars. Also present are Teach's greatly reduced crew of about ten additional men, innocuously going about their duties...

TRADER 1

There's nothing like a good green turtle soup!

TRADER 2

Complements to the chef, Mr. Caesar!

CAESAR

Just Caesar! And thank you.

Teach is uncharacteristically quiet, as he fingers a piece of parchment.

VAN WRAAK (nervously)

What's that you've got there, Captain?

TEACH

What? Oh... It's a letter, Mr. van Wraak.

Van Wraak drops the cup he's been holding

RICHARDS

Steady, lad, the night's young!

VAN WRAAK

a, a letter, sir?

TEACH

from an old friend - before your time - name of Clemency Welles.

CAESAR

(whistles, then...) How did you come by that, Cap'n?

TEACH (wistfully)

Oh, my old friend Hornigold had it - been holdin' on to it for some time. She's married now.

CAESAR

Don't I know...

TEACH

No, really married - with two daughters! She used the money I gave her to buy a

tavern on Abaco. Done fairly well for herself... she thanks me.

RICHARDS
To past loves!

CAESAR
Past loves, aye!

THE OTHERS
Here here, etc. ad lib.

TEACH (jokingly, snapping out of it)
Damn your blood, Caesar for bringin' ghosts to the table. I've the best wife this side o' the firmament... and hey, don't ye know she swears she's with child! A woman's intuition, she says!

TRADER 2
Now that's not somethin' to be triflin' with, Captain Teach, I oughta know - got seven o' me own, all duly foretold by 'woman's intuition'!

laughter

TEACH
All right, so let's on to what we're here for, eh?! Mr. van Wraak.

Hearing this 'cue', Caesar rises and goes below.

VAN WRAAK
Aye, sir.

TEACH
Robert, is it?

VAN WRAAK
Yes Captain.

TEACH
Robert, I suddenly find that I no longer exist.

VAN WRAAK
Captain?

TEACH
Blackbeard, I mean. I must re-invent myself as another. And as Blackbeard the Pirate has ceased to be, and it was he who bound you by indenture, it follows that you, my friend, are free.

VAN WRAAK
Captain, I...

TEACH (smiling mischievously)
One more thing, Mr. van Wraak, (to Caesar) Caesar!

Caesar appears with a large chest.

VAN WRAAK
What...

TEACH
Open it!

(Music.
Everyone gathers 'round, peering at the huge box as van Wraak opens it slowly. Catching the light and shimmering brightly, are the overflowing contents of the chest; silver and gold coins, silver plates and chalices, pearls, etc. All present are awestruck by the beauty of the trove; oohhs & ahhs, ad lib.)

CAESAR
'Tis your fairly calculated share, Mr. Carpenter!

TEACH
Oh I think there might be a few extra trinkets in there. Compensation for the great injustice I've imposed on ye, lad!

VAN WRAAK
I cannot accept this, Captain Teach, sir.

TEACH
Are you daft boy? What, is't not enough? Is that it?

Music (True To His Word theme)

VAN WRAAK (as if a great weight has been lifted from his shoulders, now realizing that what he is about to do is the absolute right thing. he stands...)
I should like to request the Captain's permission to join the crew of Adventure permanently!

(Before anyone has a chance to respond,
a crewman in the bow of Adventure calls out...)

CREWMAN
Captain, come quick, sir!

(Teach takes a split second to look at van Wraak,
smiling, then runs towards the crewman, followed by Caesar, then the others...)

TEACH
What's up, man?

CREWMAN
Look there, sir!

(He points to a masthead barely visible behind Okracoke Island. It can be seen slowly moving, then stopping against the night sky...)

... just as I called, they struck colors, sir... Royal Navy Jacks, sir, and pennants!

CAESAR
What manner of pennants?

CREWMAN
Colors are hard in the dark, sir... it was a dark field with a lighter cross...

VAN WRAAK (seriously, realizing the nature of the vessels)
Virginia Colonial Militia, Captain.

TEACH
Spotswood!

VAN WRAAK
And those pennants mean they are coordinated with an army battalion ashore, Captain.
(Teach looks at him quizzically as if to ask how he knows this...)

VAN WRAAK
You forget that (pointing straight down at the deck of Adventure) this very ship was out of Virginia, sir, and I...

TEACH
Indeed. (pauses to think) Well, there'll be no runnin', then, we'll have to fight 'em here.

CREWMAN
But sir, your pardon...

TEACH
...is a piece of paper, lad.

TRADER 2
Captain, if I may, a Virginian has no jurisdiction here, and...

TEACH
And you'd be hard pressed indeed explaining that to them from the grave, sir! No no, it's my head this ass Spotswood wants, and his hounds will have to come to me for it!

RICHARDS
What's it to be, Captain, it'll be light soon!

TEACH
Right, these Navy boys won't make a move 'til then.

CAESAR
Check regulations before wiping their arses, they do!

Teach paces for a short time, thinking, then suddenly turns to them...

TEACH
All right. Here it is, then. Unless I miss my guess, these boys are weighed down to swampin' with shot and powder, not to mention the crew and twenty or so marines. They'll drag bottom if we steer 'em right, you see?

RICHARDS
How do we do that?

TEACH
By doing the unexpected. Caesar, quietly, have the men jettison all ballast, and load up.

CAESAR
Aye, sir.

(Caesar sets about seeing to the dumping of ballast and the loading of the cannons.)

TEACH (to Richards)
Tom, go to my cabin and get me the soundings for the week, if you please.

RICHARDS (replying as he goes)
Right away.

TEACH (calling after Richards)
And bring out another bottle of brandy! (to the two traders) Gentlemen, I'm afraid our little soiree is at an end. I suggest you get below and make yourselves scarce.

TRADER 1
No arguments from us on that score, Captain, it's been a pleasure!

TRADER 2
And good luck to you, sir!

(They exit.
enter RICHARDS with brandy, glasses and charts)

RICHARDS (handing Teach the chart, and setting down the brandy/glasses)
Captain.

TEACH (to the crew)

Right, now gather 'round. (pointing to the chart as the men assemble around him) Here we are. The swabbies will round the island here. They'll first send boats out to take soundings if they're smart. We mustn't let them do that, you hear! Now then; as they round the point, they'll expect us to either run or engage them there, on the spot. I mean to make straight for shore.

RICHARDS

But Captain...

(Caesar returns from supervising the dumping of the ballast.)

CAESAR

Our ballast is out, Richards, we'll be over this bar here with a fathom to spare. (pointing to the map)

TEACH

Aye, but they, they'll go aground with their belly to us, and it'll be easy pickin'! We can afford, however, to make not a single mistake here. Caesar you'll have command of Adventure, and I shall lead the boarding party. I want to be aboard the lead ship before the first smoke clears, so bring us in real neat! Have the gunners ready with cutlasses to join us when the time is right. And Caesar, should the tide of battle go against us, you are to go below, set a long fuse to the powder stores and blow this vessel to Hell. They may send us all to our reward, but I'll not pay 'em for doing it!

CAESAR

Understood, Captain.

TEACH

It won't be long now, lads. Will you all take up a glass?!

(One by one, they each take a glass, and Teach pours the brandy. Once all are served, Teach holds his glass on high. The others follow suit...)

Some of you are new to my service. Follow the lead of Mr. Richards, Mr. van Wraak and myself, and I tell you all will go well. Gentlemen, to Adventure!

ALL

Adventure, aye!

(they drink.)

CAESAR

To the captain, lads... hip hip...

ALL

Hooray!

CAESAR

Hip hip...

ALL
Hooray!

CAESAR
Hip hip...

ALL
Hooray!

(Caesar looks over at Teach, expectantly, who nods at him solemnly...)

CAESAR
Hoist the main. Prepare to make way, on my command!

(the men jump double-quick to their posts.)

CREWMAN (hauling on the main halyard, letting it's sail luff languidly in the breeze)
Hoist the main, aye!

(the boarding party assembles and arms themselves, gunners prime the cannons, and riflemen load their muskets, kneeling along the bow rail. The sky has begun to lighten with a distinctly reddish tinge. Teach, during the controlled chaos stands alone at the rail. He beckons a young crewman over and whispers something into his ear. The boy runs off and heads below. Teach mutters to himself...)

TEACH
Ocracoke... Oh cock crow!

(Gradual Fade In simulating red sunrise.

Music start (sustained strings)

Darkly amused by his own pun, he deliberately takes a pair of fuses from his pocket, lights them and adheres them under his hat so that smoke envelops his head. He produces a tin of a tar-like substance, and methodically smears it on his face not unlike war-paint. The young crewman returns with Teach's double sling in which are two giant cutlasses, three pistols on each side, and a powder horn.

(Music now a single sustained high string note.)

Once the crew is in position, all is deathly silent for a time. Then in the extreme distance a rooster crows...)

VAN WRAAK (pointing to the point where the island ends)
There, Captain.

TEACH

Aye, Mr. van Wraak.

VAN WRAAK

True to your word, Captain – a longboat... They're sounding, sir.

TEACH (picks up a musket)

Right – with me lads (he fires, as do the other crewmen)

RICHARDS

That's got 'em!

CAESAR

Look at them running to mama!

CREWMAN

Yeah, well mama's a-comin'!

RICHARDS (looking through spyglass)

There!

CAESAR

Here they come.

TEACH

Haul in, boys!

CAESAR

Haul in!

(The men pull the mainsheet taut, the boom swings as the sail fills. Adventure moves.)

VAN WRAAK (looking intently over the side)

That's it, Captain, we're over the bar... And we're clear, sir.

TEACH

Thank you Mr. Van Wraak. Caesar, let 'er loose.

CAESAR

Loose the mainsheet, aye

(The crew lets the mainsail luff, stopping the ship.

Music start.

The Navy ship slowly comes into view. We can see it's name – 'Ranger')

TEACH

Hold your fire. (calling out to the lead Navy ship) Damn you for villains, sir, who are you?!

LT. MAYNARD

You can see by our colours that we are no pirates!

TEACH
Send your boat on board that I may see who you are!

(the more experienced of Teach's crew are amused by this and laugh.)

MAYNARD
I cannot spare my boat, but I will come aboard you with my sloop!

TEACH
Damnation seize my soul if I give you quarter or take any from you! (downs the drink)

MAYNARD
I expect no quarter from you, nor shall I give any!

(Suddenly, with the sound of loudly creaking timbers and strained rope, the naval vessel rides up on a sand bar and is grounded directly in the line of Adventure's fire.)

MAYNARD cont.
What the Devil?

TEACH (to his men)
Now, boys, cut 'em to pieces!

(Adventure lets loose with a barrage of cannon and musket fire. The Naval sloop is dismantled, and most of the men on deck are killed.)

TEACH
Grenadas! Hooks and lines away, lads, here we go!

(Teach and his crew throw grenades and ropes with grappling hooks over the side of the Navy sloop and haul on them, pulling Adventure and the Navy sloop together until they touch. The grenades create a large cloud of smoke. They board the Ranger, howling and whooping only to find that, aside from a few dead and wounded, there is hardly anyone aboard. They quiet down, seeing that there's not much of anyone to whoop and holler at, and the scene becomes very still.)

VAN WRAAK
Something's not right, sir

TEACH
All knocked on the head but three or four!

RICHARDS (seeing a couple of uniformed seamen astern)
Make for the helm, Robert.

VAN WRAAK

Wait – there are no marines...

(Suddenly, a wounded man struggles up to take a swipe at Teach)

Look out, Captain!

(Teach wheels, draws and fires a pistol without looking and dispatches the man with a perfect shot to the heart.

Music start {coincides with sound of shot}.

{The following remainder of the battle will be a production number}

Just then, the hatch is flung open and Maynard and his Marines (Redcoats), some twenty strong, pour out of the hold, taking Teach and his men completely by surprise... Seeing this, Caesar calmly goes below on Adventure.

Onboard Ranger, an all-out melee ensues, as Maynard's men slowly but surely overpower Teach's greatly outnumbered force. Teach is awesome in his fierceness and skill, but is unable to ward off the onslaught. He is wounded repeatedly by pistol shots and sword cuts, none of which even slow him down.

At one point, while engaged with one of the seamen, Teach is approached by another from behind, his sword poised for a fatal thrust in the back. van Wraak sees this, and fulfilling Teach's prophecy, launches himself in the path of the oncoming blade, which catches him in the back, mortally wounding him. The force of the thrust pushes him into Teach, who at that moment turns just in time to catch van Wraak's falling body in his arms, coming 'eye to eye' with him as he dies. As van Wraak's body falls away, the sword, still in him, is wrenched from its owners hand, and Teach, in a rage, a pistol in each hand, dispatches him with a single shot (right hand pistol).

{AUTHOR'S NOTE: these pistols are all single shot flintlocks, which are either holstered or discarded after use.}

As this man falls out of the way, Teach is left face to face with Lt. Maynard. They aim at each other and fire. Teach's shot (left hand pistol) goes just wide, but Maynard's strikes Teach in the side.

Barely wincing, Teach smiles and remarks...)

TEACH

Well done, captain!

MAYNARD

Lieutenant Robert Maynard, at your service!

(Teach draws another pistol as Maynard struggles to free another of his own from his belt. Teach is about to shoot when a giant Scotsman, (in a Marine Redcoat jacket and kilt) rears up behind Teach with a huge broadsword and swings...)

(Lights to sudden black; as the blade reaches Teach's neck...

Silence except for blade SFX: (Teach being decapitated) and the falling of his body.)

Epilogue.

Lights ramp up.

We are back in the study of Charles Johnson.

Present are (older) Hands, Johnson and Student.

Hands is just finishing his dinner.

Music; A Gentleman Goes To Sea, with interjections of other themes.

HANDS

Just like that, this Lieutenant Maynard defeated the Great pirate Blackbeard. Did you know he was the oldest Lieutenant in the entire Royal Navy... so eager to make a name for himself, but it all came to naught. He trotted Teach's head up to Virginia to claim his reward, but by the time the politicians were done bickering, he was retired penniless - only to be murdered in his sleep by his own slaves. And his ill-chosen master, that fool Spotswood - well he was no longer Governor of anything, I can tell you! They say that Blackbeard's skull was fashioned into a punchbowl. I think he would have liked that!

STUDENT (wide eyed)

I have heard also that his headless body, when cast from Adventure, swam about her several times before sinking!

HANDS

I don't doubt it for a minute... (now wistfully) not for a minute...

JOHNSON (looking up from his writing)

And Caesar in the powder stores?

HANDS

It took both of them to do it, but those merchant traders held him back, and he was captured. A bunch of us were rounded up in Bath... Guilt by association, yes?! They strung up everybody. Even that poor sod Stede Bonnet.

STUDENT

Yet you escaped.

HANDS

I had a very fine solicitor - one Tobias Knight, Esquire! (pause) Well, that's it then! I'll be takin' my leave. Thank ye for the vittles 'n grog!

He gets up to depart, shaking Johnson's hand. As he does, he spies a large raft of papers on a corner of Johnson's desk. Nodding at it...

What's this then?

JOHNSON

Robinson Crusoe? - 'tis a fiction - the tale of a marooned pirate name of Selkirk. A trifle, really, in fact I'm using a nom de plume; Daniel Dafoe.

I should think that this might be of more interest to you.

(He indicates a cloth sack next to the papers.)

It's yours, Mr. Hands, my small gratitude for your affording me the truth.

(He gives the sack to Hands who accepts it, smiling, tosses it up a couple of times and hearing that it is quite heavy with gold coins...)

HANDS

You're a gentleman, sir... I've not met many!

(music: Gentleman Goes To Sea theme)

He turns to go, takes a few steps, then stops...

JOHNSON

Yes?

HANDS

Mary was right... she had a son... Edward... Edward Teach

Lights FADE OUT.

Music swells.

Curtain.

End of Play

August 28, 1998

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