

CAF -0019

Captain Blood

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CAF -0019

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FADE IN:

EXT. FLEMISH BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

A FLAG bearing the distinctive emblem of William of Orange whips proudly in a sleet-driven wind. BOOM DOWN into the hell of battle in the Year of Our Lord 1688. FLASHES OF CANNON FIRE starkly illuminate frozen countryside. A FLAG MILITIA OF DUTCH AND ENGLISH REBELS are making a desperate stand against advancing lines of BRITISH DRAGOONS dimly seen through a swirling haze of snow. The rebels are defending their position on a hillock at the edge of a forest, vastly outnumbered and taking heavy casualties with each incoming volley of BRITISH ARTILLERY.

THREE HORSEMEN

race from the darkness of the woods through the chaos, leaping wildly over tangled debris. FIERY EXPLOSIONS rip along the crest of the hill behind them, cartwheeling cannon emplacements skyward like broken match sticks. Riding in the lead is ROLAND CONNER, fearless or insane, holding a wounded FOURTH MAN in his saddle. The men rein to a stop and leap from their saddles, easing the wounded man to the ground. Conner scrambles to the front line, SHOTS WHISTLING past his head --

EXT. CANNON EMPLACEMENT - NIGHT

-- and dives on his belly next to a YOUNG SOLDIER frantically reloading his rifle. The nearby CANNONEERS set torch to powder. The CANNONS ROAR, punching FISTS OF FLAME into the night.

CONNER
(shouting to be heard)
HAVE YOU A SURGEON, SON?

The YOUNG SOLDIER lines his sights on the enemy as he prepares to fire.

YOUNG SOLDIER
WHAT?

CONNER
(lower)
A SURGEON? IS THERE A SURGEON?

The soldier jerks his head at Conner as if to reply -- but to our horror, we see a gaping bullet hole where his right eye was a moment before. As the soldier's last gasp of breath hits the frozen night air, Conner glances back and sees --

A SOLITARY TENT

some distance away, canvas flaps whipping in the wind, providing brief lantern-lit glimpses of a BATTLEFIELD SURGEON laboring within.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

PETER BLOOD works with forceps and scalpel to extract a musket ball from the leg of a short, wiry Welshman named MIGGS.

Miggs is gasping as he bites down on a leather thong, trying not to pass out from the pain. OTHER VICTIMS of the carnage are sprawled about, some half-dead... others long past help.

Blood is assisted by JEREMY PITT, a frightened 14-year-old lad wearing the tattered uniform of a drummer boy. Jeremy flinches as a nearby EXPLOSION sends SHRAPNEL PIPPING past the canvas of the tent.

Conner and the others appear at the tent flap. Horsemen #2 and #3 are supporting the WOUNDED FOURTH MAN between them.

CONNER

Surgeon! I have need of you!

Blood, his back to Conner, ignores the intrusion and keeps working on Miggs. Calmly to Jeremy:

BLOOD

Jeremy. More light.

The boy nervously shifts the lantern. Conner steps forward.

CONNER

Are you deaf? This man is dying!

BLOOD

(still without turning)

You'll wait your turn.

Conner, furious, whips a flintlock pistol from beneath his greatcoat, jams it in the small of Blood's back, cocks the hammer loudly --
KA-KLATCH!

CONNER

My turn is now.

Dead silence in the tent. Exhibiting nerves of steel, Blood ignores the gun at his back and finishes the task of pulling the musket ball from Miggs' flesh with the forceps. He eases his hand across the table and drops the ball, wet and red, into a steel pan, where it clanks and rolls hollowly.

BLOOD

Now then...

Blood suddenly whips around, lightning-fast, wrenching Conner's gun-hand skyward. BLAM! The gun FIRES, blowing a hole in the canvas above their heads. Before Conner can react, Blood spins him around and presses the oversized scalpel to his neck, drawing a thin trickle of blood.

BLOOD

I see. You have a nasty cut there.

(glances up at the others)

Leave us and he might recover.

The WOUNDED MAN now eases forward into the flickering light, mustering the strength to speak. Even in his present state there is a sense of great strength and dignity about him.

WOUNDED MAN

You're a strange kind of doctor,
my friend. Your bedside manner
leaves something to be desired.

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Blood eases off, slowly realizing who he is in the presence of. Even Miggs, wracked with pain, goes slack with amazement.

MIGGS

Bless my soul. Sir William
himself.

HORSEMAN #2

William of Orange, and none other.
Put down the blade, friend, and
lend us a hand.

Blood releases Conner, who wrenches free with a look of fury and hatred. The men hustle Sir William to the table, where Blood rips open the blood-soaked tunic to reveal a serious saber wound in the side.

BLOOD

(sharp look to Jeremy)
Fetch my needle and line.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - NIGHT

The DRAGOONS advance, reloading and firing with frightening precision. Long rows of muskets BLAZE in unison, sending up white billows of powder smoke.

The REBELS duck under the withering rain of musket lead. DOZENS OF MEN are blown off the hillock, tumbling down the snowy incline as the others RETURN FIRE. Incoming artillery chews up the ridge.

EXT. TENT - NIGHT

Blood and the others hustle Sir William outside as the battle rages. Miggs hobbles along behind with pistols drawn.

CONNER

Can he ride?

WA-BOOM! Everybody ducks as a cannonball scores a direct hit on the tent behind them, sending the tangled remains of wood and canvas skyward on a conclusive GEYSER OF FLAME.

BLOOD

I think he'd better.

THE FRONT LINE

is overrun by BRITISH CAVALRY, swords flashing, horses leaping the cannons. A REBEL CANNONEER rushes forward with torch to ignite a cannon fuse -- but REDCOAT FOOT SOLDIERS coming up the hill skewer him with long pikes, lifting him off his feet. In a dying act of defiance, the cannoneer jams his torch into the barrels of black powder beside him --

-- and the top of the hill disappears in a BLAZING EXPLOSION, taking out the entire forward line of Dragoon. But there are hundreds more behind them, charging up through the smoke...

EXT. REBEL CAMP - NIGHT

Blood and the others help Sir William mount his panicky horse as HENRY HAGTHORPE, a barrel-chested, broad-shouldered cannoneer, comes running:

HAGTHORPE

Peter! They've broken our lines!
We're being overrun!

Blood surprises Conner by pulling a loaded pistol from his belt and cocking the flintlock. He reaches down and grabs a sword off a dead man for good measure.

BLOOD

We can hold them right here.

Conner calls to Horseman #2:

CONNER

Barlow! You and Thomas see Sir William to safety! The rest of us will hold them off...
(nasty grin to Blood)
...right, surgeon!

SIR WILLIAM

What's your name, son?

BLOOD

Peter Blood.

Sir William glances at the surgeon's red-stained hands and chuckles darkly at this little irony.

SIR WILLIAM

How appropriate. I'll not forget you, Peter Blood.

BLOOD

Now ride, or my work's been wasted!

Blood slaps Sir William's horse on the flank with the flat of his sword, sends it bolting off.

Barlow and Thomas ride off in hot pursuit. Conner watches them go. Softly:

CONNER
Godspeed, my king.

Conner and Blood turn and regard each other coolly. The camp is being overrun all around them. They send up a THROATY ROAR and wade into battle together, meeting the Dragoons head-on.

A REDCOAT rushes at Blood with saber raised. Blood FIRES the flintlock into the man's face, snatches the saber from his hand as he falls, keeps fighting. A sword in each hand now.

The battle is brutal. Chaotic. Extraordinary. Horses slamming into men. Steel clashing on steel. Building to a crescendo. Blood and Conner are in the thick of it, fighting back to back. Dragoons fall before them like wheat before a scythe. CANNONBALLS SHRIEK in overhead. EXPLOSIONS pepper the camp, FIREBALLS rising hugely into the night sky --

-- and a cannonball lands at their heels! The EXPLOSION ENGULFS THE SCREEN in a BLAZING WHITE FLASH!

The smoke clears. PUSH IN TIGHT on Peter Blood, lying dead or unconscious on the frozen ground, the SOUNDS OF BATTLE draining away to echoing silence as we

FADE TO BLACK

EXT. TAUNTON CASTLE - DAY

The seat of English justice looms under a brooding sky. The walled courtyard is filled with shambling PRISONERS awaiting judgment. DISTANT CHURCH BELLS are ringing out far and wide, carrying their message of Easter celebration.

SUPERIMPOSE: LONDON, ENGLAND
GOOD FRIDAY
1685

INT. COURT - DAY

TRACKING SHOT reveals a GROUP OF REBELS standing accused before the court. Dozens of men, mostly farmers. Caked with filth and dried blood. Many are wounded. Some lean on makeshift crutches, supported by their comrades. Among them are faces glimpsed in the opening battle: JOHN WOLVERSTONE, ANDREW BAYNES, Henry Hagthorpe, Miggs, Jeremy Pitt, Roland Conner... and finally Peter Blood, standing with hands manacled, stoic and defiant as:

JUDGE ADVOCATE (O.S.)
Having no fear of God in your
rebel hearts, and being moved and
seduced by the Devil, you have
waged war to depose James the
Second, King of England, from the
title, honor, and regal name of
the Imperial Crown.

ANGLE SHIFTS to reveal LORD JUDGE JEFFREYS sitting at a long table
with FOUR OTHER JUDGES.

LORD JEFFREYS
Guilty as charged.

HAGTHORPE
It's James the Second who should
stand accused of treason!

WOLVERSTONE
Aye! James the usurper!
Pretender to the throne.

LORD JEFFREYS
Silence! Or I'll have your
seditious tongues cut out!

A GUARD near Blood draws his dagger should the order be given.

LORD JEFFREYS (CONT.)
Whether English or Dutch born,
Irish or Welsh... from this day
forward, none of you may lay claim
to a king or country. This right
you have forfeited. You are no
longer men.

(beat)
However... this being the solemn
occasion of Good Friday, King
James, in all his mercy, has asked
that you not be hanged.

CAMERA PUSHES IN on Lord Blood as sentence is handed down:

LORD JEFFREYS (CONT.)
Instead, you will be remanded to
his Majesty's colony of Jamaica
in the West Indies, where you
shall remain at hard labor until
you die. So the court decrees!

We end with Blood in TIGHT CLOSE UP. On the GAVEL'S CRACK we

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. THE OPEN SEAS - DAY

A SHIP'S PROW slams through ocean swells. A British merchant ship under full sail. It seems glorious at first glance...

INT. SHIP'S HOLD - DAY

...but below deck we find a ripe little slice of Hell. Dark and airless. Reeking of filth and human despair. Some FORTY MEN are huddled about like rats in a sewer, faces haggard and bearded from months at sea, eyes drained of hope. In the murky half-light filtering from the iron-banded hatch above we find Miggs using a rusty nail to mark off yet another passing day on a wooden beam. Blood appears, tending the sick:

BLOOD

Miggs? How's the leg?

MIGGS

(cracks a weak smile)

If I'd had me a proper doctor to pull out that musket ball, 'stead of a thumb-fingered lummoxx, I 'magine I'd be dancin' a jig about now.

Blood smiles, moves on. He finds Jeremy daubing the last bit of water from a steel cup on the lips of a FEVERISH MAN.

BLOOD

How is he?

JEREMY

Burning up, Peter. That's the last of his water.

Blood takes the cup, moves to the ceiling hatch, rakes the steel cup back and forth across the grid of iron.

BLOOD

HEY! HEY UP THERE!

A DECKHAND appears above, shadowy against the glare of sky.

BLOOD (CONT.)
Another man is dying of fever.
He needs water. Please.

The deckhand considers it, steps from view, reappears with a bucket. Blood gazes up hopefully.

DECKHAND

Here you go. All you like.

The man dumps the bucket through the bars, drenching Blood and Hagthorpe. Startled, Blood nevertheless tries to catch as much water in the cup as possible. Hagthorpe eagerly tastes the water in his hands -- and spits.

HAGTHORPE
Sea water! Bastard!

Blood sniffs the cup, flings the sea water back up through the bars. The deckhand moves off, laughing. Soaked and dripping, Blood makes his way back to the feverish man.

BLOOD
Jeremy. Fetch my ration.

The boy scurries off and returns with Blood's cup, careful not to spill a drop. Blood gives the feverish man a careful sip. A SOFT GRAVELY VOICE drifts from the darkness:

CONNER (O.S.)
How very noble. How very stupid.

Conner leans from the shadows into the light. His hair is matted, his lips cracked and pale with lack of water.

CONNER (CONT.)
He's dying anyway. Why waste yours?

Blood can feel the stares of the others. He slowly holds out his cup, offering it to Conner.

BLOOD
Drink.

Conner is taken aback. He glances briefly at the cup, licks his parched lips.

BLOOD (CONT.)
We survive or die. Together.

Conner locks eyes with Blood. He has no intention of accepting the water. A scornful smile slowly spreads. A faint, dry laugh:

CONNER
You're a fool, Blood. A tin-plated fool...

Suddenly, a VOICE CRIES OUT:
LOOKOUT (O.S.)
LAND OFF THE STARBOARD BOW!

Dozens of haggard faces spin toward the light. Galvanized, the men swarm from the shadows to the hatch, pressing up against the bars. High above, the LOOKOUT points from the crow's nest.

MIGGS
(inhaling deeply)
I smell it! I swear I can!

Some of the men actually LAUGH, so thrilled are they at the prospect of landfall. Blood remains fatalistic.

BLOOD
Our new life begins...

CONNER
Our slow death continues, you mean.

The men fall silent as the reality of their situation returns. Conner's words hang ominously...

HIGH AERIAL SHOT

...as the ship rides the swells toward Jamaica, which reveals itself on the misty horizon.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORT ROYAL, JAMAICA - DAY

A coastal town in the grand colonial tradition. The docks are swarming with activity. The arrival of a merchant ship is always big news, and everybody turns out for the occasions. The ship is being unloaded, netted goods hoisted over the side with block and tackle. VENDORS are hawking their wares, everything from baskets of fruit to monkeys in wood cages.

PETER BLOOD

and his fellow convicts are herded down the gang plank, hands shackled, blinded by the unaccustomed glare of daylight. BRITISH SOLDIERS take charge, muskets at the ready, pushing and prodding them through the activity and confusion --

-- as ANGLE SHIFTS to reveal MAJOR EDWARD BISHOP (30's), commander of the garrison, handsome and sleek in uniform, keeping an eye out for trouble. WEALTHY MERCHANTS, mostly plantation owners, are debating the merits of the new arrivals.

A CARRIAGE arrives bearing GOVERNOR PRESCOTT and his daughter ARABELLA, a beautiful, intelligent young woman of breeding. Bishop helps her down, kisses her hand.

BISHOP
Arabella. Lovely as always.

ARABELLA
Edward.

BISHOP
Governor. I see your health is improved today.

GOV. PRESCOTT
Yes, feeling better, thank you.

Bishop reaches up. Prescott accepts his grip, grateful to be assisted from the carriage. The governor is not well; his pale, drawn features indicate long-standing illness.

He rests his weight on a cane as he climbs down. Arabella takes her father's arm as DIXON, a local land-owner, approaches:

DIXON

Have you seen the new arrivals?

They turn to observe the convicts being lined up in ragged formation on a low platformed area a short distance away.

DIXON (CONT.)

Appalling-looking bunch.

BISHOP

I'm sure their backs are strong enough. You'll find your value.

A BRITISH SERGEANT mounts the platform and begins CLANGING a bell to gather the CROWD:

SERGEANT

Be it known! Ten of these men are for sale! Price to be determined by fair auction! Choice of man is up to the bidder! In plainer words...

(grins)

...you take the best, we keep the rest.

The crowd LAUGHS. A few potential BIDDERS step up onto the platform. Under the watchful eyes of the Redcoat guards they begin examining the convicts, wandering down the line checking teeth, thumping chests, squeezing shoulders. Blood stands there in his shackles glowering at the indignity of it, but submits in silence like the others.

MIGGS

(mutters to Blood)

After considerin' on it deep and proper I do believe we've tumbled off the wash basin and gone snoot-first into the shitter.

Suddenly, the crowd parts as DON MARQUEZ arrives, haughty and aristocratic in his fine robes, clearly a man of power and respect, trailed by a small contingent of SPANISH SOLDIERS. The Redcoats tense up; clearly, there is no love lost here. Don Marquez proceeds to look the convicts over, tapping a wicked looking riding crop in the palm of his hand.

ARABELLA

What are the Spanish doing here?

DIXON

Outbidding the rest of us, if I know Marquez.

GOV. PRESCOTT
Those men will be bound for the
isle of Mayagana, I imagine.

ARABELLA
The Spanish mines? Edward, must
you sell to him?

BISHOP
Our stockade is crowded as it is.
We need to sell the extra men.
What difference does it make to
whom?

As the bidders are escorted off the platform, Bishop signals the
Sergeant to begin.

SERGEANT
Alright, gents. What am I bid,
and for which man?

DON MARQUEZ
(points at Baynes)
The tall red-beard. Ten English
pounds.

SERGEANT
Ten pound bid from Don Marquez!

DIXON
Fifteen.

SERGEANT
I have fifteen!

DON MARQUEZ
Twenty.

Dixon backs down, sighing and throwing a look to Prescott and Arabella:
-- see what I mean? The Sergeant CLANGS a bell.

SERGEANT
~~Sold to Don Marquez!~~ On to the
next! What am I bid, and for
which man?

As the new bidding gets under way, Baynes is pulled out of line by
REDCOATS and handed over to the Spanish. Softly:

HAGTHORPE
Good luck to you, Andrew Baynes.

BAYNES
(glances back)
You as well. All of you.

As Baynes is led off, Blood and the others overhear one of the
Redcoats mutter to his partner:

REDCOAT #1
And off 'e goes to the mines.
Poor bugger.

REDCOAT #2
Dead by Christmas, I reckon.

Blood and the men trade nervous looks as another bid is won --

SERGEANT
Sold to Don Marquez for
twenty-five pounds!

-- and another MAN is pulled out of line.

SERGEANT (CONT.)
What am I bid, and for which man?

Marquez strolls down the line, studying faces, the men sweating with each step he takes. He stops. Points. Jeremy Pitt.

DON MARQUEZ
Five pounds.

SERGEANT
Five for the lad! Any other bids?

Jeremy throws a panicked look to Blood. Marquez notices the boy's reaction, glances to Blood. (BIDDING CONTINUES O.S.)

JEREMY
Peter? What--what should I--?

Blood, feeling the Spaniard's gaze, snaps harshly at the boy:

BLOOD
Shut up! Stop bothering me. How many times do I have to tell you?

Jeremy is taken aback. Marquez looks at the boy uncertainly. Blood nudges Hagthorpe, who quickly catches on:

HAGTHORPE
Should'a tossed him overboard
while we had the chance.
Feeble-minded little bastard.

Marquez smiles faintly at Blood, knowing a ruse when he sees one. He turns, upping the last bid:

DON MARQUEZ
Twelve pounds.

BLOOD
(softly)
I'm sorry, Jeremy.

HAGTHORPE
 Courage, lad. Steady as she goes.

Jeremy nods, pale and trembling. Marquez wins the bid. Jeremy is pulled out of line and a Spanish soldier drags him away.

As he's marched off to where Baynes and the other man wait, Jeremy stumbles and falls, scraping his knees bloody. Two Spaniards jerk him roughly back to his feet. They bicker and struggles to pull away, but is beaten back by the Spaniards.

Blood can barely restrain himself. Conner catches his eye, shakes his head -- don't even think of getting involved.

ARABELLA
 (sickened, furious)
 Must we submit to this?

GOV. PRESCOTT
 I'm sorry, dear. He's their property now.

The other soldiers converge on Jeremy, nearly doubling him over as they twist his arms up behind his back.

DON MARQUEZ
 Clumsy oaf.

Marquez whips him viciously across the face with his riding crop.
 CRACK! CRACK!

Suddenly Blood leaps off the platform knocking the stunned Redcoat guards aside with a massive sweep of his shackled fists! He charges straight across the dock into the Spanish soldiers' midst --

BLOOD
 BASTARDS!

-- and rams into them like an express train. The Marquez is knocked head over heels, smashing into a crate of pineapples. Other Spaniards go into cartwheeling over the sea wall. A CHEER goes up from the convicts. Some try to break ranks, but the Redcoats drive them back with muskets leveled.

BISHOP
 Restrain those men!

Blood's attack is valiant, but hopeless. He's overwhelmed by the half dozen remaining Spanish soldiers and driven to his knees with truncheon blows. They grab his arms and jerk his head up.

Marquez staggers to his feet and draws his sword. He approaches with sword-tip glittering, seething and enraged, ready to carve Blood's hide to tatters. But as he draws close --

ARABELLA (O.S.)
 Ten pounds for that man!

Marquez pauses, stunned. He looks over and sees Arabella pointing at Blood. The flumoxed Sergeant glances to Bishop.

BISHOP

Arabella! It's not your place
to bid on a slave!

ARABELLA

Father, they'll kill him.

Governor Prescott hesitates, then:

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GOV. PRESCOTT

It seems the lady has offered a
bid.

(off Marquez's look)

With all due respect... he's not
your property yet, Don Marquez.

The Spaniard's eyes blaze at Arabella. She blazes right back. Sword
still poised, Marquez calls out to the Sergeant:

DON MARQUEZ

Twenty pounds!

ARABELLA

Thirty!

DON MARQUEZ

Fifty!

ARABELLA

One hundred pounds!

The CROWD GASPS. Marquez hesitates, realizing the hopelessness of
his position. He forces a smile, re-sheaths his sword, and bows
deeply. The consummate Spanish gentleman once again.

DON MARQUEZ

A gentleman would never go against
the wishes of so fine a lady.
I withdraw my bid. Please accept
the first offer.

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SERGEANT

Sold to Miss Arabella Prescott
for her original bid of ten
pounds!

BISHOP

Don Marquez, you are more than
gracious. Please take your pick
from the remainder... at no
further cost to yourself, of
course.

Marquez nods stiffly, goes to make his selections. Redcoats rush in
and drag Blood to his feet.

Marquez rapidly picks out SEVEN MORE MEN, Miggs and Nathan Blake included. The Spanish pull them out of line and march them off.

MIGGS

(playing up his limp)

Bloody hell, why me? I'm short,
bald, and gimpy! Can't ya see
me hobblin', ya blind Spanish
ticks?

Bishop looks Blood over with steely appraisal, leans in confidentially:

BISHOP

You're trouble my friend
(off Blood's look)
Try something like that again and
your carcass will decorate my
gallows.

Bishop turns as Arabella and her father approach.

BISHOP

Well... It seems you now own a
slave. I'll be certain to take
good care of him for you.

Bishop signals his men. As Blood is hustled off, his gaze meets Arabella's. A brief moment of eye contact, then he's gone.

CUT TO:

EXT. SWAMPY RIVER - DAY

CONVICTS drag a massive log into the water as mosquitoes swarm and buzz. BOOM UP to reveal a hellish worksite where a primitive bridge is being built by A HUNDRED MEN or more, a slave labor force of white Europeans and black Africans. The river is wide and slow-moving, murky and disease-ridden, cradled in a humid gorge surrounded by a landscape of dense tropical vegetation. Pylons are being driven into the muddy river bottom from a creaky tangle of catwalks. OVERSEERS on horseback keep the work moving, many of them quick with a whip.

PETER BLOOD

is up to his waist in bilious water, straining with superhuman effort on a rope tied around a massive banyan stump. Pulling on the rope with him are a line of men that include Conner and Hagthorpe. Wolverstone and a pair of veteran cons named HOBBS and McFEE are prying at the huge underwater roots with long steel poles, trying to lever the stump free of the muck like a rotted tooth. The men, ten in all, are chain-ganged together, which makes an unbearable task even worse. A GUARD, splashing by on horseback CRACKS his whip.

GUARD

Heave that stump, you treasonous
bastards!

The men bear down even harder. The stump shifts the merest fraction, then settles back. The men collapse, some losing their footing. A wily, one-eyed sea dog named SPIVY pops to the surface with a machete, sputtering for breath.

SPIVY

Damn! Them roots are ~~chick~~ around
as a Frenchman!

Beneath the sheen of muddy water, Spivy's chest and forearms are covered with exotic tattoos.

CONNER

(gasping, to Blood)
I'm beginning to think we'd have
been better off hung.

SPIVY

(wiping muck from under
his eye-patch)
Now, now, this ain't so bad. I
hear some'a yer lot got raffled
off to the Spics on Mayagana.
Now them poor sods what should'a
been hung.

Another MOUNTED GUARD appears, CRACKING a bullwhip inches over their heads.

GUARD

Belay that yap! Put your backs
into it!

The men throw their backs into it, contorted with effort. The stump finally RIPS loose, toppling as the men scatter from its path. A HUGE SPLASH sends up water and muck. The guard rides on.

As the men wearily start tying more ropes around the stump to drag it, an ebony-skinned slave named KINDU wades out toward them with hard biscuits and water. Once a proud Batusi warrior, Kindu is now merely a roving food and water boy with a ragged burlap sack slung around his neck.

Hagthorpe reacts to a bird's harsh CAWING from high overhead.

HAGTHORPE

Look at that! ~~They're~~ dead men
walking. Even the buzzards know
it.

MCFEE

(glances up)
That's no buzzard. That's a hawk.

SPIVY

Yer daft. Ain't no 'awks in these
islands...

BLOOD

He must have scavenged off a ship.
Followed it here from England.

CONNER

Then he's lost like the rest of
us. Bad luck.

Kindu, who seldom says a word, surprises them by speaking:

KINDU

No, mon. Hawk a good 'ting.
Spirit sign of freedom.

The men gaze up at the circling hawk, affected by his words.
Suddenly, a GUNSHOT echoes across the hills. They turn and see a
FIGURE on the crest of the gorge above, rifle poised --

EXT. CREST OF GORGE - DAY

-- as Major Bishop lowers the smoking barrel of his hunting musket and
peers at the circling hawk. Missed.

BISHOP

I don't want excuses, Mr. Tully.
We're already a month behind.

He hands the rifle to a LOADER, who quickly starts packing another
ball. A REDCOAT holds a pair of HUNTING DOGS on a short leash.
Bishop turns to the head overseer, a hulking brute named TULLY:

BISHOP (CONT.)

Lord Henry is en route from
England to assess our colony's
progress for King James. I've
no intention of disappointing him.

TULLY

Beggin' the Major's pardon, sir,
but wif so many of our supply
ships gettin' took by pirates,
I'm in good stead to have me a
spare barrel of nails.

The loader hands the rifle back. Bishop shoulders it and draws a
careful bead, tracking the hawk.

BISHOP

Nails are not the problem. The
men are working too slowly.
Redouble their efforts.
Understood?

Tully nods, cowed. BLAM! The hawk plummets from the sky, vanishing
behind the trees. The Redcoat slips the dogs off the leash. The
animals bound off through the brush down toward the river as Bishop
and the Redcoat quickly mount their horses.

BLOOD AND HIS GROUP

are hauling the banyan stump through the water as the dogs come into view, BARKING and sniffing around on shore. The Redcoat appears, followed by Bishop cradling his rifle. They look around. No sign of the hawk. The Redcoat calls to them:

REDCOAT

You see where the bird came down?

SPIVY

Into the water, sir, and drowned!
Current took him off!

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BISHOP
(mutters)

Damn.

They gallop off. Blood and the men trade glances, keep dragging the stump...

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON COMPOUND - DUSK

Sunset bathes the sky with color as CONVICTS return from their labor and enter the compound gates. Shackles are removed. Kindu catches Blood's eye. Blood nods and moves past the guards.

CUT TO:

INT. BARRACK HUT - DUSK

TIGHT ANGLE on Kindu's burlap sack as he sets it on a rough plank table and peels back the fabric -- revealing the injured hawk. The animal is struggling and frightened, one wing crippled. ANGLE WIDENS as the men gather around. Several of them help hold the hawk firmly as Blood gently examines it.

BLOOD

No bones are broken. The musket ball passed through the wing.

The hawk lunges, giving Blood's finger a serious nip.

CAP -0019
SPIVY
Ha! Feisty bugger! Think you can fix him, good doctor sir?

CONNER

This is madness. You'll get us all flogged.

HOBBS

Conner's right. I say we eat the damn thing. Fill our bellies.

Kindu responds to this by drawing a long, thin bamboo shiv from a hidden sleeve -- a homemade knife, sharp as hell. His meaning is clear -- the first man who tries, dies. A frozen beat.

HOBBS (CONT.)

Right, that's decided then.

BLOOD

I'll need water, clean rags...

CUT TO:

EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - BALCONY - NIGHT

Bishop sits beside Arabella at the railing. The view is spectacular, Port Royal and the harbor spread out below. The light from a full moon glitters off the water. They sit quietly for a moment, sipping their tea, then;

BISHOP

(softly)

Can you guess how loud your silence has become to me?

ARABELLA

What do you mean? Just now?

BISHOP

Arabella, please. I'm a proud man. It's been over a week since I've asked. Do you want me on bended knee?

ARABELLA

Of course not Edward, but marriage isn't a simple issue. I need some time to consider it. Things have been so difficult lately, especially with all the problems with Father.

BISHOP

All the more reason to say yes.

(off her look)

I don't wish to be unkind, but you must face facts. Your father's health is declining. Soon you'll need a man to help you manage this plantation. And Port Royal will need a new governor.

ARABELLA

Are you seeking my hand, Edward, or applying for position?

BISHOP

I simply meant to say that if I
succeed your father to office,
which is likely, I'd have more
to offer you than a Major's
salary.

(softly)
I just want what's best for you,
Arabella.

She softens, gives him an apologetic smile.

ARABELLA

Of course. I'm sorry. You must
think I'm terrible.

BISHOP

No. Merely distraught. Under
the circumstances, I quite
understand.

He takes her hand, solicitous and forgiving. Inside, we hear a DOOR
OPENING. Arabella leads Bishop back inside --

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - NIGHT

-- as DOCTOR NUTTALL exits her father's bedroom carrying his
physician's satchel. Through the partially-open door, we see Governor
Prescott lying in bed, pale and weak.

DR. NUTTALL

I've done all I can for tonight.
Now he needs quiet and rest.

Nuttall turns to gather his things. Bishop takes Arabella's hands,
gives it a formal goodnight kiss.

BISHOP

Will you give your father my best?
And think about what I said?

She nods. A SERVANT shows Bishop and the doctor out. Arabella turns
and enters her father's bedroom.

INT. GOV. PRESCOTT'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gloomy in here, lit with flickering candles. She moves to his
bedside.

GOV. PRESCOTT

Was that young Bishop I heard?

ARABELLA

(nods)
He's growing impatient for my
answer.

GOV. PRESCOTT
He seems a good man, Arabella.
Smart and ambitious. Are you sure
you're giving him a chance?

ARABELLA
(pauses)
I don't know that I love him.

GOV. PRESCOTT
Love may come, given time. God
knows your mother wasn't struck
by lightning when I first courted
her.

(pauses)
What matters is that you'll be
protected and cared for after I'm
gone.

CAP -0019

She considers this, manages a smile:

ARABELLA
We'll have no more talk of that.
You'll outlive us all, if only
to nag me to death.

She kisses him on the forehead.

ARABELLA
Don't worry, Father. I'll make
the right decision. Now try and
get some sleep.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANTATION ROAD - MORNING

A glorious day. Lush sugar cane fields carpet the broad landscape of
the governor's plantation. Arabella stops her carriage, hails some
passing REDCOATS:

CAP -0019

ARABELLA
Have you seen Major Bishop?

A REDCOAT gestures down into the valley.

REDCOAT
Down at the bridge, but he
wouldn't want you there, Miss
Arabella. Not with all them
convicts about.

ARABELLA
(smiles warmly)
He'll be pleased to see me when
he hears what I have to say.

She snaps the reins, and the carriage rolls off down the road.

CUT TO:

PETER BLOOD

rises from the murky water, teeth bared with massive effort as he lifts a log lying across his shoulders into the air --

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

-- Wolverstone and Hagthorpe helping lift from either end. Others rush in, helping them shift the log into place amid the bridge's horizontal supports. Workers above frantically start driving spikes.

Finally the log is set, the weight taken. Blood and his two friends collapse into the water. Others help them up as Tully bellows down from the half-completed section of bridge above:

TULLY

You men on holiday? Fetch another log, damn you!

Blood's group wades through the waist-deep water, passing other GROUPS OF CHAIN-GANGED MEN pushing logs out toward the bridge. They approach a nasty old con named SLOAT standing knee-deep near shore, piking logs out to the chain-gangs.

SLOAT

Step right up, gents! Got another lovely for ya right 'ere! Guaranteed light as a feather!

Cackling, he leans down and stabs his pike into the next log -- and it rears out of the water with gaping rows of teeth! Sloat has just piked an enormous eighteen foot long ALLIGATOR. He has no time to react except for an eye-bulging SCREAM! The huge jaws lunge and SNAP SHUT with the force of a bear trap taking him head-first in a geyser of blood and a CRUNCH BONE! The enormous reptilian head snaps back, whipping Sloat's scrawny legs skyward -- and the gator vanishes abruptly beneath the murky water, yanking his thrashing meal down with him. Blood and the men are stunned. McFee spins, bellowing:

McFEE

GAAATOOOR!

Instant pandemonium. Chain-gangs of men scatter across the river in all directions.

ON SHORE

Arabella veers her carriage to a wild stop amidst utter panic and confusion, just in time to see:

BLOOD'S GROUP

splash frantically back the way they came -- which isn't easy if you're waist-deep in water and chained to nine other men.

BLOOD
GET TO THE BRIDGE!

They almost make it, too -- a few men get close enough to reach out and grab the support timbers -- but then the immense jaws explode up from beneath the surface and Hobbs is yanked back, pulling the entire chain-gang with him. Hobbs goes under in a thrashing tangle of blood and chain, the others along for the ride whether they like it or not, getting dragged wildly through the water at the end of their chains!

Blood strains to grasp a half-submerged tree stump as he's dragged along. WHAM! He slams bodily into it, jerking the others back. He frantically uses the moment of slack to loop the chain once around the stump. The chain suddenly JERKS again as the alligator briefly lashes to the surface.

A horse rears up WHINNYING wildly. A YOUNG REDCOAT in the saddle is trying to control the panicking animal while drawing aim on the gator with his musket. The horse throws its rider into the water. The musket goes flying, landing on shore.

Blood hauls back on the chain with all his might, arms bulging in a tug of war as he desperately tries to reach the fallen musket. Men thrash to their feet all around him, shouting and panicking, trapped by their chains.

Blood loses ground, then dives again, fingers straining across the dirt for the musket -- and manages to grab it just as he gets jerked away again! Conner is yanked off his feet as he and Blood go sledding back into the water. Blood slams into the young Redcoat in a chaotic tangle of chains and panicking men.

The gator breaks the surface like a nightmare and CHOMPS DOWN on the Redcoat's leg. The Redcoat SCREAMS. The monstrous bloody jaws gape open, widening for another bite -- -- but Blood yanks the young Redcoat away, swinging the musket around and jamming it down the monster's gullet in one fluid move. BLAM! The back of the gator's head EXPLODES, spraying black brains across the surface of the water.

The beast recoils, hissing as it does, shuddering as its smoking head sinks below the surface and vanishes.

The men struggle onto dry land, gasping and near collapse, dragging the injured Redcoat -- and Blood looks up to see a dozen muskets leveled in his direction with flintlocks cocked.

BISHOP
Surrender that weapon! Drop it!

Blood tosses the musket aside. A GROUP OF REDCOATS rush to attend the injured soldier.

CORPORAL
His leg's been laid open!

ARABELLA
He needs the doctor! Quick, use my carriage!

They start to drag him, but Blood drops to his side. Startled, the Corporal jerks his pistol up to Blood's face.

CORPORAL

Back away!

BLOOD

Give me your belt.

(off his look)

We have to slow the bleeding or he won't survive! Give me your belt!

The Corporal glances uncertainly to Bishop. Bishop hesitates, nods. The Corporal hands his pistol off, strips his belt. Moving fast, Blood loops the belt around the injured leg, expertly fashioning a battlefield tourniquet.

BLOOD (CONT.)

Draw your bayonet. Place it in the loop and twist it tight. Do it!

The Corporal does. The flow of blood stops.

MCFEE

Blimey. Look'a that...

BLOOD

Keep the pressure steady.
(to the young Redcoat)
You're going to make it.

The young man nods gratefully, gasping. His comrades lift him off the ground to load him on the carriage. A REDCOAT drifts to Bishop's side, musket still leveled at Blood.

REDCOAT

What about 'im, sir?

BLOOD

Prepare a firing squad.

ARABELLA

Edward,

BISHOP

This is not up for discussion. Any convict seeking to arm himself must be shot.

(to his men)

You heard the order.

The soldiers drag Blood to his feet.

ARABELLA

That man is still my property... or have you forgotten?

BISHOP
(tight)
I'll pay you the ten pounds.

ARABELLA
He's not for sale. Punish him
if you must. But if you intend
to have him shot the governor will
intercede on my behalf.

Bishop is furious. He forces a smile, looks to his men.

BISHOP
We might achieve the same effect
with a proper caning. Back to
the stockade with him.

Soldiers hustle in, dragging Blood and the other men away. Bishop
moves close to Arabella, speaking privately now:

BISHOP (CONT.)
Never question my authority again,
Arabella. Ever.
(off her look)
Why are you even here? Why did
you come?

ARABELLA
(beat, livid)
No reason. No reason at all.

She turns and stalks off as we

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON COMPOUND - DAY

A BRANDING IRON is lifted glowing from a bed of hot coals. RACK FOCI
to Blood in TIGHT CLOSEUP, gazing at the iron.

BISHOP (O.S.)
The day you arrived you were told
not to forget the initials F.T.,
"Fugitive Traitor."

WIDER ANGLE

reveals Blood stripped to the waist, arms shackled to WOODEN STOCKS.
The convicts stand in formation, forced to watch as:

BISHOP
Burn these initials in your brain,
or they'll be burned in your hide.

Tully moves forward with the branding iron. He pauses to give Blood
a cruel smile -- then jams the branding iron against his chest. Fle
HISSES AND SMOKES. Blood throws his head back, choking on a scream.
The iron pulls away, revealing "F.T." seared into his skin.

He drops his head, gasping.

Tully lays the iron down. He circles around behind Blood, grabs a six-foot long bamboo pole from a water trough, wields it like a baseball bat. He looks to Bishop, who nods. Proceed.

The flogging begins. Blood shakes with agony and rage with every blow. Tully pauses after every third blow to shake the water off the pole and re-wet it in the trough. Soon, the droplets spattered off the pole turn blood red...

TRACKING THE CONVICTS' FACES

as they stare in quiet horror, helpless to do anything but watch. Softly:

HAGTHORPE
God's sake. They mean to kill him.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. PRISON COMPOUND - NIGHT

TORRENTIAL RAIN pours from the sky. TILT DOWN to reveal the compound empty at this time of night... except for Peter Blood hanging limply from the stocks.

TIGHT ON BLOOD

At first we can't tell if he's dead or not... but then he rouses vaguely, thinking he hears voices. He raises his eyes and sees FIGURES approaching in the storm:

VOICE (O.S.)
...not sure about this. Our orders were to leave him right here.

They stop before him. He blinks up into the rain, trying to see. A SUDDEN FLASH OF LIGHTNING reveals:

ARABELLA
Major Bishop may take it up with the Governor in the morning. For now, I wish to collect my property.

The REDCOATS move in, undoing Blood's shackles, draping him with a filthy blanket as we

CUT TO:

EXT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - NIGHT

Still raining. A carriage pulls up. SERVANTS scurry from the house to help Arabella ease Blood from the carriage...

INT. MANSION HALLWAY - NIGHT

Blood's BARE FEET come up the hallway. Water drips all over the expensive wood flooring as Arabella hurries him along...

INT. ARABELLA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

...and pulls him inside. She and Ella ease him down on the rug in front of a warm FIRE.

ARABELLA
He'll need clothing. See what
cast-offs you can gather.

CAP -0019

Ella glances nervously at Blood, uncertain about leaving Arabella alone with him. Arabella firmly motions her out. Ella exits, taking her misgivings with her. Arabella pauses, not quite so confident now. Blood peers up at her.

BLOOD
Aren't you afraid of me?

She ignores the question, rolls a tea service closer.

ARABELLA
Tea? It's hot. I can add a
dollop of rum if you like.

Blood sees the decanter of rum, half-rises from the floor and grabs it off the tray. Arabella's eyes widen as a third of the rum vanishes.

ARABELLA
Fine. So much for tea. Let's
have a look at your back.

CAP -0019

Arabella gingerly lifts the blanket and grimaces at the sight of his wounds.

ARABELLA (CONT.)
You're still bleeding.

BLOOD
Leave it for a real doctor.

ARABELLA
There's only one on this island
and judging from the progress he's
made with my father, not a very
good one.

(pauses)
I saw what you did for that young
soldier. You're a doctor
yourself, aren't you?

BLOOD
Some people think so.

ARABELLA
Which people are those?

BLOOD
The ones that lived.
(off her look)
My father was a doctor. What I
learned, I learned from him and
on the battlefield.

ARABELLA
Right now I seem to be your only
option, Mr. CAP - 0019

BLOOD
Blood. Peter Blood. Do you sew?

ARABELLA
Yes. Quite a bit in fact.

She motions around. There are embroideries everywhere. Birds.
Swans. Landscapes.

ARABELLA (CONT.)
(suddenly realizes)
...Are you suggesting?

BLOOD
Just think of me as a torn dress.

She sits behind him, gathering her sewing kit and her courage.

BLOOD (CONT.)
Here... CAP - 0014

He passes her the bottle of rum. Shaken, she takes it and knocks it
back, downing a good portion.

BLOOD
I meant for my back.

ARABELLA
Oh. Sorry.

Blood steals himself. She douses his back with rum. The pain is
unbelievable, but he rides it out.

ARABELLA (CONT.)
Now what?

BLOOD
Find your strongest thread.
Curved needle is best, but
straight will do. Douse both with
rum...

She expertly threads the needle, knots the end, douses it.

BLOOD (CONT.)
...and begin.

Arabella takes a deep breath, and makes the first stitch. Blood flinches as she carefully pulls the bloody thread taut. He takes another swig of rum.

BLOOD (CONT.)
Can I ask you one question?

Yes.

BLOOD
Are you only doing this because
you consider me your property?

He gently runs his fingertips across the smooth flesh of her exposed ankle.

BLOOD (CONT.)
...or are British men as cold as
they say.

Arabella pulls her leg out of Blood's reach, and angrily JERKS the needle taut. He gasps in pain.

ARABELLA
You're here for one reason and
one reason only, Peter Blood.
To help my father.

CUT TO:

INT. MANSION HALLWAY - MORNING

Frederic, a burly but refined butler, exits a bedroom as Arabella approaches. Frederic carries a wash basin filled with used water, shaving implements and a towel.

FREDERIC
I've done my best, ma'am. But
he'll never pass for an
Englishman.

ARABELLA
Thank you, Frederic.

CUT TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM - MORNING

Blood stares at himself in a mirror, clean-shaven and barely recognizing himself. His prisoner's rags have been replaced with real clothing -- mostly servant's cast-offs, but they fit well enough. Arabella appears at the doorway.

BLOOD
(turns, presents
himself)
How do I look?

ARABELLA
Less beastly.

INT. GOV. PRESCOTT'S BEDROOM - DAY

C.U. - LOOKING DIRECTLY UP THROUGH THE BOTTOM OF A LARGE GLASS JAR containing squirming black LEECHES. A long pair of surgical tongs reaches in, and carefully pulls one out. It makes a soft SUCKING sound as it's pulled away from the glass.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Dr. Nuttall sits at Governor Prescott's bedside, scalpel in one hand, wriggling leech at the end of his tongs in the other. Arabella's father lies in bed, pale and shivering with fever, a number of leeches already attacked to his skin.

GOVERNOR PRESCOTT
(weakly)
Must we continue?

DR. NUTTALL
Now just one more small
incision...

Nuttall starts to make an incision as Arabella and Blood enter.

BLOOD
What are you doing?

DR. NUTTALL
(glances up, annoyed)
What business is it of yours?
Who is this man?

ARABELLA
A friend.

Gov. Prescott gives his daughter a questioning look. She responds with a reassuring nod. Trust me.

DR. NUTTALL
For your sake, Miss Prescott, I'll
forgive this intrusion.
(resumes his task)
I'm bleeding the patient, if you
must know. Standard procedure
in cases of consumption.

Ella rolls a tea service in and proceeds to pour b.g.

BLOOD
Is that your diagnosis?

DR. NUTTALL

The symptoms are clear enough.

Blood looks to Arabella, who elaborates:

ARABELLA

Night sweats. Recurring fever.
He seems to get better, then
relapses worse than before.

Nuttall places the leach. Blood crosses to the bed, raises Prescott's eyelid to examine his sore.

DR. NUTTALL

See here! I'll thank you to take
your hands off my patient!

Blood paces the room as if considering the Governor's condition. He notices a detailed map of the Caribbean among other papers on his cluttered desk.

Blood suddenly turns and briskly begins peeling the leeches off Governor Prescott. To Ella's horror, he drops them onto a plate on her tea tray.

DR. NUTTALL (CONT.)

What do you think you're doing?

BLOOD

I don't approve of bloodsuckers.
Although I'm sure it must make
you comfortable to be among your
own kind.

DR. NUTTALL

This is beyond the pale! I insist
this man be removed at once!

BLOOD

So you can kill the patient?
(off their looks)
Your father is suffering from
malaria. It's common in Africa
and South America. I've treated
any number of merchant sailors.

DR. NUTTALL

What utter nonsense!

BLOOD

(to Arabella)

Give him a tincture of quinine
twice daily and all the water he
can drink. As for you...

He turns to Nuttall and sets the plate of leeches before him.

BLOOD (CONT.)
...take these.

DR. NUTTALL
And do what with them?

BLOOD
(shrugs)
Try them with garlic and butter.
Blood casually sits down and crosses one leg over another, "accidentally" knocking into the tea service and flipping the plateful of leeches into Dr. Nuttall's lap.

BLOOD (CONT.)
Oh... excuse me.

Nuttall SHRIEKS and reacts so violently he upends the chair he's sitting in and falls flat on his back... covered with leeches and scalding tea.

C.U. - BLOOD

as he deftly palms Nuttall's scalpel in the confusion and slips it up his sleeve.

Nuttall scrambles to his feet and panics as he realizes he now has two or three leeches attached to his neck and cheek.

Ella screams and drops the remainder of the tea service. Pandemonium ensues as servants rush in and try to aid Nuttall.

Arabella is shocked, but can barely keep from laughing at Nuttall's dance as he tries to brush the leeches from his body.

Finally, Nuttall tries to regain his composure and grabs his hat and doctor's bag. (He still has one last leech attached to his cheek.)

NUTTALL
You, sir are a dangerous
charlatan! You've not heard the
last of me!

He storms out of the room. Arabella turns to Blood.

ARABELLA
Do you really think you can help
him?

BLOOD
Malaria's no small thing but he'll
improve immediately if you do as
I say.

They both pause as they now hear Nuttall carrying on outside the house. Arabella moves to the window.

ANGLE ON THE FRONT LAWN

Nuttall is complaining demonstratively to Major Bishop and a squad of Redcoats who have just arrived on horseback.

Bishop looks directly at Arabella in the window and hurries inside.

CUT TO: 

INT. GOV. PRESCOTT'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bishop storms in accompanied by two Redcoats. Blood looks up casually, holding his teacup.

BLOOD

Good morning, Major.

BISHOP

(tight)

On your feet when addressing me.

Blood rises, meeting Bishop's gaze evenly. Bishop turns to Arabella:

BISHOP (CONT.)

I awoke this morning to discover a convict missing. Imagine my surprise to find him in the governor's mansion having tea.

ARABELLA

Doctor Blood has kindly agreed to treat my father.

BISHOP

"Doctor" Blood? What sort of lies has he filled your head with? This man is a traitor to the crown!

Having merely observed until now, Gov. Prescott finally speaks:

GOV. PRESCOTT

By all means, Major, take him into your custody. But please be aware I might require his services any time of the day or night.

BISHOP

Governor, with all due respect, I will not allow this man to come and go as he pleases.

GOV. PRESCOTT

No. He will come and go as I please. Put a guard on him if you insist... as long as he is available to me when needed.

Bishop doesn't like it, but sees no further argument. He gestures to his men. They escort Blood from the room. Bishop pauses, looks to Arabella.

BISHOP

I hope you know what you're doing.

He leaves. Arabella meets her father's gaze, each reading the uncertainty in the other's face.

CAP-0019

CUT TO:

EXT. PRISON COMPOUND - MAIN GATE - DAY

Blood's escorted down from the buckboard as Bishop gallops up.

BISHOP

Pray for the governor's health, convict. If you lied to her, you're a dead man.

-- and rides on. Blood enters and the gates are bolted behind him.

INT. BARRACK - DAY

Kindu and the other men are feeding meager scraps to the hawk, which seems almost recovered. Spivy spins from his post at the window --

SPIVY

Someone coming!

-- triggering a frantic scramble. Kindu jumps straight up, grabs a wooden crossbeam overhead. McFee relays the hawk up to him, perching it on Kindu's rag-wrapped arm. Kindu does a fast one-armed pull up, swinging the bird up into hiding among the rafters, then drops back to the floor.

Everybody assumes "as you were" poses as the door opens. Blood enters, looks around. It takes a few moments, but finally:

CAP-0019

HAGTHORPE

(slow recognition)

Blood?

Blood grins, pulling two huge handfuls of biscuits from his pockets.

BLOOD

Henry. Have a tea biscuit.

HAGTHORPE

(jumps up)

God's sake! Peter! It is you!

The men crowd around Blood, patting his arms and all chattering at once, grabbing biscuits and passing them out as:

WOLVERSTONE

We figured you for dead! Thought
they'd carted your carcass off
in the middle of the night.

MC FEE

But here you are, lookin' like
the Lord Mayor of London! And
loaded down with bloody fine
biscuits!

CAP - 0019

A SCREECH from above. Blood glances up, sees the hawk looking down
from the rafters, its wings stretched out. Blood pulls more biscuits
from his pockets, tosses one up. The hawk snatches it from the air,
gobbles it down.

CONNER

(catches a biscuit)
You do amaze me, Blood... from
time to time.

SPIVY

(eating with mouth open)
Aye, we're stunned good an'
proper. Had tea with the Queen,
did'ja?

BLOOD

I'll tell you all about it -- but
first, a question for Hagthorpe.
(turns to him)
Didn't you tell me you were once
in the navy?

HAGTHORPE

Aye, as a lad. Conner's mate.
Packed powder with the best.

CAP - 0019

BLOOD

Who else here knows ships?

Many hands go up. Most of these men have sailed at one time or
another:

CONVICTS

(overlapping, ad-lib)
...was a bosun's mate... ship's
cook once... rigger here, best
ever was...

MC FEE

I was a navigator in His Majesty's
fleet. Could pinpoint land
blindfolded and fog-bound.

SPIVY
Me, sir, was a pirate. Not the
murderous sort mind you, but a
right true buccaneer.

Blood holds up his hand for silence:

BLOOD
Then we have the skill. Now all
we need is the nerve.

SPIVY
Nerve?

Blood moves through the men, all eyes on him as:

BLOOD
To choose our moment. To make
our way down to the harbor. To
find a ship big enough to carry
us all --

CONNER
(grabs his arm)
Did that flogging drive you
insane? What the hell are you
talking about?

Blood pulls a rolled up parchment from within his shirt , slaps it
to the table --

TIGHT ON THE PARCHMENT

--and unrolls it to reveal the map of the Caribbean seas from the
Governor's desk. TILT UP to Blood. Gazing at them. Intense.

BLOOD
Escape.

CAP -0019
CUT TO:

EXT. FORT - PORT ROYAL

LT. KENT, Bishop's bright young first mate, rushes through the
bustling central courtyard.

INT. PORT ROYAL FORT - BISHOP'S OFFICE - DUSK

Bishop sits an oak desk reviewing naval documents when Lt. Kent rushes
into the room with important news.

KENT
Major Bishop... it's the emissary
to King James, sir! His ship is
approaching the harbor.

BISHOP
(rises; straightening
his uniform)
Alright, calm down for God's sake.
We're ready for him, aren't we?

KENT
Yes sir.

BISHOP
Good. Fetch me my ~~saber~~ and
gloves. I want an honor guard
at the dock immediately.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORT ROYAL HARBOR

An ornate English GALLEON flying the standards of King James glides regally into harbor.

Bishop and a squadron of honor guards hastily assemble on the waterfront.

BISHOP
Mr. Kent?

Kent calls to the men.

KENT
Atten-TION!

The honor guard snaps into formal ranks - highly trained men at their prim and proper best, saluting the arrival of the ship.

The emissary's galleon lowers its sails as it glides between two British naval vessels.

KENT
(aside to Bishop)
He's docking a mite far inland,
isn't he sir?

BISHOP
Lord Henry drops anchor wherever
Lord Henry pleases.

Suddenly... amazingly, the galleon lets loose a deafening ROAR OF CANNON FIRE, blowing out the sides of both of Bishop's frigates. The harbor is suddenly filled with smoke and fire.

Bishop and his men cannot believe their eyes.

BISHOP
...Good Lord!

CLOSER - THE GALLEON

The flag of King James is lowered as the flag of Spain rises accompanied by a flag bearing the dreaded SKULL AND CROSSBONES. The bodies of two British Admirals now rise hanging from nooses as if counter-weighted by the flags.

BISHOP
Pirates! Call the men to arms!

Too late. The galleon has swung about and fires another devastating twenty cannon volley. THWOOM!

THE WATERFRONT

takes a direct hit. KA-BOOM! Bodies fly and store fronts explode. Bishop and the remains of the honor guard scatter.

THE GALLEON

drops anchor as four longboats filled with Spanish pirates are dropped overboard by block and tackled pulleys. The instant they SPLASH down, the heavily armed pirates pull for shore.

THE FORT

Troops scramble to position as the bell tower frantically tolls a distress signal. THWOOM-KABOOM! The fort's cannon positions are blown to smithereens.

INT. PENAL COLONY

Blood's men are gazing out the bars of their barrack's window. The sounds of cannon fire and the tolling of the bell have sent the stockade guards scrambling.

HAGHORPE
What the bloody hell...?

SPIVY
(gleefully)
It's pirates, lads. As sure as
I'm standin' here.

Nails SCREECH and wood CRACKS as Blood tears a bed frame away from the wall. He looks up at the others.

BLOOD
Then they've given us our chance.

The men pause. They know he's right. It's now or never.

They grab the sides of the bed frame, and begin to use it as a battering ram against the barrack's door.

Blood crosses the room, pulls back a loose board and grabs the map and scalpel.

EXT. HARBOR - AT THE SAME TIME

Spanish pirates overrun the unprotected harbor, firing muskets and pistols, as Redcoats and screaming civilians run for their lives. KA-WHOOM! Another cannon volley erupts from the galleon reducing a building to flaming debris.

Bishop scrambles back with Kent and a few remaining men amidst the confusion of smoke and flame. An Honor Guardsman takes a musket ball in the throat and crumbles at Bishop's side.

CAP - 0019
BISHOP
To the fort! Fall back to the fort!

ANOTHER ANGLE

DON DIEGO ESPANAZO Y VALDEZ, the most powerful and infamous pirate captain in the Caribbean, stands regally at the helm of a longboat as it pulls ashore.

Armed to the teeth and wearing polished knee-high boots, and an ornate silver breast plate, Don Diego is the picture of a deadly renegade conquistador.

He walks straight through the destruction he has wrought on the waterfront flanked by his most bloodthirsty men.

EXT. PORT ROYAL - NIGHT

Pandemonium. BUILDINGS are aflame. WAGONS overturn, spilling their DRIVERS; the HORSES WHINNY off in terror.

IN FRONT OF A TOWNHOUSE RESIDENCE - ARABELLA BISHOP, dressed in a formal gown, emerges with other TOWNSPEOPLE. (It is a dinner party.) They look around at the mayhem with wide, terrified eyes.

ARABELLA'S CARRIAGE pulls up to the shop. She SHOUTS over the noise to Frederick the chauffeur:

ARABELLA
What's happening, Frederick?

FREDERICK
The Spanish, Miss Arabella!
Quickly before it's too late!

Arabella runs to the carriage and climbs aboard. Frederick whips the reins, speeding off through the panic-ridden street.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARRACKS - NIGHT

as the door shatters open and Blood and his men pour out into the darkness. The cacophony of the battle of Port Royal masks the sound of their escape. Blood cradles the hawk in his hands.

BLOOD

Spring the other prisoners. Then
we'll take the main gate.

As Hagthorpe and the others rush off into the darkness, Blood gently lifts the hawk up.

BLOOD

(softly)

Now fly home. Back across the
sea.

And he launches the bird into the air. For one breathless moment its wings flap awkwardly but then it finds its strength and climbs, soaring up into the night air.

BLOOD (CONT.)

I'll meet you there someday.

EXT. COMPOUND - VARIOUS CUTS

As Blood's men silently slide open the cross beams that bar the doors from various barracks, freeing their comrades. We hear the CRACK of musket fire.

ANGLE ON THE MAIN GATE

The skeleton crew of guards fire wildly as they are quickly overpowered by Hagthorpe and a handful of men.

TULLY

has Wolverstone cornered at one end of the stockade. His horse rears up, WHINNYING as he whips Wolverstone mercilessly.

TULLY

Guards! Guards!

Wolverstone manages to grab the whip and attempts to pull Tully from his horse. Tully draws his pistol and aims point blank at Wolverstone. KA-KLATCH!

TULLY (CONT.)

Die, you bastard.

At the last instant Blood appears LEAPING up into the saddle behind Tully. Blood jerks his gun hand into the air. KAR-ROOM. The flintlock discharges harmlessly. But Tully pulls a knife from its leather sheath and STABS DOWN at Blood's leg.

Blood grabs Tully's wrist with the blade hovering inches above his thigh, then reaches around with his other hand and slashes Tully's throat with the scalpel.

Tully tumbles from the horse with a gurgling scream. Blood grabs the reins and wheels the horse about.

BLOOD
Are you alright?

Wolverstone nods.

WOLVERSTONE
Half the guards have run from the pirates, the rest from us.

BLOOD
Good. Keep the men together and meet me at the docks.

WOLVERSTONE
Where are you going?

BLOOD
To find us a ship!

Blood kicks the horse into a gallop and he's off.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORT ROYAL STREET - CONTINUOUS

ARABELLA'S CARRIAGE makes it across the town square and enters a main thoroughfare; Frederick whips the reins.

IN THE STREET AHEAD - A SHELL explodes, spooking the HORSES of a WAGON; the wagon fishtails and keels over, effectively blocking the street.

ARABELLA'S CARRIAGE skids to a stop. Arabella, in the back seat, looks around, terrified.

SEVERAL SPANIARDS run to the carriage and leap into the back seat, accosting Arabella; she SCREAMS in terror.

Frederick draws A PISTOL from under the coach seat; before he can fire, A SPANIARD thrusts his SABRE into Frederick's abdomen; Frederick falls to the street, dead.

TWO MORE SPANIARDS leap into the back of the coach. Making their purpose known, they throw Arabella on the seat and begin ripping off her blouse and petticoats. She claws and scratches; it's no use...

but Arabella suddenly SHOUTS OUT in their native tongue;

ARABELLA
(subtitled Spanish)
Wait! We do this my way!

They pause simply from surprise. She beckons the largest, nastiest looking of the lot.

ARABELLA (CONT.)
(subtitled Spanish)
You, blackbeard. You first.

Blackbeard smiles wickedly and pushes past the other amazed pirates. Arabella reaches out to him...

But as she embraces him, she PULLS THE TRIGGER on the pistol tucked inside his belt. KAR-ROOM!

Blackbeard falls back SCREAMING, clutching his smoking lower extremities.

Arabella yanks the carriage whip from its holder and LASHES Pirates #2 and #3 across the face. For a moment it seems as if she may actually escape... but then they drag her down.

EXT. STREET - TRAVELING WITH BLOOD

as he gallops into the main street. He stops, his horse rearing up. He hears ARABELLA SCREAMING, and looks --

ACROSS THE INTERSECTION - ARABELLA

is sprawled on the coach seat, her clothes torn. The SPANIARDS attacking her are now more murderous than amorous.

BLOOD spurs his horse, hell-bent for the carriage. He reaches Arabella at a full gallop and leaps from the horse into the coach!

Blood, the former mercenary, now shows his skill. He is extraordinarily lethal in quick, violent succession, Blood --

-- hits SPANIARD 1 with a crushing right hand; the Spaniard falls backward.

--Blood pulls Spaniard 1's HIP DAGGER from its scabbard and plunges it into SPANIARD 2's chest.

--Blood snatches up Frederick's fallen pistol. Point blank, he shoots SPANIARD 3 in the face.

--SPANIARD 4 draws his saber and thrusts at Blood, who deflects the thrust with the hip dagger; he boots the Spaniard in the chest, pushing him to the other side of the coach; Blood then throws the dagger; it buries in the Spaniard's throat to the hilt.

It's all over in an instant.

Blood helps Arabella into the carriage driver's seat.

BLOOD
Can you drive?

ARABELLA
Yes, but...

Blood hops down from the carriage and picks up Spaniard 4's fallen saber.

BLOOD
Get out while you can.

Several more Spanish pirates appear rounding the corner... racing in their direction.

ARABELLA
What about you, Peter?

BLOOD
(pauses)
I'll never forget you. Now ride!

With that, Blood slaps her horse's rump and the carriage takes off.

Three MORE SPANIARDS attack at once. He duels them all, backing up... backing up... holding them off. His shirt is cut. A blade catches his cheek, bloodying him. When all seems lost --

WOLVERSTONE, HAGTHORPE, PITT, and the OTHER SLAVES ROAR into the town square; fifty of them. The SPANIARDS, suddenly outnumbered, turn and flee across the square.

WOLVERSTONE
(winded; panting)
What's firing on the town? A galleon?

BLOOD
Yes. Three decks. Sixty cannon.
But the shelling's stopped.

SPIVY
Bloody bastards have overrun the place.

BLOOD
Which means the crew's all ashore.
(smiles wickedly)
Seems a shame, such a fine ship
nearly unmanned.

The men slowly turn to Blood, realizing what he's suggesting.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT COMPOUND - PORT ROYAL

As Redcoats scramble to secure the main gate with a huge oak cross beam, the gate suddenly EXPLODES into flaming splinters.

Don Diego and twenty of his men race past their smoking cannon and enter the fort.

EXT. ARMORY DOOR

Chaos reigns as the British frantically arm themselves with musket balls and powder. Bishop is livid with anger.

BISHOP

What do you mean, they're attacking the fort? It's only one boat load of pirates for God's sake!

Men duck back as musket fire peppers the wall beside them and pirates race wildly through the compound.

One hurls a flaming torch into the open armory door and KA-RUMPH! A huge explosion blows out the entire wall.

Bishop, his face bloodied and blackened with soot, scrambles away on his hands and knees... directly into a pair of polished black boots. He looks up;

KA-KLATCH. Don Diego cocks his pistol, which is pointed directly at Bishop's face.

DON DIEGO

Buenos noches, Major Bishop.
Perhaps you will be kind enough to escort me to your treasury... or shall I burn Port Royal to the ground?

CUT TO:

EXT. WATERFRONT - NIGHT

Blood and fellow slaves creep across the rubble-strewn dock. In the b.g., the town is burning. They silently strip to the waist and slip into the water; they begin swimming to the galleon.

EXT. PIRATE GALLEON - STERN AND SIDE

HANGING LANTERNS illuminate the ship's name on her stern: "H.M.S. ROSE." We HEAR pirates singing a SPANISH SONG from somewhere aboard.

BLOOD AND THE SLAVES swim up to LADDER hanging from the aft gallery. Blood pulls himself onto the ladder and starts up. One by one, the others silently follow.

EXT. QUARTER DECK - NIGHT

Blood and his men pour over the gunwale. Slowly make their way along the stern deck, following THE SOURCE OF THE SONG. They come to stairs leading down to --

THE FOREDECK - A GROUP OF SPANISH PIRATES are seated around a table on deck, drinking and carousing.

BLOOD raises a hand, lowers it, and --

-- the slaves rush down like an avalanche upon the pirates; startled, they rise to meet the attack, but are quickly overwhelmed and we --

CUT TO:

INT. FORT COMPOUND - TREASURY - NIGHT

Surviving Redcoats hear muffled kicking and screaming from inside the massive cast iron door of the fort's treasury. The mangled lock has been blown away so the door SCREECHES open with little effort.

INT. TREASURY

The room has been ransacked; shelves emptied and a few remaining strongboxes broken open and overturned. Dubloons left in haste are scattered across the floor. But it's the room's centerpiece that holds the Redcoat's attention...

Major Bishop hangs upside down, gagged with a rag in his mouth. He wriggles like a fish on the line until one of the stunned Redcoats unties the rag.

BISHOP

(gasping)

Cut me down, you bloody fools
before I have the both of you
court marshaled!

EXT. PORT ROYAL - STREET/DOCKS - DAWN

A mob of swaggering, catcalling SPANISH TROOPS come down a street, heading toward the docks, driving MULES heavily laden with loot. Buildings smolder in the background.

AT THE DOCKS - FOUR LONGBOATS wait to receive the loot. OTHER SPANISH PIRATES are already loading them full. Objects that they deem worthless, they SMASH on the dock.

DON DIEGO steps into his boat as TWO PIRATES load IRON-BOUND TREASURE CHESTS on board. The pirates take up oars and begin rowing him out to the galleon.

EXT. GALLEON - MAIN DECK (DAWN)

Blood's men are busily preparing to set sail.

HAGTHORPE

Are we ready to hoist anchor?

BLOOD

(spotting the longboats)

Not quite. Looks like we're about
to have company.

SPIVY

Bloody hell... It's Don Diego
hissself! We best set sail gents
and be quick about it.

BLOOD

(pauses)

No. Let's give them the warm welcome they deserve.

EXT. PORT ROYAL - WATERFRONT - CONTINUOUS

The five longboats, filled to overflowing with loot and jeering Spanish soldiers, pull away from the docks and begin to row toward the mother ship, with Don Diego in the lead.

EXT. GALLEON - MAIN DECK

The top gun deck, a row of ten twenty-pounders. Hagthorpe and a group of Blood's men are crouched by the guns. Lying too low to be seen from the water. They all hold TORCHES at the ready.

EXT. DIEGO'S LONGBOAT

As it approaches the galleon, Don Diego scans the prow of his ship. All seems well... except for wispy trails of smoke, nearly invisible against the sunrise. The smoke of the gunner's torches.

DON DIEGO

(pauses)

Something's wrong...

OARSMAN #1

What is it, sir?

Don Diego snaps open the chamber of a ten pound gun mounted on the prow of the longboat.

DON DIEGO

Man your weapons you fools!

EXT. GALLEON - MAIN DECK

BLOOD

Ready, Hagthorpe!

HAGTHORPE

Aye, Peter.

Blood nods; Hagthorpe applies A TORCH to the breech; the gunpowder FLASHES and HISSES.

EXT. HARBOR - MOVING WITH THE LONGBOATS

The galleon's cannon ROARS, and the Spaniards in the longboats look up in shock as --

TEN SHELLS SCREAM DOWN, hitting three longboats, smashing them, spilling soldiers overboard.

C.U. - DIEGO

His longboat still unscathed, Diego glares up at the galleon as he comes eye to eye with;

C.U. - PETER BLOOD

meeting Diego's glare with his own. This is a moment Don Diego will never forget. Blood signals Hagthorpe.

Fire! BLOOD

EXT. THE GALLEON GUN DECK

The CAMERA ANGLING DOWN THE GUN DECK - TEN CANNONS, and one by one, they FIRE.

Diego's ship is BLOWN SKY HIGH on a geyser of water.

Two other longboats take devastating DIRECT HITS as they desperately try to turn about and pull for shore.

Hagthorpe and the other gunners CHEER!

EXT. HARBOR

SPANIARDS desperately cling to boat wreckage, as cannon SHOT falls everywhere, heaving the sea up, sending them under. They are weighte down by their armor; others by the loot around their necks.

EXT. PORT ROYAL - DOCKS/SHORE

Groups of Redcoats scramble to take advantage of the turn of events. As the surviving half-drowned pirates drag themselves on shore they are easily captured.

EXT. WATERFRONT/DOCKS

TOWNSPEOPLE flood toward the docks. They don't quite understand what's happened, only that the pirates are ruined. Through the crowd comes -- Major Bishop, bedraggled and bloodied but still game, galloping up with a contingent of men. He dismounts in the midst of the excited, cheering mob.

BISHOP
What's happened?

REDCOAT
Some of our men must have boarded that ship and taken it!

MAJOR BISHOP
Prepare my longboat.

REDCOAT
Yes sir!

The Redcoat bows and hurries off, while meanwhile --

EXT. GALLEON

Suddenly from the crow's nest above.

LOOKOUT

Another boat coming! It looks like...

(beat)

...Major Bishop!

Hagthorpe immediately recognizes Bishop at the prow of the longboat. He swings a twenty pound deck gun in his direction.

HAGTHORPE

This is better than a bloody shootin' gallery!

Blood stops him.

CAP -0019

BLOOD

No, Henry. Let's entertain the good major.

HAGTHORPE

(with a knowing smile)

Aye.

EXT. STERN DECK - BY THE LADDER - MINUTES LATER

Bishop climbs up the ladder, wearing a pompous smile as he boards the ship. He's all set to congratulate the heroes... when he stops cold in his tracks.

REVERSE ANGLE

Panning past the former slaves... Conner... Hagthorpe... Wolverstone... Kindu and the rest all stand here with a deadly look in their eyes.

BLOOD

Welcome aboard Major.

MAJOR BISHOP

(amazed)

Blood! It was... you...?

BLOOD

Yes. And these men. Brave hands, each and every one of them.

Bishop looks from one hardened face to the next, slowly realizing the mess he's gotten himself into.

BISHOP
 (backing up)
 Why that's... commendable.
 Absolutely commendable. King
 James himself shall hear of this.

Spivy appears behind Bishop, poking a sword tip in his back.

SPIVY
 How charmin'. And what exactly
 do ya' think His Majesty'll make
 of it all?

BISHOP
 Well... I don't know.
 (thinking fast)
 He could reduce your sentences,
 quite possibly. Improve your
 living circumstances. I could
 negotiate it myself.

Hagthorpe tightens a noose from the rope in his hands.

HAGTHORPE
 Maybe you'd like to negotiate a
 rope around your neck? .

The men begin to advance, brandishing their weapons.

MEN
 ...That's right, hang him!
 ...String 'im from the yardarm!
 ...A necktie for him!

Blood calls out from the forecastle rail.

BLOOD
 Wait!

The men pause as Bishop stands there surrounded, his heart pounding in his chest.

BLOOD (CONT.)
 Bishop and his kind have called
 us traitors and murderers from
 the start. This is no time to
 prove them right.

SPIVY
 I'd prefer to prove breathin's
 a might difficult at the short
 end of a noose.

BLOOD
 (cracks a smile)
 I say the Major shouldn't swing.
 He should swim!

The men begin to LAUGH UPROARIOUSLY. They grab Bishop and drag him toward the gunwale.

C.U. - BISHOP'S BOOT

as he whips out a DAGGER that was tucked inside.

WIDER

Bishop SLASHES OUT, catching Wolverstone with a vicious cut across the cheek. He breaks away from the men, races across the forecastle deck and leaps up on the railing. He turns to Blood.

BISHOP

Know this Peter Blood! You're
dead men, all of you. No matter
how fast these sails take you the
King's Navy will be at your heels.

With that Bishop hurls his dagger... and it's a hell of a shot. THWAANG. It stands quivering, buried in the mast inches from Blood's head.

Bishop swan dives off the railing and swims for shore.

SPIVY

Should'a kilt 'im when we had the
chance.

BLOOD

Let him go.

(turns to McFee)

Mr. McFee, are we ready to set
sail?

MCFEE

That we are, sir.

BLOOD

(smiles)

Then let's take her to sea.

A SERIES OF SHOTS:

- 1) The galleon's anchor emerges from the water.
- 2) The main sail unfurls.
- 3) The mizzen sail unfurls.
- 4) The galleons move off, gloriously under full sail... cutting through the crashing waves.

ANGLE ON THE DECK

Kindu spots something in the northeast sky. He shades his eyes from the glare of the morning sun. Then excitedly calls to Blood.

KINDU

Peter! See! I tell you, mon.
THIS ONE MEANS FREEDOM!

Blood looks up... and sure enough, THE HAWK IS CIRCLING THE GALLEON, soaring magnificently on the ocean breeze. Its CAW rings out like a cry of triumph echoing across the open bay.

The men watch with elation, their hopes soaring with the bird's flight.

PETER

(softly)

Yes, Kindu. You were right.

Finally, the hawk wheels about, glides down to the galleon and lands gracefully in the rigging beside Blood. A new member to their crew.

CAP -0019

THORPE

The ship is ours now. We should name it.

SPIVY

If you don't mind my makin' a suggestion, I think we should name her after me dear old mother.

CONNER

Sorry Spivy, I don't think "The Sea Witch" would be quite appropriate.

The men break out laughing. Spivy makes as if to throw a punch at Conner. Wolverstone plays at holding him back.

Blood watches as the hawk spreads its wings and launches itself into the air again.

BLOOD

I have a better idea.

CUT TO:

EXT. GALLEON - C.U. PAINT BRUSH

The camera pulls back... back revealing Isaac sitting on a wooden swing rigged to the stern. He's just completing an excellent job of painting the ship's new name in bold yellow script: "The Sea Hawk."

CAP -0019

ANGLE ON THE MAIN DECK

Blood gazes out at the last rays of the flaming Caribbean sunset. He gently strokes the hawk's plumage as it stands regally perched on his forearm.

The men, now idle after their adrenalin-charged escape, sit in various positions on the deck. Some try on boots and examine weaponry salvaged from the ship.

Big John Wolverstone leans on the starboard rail beside Blood, and offers him a drag off a long stemmed clay pipe.

WOLVERSTONE

Smoke?

Blood shakes his head.

WOLVERSTONE (CONT.)

What now, Peter?

Blood raises his arm and the hawk gracefully soars up into the fiery sky, circling the ship.

BLOOD

Anything's possible. We're free men.

Spivy glances up from sharpening a Spanish saber.

SPIVY

Aye. Free to have our necks stretched the moment we set foot on dry land.

ISAAC

It's true. Half the bloody fleet is on our tails by now.

Blood turns and addresses his men.

BLOOD

Listen to me, all of you. Any man that wants out is free to go. You can take the longboats and a fair share of provisions. There's islands within two days sail where your chances are as fair as any.

The men look to one another as they consider the gravity of their situation.

BLOOD (CONT.)

I only ask you this... them that would go, do so now.

The men remain silent... except for Conner, who's trying to figure Blood's angle:

CONNER

And if we stay?

BLOOD

Then you sail on to Mayagana with me.

The men are stunned. Agitation and SHOUTS sweep the deck.

CONNER
Mayagana, is it? Are we madmen
then, as well as free?

BLOOD
Our friends are there. Men who
fought at our side. I won't leave
them there to rot.

MCREE
We've barely enough hands to sail
this tub let alone take on a
Spanish fortress.

MAGTHORPE
He's right Peter. We'd need
twice the men and ammunition.

BLOOD
There's plenty of both... in
Tortuga.

SPIVY
Aye, for a price! Me
grandmother's teeth are for sale
in Tortuga for a price.

CONNER
And the Spaniards have left us
with little to bargain with.

BLOOD
Then we'll take what we need.

CONNER
From who?

BLOOD
Bishop. He said he'd send the
fleet after us. I say let them
come. Those ships carry the
richest cargo in these waters.

CONNER
You're talking piracy, then.

SPIVY
(delighted)
That he is, boyo! And I'll thank
you not to interrupt his line o'
thought--

Suddenly, a VOICE from the rigging:

LOOKOUT
MAN O' WAR! MAN O' WAR TO PORT
STERN!

The men rush to the railing. Blood snaps open a spyglass for a closer look --

SPYGLASS POV

-- and sees a double-masted MAN O' WAR flying British colors coming at us at full sail.

RESUME MEN

CONNER

Bishop hasn't wasted much time.

HAGTHORPE

The wind's with us, Peter. We may be able to outrun her.

PUSH IN on Blood as he turns to the men, draws his saber.

BLOOD

I say the time for running is over.

A breathless beat as Blood's challenge hangs in the air. Kindu steps through the men, raises a sword overhead:

KINDU

I sail with Captain Blood!

The men ROAR THEIR APPROVAL, thrusting their weapons toward the sky. "Aye, Peter!" "Here's to Captain Blood!"

Conner eases back on the forecastle rail.

CONNER

So it's "Captain" Blood now, is it?

Blood strides through the ship, now fully in command.

BLOOD

Take her about sharply, Mr. McFee! Hagthorpe, ready the starboard cannons!

HAGTHORPE

You heard the captain! Make battle ready, you sorry lot!

Men scramble to their stations.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRITISH MAN O' WAR

The stout jowly CAPTAIN PENDERGRASS stands at the prow in the elegant blue and gold uniform of the Royal Navy. His ENSIGN watches the Sea Hawk's sudden maneuvering through his spy glass.

ENSIGN
They're coming about sir!

Pendergrass grabs the spy glass.

CAPTAIN PENDERGRASS
I thought you said these were a
gang of petty thieves and runaway
slaves.

ENSIGN
That I did, sir.

CAPTAIN PENDERGRASS
Then where in bloody hell did they
learn to sail like that?

EXT. SEA HAWK - DAY

Blood stands on the rail amidships, more alive than he's felt in
months as they race directly towards the man o' war. Hagthorpe rushes
up.

HAGTHORPE
Bad news, Peter! We've only enough
ammunition left for one decent
volley.

BLOOD
Then we'll have to make it count.
Aim for the water line and wait
for my signal.

Blood swings down and races to McFee at the wheel.

BLOOD
Set course directly at her bow,
McFee.

MCFEE
Dead on, sir?

BLOOD
You heard me! You don't let them
outmaneuver us.

EXT. MAN O' WAR - DAY

As the Sea Hawk swoops down on them, the ensign begins to panic.

ENSIGN
Good lord, they're still at full
sail. They'll sink us both!

CAPTAIN PENDERGRASS
Don't these maniacs know how to
battle properly?
(MORE)

CAPTAIN PENDERGRASS (Cont'd)
 (calls out)
 Take her about Mr. Hawthorn! Give
 them a taste of our starboard
 cannon.

The shrill WHISTLE of the BOSUN'S call to battle stations rings out.

TWENTY CANNON PORTS

SLAM open and a row of deadly cast iron muzzles roll into place.

THE MAN O' WAR

starts to swing wide, aiming her starboard cannonade at the Sea Hawk.

EXT. SEA HAWK

McFee throws his weight behind the wheel, straining to outmaneuver the man o' war and keep their approach dead-on to the bow. Suddenly Blood is at his side cranking the huge teak wheel until its spokes are a blur.

BLOOD
 Dead on 'til the last second
 McFee, then scrape the paint off
 her port side.

MCFEE
 Aye, Captain!

EXT. MAN O' WAR

The gun ships cannons ROAR, blowing a row of geysers sky-high in the water, just yards from the Sea Hawk.

INT. MAN O' WAR - BELOW DECK

Sweaty cannon teams hastily reload, packing black powder deep in each barrel.

EXT. SEA HAWK

as Blood unties a sturdy rope from the rigging and climbs atop the rail. He holds his cutlass high overhead.

BLOOD
 Prepare to board!

Conner swings up beside him, grabs a rope and draws his sword.

CONNER
 This lunacy's contagious.

Hagthorpe braces himself as he keeps one eye on Blood and the other on his cannon team. All stand ready to put torch to powder.

HAGTHORPE

Steady boys. Wait for the signal.

The men duck as musket fire begins to CRACKLE from the man o' war's bow, splintering wood and sparking off the cannons themselves.

THE SEA HAWK

eats up the final yards of water bearing down on the gun ship like a bat out of hell.

BLOOD

now with a dozen or more men beside him on the railing... leans back on his rope and launches himself through mid-air.

CAP
Fire!

BLOOD

HIGH ANGLE

Just as the two ships pass within ten feet of each other at full speed, the Sea Hawk's cannons EXPLODE point blank into the gun ship's deck BLOWING MEN AND TIMBER TO KINGDOM COME.

SLOW-MO - THE SAME INSTANT

Blood and his men make a breathtaking SWING STRAIGHT OUT THROUGH MID-AIR as both ships race past each other and the cannons below them ROAR... landing with split second timing on the man o' war's deck.

EXT. MAN O' WAR'S DECK

Blood hits and rolls amidst a chaos of smoke and fire. He comes up fighting with Conner and the others close behind. Some of Blood's men have landed in the rigging and descend on the hapless seamen from above.

As the battle rages the Sea Hawk circles the gun ship's starboard side.

THE FORECASTLE

Blood CLASHES swords with two seamen at once... skewers one, spins beneath a whistling sword cut and backhands the other overboard.

KA-ROOM! Conner dispatches a burly gunner's mate with his pistol... then turns to see a half dozen enraged Brits charging out of the smoke STRAIGHT AT HIM WITH THEIR SABERS FLASHING.

He runs and ducks under a yard arm, severing its mainstay with one sweep of his cutlass. The tension on the huge boom arm is instantly released. It SWEEPS across the deck and knocks the swordsmen down like ten pins.

The British, devastated by the cannon volley and stunned by the ferocity of Blood and his men quickly begin to surrender.

Blood, his sword held at the ready, turns to find Captain Pendergrass cornered. The man is frightened half to death and barely manages to draw his saber with a shaky hand.

Blood regards him curiously for a moment then makes a sudden fete in his direction. Pendergrass instantly drops his sword and falls to his knees, blubbering.

PENDERGRASS

I yield... I yield! Please spare me!

Spivy plucks a hankie from the Captain's embroidered pocket and dabs at his eyes.

SPIVY

Pull yourself together, old boy.
You're ruining your lace.

BLOOD

Prepare your longboats, Captain.
When you return to Port Royal tell
Major Bishop that Peter Blood
sends his regards.

CUT TO:

EXT. PORT ROYAL WATERFRONT - TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

LORD HENRY WINTHROPE, the elegantly wigged and coiffured emissary of King James is being entertained by Major Bishop with a bountiful feast in the town square. Rows of elegant tables and chairs have all been tastefully arranged under the starry night sky. But Lord Henry is absolutely beside himself with anger.

LORD HENRY

Pirates, Colonel Bishop! Pirates!
Infesting his majesty's waters
like vermin. Do you realize I
barely escaped with my life!

BISHOP

Yes, Your Excellency.

Suddenly a row of booted FEET drop into the foreground and stop short with a muffled SNAP!

ANOTHER ANGLE

...and we realize this "feast" is a hanging party. A dozen-odd of Diego's pirates now swing from a gallows especially erected for this occasion.

LORD HENRY

And these are the very same ones
that overran my ships?

BISHOP

That they are. Captured them myself, sir. They sang a different tune when confronted with fine English steel.

LORD HENRY

Quite impressive Bishop, I must say. What about this leader of theirs... "Don Dago," or whatever the bloody hell his name is.

BISHOP

Don Diego de Espinosa y Valdez. The most murderous buccaneer in the Caribbean. I was saving him for last, as it might please you m'lord.

A rather voluptuous colonial girl, one of several that are vying for Lord Henry's attention raises a silver pitcher of wine.

COLONIAL GIRL #1

Another drink, Lord Henry?

LORD HENRY

Of course, my dear. How kind of you.

(to Bishop)

If you've conquered these scoundrels then you must have recovered my ship.

BISHOP

Not exactly. You see the battle was quite fierce.

Looking for a quick excuse to change the subject, Bishop detains Arabella.

BISHOP (CONT)

Have you met Arabella Prescott, the Governor's daughter?

Lord Henry is a man easily distracted by beauty and is instantly taken by Arabella. He makes a show of kissing her hand.

LORD HENRY

Delighted, I'm sure.

(pulls out a chair)

Please join us, my dear. And where is the Governor tonight?

ARABELLA
(trapped into sitting)
Ah, he's a bit tired this evening
and asked if you'd like to join
us at the plantation for
breakfast.

BISHOP
The Governor's not a well man,
m'lord. I've been meaning to
speak to you about it.

COLONIAL GIRL #2
Tell us about your escape, Lord
Henry.

COLONIAL GIRL #1
Oh, yes! Please do.

LORD HENRY
Not now, my child. It was a
gruesome adventure not meant for
ears as lovely as yours.

This kind of patronizing chauvinism is what Arabella hates most in
a man.

ARABELLA
(coyly)
So you engaged them in battle
yourself, did you Lord Henry?

LORD HENRY
Suffice it to say a tactical
retreat in a longboat was a timely
choice. I'd like to get a look
at this Don Diego.

BISHOP
So you shall, m'lord. Dancing
at the end of those ropes with
the last of his murderous lot.

COLONIAL GIRL #1
They say he's like the devil
himself. With great pointed
mustachios and eyes as red as
coals.

BISHOP
He's nothing more than a scoundrel
and a coward.

COLONIAL GIRL #3
I've heard he's the greatest
swordsmen in the Caribbean. He
can cut out a man's heart and show
it to him before he dies.

The others at the table gasp.

BISHOP
Fairy tales.

LORD HENRY
You say he's in the dungeon?

BISHOP
Yes, m'lord.

LORD HENRY
(rises)
Let's have a look, shall we?

BISHOP
I wouldn't advise it.

LORD HENRY
Come now, Bishop. You've said
he's nothing more than a coward.
I'd like to give him a piece of
my mind for having the audacity
to overrun my ship and attack one
of his majesty's colonies.

Lord Henry offers Arabella his hand.

LORD HENRY (CONT.)
Will you join us Miss Prescott?
(mild sarcasm)
Perhaps you can report the state
of affairs to the Governor if he
himself is not well enough to
observe them.

Arabella shoots an ice cold glance to Bishop, but he offers no assistance.

ARABELLA
(rises)
Of course, Lord Henry.

CUT TO:

INT. FORT - LOWER DUNGEON CORRIDOR

Bishop, Arabella and Lord Henry are escorted through the dank cobblestone archways by a nervous TURNKEY and two burly GUARDS armed with muskets and sabers.

They stop at a heavy oak door secured with a padlocked iron crossbar. The turnkey pauses.

TURNKEY
Begging your pardon, Major but
perhaps a peek through the eye
slot would suffice?

BISHOP
They're still in chains are they
not?

TURNKEY
Of course, sir.

BISHOP
Then be quick, man. We haven't
got all night.

With a great CLANKING and SCREECH of metal the turnkey unbolts the door. Bishop and Company enter and descend a narrow stone staircase, guided by torches held high by the guards.

INT. DUNGEON

Don Diego stands, manacled to the wall in heavy irons... still imposing even in his present state. Shafts of stark moonlight cut through the dungeon's gloom, making Diego and the dozen or so remaining pirates look like figures suspended in some cold blue hell.

Diego slowly raises his shaggy head as Bishop approaches, and indeed in the flickering torchlight the Spaniards eye's appear to glow red with hate.

DIEGO
Buenos noches, Colonel Bishop.
Have you come to surrender your
town to me again?

Diego's men chuckle darkly.

Bishop signals to a guard, who SLAMS his rifle butt into the Spaniard's face.

LORD HENRY
What's he talking about?
Surrender again...

Diego shakes off the blow and grins through bloodied teeth.

DIEGO
He and his Redcoats ran from us
like rabbits. He hasn't the balls
to cross swords with a true
Corsican.

Bishop SLAPS him with all his might.

Diego whips his head back and spits blood in Bishop's face. Bishop's voice shakes with fury as he wipes his cheek.

BISHOP
(to the guard)
Unchain one of his hands.

ARABELLA
Edward, don't be an idiot.

BISHOP
(louder)
Unchain his hand! One hand only.
And give him a sword.

Bishop draws his saber as his guards quickly do his bidding.

BISHOP
I shall end the legend of Don
Diego here and now.

LORD HENRY
(enthused)
Jolly good show, Bishop!

Guard #1 gingerly hands Diego his sword. The pirate captain's left hand remains manacled to the wall by a short iron chain... but dark power seems to surge through his body as he clutches the cutlass.

ARABELLA
Edward this is madness!

Bishop raises his saber and the two men cross swords.

BISHOP
En garde!

The CLANG and CRASH of their swords echo within the dungeon's stone walls as Bishop parries and thrusts against Diego's sudden onslaught.

Both guards level their muskets at Diego and keep a wary eye on the action.

Time and time again, Bishop dances outside of the pirate's short reach and SLASHES at his midsection, drawing blood. There's no mistaking this for a fair fight.

Enraged, Diego lunges again...

C.U. - THE MANACLE

only to be jerked short by his chain, his wrist bloodied by the effort.

ARABELLA

watches, horrified. Lord Henry's eyes sparkle with delight as Bishop's saber strikes home again.

LORD HENRY
Well done, man!

Diego's tiring, his tunic glistens with his own blood. Mustering one mighty thrust, he drives Bishop back... then turns to his own manacled wrist with a wild gleam in his eyes. He raises his cutlass and...

C.U. - DIEGO'S WRIST

CHOPS OFF HIS HAND with one mighty SLASH.

WIDER

Free at last! Diego wades into his adversaries like a wild man.

KA-BOOM! He ducks under Guard #1's musket fire, slashes his throat, spins and BEHEADS Guard #2 with one blow. The headless body takes two staggering steps through the shadows and collapses in a heap.

Bishop attacks, his sword sparking against Diego's, but he's quickly backed up the narrow stone steps by the pirate's manic onslaught.

The power of Diego's final blow sends Bishop tumbling off the stairway.

Bishop CRASHES to the floor, knocked senseless.

Diego skewers the turnkey through the back as he desperately tries to escape... pinning him to the dungeon door. He pulls the key ring from his convulsing fingers and tosses it to his fellow pirates.

Gasping in pain and adrenalin-charged madness, Diego now staggers back down the steps and jams his severed wrist into a torch's flame, cauterizing the wound. His flesh SIZZLES.

Suddenly, Lord Henry leaps up out of the shadows slashing down with Bishop's saber... only to be run through with a lightning THRUST of Diego's cutlass.

Lord Henry freezes, gazing down at the blade buried deep in his chest.

LORD HENRY

(gasps)

You bastard...

Smiling cruelly, Diego gives his cutlass a SHARP TWIST and Lord Henry collapses to the stone floor.

As his men hastily unchain themselves Diego braces a boot against Lord Henry's chest and pulls his blade free. He casually wipes the blood off on his pant leg.

DIEGO

These English have blood as thin
as piss water.

Arabella makes a break for the stairway, but Diego is quicker. He grabs her about the waist, spins her around and puts his cutlass to her throat.

DIEGO (CONT.)

Not so fast, little one. You are
our guarantee of safe passage from
this harbor.

(MORE)

DIEGO (Cont'd)
(to his men)
Vamanos ustedes!

CUT TO:

EXT. CARIBBEAN OCEAN - DAWN

A British merchant vessel cuts through a light fog as the sun rises over the Caribbean.

The ship's captain, SEBASTIAN WORTHINGTON, is alerted by a call from the crow's nest.

LOOKOUT
Ship ahoy! Ship ahoy!

As Worthington gazes off the starboard bow we see the Sea Hawk, or what remains of it gliding like a ghost ship out of the fog.

CLOSER - SEA HAWK

The ship has been ravaged and abandoned, the entire vessel listing hard to port. Black brackish smoke trails from her deck.

BRITISH FRIGATE

The First Mate approaches the Captain.

FIRST MATE
What do you think, sir?

WORTHINGTON
(pauses)
Pull up to her starboard side.

British sailors expertly twirl grappling hooks and hurl them across to the Sea Hawk.

The lines are pulled taut and a gangplank is slid into place.

EXT. SEA HAWK - MAIN DECK

Captain Worthington and his First Mate warily board the tilted deck midship, followed by a contingent of their crew.

Worthington now pauses as he hears a soft GROAN coming from the other side of the main cabin's awning. It's hard to see through the smoke.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Worthington approaches a man lying on the deck, barely moving. He turns him over and we discover it's Captain Blood... his lips cracked and pale.

WORTHINGTON
Good lord, man. Were you boarded
by pirates?

Blood pulls out a pistol, jams it in the captain's ribs and smiles.

BLOOD

No. You were.

Dozens of Blood's heavily armed men now SPRING UP from hiding and swing down from the rigging, instantly surrounding Worthington and Company.

INT. SEA HAWK - BELOW DECK

All the cannon and cargo have been pushed to the port side. At Hagthorpe's signal a dozen men pull block and tackles and the cannons roll to their proper positions. The ship begins to right itself.

EXT. SEA HAWK DECK

KA-LATCH. Blood locks his flintlock as he wipes away the sea salt that has disguised his lips.

BLOOD

I see no reason for heroics. Do you, Captain?

Worthington eyes the pistol barrel in his gut.

WORTHINGTON

At British Navy wages? Welcome aboard the H.M.S. New Foundland.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP - IRON CHEST

As its lock is SHATTERED WITH A CHISEL AND Mallet. The lid opens revealing a huge pile of glistening gold coins.

WIDER

Blood, McFee, Wolverstone, Hagthorpe and Spivy stand in the ship's hold... which is now filled with a variety of pirated booty. Conner sits cross legged on a wooden crate, oiling his pistol.

HAGTHORPE

Sweet Joseph and Mary! We've hit a payroll ship, lads.

WOLVERSTONE

That should do it. We've more than enough for the men and guns we'll need.

SPIVY

Aye, but bartering in Tortuga's no simple feat. A pirate's haven, it is run by the rarest cutthroats and scalawags in the South Pacific.

McFee checks his maps.

MCFEE
Tortuga's two days sail if the
wind's with us.

BLOOD
After that it's on to Mayagana...

C.U. - MAP

as Blood buries his knife point on the map's tiny isle.

ANGLE ON BLOOD

BLOOD
(softly)
...and our countrymen.

Conner glances up from cleaning his flintlock.

CONNER
Or what's left of them.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARIBBEAN - NIGHT

A sleek single masted SLOOP cuts through the dark waves under a moonless sky as Diego and his men make good their escape from Port Royal.

INT. MAIN CABIN - NIGHT

Arabella is kneeling beside the cabin door quietly trying to pick its lock with a quill pen. Suddenly the door FLIES OPEN. Arabella scrambles back on her hands and knees.

A Spanish pirate with lean wolf-like features enters holding a half empty bottle of wine in one hand and a wickedly curved dagger in the other. A drunken leering grin curls his lips back from rotten teeth as he approaches the girl.

Arabella quickly rises, only to be brutally SLAPPED back down to the cabin floor.

The Spaniard takes a final swig from his bottle and tosses it aside. It's obvious what he has in mind as he straddles her supine form.

Arabella starts to scream but another CRACK of the back of his hand reduces it to a strangled gasp. A trickle of blood runs down her chin.

While holding her by the throat with one hand, the pirate hooks his dagger under the laces of her bodice and slices upwards... revealing the creamy flesh of her cleavage.

His eyes glistening with lust, he begins to peel off his waistcoat.

Suddenly there is a deafening KA-BOOM and a FLASH of powder. The pirate freezes, kneeling over Arabella with a startled expression on his face... then he tumbles to the cabin floor, stone cold dead.

Don Diego stands in the doorway with a smoking pistol in his hand.

DON DIEGO
My apologies, Senorita.

He casually kicks the body aside.

DON DIEGO (CONT.)
If I don't kill one of them from
time to time they forget who I
am.

He sits down on the floor beside her. Arabella chokes back her fear.

Don Diego pulls a handkerchief from the bedside and dabs at her bloodied lip.

DON DIEGO
You are frightened of me, yes?

ARABELLA
Yes...

DON DIEGO
You should be. But understand
this; the English call me a
pirate. Put a price on my head.
But in my own country I am a hero.
A man of honor and privilege.

ARABELLA
You're a murderer.

DON DIEGO
I pillage the Caribbean for Mother
Spain. Raid English outposts that
have no right to these islands
but that invented by their own
arrogance.

(rises)
My only interest in you now is
as merchandise. A woman of your
beauty and position must remain
unspoiled if she is to fetch a
high price. And I know of a place
where there are men more than
willing to pay it.

CUT TO:

EXT. TORTUGA COASTLINE - NIGHT

Towering moss covered pinnacles of sheer rock thrust up out of the pounding surf, creating a harbor sane men would avoid...

evidenced by the remains of BLEACHED SHIPWRECKS, near the narrow channel to this half-hidden pirate haven. Torch lights of the ramshackle village twinkle from within the cove as the sounds of drunken revelry drift above the crashing of the waves.

SUPERIMPOSE: TORTUGA

CUT TO:

EXT. TORTUGA, MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Camera BOOMS UP through the source of the music... a vast open air structure that serves as Tortuga's main tavern, dance hall and center of commerce.

Pirates, whores, bar maids, men of fortune and misfortune all dance, drink, laugh and quarrel in a hall constructed of salvaged ship masts, bamboo and stone. Three pigs skewered on a cast iron spit roast over a huge fire pit in the center of the room.

As camera continues to BOOM UP across an ornate teakwood stairway salvaged from a galleon's forecastle, we hear the KA-BOOM of pistol fire. CAMERA ENDFRAMES on Captain Blood.

EXT. BALCONY

Blood's sitting on an open air balcony next to a flamboyant French pirate named ANTON LEVASSEUR. A beautiful half-Asian WENCH sits in Levasseur's lap as a second wench tosses a gold plate into the night air. The Frenchman fires his pistol... KA-BOOM - CLANG, this time striking his target in mid-air.

LEVASSEUR

Hah! That makes us even. Your turn, mon capitain.

A third wench finishes reloading Blood's pistol for him as Wench #2 prepares to toss another plate into the balmy night air. Blood waves them off.

BLOOD
I concede, Levasseur. Victory is yours. Now what about my offer?

LEVASSEUR

Are you not a sporting man? Take your shot, mon ami. Then we talk business.

The plate flies and Blood fires. THOOM-CLANG. The plate cartwheels from the impact.

LEVASSEUR (CONT.)

Mon dieu! After all my hospitality I thought you at least had the wit to let me win.

Blood raises his goblet to Levasseur.

BLOOD
(chuckles)
My apologies. Must be the rum.

LEVASSEUR
(calls out)
Lulu! Se va!

The most alluring wench of them all appears and at Levasseur's gesture, drapes her arms across Blood's shoulders.

CAP - 0019
Blood
What's this?

LEVASSEUR
Your prize, mon ami. The most beautiful woman on the island! I give her to you!

The wench in his lap SLAPS him resoundingly.

LEVASSEUR (CONT.)
Pardon, Cheri. Of course you are the only true beauty in Tortuga.

BLOOD
I'm honored Captain, but there's only one prize that interests me.

LEVASSEUR
(exasperated)
Ah! You really are such a bore.

BLOOD
Mayagana.

LEVASSEUR
Oui. The most well fortified compound in the Caribbean. Your offer is tempting, but I'm not certain my men are so ambitious.

BLOOD
My offer's just the start. That's an emerald mine and a rich one.

LEVASSEUR
(shrugs)
Still, the risks are high. No man has ever escaped this place... well, at least not completely.
(calls out)
Doogan!
(pauses)
Doogan, where art thou?

An especially weather beaten old sea dog looks up from a game of dice.

DOOGAN
Aye, Captain!

LEVASSEUR
This gentleman would like to hear
of Mayagana.

Doogan hops up from the table on crutches carved from teakwood, revealing he's missing both legs. He swings across the balcony with peculiar grace and plops himself down beside Blood.

CAP -0019
Aye, a slice of hell that place
is to be sure. I left a bit o'
meself behind, as you can see.
But I'd wager it was worth it,
being as me privates are still
intact an' all.

BLOOD
What happened?

DOOGAN
Sharks, sir. The water's infested
with 'em. The Spaniards toss a
miner in now and again just to
keep 'em handy. Cuts down on
escape attempts.
(beat)
And what interest do you have with
Mayagana might I ask?

BLOOD
My friends are there...

DOOGAN
Then you'd best make new friends,
if you don't mind my saying so.

They're now interrupted by the rhythmic tolling of a BELL.

A buccaneer hurries to Levasseur's side and whispers an urgent message. Levasseur quickly tosses down the last of his rum.

LEVASSEUR
We have an unexpected guest...
and a rather infamous one.
(rises)
Will you excuse me, mon Capitan?

INT. PIRATE HALL

The boisterous room goes silent as if a chill wind had just blown through it. All eyes go to the main entry. Two grim faced Spanish pirates appear, and take formal positions at either side of the doorway.

Don Diego now strides in accompanied by a heavily armed contingent of his men. He pauses to survey the room.

Levasseur stops halfway down the central staircase. There is an underlying tension to his courteous manner.

LEVASSEUR

Greetings Don Diego. Will you forgive me if I say I'm surprised we have the pleasure of your company?

DIEGO

Not at all, Captain Levasseur.

LEVASSEUR

(gestures grandly)
Please join us. The food is abysmal, but the drink makes that less obvious and the women make the rest completely unimportant.

DIEGO

(curtly)

Unfortunately, my stay must be brief.

(addresses the entire room)

I've come to offer the pirate kings of Tortuga a unique prize.

Without warning, two swarthy Spaniards sweep the contents off the nearest table top, sending food and drink flying.

Arabella Prescott is dragged forward into the torchlight, her wrists manacled and a black sack cloth secured over her head. She's yanked off her feet and placed standing on the table top.

Diego's First Mate hops up beside her and rips the sack from her head. Even in her present condition her fierce beauty is dazzling in the torchlight.

FIRST MATE

Arabella Prescott, daughter of
Frederic Prescott, Governor of
Port Royal!

A gasp and rumble of discussion cross the room.

Levasseur is one of the few who understands the gravity of this kidnapping. He chooses his words carefully.

LEVASSEUR

Truly, Don Diego, you've brought us a treasure beyond compare. I simply hope you haven't brought the wrath of the British fleet with you as well.

DIEGO

The Governor himself knows if we
were followed he'd receive her
head in a box.

(steps up on the table)

And he's willing to pay a king's
ransom for the safe return of his
daughter.

Diego pauses to stroke her cheek. Arabella snaps her head away in
defiance.

DIEGO (CONT.)

She is a proud beauty, no?
Perhaps her unsafe return would
do as well.

A hearty laugh ripples across the room.

DIEGO (CONT.)

The choice belongs to the highest
bidder.

A one-eyed Brit with the look of a pirate/deserter shouts out;

BRIT

One hundred pieces of eight!

An enormously fat Turkish captain raises his curved scimitar in the
air.

TURK

One thousand drachma in a chest
of gold.

C.U. - LEVASSEUR

as he mumbles to an associate.

LEVASSEUR

What the hell's the value of
drachma again?

ASSOCIATE

Less than the gold chest.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A nasty pirate captain, one side of his face covered with a grotesque
burn scar shouts out;

BURN FACE

Two hundred gold doubloons! And
her father shall receive her as
bowlegged as a British cavalryman.

His men burst into dark laughter.

Suddenly a voice rings out from the balcony.

BLOOD
Five hundred gold doubloons.

Arabella looks up across the room, hardly able to believe... it's Peter Blood!

C.U. - DIEGO

as he slowly recognizes the face of the man who captured his ship and blew half his men to kingdom come.

DIEGO
(gasps)
You...

ANOTHER ANGLE

BLOOD
The name is Peter Blood and my bid is five hundred doubloons.

Diego glares up at his sworn enemy.

DIEGO
To you she is not for sale.

Blood leaps down off the balcony, nimble as a cat and lands on a table top where Conner, Hagthorpe and several of his men are seated. Blood lays a hand on his sword hilt.

BLOOD
I say she is

Blood's men rise, their hands going to their weapons.

DIEGO'S MEN

do the same, as other buccaneers and wenches start to back out of the line of fire. Diego draws his cutlass as his men cock their muskets. KIT-KLATCH. KIT-KLATCH.

DIEGO
Then it's the last thing you shall say.

LEVASSEUR
Gentlemen, please! As you know, violence is not allowed in Tortuga. Especially in my own tavern.

DIEGO
It shall be brief.

LEVASSEUR

Don Diego... You are a man of honor. Might I suggest you settle this man to man?

DIEGO

A duel?

LEVASSEUR

If you wish. But a sporting one.

Levasseur snatches a sand glass from atop a harpsichord.

LEVASSEUR

A duel within the time it takes for the sands to run out of this glass. Afterwards, if both men still stand, I, myself shall determine the winner.

Blood hops down from the table top and draws his sword.

BLOOD

Agreed.

CLOSER - BLOOD.

as he hands his flintlock to Conner.

BLOOD (CONT.)

If I lose, kill him.

CONNER

My pleasure.

WIDER - LEVASSEUR

LEVASSEUR

Now, if you gentlemen will just step outside...

Too late. Diego moves like lightning... bounding across two table tops to swoop down on Blood, his blade FLASHING.

CLANG! SCREECH! Sparks fly as Blood meets the attack, blow for blow... but Diego is an incredible swordsman.

Blood leaps above a low sword thrust and ducks an overhead slash that beheads a roast pig on the table behind him. THWACK!

Blood's sword arm is blocked, but he rocks the Spaniard back with a solid elbow to the jaw. CRACK! Diego wheels about and nearly deswords Blood with a windmilling reposte that leaves Blood at the very edge of the blazing fire pit.

Blood counters with a series of devastating parries and repotes that reverses their positions. Now with their swords crossed, it's Diego who strains against falling into the flames... back... back.

Suddenly, Diego shifts his weight and makes a mighty leap back, just clearing the pit. He stabs a blazing log and hurls it at Blood.

Flames scatter as Blood SEVERS THE LOG IN TWO IN MID-AIR.

Diego uses the distraction to charge head long at Blood. Blood blocks the Spaniard's sword thrust, but the two crash together like linebackers and EXPLODE STRAIGHT OUT THROUGH THE THATCHED BAMBOO WALL...

EXT. PIRATE HALL

...and out into the dirt. Blood rises first and nearly takes off Diego's head with one mighty SLASH -

- but the Spaniard darts back and Blood's blade severs a support pole.

WIDER

The entire balcony collapses, dumping Wench #1 and #2 on their behinds.

The swordfight continues into Tortuga's open air marketplace where everything from barrels of rum to exotic weaponry are bought and sold.

Diego makes a desperate lunge that Blood sidesteps like a matador. The Spaniard crashes through a wine vendor's stall and straight into a snake charmer, knocking open a large wicker basket of deadly HOODED COBRAS.

Suddenly both men find themselves surrounded by half a dozen serpents coiling to strike.

They warily CLASH swords as they dodge the cobras' poisonous fangs.

Blood and Diego's men circle the battle as it rages through the marketplace shouting encouragement to their leaders and hurling oaths at their adversaries. Duel or no duel, the entire lot are ready to break into a full scale brawl at any moment.

THWACK. Blood beheads a striking cobra, then redoubles his attack on Diego. The Spaniard is weakening... falls to one knee.

ANGLE ON DIEGO'S FIRST MATE

as he silently draws a dagger, and positions himself near Blood's back.

CONNER

notices the threat and pushes his way through the rabid crowd.

BLOOD

has nearly desworded Diego... keeps driving him back.

DIEGO'S FIRST MATE

waits for his chance, then lunges at Blood's unprotected back.

CONNER

draws his sword and deflects the blade at the last second. CLANG!
He's spun around from the impact into the center of the ring.

DIEGO

lashes out, STABBING CONNER STRAIGHT THROUGH THE BACK. Conner SCREAMS
and falls to his knees.

Then all hell breaks loose as a full scale battle erupts from both
sides.

KA-BOOM. The earth at their feet suddenly explodes in a huge ball of
smoke and flame.

REVERSE ANGLE

Levasseur stands beside a SMOKING CANNON, flanked by his men, who have
their muskets trained on the group of combatants.

The Frenchman still holds the dainty time glass in his hand.

LEVASSEUR

Gentlemen... your time is up.

Levasseur's gunmen hastily reload the cannon and train it on the
Spaniards.

LEVASSEUR (CONT.)

This dispute is now over. In my
humble opinion, the right to
purchase the girl has been won
by Captain Blood.

(beat)

Don Diego, I respectfully suggest
that for now you bid adieu.
My men will collect your payment
and escort you to your ship.

Diego glares at Levasseur, turns on his heel and exits. His men
follow suit.

ANGLE ON BLOOD

who now holds Conner in his arms. The Irishman is clearly dying.

CONNER

(smiles weakly)

Now see what you've gotten me into
with your lunacy?

Conner convulses as his body is wracked with pain. He's fading fast.

BLOOD
Be still, Roland.

Conner grasps Blood's shirt front and pulls him closer... his voice now a hoarse whisper.

CONNER
I've one confession to make...
(pauses)
It was an honor to fight at your
side Peter Blood.

And Roland Conner breathes his last.

Blood gently lies Conner back down and shuts his eyelids as his men gather round. Blood glances up to see Don Diego cast a last gloating smirk in his direction.

Blood rises, enraged... but Levasseur stops him.

LEVASSEUR
A bit of advice, mon capitan.
In my country we say revenge is
a dish best served up cold.
(pauses)
Besides, five hundred gold
dubloons and all this trouble for
one woman...

BLOOD
Where is she?

LEVASSEUR
Safe. I've had her sent to your
cabin.

BLOOD
And my offer?

LEVASSEUR
Mon dieu. Can you think of
nothing else?
(pauses)
Alright. You are a man of
passion. I am a man of commerce.
If I should assist you on this
adventure your reward will be the
freedom of your comrades. My
reward will be the treasures of
the Spaniard's mine. All of it.

BLOOD
Done.

LEVASSEUR
(surprised)
What? You don't even want to
negotiate?

BLOOD
Get your men ready. We sail on
the morning tide.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEA HAWK - TORTUGA HARBOR - NIGHT

The ship bobs gently in Tortuga's half-hidden lagoon under the pale light of a crescent moon.

INT. SEA HAWK - BLOOD'S CABIN - NIGHT

Blood enters to find Arabella chained to an oak pillar in the center of the cabin. She's thrilled and relieved, having had no idea who won the duel.

ARABELLA
Peter, thank God!
(notices his bloodied shirt)
You're hurt...

BLOOD
I'm fine. Here...

He inspects her manacles, which are looped over a crossbeam... locked tight. Blood scans the cabin.

BLOOD (CONT.)
There doesn't seem to be a key.

He moves closer and tries to slide the chain off the beam. No luck... but there is a nearly palpable heat from the close proximity of their bodies. Blood looks into her eyes.

ARABELLA
(softly)
There must be a key...

But the key is no longer important to either of them.. Blood gently runs his hands through her hair, then kisses her passionately. She responds as if she's waited for that kiss a very long time.

Their passion flares. Blood's rough hands caress her body and she's left breathless. She wraps one willowy leg around his... drawing him closer. Blood strips off his waistcoat and tosses it aside.

C.U. - WAISTCOAT

It gently lands on the cabin floor and we see the large brass KEY to Arabella's manacles slip out of its pocket.

As Arabella's soft cries mingle with the distant sounds of the crashing ocean we...

FADE OUT

EXT. CARIBBEAN - DAWN

Two mighty ships at full sail crash through the waves; the Sea Hawk and next to it Levasseur's ship, the St. Anne.

INT. SEA HAWK - THE MAIN CABIN - DAWN

ANGLE ON A CRUDE MAP - DAY

Doogan scratches out a diagram of the mine at Mayagana. The access is from the harbor. At its back is a mountain.

DOOGAN

There's guard posts all along the perimeter. The mine itself's a vast pit straight out of the seventh level of hell. The harbor's a fortress. Cannon here and here.

BLOOD

Then we'll strike from the inland side. They'll never suspect it. A small brigade with a single cannon to draw fire.

DOOGAN

It'll be no holiday. You'll be headin' dead up hill through jungle thick as a barrister's wig.

LEVASSEUR

A task I'm sure you're much better suited for than I, mon capitain.

BLOOD

Once we've broken through here you strike the harbor. We'll have them chasin' their own tails.

LEVASSEUR

A fine plan, mon ami. May God smile on optimists and Frenchmen, the most entertaining of His fools.

C.U. - MAP

Blood points out a distinctive lagoon on the side of the island opposite the fort.

BLOOD (V.O.)

When it's over we rendezvous here. A safe harbor.

DOOGAN (V.O.)
No such a thing on Mayagana, me
bucko. No such a thing.

MATCH DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAGOON - MAYAGANA - DAY

The map comes to life as we dissolve to an aerial shot of the actual lagoon. A remote tropical harbor at the base of the island/mountain.

THE SEA HAWK

Arabella stands on deck, sharing a silent last look with Blood, as he stands at the prow of a longboat pulling for the rugged shoreline.

Hagthorpe, Kindu, Wolverstone, Spivy and four more of Blood's hardiest men row past a breathtaking WATERFALL towards an impenetrable tropical rain forest that grows up the nearly vertical slope of the island.

Spivy glances across the lagoon as he rows.

SPIVY
Mind yer pinkies, lads. That
ain't no angel fish yonder.

The wickedly curved fin of a six foot tiger-shark cuts the surface of the longboat's stern.

C.U. - ARABELLA

as she continues to gaze after the longboat.

ARABELLA
(softly)
Godspeed, Peter Blood.

Arabella looks overhead as she hears a bird's CAWING echo across the harbor.

THE HAWK

swoops across the lagoon, circles Blood's longboat and gracefully lands in the rigging beside Arabella... her protector in its master's absence.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. YUCATAN PENINSULA - DAY

Magnificent Mayan temples dominate a lush tropical coastline. Half a dozen heavily armed Spanish warships are harbored just offshore.

SUPERIMPOSE: THE YUCATAN PENINSULA
MEXICO

CLOSER - TEMPLES

Don Diego and four of his men gallop on horseback through the devastated ruins of what was once a mighty civilization.

CUT TO:

INT. TEMPLE - DAY

DON CARLOS DEPAGAL, the commander of the Spanish fleet, sits on a throne overlooking a chamber that was once a sacred place. The Spaniards have converted it to a war room covered with maps and the standard of the King of Spain.

Don Diego stands before the throne. Several CONQUISTADOR GENERALS, Don Carlos' advisors, are present at this formal audience.

Don Carlos takes a bite of melon presented to him on a golden tray by a Mayan servant. He spits out the seeds.

DON CARLOS

I sympathize with your misfortunes Don Diego, but I suspect your vendetta against the British is more of a personal nature than a political one.

DON DIEGO

Perhaps you've spent so long among these primitives that you've forgotten our purpose in the modern world.

DON CARLOS

(dryly)

I wouldn't bite the hand that feeds you Don Diego. It appears someone has already nibbled at yours.

The Conquistadors chuckle.

DON DIEGO

All I ask for is three ships. Three ships and the men to sail them.

DON CARLOS

You've asked for the Diablo de Llargos. Our greatest fighting vessel.

DON DIEGO

Grant me this and I will burn Port Royal to the ground and take Jamaica for Mother Spain.

Don Carlos is intrigued, but cautious. He glances at his advisors, then back to Don Diego.

DON CARLOS
You may start a war with the
British.

DON DIEGO
It has already begun.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAYAGANA - JUNGLE

A SERIES OF DISSOLVES takes us up the steep jungle slopes and sheer rock faces of Mayagana as Blood leads his MEN on a back-breaking journey. Hacking through foliage. Tormented by insects and heat. Loaded down like pack mules...

They carry a cannon suspended in a rope cradle from sturdy wooden beams... as well as a small barrel of black powder and a sling filled with cannon shot.

And all along their way, never out of sight or mind, is the river -- a series of breathtaking waterfalls that descend the mountain like a giant's stairway pounding through the jungle...

Kindu stops up ahead. He drops into a crouch, motioning the others to a halt. Blood hurries to Kindu's side, keeping low. Together, they creep forward...

ANOTHER ANGLE

...and emerge from the foliage onto an outcropping of rock, crawling forward on their bellies. The other men cautiously ease into place around them. CAMERA CRANES UP AND OUT, revealing their dizzying position atop sheer crags...

...and unveiling the Spanish mines of Mayagana beyond. We've seen some bad places before, but this one looks like Dante himself designed it. It's an enormous pit gouged into the face of the earth. Countless mine-shafts honeycomb the cliff faces, the various levels of which are connected by impossibly long and shaky ladders. Sulphur deposits smoke and flare, lending the scene an oddly hellish and stagnant haze.

SLAVES are being worked to death everywhere we look. Columns of chain-ganged MEN are urged along with whips as they carry baskets of raw ore along slippery trails or rickety catwalks.

Even worse than what's being done to the living is what's been done to the dead. The ridges of Mayagana are lined with crossed beams of wood standing out like big X's, upon which are the desiccated corpses of those who've been lashed there and left to rot. Buzzards pick and choose from a vast buffet.

WOLVERSTONE

Hobbs was right. This place is Hell itself.

BLOOD

Henry. Can you get a clear shot at those cannons from here?

Hagthorpe creeps up to assess the layout. Their position is near the rim that lines the back of the crater. Protecting the front from sea attack is an impressive fortress-like wall, the battlements of which are bristling with Spanish cannons aimed at the harbor. (This wall serves double duty -- not just keeping intruders out, but keeping the slaves in.) Additional cannon emplacements are perched atop a pair of wooden towers standing like sentinels at either end.

CAP -0019

HAGTHORPE

We'll have to, if our French friend expects to sail into this harbor.

He aims his spyglass at the mouth of the harbor, where a narrow channel of sheer cliffs provide passage to and from the open sea. Levasseur's entryway.

BLOOD

Your first cannon shot will be Levasseur's signal. Aim quickly and well, or they'll cut his ship to pieces before he can even bring his cannons around.

HAGTHORPE

(nods)

I'm to be the Frenchman's signal. Who's to be mine?

Blood pulls a double-barrel antlock pistol. A grim smile.

BLOOD

You'll know when the time is right.

(to Spivy and
Wolverstone)

Remember... not a single shot 'til we find them.

Hagthorpe watches them depart, turns to the others:

HAGTHORPE

You heard the captain! Bring them cannon up! Let's get ready to do some discouragin'!

EXT. HILLSIDE

The narrow rim that rings the back of the mine. Beyond it is the sheer drop down into the crater...

the inner wall crisscrossed with catwalks and patrolled by guards.

Blood, Spivy and Wolverstone cross the outskirts of simple guards' barracks and craftsmans' shops that are built into the hillside bordering the compound.

The men pause under cover of a BOAT BUILDER'S YARD as Blood points to the ridge above.

A half-dead slave is being lashed to one of the ghastly crossbeams that line the rim of the vast crater.

Two hooded monks pull the leather cords taut until they cut into his flesh as a third chants solemnly in Spanish and dangles a smoking censer of incense.

A guard accompanying them starts back down a ladder to the catwalks below.

BLOOD

waves his men forward and they scramble up the steep incline to the ridge.

THE PRIEST

finishes his chant and all three turn to climb back down the ladder. The miner, badly beaten and weak from his ordeal, manages to lift his head and speak in a throaty whisper;

MINER

Please Father... don't leave me like this.

PRIEST

Silence! Only pain and suffering can cleanse the devil from your soul. Such a death is a blessing for the likes of you.

An ARM pointing a flintlock pistol suddenly appears from behind the "X" crossing of the beams (it's almost as if the victim himself suddenly sprouted a third arm).

BLOOD (V.O.)

Come closer, Father.

(cocks gun)

Or I'll bless you all where you stand.

The stunned priests slowly move forward as Wolverstone and Spivy appear and quickly cut the miner's bindings.

CUT TO:

EXT. MINE COMPOUND - DAY

A PAIR OF SLAVES are WHIPPED as they trudge past camera. ANGLE WIDENS to reveal DOZENS OF SLAVES pushing the spokes of a huge wheel similar to a rum mill, only this contraption is designed to pulverize ore. Long lines of shackled SLAVES are bringing baskets of rock, dumping them, going back for more.

Blood and his fellow "priests" march solemnly into view swinging their censers.

BLOOD
We should split up. If you find
CAP -0019
'em first get 'em to safety and
fire a round.

Wolverstone and Spivy go off on their own. Blood continues in a different direction, scanning for faces...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MINE SHAFTS - BLOOD

Searching. Hoping for a familiar face. He suddenly pauses, seeing Jeremy Pitt. The boy is trudging back to the mines with an empty basket, chained in a long column of men. Blood glances around, follows Jeremy's column up toward the mines...

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

...while Wolverstone and Spivy case the area. Spivy pauses, seeing DON MARQUEZ leading a squad of heavily-armed SOLDIERS across the compound. With them are SLAVE BEARERS toting a pair of medium-sized chests on a shoulder pallet.

SPIVY
CAP -0019
Hang on. I think I've spotted
two old friends of mine.

WOLVERSTONE
Where?

SPIVY
(points at the chests)
John, meet Mr. Booty and Mr. Swag.

WOLVERSTONE
(grins)
Pleasure's all mine.

They press on, following Don Marquez' group...

INT. MINE SHAFT - DAY

...as Jeremy Pitt's column enters, trailed by Blood.

Blood looks around as his eyes adjust. In the inky blackness all around him, he sees endless rows of HAGGARD PITIFUL MEN working with picks, digging out tons of ore a handful at a time. (NOTE: All the workers in the shaft are connected by long chains that loop through their leg shackles.)

SOLDIER #1 suddenly appears at Blood's side. Blood's cowl still masks his face. He points.

BLOOD
The boy. Bring him to me.

Jeremy looks up, eyes widening with terror at the sight of the priest. He struggles as Soldier #1 tries to undo his shackles:

CAP -0019
JEREMY
No, I didn't do anything! I swear
I didn't--!

The commotion brings SOLDIER #2 up behind Blood:

SOLDIER #2
Father, my humble apologies, but
you shouldn't be in here. It
isn't safe.

Blood turns. He slowly raises his right hand, drawing the man's gaze by making the sign of the cross before his eyes --

BLOOD
No. It isn't.

-- and he completes the holy gesture by making a fist and punching him in the nose with pile-driver force. Soldier #2 goes flying, landing hard on his back --

Soldier #1, stunned, lets go of Jeremy and scrambles to his feet to confront the attack --

CAP -0019
-- but Blood is still in motion, swinging the smoking censer around like a mace, meeting the soldier with a hammer-toss uppercut that literally flips the man off his feet and sends him spinning backward through the air to land in a heap.

The slaves are stunned. Blood throws his cowl back.

BLOOD
Jeremy! It's me!

JEREMY
Peter? But how--?

BLOOD
Never mind that. We have to find
Miggs and get out of here.

Jeremy starts towards the entrance of the mine shaft.

JEREMY
This way...

BLOOD
No, Jeremy.

Blood glances down the rows. Endless lines of hopeful faces stare back, meeting his gaze. Firmly, to Jeremy:

BLOOD
All of us.

A HUGE IRON PADLOCK

SHATTERS and flies apart under the blow of a sledgehammer swung by Peter Blood, freeing the endlessly long chain...

THE CHAIN

gets pulled along by the slaves, slithering free of their leg shackles all down the line...

...and we come to the boots of a SOLDIER. TILT UP to his face, baffled as he watches the chain slither past. He pulls out his gun...

SOLDIER
What the hell?

-- and he promptly gets a sledgehammer in the face that takes him clean out of frame. SWISH PAN to Blood as:

BLOOD
Get his keys!

SLAVES scramble to the fallen man, grabbing his keys.

BLOOD
Free the men in the other shafts!
The rest of you keep working!
Wait for the signal!

Blood spins, races with Jeremy back up the shaft toward daylight...

INT. ANTECHAMBER - COMPOUND

BOTH chests sit side by side on a rough hewn oak table. Don Marquez unlocks a chest and raises the lid to show off its contents to a Spanish seaman, CAPTAIN RAMON...

...revealing the chest filled to the brim with glistening green emeralds. Captain Ramon holds a particularly large specimen up to the light.

CAPTAIN RAMON
My compliments, Don Marquez. An amazing shipment for the glory of Mother Spain. I will guard it with my life.

SPIVY (O.S.)
If you insist.

KA-KLATCH! Both men suddenly find themselves with pistols at their backs, aimed from the folds of Spivy and Wolverstone's priestly robes.

EXT. HIGHER BATTLEMENTS - DAY

Jeremy leads Blood along the parapets overlooking the mines. They enter a dank earthen chamber.

JEREMY
This way...

INT. CHAMBER

The eerie cave is carved out of solid rock. Blood and Jeremy pass long rows of HANGING STEEL CAGES containing corpses in various stages of desiccation and decay.

They finally come to one that contains a still-living person -- Miggs. He blinks dazedly at them through the bars, dismissing what he sees:

MIGGS
(muttering)
Damn my eyes, I'm seeing things again. Is that Peter Blood or grim death hisself havin' a joke?

BLOOD
(grins)
Hello Miggs. How's the leg?

MIGGS
Blood! It is you! Get me out of this thing! I feel like a bleedin' parakeet in here.

Blood steps back and throws his sledgehammer down, knocking the bolts off. Jeremy wrenches the door open and they help Miggs out.

BLOOD
Can you walk?

MIGGS
Walk? I'll bloody well dance if it gets me out of here.
(looks over Blood's shoulder)
Hello boys! Is that Wolverstone and Hagthorpe?

Blood turns and sees two real priests approaching. Priest #1 gets on look at Blood, pulls a dagger from beneath his robe and attacks. Priest #2 races off screaming for the guards.

Blood blocks Priest #1's knife hand and knocks him out cold.

BLOOD

Come on!

Blood, Jeremy and Miggs hurry into a cross tunnel.

ANOTHER ANGLE

...and are suddenly cut off by Spanish guards racing straight at them.

Blood fires his pistol point-blank at Guard #1, snatches the guard's musket as he falls, cracks #2 in the head with its butt and fires it at #3. KA-BOOM!

EXT. HAGTHORPE'S POSITION - DAY

HAGTHORPE

(hears the shot)

FIRE!

Men set torch to fuse. The CANNONS ROAR!

EXT. WALL/COMPOUND - DAY

Hagthorpe's cannonball SHRIEKS in. The Spanish emplacement atop the wall EXPLODES! Several SCREAMING CANNONEERS (and an entire cannon) are catapulted off the wall to land in a flaming heap in the compound

-- where we find Wolverstone and Spivy racing wildly through the pandemonium with their iron chests.

SPIVY

So much for sneakin' out quiet!

INT. MINE SHAFTS - DAY

VARIOUS QUICK-CUT ANGLES:

As the revolt begins! GUARDS are suddenly overwhelmed as SLAVES come swarming out of the darkness with picks and sledgehammers, hundreds of men pouring up the shafts toward daylight --

INT. COMPOUND ANTECHAMBER

as DON MARQUEZ unties the ropes from his feet. Several soldiers try to rouse Captain Ramon, who still lies bound and unconscious.

DON MARQUEZ

Leave him! Follow me!

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

MORE GUARDS are swept under as SLAVES come flooding out of every shaft. All over the compound, soldiers are overwhelmed by sheer force of numbers, a huge rolling wave of frenzy and chaos...

EXT. HAGTHORPE'S POSITION - DAY

...as Hagthorpe scans the harbor entry with his spyglass. No sign of Levasseur's ship. Musket fire CRACKLES from below, peppering his cannon position with lead.

MCFEE
(ducks back)

WHERE THE HELL IS THAT FRENCHMAN?

HAGTHORPE
(torching a fuse)
He'd have to be stone deaf not
to hear this!

WA-BOOM! The cannon ROARS --

EXT. COMPOUND - DAY

--and the resulting EXPLOSION blows the main doors to the harbor wide open! Slaves pour out towards Spanish ships docked at the pier... and freedom. Spanish sailors run for their lives.

EXT. ROAD NEAR PARAPETS (HIGHER GROUND) - DAY

The SLAVE REVOLT surges toward the harbor gates. Wolverstone and Spivy come careening wildly up the rickety catwalks, each straining under the weight of an iron chest. They spot Blood's group.

WOLVERSTONE
Miggs! Jeremy! You're alive!

MIGGS
So are you, bless yer hide!

BLOOD
Something's happened to Levasseur.

SPIVY
We done well enough without him,
t'would seem.

Grinning, he raises the lid of a chest to reveal the dazzling array of emeralds within.

SPIVY (CONT.)
...and come away with some lovely
sparklers for our trouble.

Suddenly, a hundred yards away, Don Marquez appears, racing down a stairway towards them with twenty soldiers at his heels.

BLOOD
This way!

Blood and his men scramble up a series of ladders up the back of the crater... heading for the rim.

Spivy and Wolverstone bring up the rear, doing their best under the weight of the chests.

Musket fire tears up the catwalks and ladders around them. KA-ZING. A shot ricochets off Spivy's chest handle just as he makes it off a ladder onto a catwalk.

Spivy sets the chest down shaking his stinging hand, and turns back to the ladder. He pulls his sword, slashes the ropes securing the ladder and pushes it off.

Half a dozen Spaniards clutching the ladder fly backwards, screaming as they tumble down into the crater below.

SPIVY (CONT.)

Hah! How does that feel ya dirty
pack 'a...

Spivy's victorious outburst is cut short as musket shots splinter the catwalk around him.

Don Marquez and the rest of his men have reached Spivy's catwalk from a different route and are hot on his trail.

He grabs his chest and races to catch up with the others.

EXT. RIM

Hagthorpe helps Blood pull Miggs and Jeremy up off the final catwalk up over the edge of the compound. THOOM! KA-BOOM! Suddenly cannon shot begins to tear into the ridge.

Hagthorpe returns fire as Spivy and Wolverstone clamor over with their booty.

BLOOD

Leave the cannon. Come on!

EXT. HILLSIDE

The group scrambles back down towards the safety of the jungle, when a squadron of guards led by Don Marquez appears cresting the hillside... cutting them off.

BLOOD

This way!

Blood leads his men across a gully towards the guard barracks as the soldiers open fire.

BLOOD

Head for the river! Wolverstone
with me!

ANGLE ON BOAT MAKER'S HUT

Blood grabs a freshly-painted longboat by the bow, yanks it off its blocks. Wolverstone lends a hand, lifting at the stern.

Together, they race downhill toward the river. Spanish musket balls track them like angry hornets, punching several HOLES in the longboat's hull.

BLOOD AND WOLVERSTONE

come hurtling over the crest of the river bank with longboat held high, musket balls CHEWING the rocks at their feet. They slide down the last few yards on their butts, slowing the boat to a wild stop right at the water's edge, where the rest of their party waits.

Miggs gapes. The river is raging past in a white torrent.

MIGGS

Go down that? You can't be serious.

CAP -0019
BLOOD
Your choice! Either the river or Spanish muskets!

Spivy heaves an emerald chest into the boat, shouts to Miggs:

SPIVY

Look on the bright side! You'll never live to regret it!

Miggs shrugs. True enough. Everybody hurls themselves into the longboat, shoving off as Spanish soldiers come over the rise with pistols and muskets BLAZING --

-- but the longboat is caught by the raging current and swept off the in the blink of an eye as if launched from a catapult! Don Marquez is not to be denied:

DON MARQUEZ

Bring the other boats!

EXT. RIVER RAPIDS - DAY

CAP -0019
The nastiest, most awesome WHILE WATER you can imagine zig-zagging down the jungle slopes. The longboat comes SLAMMING UP into view through a raging wall of water and CRASHING BACK DOWN again, revealing Blood and his men hanging on for dear life. They're not exactly taking a ride so much as a controlled fall down the mountain via rapids --

-- as massive ROCKS loom up in the blink of an eye, threatening to smash the boat to pieces at every turn. The men get swept along like a cork bobbing in a flood, whipping through wild spinning turns with every change in the current's flow!

Blood is at the tiller, arms bulging in a life-or-death struggle. The others are desperately trying to control their headlong momentum with SHOUTS AND FLAILING OARS, but it's kind of like spitting into a hurricane for all the effect it has.

Miggs spins accusingly to Blood, suddenly noticing:

MIGGS
HEY! THERE'S HOLES IN THIS DAMN
BOAT!

WHAM! He gets nailed in the face with roughly 50 gallons of water
as the boat nearly swamps!

SPIVY
THINK IT MATTERS?

Suddenly, the oar in Spivy's hands is SHATTERED TO SPLINTERS BY A
GUNSHOT! Stunned, everybody glances back and sees:

TWO MORE LONGBOATS in the rapids behind them, bristling with Spanish
soldiers and muskets, Don Marquez's boat in the lead!

All three boats go SLAMMING through an awesome series of dips, seeming
to vanish completely in the torrential rapids before bobbing back into
view!

SPANISH BOAT #2

CRASHES headlong into a boulder and flies apart in an instant,
throwing shattered wood and SCREAMING MEN in all directions to vanish
in the churning water!

SPANISH BOAT #1

Don Marquez watches the other boat disintegrate, spins forward:

DON MARQUEZ
SHOOT! SHOOT, IDIOTAS!

The Spaniards let rip a BLISTERING BARRAGE. One particularly
courageous SOLDIER rises up with musket poised, trying to get a clear
shot -- and a passing tree branch takes him right out of the boat with
a sickening THUD! So much for that idea.

BLOOD'S BOAT

takes a few hits, gunwale splintering with the impact of the musket
balls. Blood ducks, keeping a death-grip on the tiller as the others
bail water like crazy.

Suddenly--CRUNCH--the bow glances off a passing boulder, crumpling a
plank inward. Water shoots in like a firehose. Miggs frantically
tries kicking the plank back in place!

MIGGS
Damn boat!

BLOOD
Don't worry! It's not the boat
that'll kill us!
(points ahead)
It's the falls!

MIGGS
(eyes bugging)
THE WHAT?

And suddenly the boat seems to drop out of frame as --

ANGLE ON WATERFALL

-- Blood and his men literally go airborne. An endless, gut-wrenching moment of freefall. The Spanish boat hurtling into mid-air right behind them! Men SCREAMING as they drop back into the rapids, swept along toward --

A SECOND WATERFALL

-- and going airborne again! More screaming freefall. Dropping back into the rapids again, swept along toward --

YET A THIRD WATERFALL

-- and Blood's boat hurtles awesomely into the air to drop smoothly back into the rapids yet again! Behind him, the Spanish boat takes a nasty bounce and shoots off the edge of the falls at a bad angle, hurtling through the air on the wrong trajectory --

Don Marquez and his men are SCREAMING (and holding on!) as they sail through the air on a long lethal arc that ends with them SHATTERING on the rocks below, obliterated in an explosion of wood fragments and cartwheeling bodies!

BLOOD'S BOAT

as the rapids even out. Everyone looks back for one last glimpse of the Spanish wreckage. Jubilation erupts in the boat, men laughing and shouting, slapping one another's shoulders.

MEN

(various, overlapping)
We made it! We're alive! ...Take
that ya slavemongerin' bastards!

Suddenly they notice that Blood has remained quiet and intense at the tiller. Staring straight ahead.

BLOOD

(softly)
One more to go.

All eyes turn forward. Shit!

THE FOURTH (AND BIGGEST) WATERFALL

cascades from the cliffs into the lagoon where The Sea Hawk lies at anchor. Blood's boat rockets over the edge as if shot from a cannon, hurtling/plummeting to the water below --

EXT. LAGOON - DAY

-- to land in a massive spray of water, upright and still afloat!
Barely intact. Joints sprung like a worn-out mattress. Half-filled
with water and in imminent danger of sinking.

This doesn't keep Spivy from noticing there's now only one treasure
chest on board.

SPIVY
(to Wolverstone)
Where's your chest?

WOLVERSTONE
That's mine right there! Where's
your chest?

Their discussion is interrupted by a soft crack as the battered stern
splits in two and water rushes in.

Which wouldn't be so bad if it weren't for the shark fins tracking
them, skimming the surface in every direction.

Blood and his men grab frantically at anything they can get their
hands on and paddle for their lives toward the Sea Hawk!

Suddenly, a major crack down the middle gets worse -- the edges of
the boat spread outward, threatening to split the boat in two.

The last treasure chest slips off the end of the fragmenting boat.
Spivy makes a desperate grab, but only manages to knock it open,
spilling its glittering contents as it sinks out of sight.

WOLVERSTONE (CONT.)
(beat)
Maybe that was yours.

Blood grabs the edges and pulls them back in, literally holding the
boat together for the last few yards of travel.

They thump against the Sea Hawk's hull and frantically grab onto the
drop nets...

..just as their faithful longboat sinks from under their feet and
vanishes below the surface for good. Blood and his men wearily climb
up the nets --

EXT. SEA HAWK - AMIDSHIPS

as Blood climbs over the gunwale and is surprised to find the ship
deserted.

BLOOD
(calls out)
Arabella?
(pause)
McFee?

Hagthorpe and the others are close behind.

HAGTHORPE
Who's mindin' the ship?

LEVASSEUR (O.S.)
I am, mon capitain.

Blood and his men turn to see Levasseur on the forecastle deck.

BLOOD
Where were you, you bastard?

LEVASSEUR
Right here, of course. Waiting
for you... with my benefactor.

Major Bishop now appears with a squadron of British soldiers, their
guns trained on Blood.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A heavily armed English battleship and Levasseur's ship both glide
into the lagoon, neatly blocking its entry.

LEVASSEUR

eases back on the forecastle rail.

LEVASSEUR
Forgive me, mon ami, but as I
said; you are a man of passion.
I am a man of commerce. Why fight
the Spanish when the price on your
head... as well as the girl's,
is so high?

CUT TO:

INT. METAL SHOP - YUCATAN PENINSULA - DAY

C.U. - A FIST OF IRON

crowned with a row of deadly spikes across the knuckles, glowing
red-hot in a primitive kiln.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Don Diego sits with his forearm strapped to the top of a work table.
He nods to a Mayan ARTISAN, and braces himself.

The Artisan grabs the iron fist by its "cuff" in a pair of metal
pincers and extracts it from the kiln.

ANGLE ON DIEGO

as the Artisan squeezes the pincers shut, sealing the red hot fist to
Diego's forearm. Diego SCREAMS in pain.

The moment the pincers are removed, Diego dunks his new fist in a tub of water beside him, creating a HISSING cloud of steam.

Diego removes the deadly looking fist from the water and admires its workmanship.

DIEGO
(softly)
Bueno. Muy bueno.

Smiling darkly, Diego turns to the open doorway of the Artisan's workshop and admires the three Spanish warships that sit in the harbor, being prepared for battle.

The foremost ship, "El Diablo de Llargos," is an absolutely massive floating fortress... a man o' war with a full three tiers of cannon ports and an iron prow that looks as if it could punch a hole through a mountain.

Diego's first mate now enters and hands his captain a scroll that bears a royal seal.

FIRST MATE
Your commission from His
Excellency, Don Carlos.

Diego accepts the scroll, clutching it in his good hand.

DIEGO
Then we are ready.

He raises his iron fist and SMASHES a stone vase as if it were made of China.

C.U. - A BUCKET OF BLOODY FISH
as it's poured overboard.

LOW ANGLE - BOW

looking up at Bishop and his first mate as they gaze at the water below. We hear a furious SPLASHING off camera.

BISHOP
That should do it.

REVERSE ANGLE

Peter Blood hangs lashed hand and foot to the Sea Hawk's massive barnacle-encrusted anchor.

He dangles just above water that's churning with dozens of frenzied MAN-EATING SHARKS.

Bishop leans over the bow rail.

BISHOP
I've finally discovered an
honorable way for you to serve
your king, Blood... as bait.

Bishop chuckles as he turns to his first mate.

BISHOP (CONT.)
Prepare to drop anchor.

CLOSER - BLOOD

He is desperately working away at the rope binding one of his wrists. It slowly begins to fray as he rubs it against the anchor's barnacles.

ON DECK

A sailor unlatches the "safety" on the heavy ironworks of the anchor's release mechanism.

BLOOD

rubs frantically, heedless of his bleeding wrist. The rope is nearly worn through.

Suddenly a one-eyed sailor pops out of a cannon port right beside Blood and jabs a bowie knife in his ribs.

ONE-EYE
'cre, now! That'll be enough of that!

ON DECK

Bishop signals to the first mate.

BISHOP
Drop anchor!

C.U. - THE ANCHOR CHAIN

It's released, the massive links CLANKING as they flash across the deck.

BLOOD'S HAND

BREAKS FREE just in time to grasp One-Eye by the wrist. The shocked pirate is jerked overboard with Blood as the anchor drops STRAIGHT DOWN INTO THE SHARK-INFESTED WATERS.

UNDERWATER

The cast iron anchor drags both men straight through the swirling pack of rabid tiger sharks to the bottom of the bay.

BLOOD

struggles for One-Eye's knife, slashes him across the chest and pushes the bleeding sailor towards the sharks.

THE SHARKS

immediately descend upon him in a frenzied pack, all snapping teeth and lashing tails.

BLOOD

frantically cuts at his bonds.

EXT. DECK

Levasseur steps up beside Bishop as he watches the churning water below turn red with blood.

LEVASSEUR

Such a pity.

(raises his glass)

Here's to you, Captain Blood.
May you be in heaven an hour
before the devil knows you're
dead.

Bishop's First Mate steps up to the rail.

FIRST MATE

Your longboat's ready sir.

BISHOP

And how is Miss Prescott?

FIRST MATE

(uncomfortably)

She's insistent on speaking to
Captain Blood, sir.

BISHOP

She must hear nothing of this.
Simply tell her we shall depart
for Port Royal momentarily.

UNDERWATER - AT THE SAME MOMENT

Blood, his lungs ready to burst, finally frees himself and swims under the ship.

He glances back at the pack of sharks; still fighting for the last scraps of One-Eye... but one or two now turn in Blood's direction.

SHOCK-CUT

Suddenly a huge tiger-shark rockets up out of the shadows IN FRONT of Blood, its rows of razor sharp teeth gaping open for the kill.

Blood dodges the teeth by inches and buries his knife in the creature's white belly as they COLLIDE.

For a few brief moments Blood takes a horrifying ride, digging his knife into the shark's guts as it lashes about... its teeth straining for a bite.

Finally the beast goes limp in a watery cloud of its own blood.

Blood swims for the surface. Several other sharks are now at his heels, but stop to devour the bleeding carcass Blood has left behind.

EXT. THE SEA HAWK - OPPOSITE SIDE

Blood breaks the surface GASPING for breath. Never has air tasted sweeter.

He puts his knife in his teeth and silently climbs the netting up the Sea Hawk's port side.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Blood pauses as he spots Bishop climbing aboard his frigate at the entry of the lagoon. The sails unfurl as the ship heads out to sea.

SHOCK CUT - AN ENORMOUS SHARK

The largest killer of them all suddenly breaks the surface right beneath Blood... it's monstrous jaws stretched wide!

Blood literally leaps up the netting and grasps the lower edge of a cannon port as the mighty jaws SNAP SHUT just short of him.

The beast CRASHES back down beneath the surface.

EXT. SEA HAWK - AFT DECK

Blood slips over the rail and crouches beside the aft cabin hatch.

BLOOD'S P.O.V.

Levasseur and his men are in a general state of merriment as they pillage supplies and valuables from the Sea Hawk's main hold and transfer them to Levasseur's ship.

Blood ducks back down as he hears the approaching footsteps of two PIRATES.

They stroll by, their arms loaded with booty from the Sea Hawk.

PIRATE #1

Look 'ere Harry. We'll be fartin'
in silk after this haul!

Blood springs up behind them and CRACKS their heads together. He quickly gathers the men's weapons.

O.S. VOICE
(urgent whisper)
Hssst! Captain!

Blood turns toward the aft hold and discovers his men have been locked below.

HAGTHORPE
The bastard means to set us
adrift!

BLOOD
Hold on.

Blood knocks the pin out of the hold's lock with the stock of Pirate #1's musket.

He hands Hagthorpe and Wilverstone the fallen pirate's weapons as they climb out of the hold.

BLOOD (CONT.)
Quietly, now...

ANGLE ON THE FORECASTLE DECK

as Levasseur oversees the sacking of the Sea Hawk.

LEVASSEUR
Tuit's vete, mes enfants! This
isle is no place for civilized
men.

The moment Levasseur turns his back the two pirates he was speaking to are JERKED off-camera.

TWO MORE PIRATES

loaded down with loot are silently ambushed by Blood's men and disappear behind the main hold. We hear a muffled THWACK and CRUNCH off-camera.

LEVASSEUR

looks across the deck... which is suddenly missing most of his men.

LEVASSEUR
(irritated)
Pierre? Am I talking to myself?
Where is everybody?

Blood now hops up on top of the main hold, a pistol in both hands.

BLOOD
Right here, Levasseur.

Blood's men appear in key positions across the deck, with muskets and pistols trained on Levasseur and his remaining pirates.

Levasseur freezes, a nervous smile on his face.

LEVASSEUR
Ah, Captain Blood. I was so
worried about you.

CUT TO:

EXT. LEVASSEUR'S SHIP

with the Sea Hawk still anchored beside her.

Levasseur stands precariously balanced atop the rail with his hands
tied behind his back and Peter Blood's cutlass poking his stomach.

The tiger sharks still circle menacingly in the water below.

CAP -0019
LEVASSEUR
You can't be serious! Surely we
can talk this over, mon ami.

BLOOD
For once your only hope will be
to keep your mouth shut.

Blood jams a rope between Levasseur's teeth and swings him out over
the water on a yard arm's beam. Indeed, the Frenchman's only hope
is to hang on by his teeth as he dangles above the sharks.

ANGLE ON THE SHORE

A longboat pulls away, leaving Levasseur's men stranded on the shore.

BLOOD

grabs a sturdy rope from the rigging overhead.

BLOOD
Don't worry, Levasseur. I'm sure
your loyal men will swim out to
save you.

Blood swings across to the Sea Hawk and lands gracefully on deck.

HAGTHORPE
What about that bastard, Bishop?

BLOOD
Mr. McFee?

McFEE
Yes, Captain?

BLOOD
Do you think we can beat a British
crew to Port Royal?

MCFEE
That we can Captain!

BLOOD
Then hoist anchor!

ANGLE ON LEVASSEUR

As the Sea Hawk's sails unfurl majestically in the background, the Frenchmen desperately keeps trying to swing back to his ship's rail with the rope still clutched in his teeth.

CUT TO:

EXT. OPEN SEA - SUNSET

Bishop's frigate cuts through the darkening waters on its way to Port Royal.

INT. BISHOP'S CABIN

Bishop enters to find Arabella pacing the room. She confronts him immediately.

ARABELLA
What have you done, Edward?
What's happened to Peter Blood?

BISHOP
He was killed trying to escape
with Spanish booty. He abandoned
you and his own men.

ARABELLA
How can I believe you?

Bishop takes her hand in his.

BISHOP
Arabella, we've been caught up
in violent events... trying to
start a new life in this place.
First you're kidnapped. Held
hostage by Blood.

ARABELLA
I was never held hostage by Peter
Blood.

BISHOP
Of course you were. Don't you
see? If you weren't that would
make you a consort to pirates.
(pauses)
And worse yet guilty of
collaboration with traitors to
the crown.

ARABELLA
You bastard!

Bishop stands there, gazing unflinchingly into the eyes of the woman he must possess or destroy.

BISHOP
There is still one way you can
put this all behind you, Arabella.
As my wife in Port Royal.

He turns on his heel and exits.

CUT TO:

EXT. BISHOP'S FRIGATE - NIGHT

As Bishop paces the deck, the lookout calls from the crow's nest;

LOOKOUT
Land ho!

ANGLE ON THE BOW

Bishop steps up beside the first mate and gazes off at the twinkling lights of Port Royal.

FIRST MATE
We're almost home, sir.

BISHOP
No, Kent. We're almost at our
godless outpost.
(pauses)
England is still far, far away.

Suddenly Port Royal is thrown into stark relief by the FLASH and THUNDER of cannon fire.

Kent snaps open a spyglass for a closer look.

KENT'S P.O.V.

Two Spanish man o' wars have begun to pound the city mercilessly with cannon fire.

BISHOP

snatches the spyglass from his hands.

BISHOP
What is it?

KENT
(shaken)
Spanish ships, sir.

BISHOP
Pirates?

KENT
I can't say. They're not landing.
They look more as if they wish
to simply...

BISHOP
To simply what, man? Spit it out!

KENT
To simply destroy the entire port.

BISHOP
Sound battle stations. Make
certain we're at full sail.

The lookout calls once again from the crow's nest.

CAP -0019
LOOKOUT
Ship ahoy!

Bishop scans the darkness around their vessel and sees nothing.

BISHOP
What the bloody hell is he talking
about?

LOOKOUT
Ship ahoy!

Bishop and Kent look off the frigate's stern and still see nothing.
The night is black as pitch.

BISHOP
The man is mad

KENT
We'd see its lanterns...
something.

ANGLE ON THE NIGHT SKY

as dense clouds drift past, unveiling the FULL MOON.

ANGLE OFF THE FRIGATE'S STERN

The moonlight now illuminates the immense battleship DIABLO DE LLARGOS directly behind the frigate and closing in fast. The ship has been operating without any running lights and now appears as if by some evil magic, dwarfing the frigate in its path.

BISHOP

GASPS as the men around him scramble to their battle stations. He gets a grip on himself and takes command.

BISHOP
Hard about! Hard about! Man the
starboard cannon.

DIABLO DE LLARGOS

Torches now flicker to life at every battle station across the entire vessel revealing row upon row of cannons.

CLOSER - THE BOW

Don Diego, just like his ship, suddenly appears out of the darkness as torches at either side of him are lit by his men. Looking like grim death in the flickering light, Diego raises his iron fist high overhead... then slams it down.

DON DIEGO

CAP
FIRE!

WIDER

The night itself seems to EXPLODE as three full decks of cannon fire from the battleship's bow and rain down on Bishop's frigate.

The vessel is ROCKED as the ocean heaves up beneath it and the stern takes devastating DIRECT HITS.

CUT TO:

THE SEA HAWK - AT THE SAME MOMENT

Blood, Hagthorpe and Spivy at the bow. They watch in horror as the El Diablo mercilessly continues its assault.

HAGTHORPE

That's not a ship. It's a bloody fortress.

SPIVY

The El Diablo de Llargos. I've heard tales of it but I thought it were sea dog's blather.

BLOOD

Fire a volley off the bow.

WOLVERSTONE

We're too far out of range.

BLOOD

We've got to draw its fire before they sink her.

HAGTHORPE

Aye, Peter. But we've precious little ammunition left.

CAP -0019

BLOOD
Use it! Wolverstone, heat up
coals in the galley as quickly
as you can.

Wolverstone races below decks. Spivy turns to Hagthorpe.

SPIVY
Are we bakin' em bread, now?

CUT TO:

EXT. BISHOP'S FRIGATE

The deck tilts dramatically as she comes hard about. Bishop's ship has taken direct hits and is seriously outgunned but he remains game for the fight.

BISHOP
Fire at will Mr. Hardy!

The cannons ROAR at irregular intervals, panicked sailors reloading as quickly as they can.

KENT
We're taking on water, sir!

Arabella struggles through the smoke and fire to Bishop's side.

BISHOP
Get below!

Geysers of water suddenly explode all around them and the forecastle deck erupts from a DIRECT HIT.

ANGLE ON DIEGO

Don Diego smiles... a predator going in for the kill.

SPANISH MATE
La boata esta finito, Capitan.

DIEGO
No prisoners. Prepare another
volley.

Suddenly there is a FLASH and ROAR off their starboard side.

Diego turns to see the Sea Hawk approaching at full sail. Its cannon BLAZING.

The Spaniard's eyes flash with hatred as he recognizes the ship. He utters one word, his voice choked with rage;

DIEGO
...Blood!

FIRST MATE
Que esto, Capitan?

DON DIEGO
Come about! Prepare to fire the
starboard cannon!

EXT. SEA HAWK - C.U. - BLOOD

gazing through his spyglass directly at Diego. Blood slowly lowers
the glass.

BLOOD (CONT.)
(softly)
We meet again.

ANGLE OFF THE SEA HAWK'S BOW

as the Diabla de Llargos returns fire. CRACK-CRACK-KABOOM! Rows of
its starboard cannon BLAZE.

The shots fall short, sending up a bizarre water-show of geysers
exploding off the Sea Hawk's bow. Miggs cautiously rises from behind
cover.

MIGGS
We'll, we've drawn their fire
alright. Are your plans always
this successful?

Blood scans the harbor with his spyglass.

BLOOD'S P.O.V.

Both of the other Spanish ships are also coming about.

BLOOD
We've got the attention of their
other ships as well.

HAGTHORPE
We've only a few rounds left!

BLOOD
Henry, have you ever fired a
cannon from a longboat?

HAGTHORPE
You mean a ten pounder?

BLOOD
No. I mean a deck cannon.

HAGTHORPE
I'm not sure such a thing can be
done.

BLOOD

It's got to be done. I'm going to stop Diego. But you and Wolverstone have to take out those other two ships or we're done for.

HAGTHORPE

From the longboats?

BLOOD

They won't see you coming. One shot at sea level is all it will take.

HAGTHORPE

(realizing)
...it could work.

Blood turns to McFee.

BLOOD (CONT.)

McFee - dead on to her bow at full speed.

MCFEE

Then scrape the paint off her side?

BLOOD

(grim)

No, son. Just dead on to her bow.

CUT TO:

EXT. BISHOP'S FRIGATE

The entire ship CREAKS as the deck slowly tilts more dramatically.

KENT

We're taking on water fast sir!
Two other man o' wars approaching off the port bow!

BISHOP

Man the longboats. Abandon ship.

Bishop leads Arabella through smoke and fire racing towards the longboats as the sailors hastily prepare to lower them.

ANGLE ON THE APPROACHING SPANISH SHIPS

as they open fire.

BISHOP'S FRIGATE

BOOM! KABOOM! A direct hit blows the longboat and the port side gunwale to smithereens, cutting off their escape.

C.U. - BISHOP AND ARABELLA

cling to the deck for their lives.

EXT. SEA HAWK - STARBOARD SIDE

With the ship still at full speed, Hagthorpe and a four man team finish lowering a cannon barrel into a longboat and jump in. Hagthorpe signals to the deck hands.

No time for block and tackles now. Kindu and Isaac both raise hand axes high overhead and chop the lines.

The longboat takes a breathtaking drop... and SPLASHES DOWN with bon rattling impact into the night-darkened waves.

PORT SIDE - LONGBOAT #1

as Wolverstone gives the signal and his boat lines are severed. Down... down it falls, setting off a huge spray of water on impact.

THE EL DIABLO

A mountain of timber and cannon cutting a path through the waves directly at the Sea Hawk. Its guns blaze in sequence - all three tiers - THOOM! THOOM! KABOOM!

THE SEA HAWK - AFT DECK

as cannon fire EXPLODES all around them. Blood stands at the wheel beside McFee, busily lashing it down... immobilizing it.

McFEE

What if they try to outmaneuver us, sir?

BLOOD

I know this man. He'll want to ram us, no matter what the cost... if he can't sink us first.

(calls out)

Spivy!

SPIVY

Aye, Captain!

BLOOD

Load the hot coals into the forward cannons.

SPIVY

Beggin' yer pardon Captain, but they'll bounce off her hull like tea biscuits.

BLOOD
It's not her hull I'm after. It's
her sails.

CUT TO:

THE EL DIABLO

Don Diego races up the quarter deck ladder to his HELMSMAN'S side. The helmsman clutches the wheel, his knuckles gone white as he watches the Sea Hawk racing at them on a collision course.

HELMSMAN
We must come about, Capitan!

DIEGO
We will crush them! This ship
was built for us.

HELMSMAN
Madre Dios! Por favor, capitan!

Diego cocks his pistol and jams it in his helmsman's ribs.

DIEGO
Cayense, bastido!

CUT TO:

THE TWO SPANISH MAN O' WARS

now within firing range of the Sea Hawk... their cannons ROAR.

The Sea Hawk races through a gauntlet of fire from all three ships, shells exploding on all sides. It may well be destroyed before it completes its desperate charge at the El Diablo.

HAGTHORPE'S LONGBOAT

comes about in the darkness at Spanish man o' war #1's stern, the men pulling for all they're worth in the churning waves.

Hagthorpe tightens the makeshift rigging that lashes the massive iron cannon barrel to the longboats prow, then prepares to put torch to powder.

HAGTHORPE
Steady lads! Mind the recoil!

Hagthorpe ignites the cannon.

HAGTHORPE (CONT.)
(sotto voce)
And God help us.

BARROOM! The smoking cannon RECOILS, knocking Hagthorpe overboard, snapping its rigging and smashing straight backwards through the longboats' seats. The men leap overboard.

Hagthorpe surfaces, sputtering and grasps the longboat's gunwale to see... They've scored a direct hit! The shattered stern of the Spanish ship is quickly taking on water.

The longboat is gutted, but still floating. The men CHEER as they cling to the gunwales.

ANGLE ON THE SEA HAWK'S QUARTERDECK

The entire ship TREMBLES as it takes devastating DIRECT HITS. Explosions erupt across the main deck. Blood yells at the top of his voice to be heard over the deafening roar of cannons.

BLOOD

Prepare to cut loose the top sails.

MCREE

The prow will heave up!

BLOOD

As it must! Do as I say!

Blood untheches his cutlass and races towards the bow of the ship.

SEA HAWK - FORECASTLE - C.U. - RED HOT COALS

as the cannon team pours the burning coals from tin buckets down the bow cannon barrels. Spivy merrily lashes himself to the railing beside his cannon and calls to his mates.

SPIVY

Hang on, lads this'll be a ride you'll not forget.

WIDER - THE SEA HAWK AND THE EL DIABLO

The Sea Hawk continues its charge straight through the hellish barrag of canon fire towards a dead-on collision.

EXT. THE EL DIABLO - HELM

The two ships are moments away from impact. The helmsman can't take it anymore. He pushes Diego aside and spins the wheel for all he's worth.

KAROOM! Diego shoots him in the back, jerks his body out of the way and spins the wheel back on course.

THE SEA HAWK

Blood crouches at the bow as geysers of water EXPLODE all around him. He turns to Spivy.

BLOOD

Now aim for her sails, man. Her sails! FIRE!

Both bow cannons ROAR.

Twin volleys of fiery coals shoot through the night air like comet trails and scatter across the El Diablo's sails. The canvas BURSTS INTO FLAMES.

HIGH ANGLE

The Diablo and the Sea Hawk, both now trailing smoke and fire crash through the waves on a deadly collision course 100 yards apart...50 yards!

With only seconds left, Blood calls to McFee's team.

BLOOD
Cut the topsails! Now!

McFEE'S MEN

cut the lines

WIDER

The entire prow of the Sea Hawk lifts up out of the water as the tension is suddenly released from its topsails.

Blood braces himself at the prow, buffeted by the tearing wind. He catches movement out of the corner of his eye...

THE HAWK

flies right beside him... valiantly pacing the mad headlong charge of the ship that is its namesake.

Blood smiles. A good sign. He pulls out his saber and dirk (long-bladed dagger) and races straight across the forecastle deck like a madman, heading right for the point of...

IMPACT!

The Sea Hawk's bow sprint TEARS into the upper deck of El Diablo's prow like an immense spear as the ship's COLLIDE AT FULL SPEED!

QUICK CUTS;

Blood leaps through the night air, thrown high across the Diablo's bow from the impact.

Rigging tears loose and rains down on the flaming decks.

Diego's men are hurled like rag dolls smashing through railings and sliding off tilting decks.

Blood flies straight into the Diablo's flaming main sail and plunges his cutlass into the canvas. He rips his way straight down onto the deck in one long slice.

Below-decks, Spaniards are crushed by their own runaway cannons.

The Sea Hawk, carried by its own momentum continues smashing across the Diablo's bow, rising up out of the sea... shattering wood and crushing the Spaniards in its path.

Both ships are now locked in a death grip, bow crushing bow.

Kindu, Spivy, McFee and the rest of Blood's men charge over the bow of the Sea Hawk and leap down onto the El Diablo's deck, sabers flashing and war cries on their lips.

EXT. EL DIABLO - MAIN DECK

Blood wades into a group of four Spaniards, his cutlass and dirk deadly blurs of steel.

The first two Spaniards go down almost instantly, #3 fires off a pistol shot which Blood ducks, but Spaniard #4 doesn't, catching it right between the eyes. Blood bulldogs #3, running him through with both blades as he tosses him high over his shoulder.

CUT TO:

EXT. BISHOP'S FRIGATE

Chaos amidst the smoke and fire as the ship sinks at a dramatic 45 degree angle.

Bishop pulls Arabella back and wedges them both in a momentarily safe spot amidships. Arabella looks off towards the starboard side.

The Sea Hawk and El Diablo are adrift in their direction. The battle still rages on board.

CLOSER

There, illuminated by the light of the burning main sail, Arabella sees Peter Blood, locked in mortal combat with the Spanish pirates.

Bishop's frigate lurches again, listing hard to port as it takes on more water. Its main mast tilts towards the deck of the approaching El Diablo.

Bishop grabs Arabella by the wrist and starts to drag her towards the bow.

BISHOP

This way...

Arabella pulls away.

ARABELLA

Your ship is sinking, Edward.
I don't intend to go down with
it.

With that she turns and starts for the clew line (rope ladder up main mast).

Bishop grabs her by the forearm, but Arabella swings around and CRACK him in the jaw with a surprisingly effective right cross.

Bishop is rocked back as she scrambles up the clew line.

CUT TO:

EL DIABLO - MAIN DECK - ANGLE ON BLOOD

as he instinctively ducks a sword cut from behind him. Blood spins, slashes the Spaniard across the midsection and kicks him aside... then looks up.

BLOOD'S P.O.V.

There, through the smoke and fire across the main deck, Blood sees Diego. The pirate captain stands atop the aft deck glaring straight back at him. Diego draws his cutlass with a flourish. A clear invitation to duel.

Blood grabs the fore topsail's support line, severs it with one swipe of his cutlass and swings across the entire length of the main deck.. right above the raging battle.

ANGLE ON DIEGO

as Blood swoops down out of the smoke and fire straight at him... kicking out with both feet. SMASH!

Diego crashes back against the cabin hatch, splintering wood... but he quickly recovers. CLANG-CLASH! Sparks fly as steel meets steel.

SPANISH MAN O' WAR #2 - MAIN DECK

A Spaniard has sighted Wolverstone's longboat, coming about with its cannon aimed at their port side. He calls excitedly to the gun crew.

LONG BOAT #2

as Wolverstone sees the Spaniards scurrying about on deck.

WOLVERSTONE

Be quick lads, they've spotted us!

The man o' war's port cannons ROAR, but the longboat's too low in the water. The shells whistle by overhead.

WOLVERSTONE (CONT.)

We're down here, ya blind bastards! Say hello to John Wolverstone!

With that Wolverstone puts torch to powder. THOOM!

The cannon rigging holds but the recoil upends the entire longboat... flipping the prow straight up in the air and tossing its crew like a bucking bronco.

A direct hit smashes through the Spanish ship's hull!

INT. MAN O' WAR #2

Spaniards are swept off their feet as a torrent of sea water surges through the shattered cargo hold.

EXT. BISHOP'S FRIGATE'S CROW'S NEST - ARABELLA

The mast is now tilting precariously above the El Diablo's aft deck. Arabella kicks off her shoes and climbs out on the top gallant sail's rigging. She takes a quick look back down the mast and sees Bishop clamoring up after her.

The frigate lurches again, its timbers GROANING horribly under its own weight as it sinks. Arabella nearly loses her grip, but hangs on. She's now as close as she'll ever get to the El Diablo's deck. Diego and Blood are locked in battle beneath her. Bishop is almost upon her. She cries out.

ARABELLA

Peter!

Blood turns and is astonished to see Arabella leap through mid-air... and attempt to grasp the aft rigging to break her fall. She tumbles from the rigging and falls to the deck below.

SWIZZING! Diego's blade cuts deeply across Blood's ribs. Blood recovers in time to parry a second sword cut. CLANG! But Diego follows with a vicious uppercut with his spiked iron fist. CRACK!

Blood is sent spinning backwards over the stair rail.

MAIN DECK

Blood lands flat on his back and rises just as Diego leaps down onto the deck and continues his assault. Dazed, but unbroken, Blood counters Diego's lightning sword thrusts then ducks under another iron punch. SMASH! Diego's fist shatters the wood inches from Blood's head.

Blood spins and nearly takes Diego's head off, when out of nowhere... SLASH! A saber cut opens a wound across Blood's back. He turns...

Bishop attacks from behind!

Now Blood, seriously wounded and half-blinded from the blood of his head wound, clashes swords with both Diego and Bishop at the same time.

Diego, enraged to suddenly find himself fighting beside Bishop, alternates between attacking Blood and the Englishman as the bizarre three-way battle continues.

Blood fights as he's never fought before, spinning under one blow and parrying the next with both his cutlass and dirk. He leaps over a low cut from Diego, knocks Bishop back with an overhanded slash, then looks across the deck for Arabella.

BLOOD'S P.O.V.

She lies unconscious near the starboard rail's cannon emplacement. The flames eating their way across the deck are quickly approaching her... and the overturned barrels of BLACK POWDER beside the cannonade.

CLANG! Blood catches Diego's blade inches from his throat. He redoubles his efforts, fighting like a man possessed. Arabella only has seconds left.

Blood spins about, deswords Bishop, literally cuts an X across his chest and sends him crashing down the open galley hatch.

Just as Blood wheels about, Diego severs the flaming main sail's tie-line. The huge boom arm sweeps across the deck directly at him, carrying a solid sheet of flaming canvas with it.

SLO-MO

Blood leaps above the wooden beam and SLASHES his way straight through the flaming canvas in one breathtaking move. He bursts through the other side trailing smoke and fire.

BLOOD

hits the deck, rolls and thrusts his cutlass STRAIGHT UP THROUGH DON DIEGO'S CHEST.

The Spaniard stares down in amazement at the blade buried deep inside him... then actually smiles at Blood.

DON DIEGO

(gasps)

I'll wait for you in hell, Captain
Blood.

Blood jerks his sword out of the Spaniard's chest and he collapses to the deck... dead.

THE MAIN MAST

Fractured at its base and fully aflame, the entire mast now begins to topple over, tearing half the boat's rigging with it.

BLOOD

scrambles out of the way... too late. The huge beam CRASHES down, splintering the deck like a felled sequoia. Blood is trapped beneath the jib arm, pinned to the burning deck. He struggles desperately to free himself but only manages to turn face to face with Don Diego's grinning corpse. Perhaps their meeting will take place sooner than he expected. Blood strains to look up.

The raging fire licks at Arabella's unconscious form. The powder barrels lie only inches away.

KIT-KLATCH!

Blood looks over the mast to see Bishop, standing above him. His chest is a bloody ruin but the crazed Englishman still manages to point a flintlock directly at Blood's head.

BISHOP
...Now I end the legend of Captain Blood.

Suddenly a piercing CAW rings out across the deck of the El Diablo de Llargos.

THE HAWK

streaks down out of the smoke and flames straight at Bishop... its claws barred.

BISHOP

can't believe his eyes. He fires at the hawk. KA-BOOM!

THE HAWK

strikes Bishop at full speed, digging its claws into his left eye. Its wings beat wildly as Bishop struggles to pull the SCREECHING bird from his face.

BLOOD

finally with one last massive effort, frees himself from the jib arm.

THE HAWK

flies away, leaving Bishop clutching his bleeding face. The Englishman staggers forward.

BLOOD

scrambles, limping and bloodied to Arabella... scoops her up in his arms and leaps overboard just as

KARROOM!

The entire port side of the deck explodes in a huge ball of flame.

C.U. - BISHOP

as he is blown to bits in the explosion.

BLOOD AND ARABELLA

splash into the water below and come up sputtering. Arabella slowly regains consciousness.

ARABELLA
...Peter.

BLOOD

Hang on.

Blood swims from the burning ship with one arm around Arabella as a series of explosions are set off somewhere deep inside the El Diablo's hull.

The pride of the Spanish fleet is going down and it's taking the Sea Hawk with it. The burning wrecks SCREECH and GROAN as they sink beneath the waves.

Blood and Arabella are suddenly caught by the massive undertow from the sinking ships... tossed back and sucked under in the churning water.

Blood surfaces again, gasping for breath as he still hangs onto Arabella... Then a hand shoots out of the darkness.

HAGTHORPE

Blood grasps his hand. Hagthorpe and his cannon team pull them aboard the longboat... battered and half-sunk, but still seaworthy. Miggs and Jeremy are already on board.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Wolverstone in his longboat help Spivy and Kindu aboard as massive gouts of water shoot skyward in the background... the last sign of the Sea Hawk and El Diablo.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF PORT ROYAL - SUNRISE

The war torn longboats pull into the shallows and their exhausted passengers struggle ashore.

Blood, weakened from loss of blood, clutches his side as Arabella helps him ashore. He collapses on the sand.

ARABELLA

You need a doctor.

BLOOD

(gasps)

On this island? Just fetch your sewing kit.

Bishop's first mate, Kent, now struggles up out of the surf having escape the sinking frigate.

KENT

(gasping)

Do you think you've won, Blood?
Look yonder.

Blood and company follow Kent's gaze;

ANGLE ON THE HARBOR

Three British frigates, magnificent full battleships, are pulling into the harbor past the smoking remains of the sunken Spanish ships.

KENT

The armada from England!
Replacements for our ships and
troops. They'll be no stockade
for you this time. You and your
lot will hang!

MIGGS

(aside to Blood)

No hard feelings Peter, but next
time you set out to rescue me,
spare us both the trouble.

Hagthorpe rises slowly realizing...

HAGTHORPE

Wait... those standards! Look
at the colors they're flying!

CLOSER - THE SHIPS

Beneath the British flag each ship flies the bold colors of WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

WOLVERSTONE

God have mercy! The flag of King
William. Can it be true...

THE HAWK

flies across the harbor, circling the approaching ships... a
victorious airborne escort.

CUT TO:

INT. GOVERNOR'S MANSION - DAY

Governor Prescott sits at his desk with Arabella at his side. Blood, Hagthorpe, Wolverstone, Kindu, Spivy, Miggs and Jeremy are all in attendance. The entire group are in fresh clothing and outside of a few bandages and arm slings, look fit and well.

LT. BARLOW

King William's escort from our opening battle scene is now emissary to the crown. He addresses the gathering.

BARLOW

On the fifth of February, Sir
William of Orange was declared
King of England. He'll continue
his reign of both Holland and
Belgium in one United Kingdom.

MIGGS

Here, here! Long live King
William!

Barlow presents official documents to Governor Prescott.

BARLOW

And he's not forgotten those who
stood by him. This is a full
pardon for Peter Blood and his
comrades... and an offer for their
commission to the King's royal
guard in London.

GOVERNOR PRESCOTT

That's kind of King James. But
I'm not certain I can allow it.

ARABELLA

Father, what are you saying?

GOVERNOR PRESCOTT

Now that I've regained my health,
I'd like to enjoy my retirement.
And Port Royal will need a new
governor.

(turns to Blood)

I need Peter Blood to stay right
here and fill that position.

BARLOW

(to Blood)

The choice is yours.

BLOOD

(pauses, then to
Prescott)

If I take your offer, you'd best
know what you're in for. As long
as one man thinks he has the right
to own another, I'll make it my
business to stop to him. Whether
a man's put into slavery for his
politics, his place of birth, or
the color of his skin, it's all
the same to me and I won't stand
for it.

(pauses)

You may want to think twice before
you put me in office.

GOVERNOR PRESCOTT

I'll admit, it won't be a popular
position, and I warn you, you'll
find English politicians more
treacherous than the Caribbean's
worst pirates.

(MORE)

GOVERNOR PRESCOTT (Cont'd)

(pauses)

But if you want the job, it's
yours.

HAGTHORPE

Here's to the good governor, Peter
Blood!

MIGGS

Here, here! And God help us all
if he's actually going to run the
bloody place.

Arabella hugs Peter as the men raise their mugs in a hearty victory
toast.

THE END