CUTTHROAT ISLAND

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"Being an account of BUCCANEERS & the SPANISH MAIN, the *Jolly Roger*, GOLDEN GALLEONS, bleached skulls, BURIED TREASURE...DESPERATE DEEDS, DESPERATE MEN, and-- even on this dark sail-- *ROMANCE*..."

"THE BLACK PIRATE"
screenplay by Douglas Fairbanks Sr.
1926

FADE IN:

The dead of night, filled by a thick veil of SWIRLING FOG. Ethereal tendrils pull us in, PROPELLING us over the dark waters of--

EXT. A VAST REEF - NIGHT

As we're SWEPT INTO this lethal maze of jagged, ship-eating coral, smoky shadows beneath us become the shattered hulls of--

TWO SPANISH GALLEONS

jutting from the reef like wretched bones. The glow of a dying fire flickers eerily in one ship illuminating the bodies of several dozen SPANISH MARINES as they wash against the rocks in a soup of bloody froth.

There are no survivors and the entire scene may as well be an apparition in our vaporous wake as ROCKETING FASTER AND FASTER over twenty miles of reef there is a FIERY CRACKLE! AND BURNING ONTO THE SCREEN--

"THE CARIBBEAN, 1659"

WOOSH! The curtain of fog blows away and in its place, the full moon of the summer solstice hangs like a gold doubloon in the black sky revealing the outline of a haunting island.

EXT. CUTTHROAT ISLAND - NIGHT

Ten miles long and half as wide, it is little more than a strip of black sand littered with boulders spewed from the steep volcano that dominates the western tip of the island throwing its shadow across a protected lagoon where from high above are seen the spectres of--

FIVE BATTERED SHIPS

resting at anchor. Two eight gun barques flying England's colors; a heavily damaged Spanish merchant ship; a small, derelict five gun sloop, its blood-red "no quarters" flag burnt and tattered; and the largest of the group a twenty gun frigate--

THE DEVILFISH

High atop its main mast whips THE BANNER OF KING DEATH: a flaming skull over crossed swords dripping blood, as--

SPIRALLING DOWN the mast and onto the decks reveals the BLOODTHIRSTY crew of SIXTY PIRATES. Eyes sparkling, cutlasses and pistols bristling with the anticipation of violence, they lower gig boats over the sides.

On the beach beyond, bonfires flare into the night sky where all the other CREWS can be seen in the drunken bliss of celebration.

Torches blazing in the gig boats' bows, the murderous pirates of THE DEVILFISH begin shuttling to the beach as--

SWOOPING AWAY, WE GLIDE ACROSS THE WATER toward a sea cave below the volcano.

INT. THE SEA CAVE - NIGHT

Filled with razor-sharp lava and jutting pillars of barnacle-encrusted coral ending at--

A TWENTY FOOT SHELF

which rises from the water. Two empty longboats bob before it while in a sudden flicker of fiery torchlight--

INT. THE CORAL SHELF - NIGHT

FOUR DESPERATE CAPTAINS, dirty faces streaked with sweat, each with left hands dripping blood, race to the ledge. Getting there first is, BONES MONROE followed by CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY--

A ROLL OF PARCHMENT

clutched in his fist. He is about to descend as--

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

bullets chew up the stone around him. The third and fourth captains, MORDACHAI FINGERS and DON FRANCISCO, RETURN FIRE hitting--

TWO DIRTY PIRATES as they charge from the darkness of a tunnel thirty yards across the ledge. As their bodies crumple to the ground--

THREE MORE KILLERS

stream after them. These are NATHANIEL VICKERS, DOGFACE CUBBINS and EARLESS TOM GROAT, while moving in behind them comes their leader--

JAGGARD CURREN

captain of THE DEVILFISH. A tower of a man, his frightful face looks as if it were brutally chiseled from granite with hammer and spike; he covers it with a thick dark beard and surrounds it with a ferocious mane of black hair. His booming voice like a mad dog's howl--

JAGGARD CURREN
Kill the bastards and get that map!

BOOM! Vickers sends lead for Mordachai Fingers, who trying to dodge, slips and rolls across the shelf.

Cocking his flintlock, Black Harry takes aim on Jaggard Curren just as--

BONES MONROE

cutlass shaking in his grasp, fastens his fearful gaze on the map. Seized with panic, Monroe leaps on Black Harry, throwing off Black Harry's SHOT, and he rips--

THE MAP

from his partner's grip. But as Monroe turns to flee Jaggard Curren FIRES, his lead ball ripping into--

MONROE'S BACK

spinning the Englishman across the shelf, slamming him into lava rock.

Earless Tom trades SHOTS with Don Francisco, as--

Curren moves after Monroe, intent on the map, and--

Dogface Cubbins SHOOTS Black Harry in the shoulder as he reloads. Blood streaming down his arm--

BLACK HARRY

grimaces, ramrods his load and BOOM! lead spits from his pistol, ripping into Dogface who goes down with YELPS AND SCREAMS.

Rapier in hand, Don Francisco rains blows at Earless Tom who defends himself with steel as--

Vickers charges for Black Harry, swinging his cutlass like an axe.

JAGGARD CURREN

kicks Monroe's inert body leaning upright against the stone. Monroe doesn't move. Curren reaches in and snatches--

THE MAP

from his fingers. He grins for an instant, only to recoil as--

BONES MONROE

ARRAGHH!!

Flashing up for his face, Monroe drives his cutlass cutting into Curren's skull with a sickening crunch.

JAGGARD CURREN

ROARS with painful rage as Monroe twists his cutlass in an effort to free it, but CRACK! the blade breaks off, embedded in Curren's head from nose to crown. Curren drops the map to the rocks at his feet.

Black Harry dodges Vickers's lethal blows, wresting his longsword from its scabbard with--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Don Francisco! The map!

But as blood streams down Curren's cheeks, it is--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

who scuttles for the parchment. Greedy to a fault, his honor and alliegence extend only as far as his margin of profit so swooping up the map, Mordachai Fingers makes his getaway, jumping from the ledge into--

A LONGBOAT

Weakening from battle and loss of blood--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY (CONT'D)
DON'T LET THAT SCOUNDREL ESCAPE!

Don Francisco drives Earless Tom back with a vicious attack, then turns and hurtles from the shelf, CRASHING into the boat where Mordachai Fingers fumbles with the oars.

JAGGARD CURREN

grabs Monroe by the hair, twisting his head until their eyes meet. Monroe stares horrified at Curren's bloodsoaked face.

JAGGARD CURREN
Here. I think this is yours.

Curren rips the jagged shank of steel from his head, then savagely plunges the blade into--

MONROE'S THROAT

carving through it from ear to ear. As Monroe GURGLES BLOOD, his detached body crumples to the ground. Holding the head, Curren grins fiendishly, turning as-

SLAP! Black Harry catches the blade of Vickers's sword with one hand and stepping past his guard, CRACK! delivers a solid kick to the cutthroat's stomach.

BLACK HARRY

releases Vickers's blade as the pirate staggers, then he dives from the shelf into the sea. He swims for--

INT. THE LONGBOAT - NIGHT

Mordachai Fingers pulls Black Harry into the craft as Don Francisco swiftly loads a brace of pistols. As the captains row away from the danger of the shelf, their attention fastens on--

A GIG BOAT

of TEN MEN sculling into the cave heading directly toward them.

DON FRANCISCO
We're saved! Those are our men!

But KABOOM! the pirates rain MUSKET FIRE into the longboat. Hit, Don Francisco slams back.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Not no more they ain't.

Snatching up the pistols--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Put your back into it, Fingers, head right for the bastards!

The captains' boat sweeps forward, closing the distance between the pirates who frantically reload their wheellock rifles.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY (CONT'D)
Heave to, you bloody whoresons!

A PIRATE
FUCK YOU, BLACK HARRY! WE SAIL BEFORE CURREN'S MAST NOW!

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Not for long, you don't, YOU FOUL-MOUTHED SONS-A-BITCHES!

And Black Harry FIRES TWICE taking out two men with torches, their flaming brands dropping, one to the floor, the other onto a comrade's head igniting his oily hair.

THE BURNING PIRATE
AAAHH!!!

He flails about in an effort to throw himself overboard, causing the rower to lose the oars, as from the shelf--

NATHANIEL VICKERS

FIRES and misses as he and Earless Tom Groat scramble for the second boat.

A few of the musket-armed cutthroats FIRE AGAIN before their boat, burning and out of control, spins KRRAAK! into a razor-sharp pillar of coral and sinks, finishing them off for good.

From the shelf--

JAGGARD CURREN
YOU'RE DEAD MEN! YA' HEAR ME?! I'LL HAVE ALL YOUR HEADS!

And he hurls Monroe's head out over the water and into--

THE LONGBOAT

landing among the captains as they escape the cave.

EXT. THE LAGOON - NIGHT

The longboat gliding into the lagoon, Mordachai Fingers peers down at the dripping head with--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Well rum won't be the death of this pirate.

And he kicks the head overboard as--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Oh my God...

The captains stare in awe as ahead the sky glows with the unearthly light of--

THREE SHIPS

flaming out of control.

Beyond the ships on the beach, Curren's men toss bodies into huge bonfires. A SENTRY watching the lagoon catches sight of the escaping captains and FIRING his weapon, sounds the alarm.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
(eyeing the beach)
Wonderful partner, that Curren.
If'n you don't join him...
(a grim smile)
He'll burn ya.

Black Harry looks up from tending to Don Francisco with--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Keep rowing, you idiot! They haven't got your tub yet!

Squinting, Mordachai Fingers sees he is right. Farthest out from the shore, his decrepit sloop--

THE SPARROWHAWK

still floats untouched. He gives it all he's got as from the beach--

EIGHT GIG BOATS --

with fifty bloodthirsty pirates streak out to catch them.

EXT. THE DECK OF THE SPARROWHAWK - NIGHT

THREE CUTTHROATS throw torches up into the sails, as leaping the rail come--

BLACK HARRY AND MORDACHAI FINGERS

PISTOLS BLAZING their bullets rip apart the surprised pirates, their torches hitting the deck, the sails saved.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
FINGERS! THE ANCHOR!

As Fingers races to the anchor, Black Harry helps the wounded Don Francisco aboard, his eyes glancing across the lagoon--

The eight gig boats have passed the first two burning ships, only Don Francisco's is left between the cutthroats and THE SPARROWHAWK. GUNFIRE rips across the water and--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

hacks at the anchor rope. CRRREECK! the old rope splits, the anchor plummets and the ramshackle sloop lists, its sails hunting the wind.

BLACK HARRY

races to the wheel, putting his all into bringing the small craft about, as he sees his approaching death in--

THE SPEEDING PIRATE BOATS

ten yards away, violent silhouettes against Don Francisco's sinking merchant ship, then--

KABOOM!

Fire hits the magazine and the Spanish ship blows to hell, scattering the gig boats like confetti.

With the sound of THUNDER the sails catch wind and fiery debris raining through the rigging--

THE SPARROWHAWK

rockets through a gap in the reef, Cutthroat Island and THE DEVILFISH silhouetted in fire behind them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MORDACHAI FINGERS'S CABIN - LATER

The three captains sit around a wobbly table, the treasure map spread out before them. No one speaks.

A PIRATE (V.O.)
Davey Jones smiled on them that night, to be sure. Three left from five, they were, the map drawn in blood between 'em. Yet now the Spanish were hunting them on one side, while on the other it were: THE SCAR!

A YOUNGER MAN (V.O.)
(half asleep)
Huh..? No shit? We're talkin' about the Scar here?

THE PIRATE (V.O.)
'Aye, for that be Curren's name now. Monroe's blade it were gave it to him. 'Course I have other names for the likes a him, the worm-brained puss-spewing baboon-bearded rat-bastard!

Silently, Black Harry raises his dagger over the map.

THE PIRATE (V.O./CONT'D)
They made an oath to wait until the Scar were dead or they theirselves had enough power to beat him...then they cut the map.

And the English privateer swiftly slices the map into three equal portions. They hesitate briefly, then all at once each captain grabs a part.

FADE OUT.

OVER BLACKNESS

THE YOUNGER MAN (V.O.)
(real tired)
Sorry, I didn't mean to doze off...So what? I'm supposed to believe that ten years later this treasure's still on the island, and the three captains have never gone back... Or maybe you're gonna tell me you got all three parts and I could have 'em for a price, hmm?

There is the sound of A BOTTLE CLINKING AGAINST GLASS and LIQUO being poured. Someone DRINKS, then SMACKING HIS LIPS--

THE PIRATE (V.O.)
No, friend, I'd be a bold one to claim the three parts're still out there, an' the Scar's just sittin' 'round with his thumb up 'is ass... Nooo...one of them cap'ns tried to go back the very next year. But drumming up a crew in St. Kitts he ran into that vomit-eating dog Nathaniel Vickers. Lost his hand, the map inside it.

THE YOUNGER MAN (V.O.)
Bull. Shit.

But WOOSH! Splitting the blackness with a flash of silver--

A THREE FINGERED STEEL CLAW

slams onto a greasy table, and PULLING BACK reveals--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

sporting a left hand of steel, his once fine clothes are now as dilapidated as THE SPARROWHAWK. Ten more years can be read in the wrinkles around his crafty eyes and they carry the glint of a man who knows he's destined for Hell, but who's determined to have a good time getting there. Bombed out of his gourd he pushes his jug of rum across the table to his worn out companion, WILLIAM SHAW.

SHAW
(with a deep sigh)
With such vivid detail, I should've guessed: the story of your life.

Shaw looks at the jug then regards the old scoundrel with vivid blue eyes that float above a mischievous grin and a perpetual five o'clock shadow. Where some men meet danger like an adventure, Shaw meets it like an accident, and if he's learned any lesson at all it's that he should have taken more lessons.

Shaw pushes the jug back to Mordachai with--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Actually I don't drink.

Mordachai Fingers's eyes bug out-- it's clear he's never heard that one before-- and he snatches back his jug as if Shaw's mere mention of abstinence might spoil the liquor. As Mordachai takes a reassuring swig--

SHAW'S HAND

strays to his belt where two well-used flintlocks remain handy beside a Toledo longsword; the strength of his steel more than making up for his many shortcomings.

THE BARTENDER (O.S.)
Last call, mates.

As Shaw and Fingers look to the voice, this is--

INT. THE DEAD DOG TRADER - NIGHT

Smokey tallow candles illuminate this smugglers' den as THE BARTENDER stands behind a sword-scratched and smelly bar where a SYPHILITIC THUG is slumped in a puddle of drool. The bartender empties a jug of rot-gut along the countertop.

THE BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Time to get rid of the germs.

He lights a match on his teeth and drops it onto the bar.

A BLUE FLAME

rips across the counter in a burning trail hitting the Syphilitic Thug who bolts upright, GURGLING indistinctly, his face singed.

THE BARTENDER'S FIST

SLAMS into his teeth launching--

THE THUG

across the sticky floors exploding through kegs and crates of plunder, and reeling into THREE LOW RENT PIRATES at a mouldy table, who grab him and toss him into the wall. The Thug sinks to the ground in a heap, facing--

THE BARTENDER
Go. The fuck. Home. Now.

Mordachai Fingers and Shaw watch the Thug stagger up the steep narrow stairway which leads to the only door out.

Leaning in and whispering--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
You happen to see the moon tonight?

Shaw raises an eyebrow at Fingers with--

SHAW
Don't let my leather boots mislead you, pal.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
No, no, I be talkin' about the summer solstice; this be the time a year when the tides drop their lowest-- only one week, once a year a careful sailor who knows the reef can get to Cutthroat Island.

Shaw's face is non-commital. Fingers drinks rum, then--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (CONT'D)
I plan to get my rightful share and I'll stake any lubber brave enough to help me.

Shaw scans the room. The Three Low Rent Pirates stumble up the stairs and out. Shaw shifts in his chair a gleam growing in his eye.

SHAW
Got yourself a ship?

Mordachai Fingers nods. Making sure the room's empty--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Any crew around here besides yourself?

Fingers gives a shrug and from the look on Shaw's face, this is good news.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Now answer me this, you a man in want of profitable work?

SHAW
Naw, I already got me a job.

Mordachai Fingers raises an eyebrow.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Perhaps you've heard of me. Name's William Shaw?

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Whatdya--
(hiccup)
do, Mister Shaw.

SHAW
I kind of, you know, put people together.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Fence goods, do ya?

Hands dropping to his lap--

SHAW
Nooo...actually my work isn't really against the law. Anyone with a sword can do it. What I do is find, let's say, scumbucket criminals like yourself and put them together with say, the city hangman.

Mordachai Fingers jolts in shock as, CLICK-CLICK!

SHAW (CONT'D)
Yeah, pays real well. Your bounty for instance is--

The old captain throws back his chair, kicking over the table and exposing Shaw's flintlocks. He freezes staring down at the business ends of Shaw's pistols--

SHAW (CONT'D)
That's right, don't move, 'cause the only thing between my bullets and all that rum you drank is your shirt.

THE BARTENDER (O.S.)
You don't hear too good. CLOSIN' TIME! Sun's comin' up and I gotta get my goods hidden from pryin' eyes!

Guns trained as he rises, Shaw catches a glimpse of the Bartender angrily coming around the bar.

SHAW
Don't worry about us, I got things under control and this doesn't concern you. There's any damages, I'll cover 'em.
(to Mordachai)
Keep your hand and that walnut crusher where I can see 'em and march.

Mordachai Fingers reluctantly complies, and Shaw can't help but smile and marvel at the situation--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Seven years and I finally peg this job.

But the Bartender, now storming across the room, grips a headsman's axe, and isn't seeing it the same way as--

THE BARTENDER
Tell me what to do in my place?! Here's one on the house for ya!

WHHOOSH! He hurls the giant axe for Shaw's head, the bounty hunter diving sideways as the blade bites into the overturned table and Shaw's SHOTS accidentally discharge, splintering wood as--

Mordachai Fingers rushes the stairs and out the door.

As the Bartender pries his axe from the table, Shaw quickly recovers his senses and charges up the stairs after the pirate.

Reaching the door Shaw reloads a pistol, when THUNDERING up the stairs behind him--

THE BARTENDER (CONT'D)
YOU AIN'T GETTING OUTTA HERE!

Taking the steps two at a time, the heavy axe high above his head, the Bartender closes in for the kill, only to meet--

SHAW'S PISTOL

aimed right for his heart. It freezes the Bartender one step before the pirate hunter. Shaw doesn't fire. For a moment it's a standoff, until weighty axe wobbling overhead--

THE BARTENDER (CONT'D)
(weakly)
What're you waiting for?

SHAW
The falling sickness.

THE BARTENDER
The what?

In answer, Shaw touches the barrel of his pistol to the Bartender's chest and gives a tiny shove. That's all it takes. Gravity snatches the unstable axe and pulls the Bartender backwards, KLUNKETY-KLUNK-KLUNK-KLUNK down the stairs.

Grinning with self-satisfaction, Shaw throws open the door.

A BULLET

EXPLODES into the doorjamb next to his ear. An instant's surprise becomes resolve and with a deep breath--

SHAW
One hand, one pistol, one miss.
Now it's my turn.

The bounty hunter spins through the door onto--

EXT. A PERIMETER WALKWAY - DAWN

Smiling, Mordachai Fingers takes aim with the second barrel of his double-barrel pistol. Hurling himself to the planks--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Shhiiit!

The BULLET WHIZZES inches above him as the bounty hunter painfully eats wood and RETURNS FIRE, driving Fingers around a corner twenty feet down the walkway.

Grabbing a railing--

SHAW

carefully pulls himself up, glancing nervously at the eight foot drop into water beyond and it's suddenly apparent that--

THE SMUGGLER'S DEN

is a forty foot, flat-topped barge moored fifty yards out in a placid jungle river.

Trading pistol for Toledo steel, the pirate hunter gingerly steps away from the vertiginous edge and sweeps his gaze down the narrow walkway after Fingers, then in the opposite direction to a ladder leading onto the roof. Around the corner--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

scoots along the walkway to a landing concealed in the shadow of a pyramid of fifteen gallon kegs stacked on their sides, secured by a rope to the deck above.

A ROWBOAT

floats before him. Glancing back for Shaw, Mordachai bends down and with claw and hand tries his best to untie the boat.

EXT. THE DECK - DAWN

Stepping off the ladder, Shaw races across the jumbled upper deck, his path a blur of stolen furniture, pilfered lumber, and walls of junk, ending with the huge pyramid of kegs.

Shaw hops over the mooring winch that runs a rope from the deck to the jungled shore. He hears--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (O.S.)
Those lazy toads'll get theirs, ol' Mordachai havin' to get home hisself...

The bounty hunter swiftly mounts the pyramid, climbing up and around the kegs for a better look. Hooking his free arm through the cord that secures the kegs to the deck--

SHAW

leans out, ready to tackle onto Mordachai Fingers when--

THE BARTENDER (O.S.)
YAAAA!

The bruised and bloodied Bartender swings for Shaw who dodges as SWWOOSH! the axe cuts air. The bounty hunter quickly climbs higher up the kegs.

Startled by the fight above, Mordachai Fingers accidently loses the rope--

THE ROWBOAT

immediately snatched by the current floats away from Mordachai, off into the river.

Fingers snaps his gaze from the boat up to Shaw, taking offense with--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
(to himself)
Oh, be it a black mark on a man's honor when he resorts to sneakin' up on poor ol' cripples.

Then the pirate flashes his eyes to the shore where barely discernable in the morning fog--

A PIROGUE CANOE

with FOUR PIRATES leisurely paddles towards him.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
HURRY UP YOU SKANKY GOATFISH! WHAT DO I PAY YA FOR-- TO STRAND YER CAP'N LIKE A PENITENT WHORE COME CHURCH SUNDAY?!

The steel-clawed captain waves to his men who pick up speed, as--

SHAW

scrabbles for safety across the top of the kegs, the Bartender close behind.

SHAW
Bartenders are supposed to be friendly for Godsakes!

But this Bartender sure isn't. His axe missing Shaw, the Bartender hacks the cord holding the pyramid together. With a RESOUNDING CRASH the kegs topple, Shaw and the Bartender with them.

Below, the canoe glides in for the landing. Fingers leaning out with--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
You stupid, drunken fishwives! I'll see the lot of you--

KLONK! a flying keg glances off his head, knocking the thought from his mind and the captain from his feet. Up on the deck--

THE BARTENDER

fights through bouncing, rolling kegs, his axe flailing before him until he finds--

SHAW

dazed and crawling for his sword that has wedged under the thick, wooden mooring winch. Shaw frees his weapon as the axe sweeps down for his head.

KLANG! the death blow deflects across the pommel of Shaw's sword and the axe continues down, cleaving the winch in two. His life saved, Shaw flashes a thankful grin to his sword, as--

THE SEVERED MOORING ROPE

SSS-CRACK! it snaps across the water, and--

Mordachai Fingers desperately holds out his hand for his men to grasp. But even as the FIRST PIRATE reaches for his captain's hand--

The current rotates barge and Mordachai Fingers away from the pirogue and into the heart of the river.

In the canoe, Mordachai's four men streak after the barge. As the next corner of the craft turns toward them, the SECOND PIRATE catches the railing. On the deck above--

SHAW AND THE BARTENDER

fight across the deck, the bounty hunter parrying the lethal axe blows two-handed as his feet dance through the hazardous kegs.

THE BARGE

takes a violent battering from the turbulent river throwing the two men together. The heavy axe makes a gash along Shaw's leg, but the real shock is on the face of the Bartender.

A BLOODY CIRCLE

swiftly spreads around the point of Shaw's longsword as surprised he pulls it from the man's chest. Axe falling to the deck, it's last call for the Bartender.

Blood flowing down Shaw's thigh, the pirate hunter lurches across the rolling deck in search of Mordachai Fingers.

EXT. THE PERIMETER WALKWAY - DAWN

Mordachai Fingers rubs the lump on his head and MUTTERS CURSES as he spastically bounds around the perimeter of the spinning barge trying to find his crew. Suddenly dropping into his path, Toledo longsword at the old scalawag's throat--

SHAW
Listen you, I've tried to be fair, but ya know, my sword here's losing patience and all I really need is your head. So you make this any harder for me, Fingers, and I'll leave the rest of you behind.

Shaw means business; but Fingers looks past him and grins.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Maybe you should take that up with me men.

SHAW
Your men?!

Shaw's question is answered with BLAAMO! Mordachai Fingers's men rain fire on the pirate hunter.

THE BULLETS

carving a path behind him, Shaw lowers his sword and throws himself at Fingers trying to tackle him around the corner. Glancing off the wall, they bounce into the railing and to Shaw's horror, KERRACK! both men plummet to the water below.

EXT. THE JUNGLE RIVER - DAWN

Mordachai Fingers breaks the surface, swept along with floating kegs in deep, fast waters.

THE PIRATE HUNTER

emerges like a half-drowned dog beside him, coughing and spitting. Shaw can't swim. They lock eyes, then--

Fingers desperately paddles away, aiming for a small rock-piled island that splits the river in two.

Shaw flounders for a keg to keep from drowning.

THE BARGE

pounds through whitewater troughs, as Mordachai's four men take aim on the bounty hunter.

Through mouthfuls of water--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
SHOOT THE BASTARD!

Catching his breath, Shaw finally drapes himself across a keg, a huge thankful smile spreading across his face until--

The pirates' LEAD whistles around him, one bullet striking--

A KEG

bobbing in the current beside Shaw, which EXPLODES in a blast of fire and water. Eyes wide at the keg clutched to his chest--

SHAW
Shit, gunpowder!

Popping from the floating explosive, Shaw's arms flail as he is immediately sucked under.

MORDACHAI FINGERS

washes out of control just about to pass the stone island and head into a tributary of wild rapids and boulders that splits to the right. With all his might, the old captain kicks for the last rocky corner of the island. Hand and claw outstretched--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Here we go, here we go, here we--

WHHAAM! he makes it all right, meeting slippery rock with the force of a cannonball that bounces him HOWLING in pain over a few more stones, then back into the current where--

MUSKETS BLAZING, the pirates are getting off trying to blow up--

The floundering Shaw in the tide of EXPLODING POWDER KEGS. In fact, they're having such a hell of a time with it, that they fail to notice--

THE STONE ISLAND

directly in their path. Shaw disappears into the tributary as the barge hits the island EXPLODING like a comet into a thousand pieces.

WILLIAM SHAW

jettisons in a spout to the surface, spinning after Mordachai Fingers and the kegs down the brutal tributary. The two men struggle to find safety in this raging foam-flying ride--

Shaw grabs onto a boulder. Hanging there, his body buffeted by the current, the pirate hunter has found safety, only long enough to react with fear as--

ANOTHER KEG

cascades right for him. Shaw only has one choice. Letting go of the stone he is sucked into a whirlpool as the gunpowder BLOWS UP, making sand of the boulder.

MORDACHAI

embeds his steel claw into a tree trunk that overhangs the water. As a keg shoots past him, EXPLODING among the tumult of jagged rocks that mean certain death ahead, Shaw has disappeared and Fingers grins, muttering--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
You challenge the best, you die with the rest.

Drip, drip, drip... Droplets of blood and water dribble onto Mordachai's nose. Slowly he lifts his gaze, past his claw to the log above where sword out and sopping wet Shaw crouches, glaring with--

SHAW
I'm taking your head.

Mordachai Fingers opens his mouth fumbling for words, but--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Uh-uh, don't even say a word 'cause you really piss me off! I sit in that disgusting dump listening to your boring stories till all hours of the morning! I'm shot at, chopped up, near drowned and exploded! And I almost lost my sword-- I LIKE MY SWORD! I warned you, I tried to be reasonable, but I have had it!

And Shaw pulls back the longsword ready to separate the pirate from his personality, when--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Wait! Wait! Wait! Kill me an' Cutthroat Island'll go to the others sure as day!

Shaw's blow freezes mid-stroke and with a big sigh--

SHAW
Would you just shut up about that?

MORDACHAI FINGERS
'Aye but I be offerin' you a partnership! What harm be there to you from an unarmed, one-handed Christian without friend nor family nor prospect to save 'is wretched soul from eternal damnation!

SHAW
My God you just don't stop, do you?

As Shaw readies his blow again, Fingers pulls up his legs letting another keg whisk past.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
I don't stop because it's true! Listen to ol' Mordachai! You be throwin' away a chance at the biggest fortune ever stolen in history!

The keg that just passed BLOWS UP, its shockwave jarring Mordachai's claw from its grip in the wood.

SHAW'S HAND

shoots out, grabbing the pirate's wrist. A piercing gaze--

SHAW
You are relentless... Okay: prove it!

MORDACHAI FINGERS
I be meetin' with me ol' friends Black Harry and Don Francisco this afternoon at the Carnival of Puerto Bello. You'll see their maps for yourself.

Shaw narrows his eyes as Mordachai finally implores--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (CONT'D)
If'n I be found lying I'll happily slit me own lily-white throat.

The gleam back in his eye, he's got nothing to lose; Shaw laboriously pulls the old pirate up onto the log.

Wringing water from the tattered hem of his coat, Mordachai Fingers considers Shaw, winks, and with a chuckle--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (CONT'D)
So's we got a deal?

Shaw just smiles and indicating their path--

SHAW
After you.

SMASH CUT TO:

PRISON BARS-- SLAMMING shut in Mordachai Fingers's face.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
WHY YOU STUPID SEA-SNAKE! WHERE'S HONOR?! WHERE'S FRIENDSHIP?! WHERE'S DECENCY AMONG BROTHERS OF THE SEA?!

SHAW (O.S.)
I hate the sea.

And Mordachai beats HIS METAL FIST between the prison bars of--

INT. A SPANISH DUNGEON, PUERTO BELLO - DAY

while across the room, his back to the cell, Shaw accepts a bag of gold coins from a gaunt and waxy SPANISH WARDEN.

SHAW (CONT'D)
It's always nice doing business with the Spanish.

THE WARDEN
Only because if you went back to the English the bounty'd be on your head.

SHAW
(evasive)
Well, I'm working on that.

The Warden doesn't care, shrugs and--

THE WARDEN
Want to count it?

Shaw hefts the bag, feeling its weight, and with a smile--

SHAW
No, that's one hundred.

Eyes going wide--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
ONE HUNDRED PIECES OF EIGHT? I OFFER YOU TEN THOUSAND TIMES THAT! WHERE'S YER LOVE OF GOLD?!-- I MEAN GOD.

The Warden perks up at this, but Shaw just makes the loony sign next to his head with his finger. About to go, Shaw pauses, then walks to the bars. Just out of reach of Mordachai's swatting claw--

SHAW
Look, Fingers, if it's any consolation, the warden tells me they're not gonna hang you. You're going to the silver mines. Fresh air, exercise, no drinking-- it'll do you a world of good.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
WE'LL SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN AND I'LL PISS ON YOUR GRAVE, I WILL!

Screwing up his face in consternation--

SHAW
You're lucky they're giving you your life. Just a word of advice before I go: only a fool would try to escape the silver mines.

And with that, Shaw tips his hat to the Warden and swiftly departs, Mordachai scowling behind.

Over this comes the harsh SHRIEKING YOWL of--

CUT TO:

AN ENRAGED CHIMPANZEE

an eyepatch over one eye, flays his gangly black arms above his head then hurls himself onto--

A FEROCIOUS ALLIGATOR

It HISSES and SNAPS its jaws at the attacking monkey. SMACK! its heavy reptilian tail rockets the chimp through the dirt.

As the alligator charges for the kill, the chimp scoops up a heavy rock and REEEH! REEEH! REEEEHHH! leaps screaming into the air bringing the stone down on the alligator's skull.

As the air fills with WILD CRIES and CHEERS, the shadows of SPECTATORS are now visible haggling over bets and this is revealed as--

EXT. THE CARNIVAL OF PUERTO BELLO - AFTERNOON

An open market set amid a crumbling, overgrown Aztec ruin, this is a back corner betting pit surrounded with a slovenly crowd of boil-covered FARMERS, drunken SAILORS and well-dressed GAMBLERS reacting vociferously to the fight. To the rear of the group--

WILLIAM SHAW

shakes his head with disgust and moves from the crowd, shouldering past--

A CLOAKED AND SWARTHY ROGUE

whose features, hidden in the shadows of a monk's hood are indistinct, but somehow familiar. The rogue gives a brief nod of his head, signalling a group of five similarly disguised PIRATES who spread out into the fair.

Shaw wanders through the carnival, then leans against an ancient stone-carved eagle where two rows of stalls intersect. He scrutinizes every passing face for anyone who could possibly be a pirate. Beside him stands a tall, bald-headed man in the robes of a prophet, a cluster of peasants enrapt by his--

BALD PROPHET
Nigh! Nigh! Nigh! The end is at hand; only the penitent will enter God's Kingdom! And the rest of you sinners shall burn for eternity in the pits of HELL!

Chuckling to himself, Shaw catches a glimpse of--

A FIGURE IN A BRITISH NAVAL JACKET

carrying a shopping basket and wearing a pistol, who goes through a pedlar's wares. Finding nothing of interest the figure turns, then pauses, and feeling Shaw's gaze, slowly looks toward him.

A moment's surprise registers in the bounty hunter's eyes, his cheeks flush red as he looks into--

The figure's face. Deeply tanned, with hazel eyes framed by close-cropped chestnut hair, it is a boyish face with thin lips eager to share a smile, and innocently raised eyebrows that belie the trap of an exceedingly sharp wit. This is--

MORGAN ADAMS

and though she tries to disguise it, the fact remains that at twenty-two she has matured into a woman. For a split second--

HER EYES

lock with his, then dropping her lashes like a veil she tilts her head away pretending not to see Shaw, and singing to herself, gives her attention back to the pedlar.

MORGAN
"A girl that I knew/named Annabelle Sue/Had a pile of hair that was red..."

Shaw can't tear his eyes from the girl as--

THE BALD PROPHET

moves through the people, his hands smacking their heads in a bizarre form of blessing.

BALD PROPHET
Bless you, bless you, forgive you.

And as the prophet passes, WHACK! Shaw's knocked back to reality and reeling from the prophet's blow, feels a twitch at his belt. His glance darts from Morgan to--

TWO HAIRY DWARF HANDS

clutching Shaw's purse disappearing in the folds of the prophet's robe as he walks by. Shaw clamps a hand on the bald man's shoulder, spinning him around with--

SHAW
Hey, buddy. The little Christian spirit in your skirts just picked my pocket.

BALD PROPHET
(scowling)
Dare you lay hand on a man who hears the voice of God?!

Drawing a pistol, Shaw grips the man's collar with his left hand--

SHAW
Mister, I'll do you one better; if you don't return my money this second, I'll give you the lead key to the pearly gates.

Eyeing the unsuspecting peasants, the prophet whimpers out of the corner of his mouth--

BALD PROPHET
Jose, return the gentleman's purse.

The little hands shoot out with a handful of purses. As Shaw reclaims his own, he feels the pressure of a gun barrel against his spine, and CLICK-CLICK!--

MORGAN (O.S.)
Obviously good looks are no substitute for class. Give the priest back his money.

Shaw peers over his shoulder to see Morgan ready to use her gun.

THE BALD PROPHET
(smiling)
Bless you, sister.

And gun still aimed at Shaw, Morgan steps around him to the prophet's side.

SHAW
Ma'am if I may say, your beauty needs no substitute and I'm sure your intelligence doesn't either... However, you're making a big mistake.

MORGAN
Cut the talk.

Slowly returning his pistol to his belt--

SHAW
Fine, but after you shoot me, you do the explaining to the flock he just fleeced.

Shaw haltingly releases the prophet's collar. Impatiently motioning with her pistol--

MORGAN
Stop stalling and give him back his due.

SHAW
(raising an eyebrow)
Okay, have it your way.

Starting to hand over his purse, Shaw's arm gains momentum and CRACK! he punches the prophet with a right, and in the same movement hammers his left into the folds of the robe.

The prophet falls as A HAIRY LITTLE DWARF, stolen purses flying, sprawls into Morgan, knocking her from her feet. Glinting gold catching his eye, the Dwarf seizes Morgan's locket chain, breaking it off, but--

MORGAN
Gimme that you little pygmy!

As Morgan raises her hand to slap him, the Dwarf flinches, drops the locket and scuttles off after the fleeing prophet.

Unable to conceal his amusement, Shaw hides his purse in his belt and steps over, offering his hand with--

SHAW
William Shaw, at your service. Help you up, miss..?

But Morgan glares at him, and rises by herself.

MORGAN
It's Morgan. And what kind of man are you to let a couple creeps like that go?

SHAW
What? What're you talking about..?
(self-mocking)
Snap your fingers, my lady, and I'll chase those ruthless thieves down and bring back their heads.

Morgan rolls her eyes and Shaw watches her dust off her locket, surreptitiously checking the miniature portrait of a woman. Treating it like a treasure, she stows it carefully in her breast pocket as--

SHAW
I could probably fix that chain for you.

MORGAN
Sir, if you are trying to impress me with some misdirected bravado, you've failed. Dismally.

Shaw's tried his best, but a man can only take so much.

SHAW
Listen, sweetheart, girls like you are rarely worth their silver penny words, so just--

A WOMAN (O.S.)
Billy..? Billy Shaw?

Shaw cringes as he and Morgan turn to see ISABEL DELAROSA, the sexiest woman in all of New Spain heading for the bounty hunter, arms outstretched. From the jewels in her hair to the tight bodice gripping her firm, ample and mostly visible breasts, it is clear in an instant that Isabel is a professional.

As she hurls her embrace upon Shaw, Morgan catches his eye, and with a big smile--

MORGAN
Guess you're an expert at a woman's worth. How much does this one cost?

And leaving the question hanging, Morgan turns and goes. Shaw looks after her until releasing him from her hug--

ISABEL
You never looked at me like that.

SHAW
The only thing I've ever looked at like that is gold.

And the pirate hunter warmly takes her arm and speaking low, begins walking--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Tell me something, Isabel. You know of any old pirates around here go by the names Black Harry and Don Francisco?

ISABEL
(shaking her head)
Still chasing pirates and their measly bounties...

But eyes gleaming--

SHAW
Maybe, maybe not. All I gotta do is play my cards right 'cause I think I'm on the verge of something much bigger.

With a playful toss of her hair, she's heard that song before and--

ISABEL
Just the same, you never come to Puerto Bello to see me... I'm hurt.

SHAW
Hurt? You'd be dead if I hadn't saved you from Captain Van Eyk and his boys after the sack of Cartegena.

Dropping her hand along his thigh--

ISABEL
And I've been trying to repay you ever since.

SHAW
You've repaid me well enough by keeping my gold for me.

ISABEL
True, but I'm always ready to handle more affairs for you than just your money.

With a sigh like he's dodged this temptation a thousand times, Shaw gently lifts Isabel's chin and meeting her eyes--

SHAW
C'mon, those two pirates I mentioned, they ever come into your house; drink rum, chase the girls? Chase the boys? They probably got huge rewards. You know 'em or what?

Isabel pulls away and laughs at him.

ISABEL
Don Francisco, a pirate? Honestly, Shaw, one of these days someone's gonna shoot you for being stupid, and then where would I be...after all these years?

SHAW
Somehow I can't picture you lonely.

Isabel grins and takes Shaw's hand turning him around. Pointing to two men standing at the top of a very steep hill behind a four foot ruined wall--

ISABEL
There's your "pirate" right there, talking to the town sawbones, Doc Adams.

Shaw squints to make them out, his mind shifting into high gear as Isabel kisses his cheek, pinches his ass and leaves with--

ISABEL (CONT'D)
As long as you're here on business, if you want me, you know where to find me.

Then waving to ANOTHER MAN in the crowd--

ISABEL (CONT'D)
Hey Antonio? Sweetie?

Shaw watches Isabel throw her embrace around this new lucky customer, then gives a chuckle and shakes his head. Taking hold of his Toledo steel to muffle it as he runs, Shaw darts up a path to the end of the shoulder high, tumbledown wall.

The bounty hunter ducks and crouching, dashes quietly along the ruin, up the tall hill until he is within earshot directly below Don Francisco and the Doctor. He crouches, listening.

EXT. THE WALL - AFTERNOON

The ten years appear to have been good to Don Francisco, who decked out in the finery of a wealthy landowner wears a powdered wig of the best European quality, but his face is drawn and the black circles around his eyes reflect a soul in torment. The town doctor with whom he speaks stands by a tree, back turned, head shaking. But his voice is unmistakable.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
No, no, no. Why are we doing this? First you take this appointment, then you risk my life by contacting me for a meeting out in the open--

DON FRANCISCO
Dr. Adams, please--

Black Harry wheels on Don Francisco with--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
That's right, it's Doctor Adams now, not Black Harry and the Scar's still hunting us! You yourself know that his men comb the coast for us this time every year on their way to that cursed island!

The two former comrades face off. The sun gone from Black Harry's now gray hair, he's clearly dissatisfied with this situation.

DON FRANCISCO
So how long do we hide?

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
We swore an oath!

DON FRANCISCO
To wait till the Scar was dead or...we had enough POWER to beat him.

Black Harry sighs, remembering. Don Francisco steps to the wall, puts his hands on it, raining debris on top of Shaw who flinches, pushing back against the barrier as the Spaniard looks out over the festivities.

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
Harry, I betrayed that fleet to Curren because I thought with that gold I could help the people here I saw Spain destroying. I was a foolish idealist.

He pauses considering whether or not to continue, then softly--

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
For the last ten years the only sleep I've had was at the bottom of a bottle. The rest of the time I've tried to forget my guilt with back-breaking work.
(a bitter laugh)
I still feel the same, but now I have a fortune from sugarcane and some powerful allies in Madrid.

Knitting his brow--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Powerful--

DON FRANCISCO
Allies. Not friends.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
So you're suggesting we take the Spanish navy, give the treasure back and let 'em mount our heads on stakes outside El Escorial?

DON FRANCISCO
On the contrary. Madrid will never know. My new position has afforded me a warship ready to sail and a completely faithful army. Two days ago the tides began lowering; in four the reefs will be covered again for another year.

Don Francisco fixes Black Harry with a penetrating gaze.

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
I'm through hiding. Besides, since yesterday I've become a public figure and people know me now. Any day, any hour, any minute the Scar will find me, so whether Mordachai joins us or not, we still have two pieces of the map. This is the time for action!

Shaw is totally enrapt, straining to hear every word.

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
Tell me you're with me-- Black Harry.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
You leave me no choice...

And thinking aloud--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY (CONT'D)
It would be nice to have enough money to return to London, give my daughter a chance at the finer things... After all, she's helped protect the map for me all these years.

On the other side of the wall Shaw mouths, "his daughter?" as--

MORGAN (O.S.)
Father?

The two men flash their eyes across the wall to Morgan, who with her pistol motions up and down.

Don Francisco and Black Harry exchange a quizzical look as a pair of hands followed by Shaw, rise from behind the wall.

For a second Shaw doesn't even care about the pirates or their treasure, and--

SHAW
Are you going to stalk me for the rest of my life?

Morgan gives no reaction as--

Don Francisco reaches for his rapier, but Black Harry steps to the wall and--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
I think before my daughter kills you you might want to explain what you were doing?

Her gun still trained, Morgan smirks at Shaw who stands looking for all the world like a kid caught with his hand in the cookie jar. Eyes darting between Morgan and the captains, his mind reels and his mouth falls open with--

SHAW
I didn't know whether it was safe, so I was trying to make sure you were who you're supposed to be. Mordachai suggested I join you.

Don Francisco and Black Harry share a furtive glance.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Fingers sent you?

Shaw nods. Puzzled, Morgan makes a motion with her pistol.

MORGAN
Should I get some soldiers?

Shaw challenges the two captains with a knowing look.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
No, Morgan. Thank you, we'll take it from here.

MORGAN
(suspicious)
You know this man?

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
No. But it's okay. Just go...finish your shopping.

As Morgan slowly turns to go, Shaw gives her a winning smile. Morgan swiftly turns away and walks down the hill.

Black Harry can't help but break a smile and finds he's sharing it with Shaw.

SHAW
That daughter of yours, sir, is-- um, quite...remarkable.

Taking it as a compliment--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Yes, she certainly is.

DON FRANCISCO
So you say Captain Fingers sent you. Why?

SHAW
He's getting old. Brought me in as a partner. You know, the toils of rum and the gout...

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Then you must have his map?

An instant's hesitation--

SHAW
Uh, no-- I mean yes: he did give me the map, but I've hidden it. You understand.

Don Francisco looks to Captain Black Harry who gives a tight-lipped smile.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
You sir, are a liar. The Scar has Mordachai Fingers's map everyone knows that. Fingers has no partner.

Both pirates reach for their swords but Shaw is faster and whips up his pistols, covering them with--

SHAW
Look, I'll tell you what: you give me your parts to the map, and I give you my word I won't involve the authorities.

Don Francisco looks at the pistols and laughs. Shaw gives a nervous half laugh, not knowing where this is going, until--

DON FRANCISCO
I am the authorities.

Slack-jawed Shaw just watches as Don Francisco steps up to him and pushes his pistols aside.

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
Threatening the life of the Governor of Puerto Bello is a capital offense.

A sinking feeling as he lowers his guns--

SHAW
The Governor?

Don Francisco nods, then puts his hands to his mouth and shouts--

DON FRANCISCO
GUARDS!

Shaw swivels around as dashing toward the hill from all directions of the carnival, rush--

TEN SPANISH SOLDIERS. Seeing Shaw they take position at the base of the hill, aiming their weapons.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Be smart and drop your pistols.

Seeing that he's vastly outnumbered, Shaw does just that and raises his hands in defeat.

A SPANISH LIEUTENANT trots up to the men. Don Francisco gives him an order IN SPANISH and grabbing Shaw by the arm, the Lieutenant leads the pirate hunter struggling down the hill.

Shouting back at the captains by the wall--

SHAW
C'mon, you don't want to do this!
I'm willing to make a deal!

But Black Harry and Don Francisco just shake their heads in disbelief, and as Shaw is dragged into the carnival he shouts to anyone and everyone--

SHAW (CONT'D)
They're pirates up there! That's
DON FRANCISCO AND BLACK HARRY!
Notorious criminals! SOMEBODY
LISTEN TO ME!

EXT. THE CARNIVAL - AFTERNOON

And somebody does: Morgan glancing up from a fruit stall with an odd look in her eye, as does--

THE CLOAKED AND SWARTHY ROGUE

from the betting pit who freezes at the names. A BILIOUS CHUCKLE building in his throat, he leaps atop an apple barrel casting his eyes to the wall where--

Don Francisco and Black Harry shake hands and separate as--

Morgan heads back for the hill.

Quickly scanning the crowd, the rogue sticks his dirty fingers in his mouth and gives a SHRILL WHISTLE.

Two of the Pirates jog up and as the rogue turns to face them, his hood falls back revealling Nathanial Vickers, the Scar's first mate. Pointing at the hill--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
(hisses)
Follow Don Francisco but do nothing.
The Scar wants him alive.

As his men take off, Vickers leaps from the barrel, and begins trailing Captain Black Harry who is joined by his daughter.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROAD TO PUERTO BELLO - LATER

Dusty and sweaty, Shaw plods into the orange glow of sunset behind the Spanish Lieutenant and his horse, with--

SHAW
C'mon... What? You're really gonna
hang me..?

No response as the Spanish Lieutenant quenches his thirst from a jug of wine and belches, the alcohol taking its effect.

SHAW (CONT'D)
You're not going to hang me, you-- I'm-- Jesus, that fair was filled with a hangman's dreams: con men, pickpockets, thieves, perverts, drunks--

A menacing look from the drunken Spanish Lieutenant and with a nervous half-laugh--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Okay, forget the drunks. I like drunks. Drunks are fine. Just--

Shaw's interrupted by the SOUND OF A CARRIAGE. Quickly hopping off the road Shaw barely misses being knocked down by--

BLACK HARRY'S COACH-- It's COACHMAN hunched at the reins.

INT. BLACK HARRY'S COACH - DUSK

MORGAN
(distressed)
I don't see why you're running away like this, Puerto Bello's our home. Father, what is this all about?

Captain Black Harry looks into the concerned eyes of his daughter beside him. Putting his arm around her--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
Morgan, I'm doing this for us. Tomorrow I sail from the Governor's warehouse but I'll be back before you know it and I'll have everything I've always wanted for you.

Morgan stares at her father and--

MORGAN
But I don't want anything. I just want you safe at home.

Black Harry doesn't comment and a long moment goes by as the coach clatters down the road then softly--

MORGAN (CONT'D)
You said the same thing to mother and all I can think about is her holding my hand and crying as your ship sailed away. She cried every night and we never knew where you went... You're running from something...
(more)

MORGAN (Cont'd)
You're in some kind of trouble like you were then, aren't you?!

Black Harry clenches his jaw, slowly swallows and--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
When I left your mother for the navy I was a ship's doctor, nothing more. England was at war with Spain and after a handful of engagements, I was suddenly captain of a privateer, under the King's colors I could fight and plunder the Spanish as I pleased. There are things I did that I'm not proud of...

Morgan looks deep into her father's soul trying to put the pieces together with--

MORGAN
That man they arrested at the fair was someone from your past, wasn't he? Why'd he call you Black Harry?

Captain Black Harry tenses up shocked at Morgan's question then tempering his words--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
I've told you all I can tell you without putting you in grave danger. The only way for you to be safe is for me to leave. I know this is all probably hard for you to understand, and I'm sorry, Morgan, I'm sorry for everything.

Morgan shifts uncomfortably, her hand straying into her pocket, hunting out her mother's locket. She opens it and almost to herself--

MORGAN
When she died, she told me you were a hero.

Morgan looks up at her father with a sad smile as she returns her locket into the breast pocket of her coat.

EXT. A WOODEN BRIDGE - DUSK

Spanning a misty bog. Galloping around a bend and onto the bridge come--

FIVE MOUNTED PIRATES

all disguised in dark, hooded cloaks. Crossing the wooden span they cut their horses, disappearing down the embankment into--

THE DEEP BOG

Splashing into the mud and water beneath the bridge, three of the pirates leap from their mounts and throwing back their hoods are revealled as--

Nathaniel Vickers, RAT WHISKERS TAYLOR, and HAWK who quickly draw their cutlasses and swing them into the bridge's support poles, eating chunks out of the wood, as--

Obscured in darkness, the other two pirates move with the horses deeper down the stream bed into the gloom.

EXT. THE ROAD - SUNSET

Stumbling and exhausted at the end of his leash behind the horse, Shaw finally appears beaten, until in the last glow of daylight, his eye catches on--

THE TIP OF HIS TOLEDO LONGSWORD

it's "v'd" point poking through the leather bottom of the horse's saddle bag like a friendly smile.

SHAW

grins back, watching it as with every jostling step, the blade cuts its way, bouncing and slicing farther out.

The drunken Lieutenant slouches in his saddle.

Shaw takes a deep breath and lightly jogs up behind the horse. Mere feet from his captor's leg he raises his fatigued arms up to the tip of his sword. Licking his lips he extends--

HIS BONDS

to the steel blade and rubs.

INT. BLACK HARRY'S COACH - NIGHT

Black Harry quietly holds his daughter's hand, Morgan watching out the window, nervously singing her song as they round the bend and approach the empty bridge.

MORGAN
(softly singing)
"Annabelle Sue, Annabelle Sue, you wander I know not where..."

And her eyes fall to the floor a lump building in her throat.

EXT. THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

The pirates exchange swords for pistols as--

VICKERS
Get ready, boys.

With the sound of HOOVES--

INTERCUT INSIDE THE COACH WITH THE BRIDGE

Morgan's song has dwindled to a sad HUM in counterpoint to the rumble of the carriage. Black Harry smiles wanly and squeezes her hand.

As the coach pulls onto the expanse of wood, the Coachman sits bolt upright, pulling the reins as--

Nathaniel Vickers steps onto the road, pistol drawn.

Morgan raises her eyes to her father's with a look of forgiveness. His lips part as if to speak but--

THE COACHMAN (O.S.)
Sir, its--

A GUNSHOT cuts the man off. Black Harry reacts, reaching for his pistol as--

EXT. THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

KERACK! the support poles break under the weight of the coach, the HORSES SCREAM and the bridge collapses dumping the coach on its side into the jungled bog.

As the horses struggle from their broken traces, the coach lies on its side, the Coachman dead in the mud.

A WHEEL

spins and the floor of the coach bulges, cracked against the broken bridge.

There's no movement from inside.

EXT. THE ROAD - NIGHT

SNAP! Shaw frees himself and--

SHAW
Hey, buddy!

Coming out of his stupor--

THE DRUNKEN LIEUTENANT

turns, fully unsuspecting as grabbing his foot in the stirrup, Shaw heaves the soldier from his saddle. Jumping up into his now vacant place--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Drinking and riding don't mix.

And kicking the horse--

SHAW

takes off. The Spanish Lieutenant fumbles for his pistol, but Shaw's already gone.

EXT. THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

As Vickers scrambles down from above, emerging from the shadows like wraiths, Rat Whiskers Taylor, Hawk and Dogface Cubbins slowly approach the crippled and broken coach, flintlocks aimed and ready.

INT. BLACK HARRY'S COACH - NIGHT

Lying across what was once the coach's side, Morgan's eyes flutter open and her lips part, but before she can speak, Black Harry covers her mouth with his hand.

HAWK (O.S.)
Think we kilt 'em?

NATHANIEL VICKERS (O.S.)
Better not of. Now get 'em out!

As the pirates SLOSH up to the coach, Black Harry flashes his eyes across the split planks of the coach's floor, and to his wide-eyed daughter--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
(an urgent whisper)
It's pirates Morgan. When I fire, kick out through that floor and run into the jungle. Don't stop for anything!

Morgan swallows, nods and impulsively stroking his little girl's hair--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
You'll be careful?

In response Morgan grips her pistol with--

MORGAN
As careful as you taught me.

CLICK! above, the door handle turns, and Hawk looks down, right into barrel of Black Harry's pistol-- BLAM!

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
NOW MORGAN!

CRACK! Morgan kicks through the floor and--

EXT. THE BOG - NIGHT

She rolls into the mud, wriggling beneath the edge of the broken bridge, losing--

HER LOCKET

as--

BLACK HARRY

draws his sword climbing out as the gun-wielding pirates close in on him.

On the other side of the bridge Morgan stops, unable to leave her father, but--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
MORGAN SAVE YOURSELF!

And fighting back tears, she hesitates, until--

Vickers fixes her in his sick gaze and--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
After her Taylor!

Morgan runs for her life into the jungle, and as the pirate takes off after her--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
I've sent the devil better men than the like of you! COME AT ME YOU DOGS!

And as Black Harry attacks Dogface Cubbins, the retreating pirate SHOOTS him in the shoulder, and BANG! Vickers hits Black Harry in the leg taking him down.

The two pirates move in.

NATHANIEL VICKERS
Be this any way of treatin' yer ol' shipmates, I ask?

Black Harry raises his eyes looking up at Vickers who gives a phlegmy chortle.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
...vickers... Nathaniel Vickers...

Blood running down his chest, Black Harry uses--

HIS SWORD

to pull himself to his feet then staggers forward, his sword waving before him.

Nathaniel Vickers and Dogface Cubbins both back away from him, just out of reach of his sword.

NATHANIEL VICKERS
We shoulda killed you when you started drawin' the bleedin' map!

But Black Harry doesn't listen as he drags himself toward them, deeper into the shadows of the bog, step by bloody step. Vickers leads Black Harry past--

THICK VINES

that hang like a curtain down the edge of the embankment, and as Black Harry tries to lunge for him--

Stepping behind him from the living tapestry like--

A GHOUL FROM HELL

moonlight spraying across the thick and dirty yellow scar that runs a crevice from the bridge of his nose to the top of his skull--

CAPTAIN JAGGARD CURREN: THE SCAR

Knocking the sword from Black Harry's weak grip, he engulfs him in a bear hug, pinning his arms and pulling him in.

Nathaniel Vickers laughs his repugnant laugh and tickles Black Harry's chin with the tip of his sword. Then whispering in Black Harry's ear--

THE SCAR
It's your old partner, Captain Curren. It's good to see ya, Harry, you're looking fit and I hear the Don's been made Governor...

Black Harry grows tense, horror tightening the muscles in his face. Vickers sheathes his cutlass.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Me? Well I can't complain for meself-- wish't I could say the same for the many a good man I've lost these ten long years huntin' for what's rightly mine.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
"Rightly" yours?

Curren lashes his left arm around Black Harry's throat choking him, with--

THE SCAR
That's right! You were fools to think I recruited you for anything more than extra guns to sink the Spanish fleet.

Curren pulls out a jagged-handled gully knife with his right hand and slips its blade against the small of Harry's back.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
I want your part of the map, Black Harry! I'm a busy man, so UP WITH IT QUICK!

The demonic urgency in the Scar's voice is equalled by a twist of the knife. It takes Black Harry's breath; he wheezes, then his wheeze becomes a full-blown LAUGH.

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
The map of Cutthroat Island? I burnt it years ago, you bastard!

Digging with the blade--

THE SCAR
I'LL KILL YOU, HARRY! THE MAP!!

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY
And that's all you can do... It won't be enough. The map is gone, you fool!

THE SCAR
Then you won't mind taking us back to where you live for a look around.

Throwing the wounded Black Harry into Vicker's clutches--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Vickers, be good enough to extract some directions from our old pal.

EXT. THE JUNGLE - NIGHT

The sound of Rat Whiskers Taylor thrashing in the jungle behind her, an exhausted Morgan cocks her pistol as she rushes through the foliage.

MORGAN

snags in a tangle of vines and slips, falling backwards down a slope. With no time to look, she turns and FIRES--

Rat Whiskers Taylor falls onto her, dead.

Face white, Morgan pushes away the body then, choosing a direction she starts forward.

EXT. THE BRIDGE - NIGHT

His horse moving at a fast trot, Shaw pulls up short at the sight of the fallen bridge and the wrecked coach.

Dropping from the saddle--

SHAW

draws his sword and carefully climbs into the bog, coming upon Hawk's body in the mud. Ready to get out of there his eye is caught by--

MORGAN'S LOCKET

glittering near the coach. Sweeping it up, Shaw's palor darkens as he recognizes the piece of jewelry. Suddenly the night sky flares orange and red around the next bend. Fire. Gripping the locket he throws himself into the saddle and--

SHAW
Ha!

He kicks the horse into a gallop, his longsword glimmering in the moonlight.

EXT. BLACK HARRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Pistol in hand, ready to fight for her father--

MORGAN

staggers to a halt, hit in the face by a wall of heat blasting from her house which is engulfed in the flames of a deadly inferno. She gives a strangled cry of horror as she sees--

CAPTAIN BLACK HARRY'S CORPSE

hanging by his feet from the burning porch.

MORGAN
NOOOO!

She throws herself at the fiery porch only to be flung back by the deadly hellstorm. Reeling into the yard, Morgan's eyes dart like a wounded doe's. As the flames begin to surround her father's body, Morgan tries again to reach it, screaming--

MORGAN (CONT'D)
FATHER!!

But before she enters the blaze--

cuts her off stopping her in her tracks. Ignoring a dangerous shower of burning debris, he defies death and raising his longsword, cuts the rope. The body falls across his saddle.

Rising from the dirt, Morgan watches as--

Shaw crosses the yard carrying her father's body from the fire. The pirate hunter dismounts, gently laying Black Harry beside the well safely away from the flames. Still holding his sword, Shaw looks down at the dead captain just as he hears a COCKING GUN from across the yard and--

MORGAN (O.S.)
BASTARD!

BANG! TWWARM! Morgan sends him a bullet that blows three inches off the tip of his Toledo longsword. In utter shock--

SHAW
That-- that-- that's...impossible.

And taking a deep breath he resheathes the rest of his blade, judges the distance between them, and steeling his nerves--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Women should NEVER be given guns.

Pushing off from the well, Shaw charges Morgan, who standing in the yard, is frantically loading ball and powder. The bounty hunter turns on the juice and it's going to be close as--

Morgan cocks her hammer, turns and--

Shaw dives for Morgan catching her in the waist as she FIRES, the lead ball blasting past Shaw's ear, and THUD! they tumble backward, rolling away from the burning house.

Ending up side by side, Morgan beats Shaw's head with her flintlock until he catches her wrist and twisting the gun from her hand lets it drop as he enunciates--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Stop it. Morgan. That hurts.

But Morgan continues to fight him, hitting him with her free fist, her eyes crazed with fear and pain.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Morgan?

Catching her pounding fist Shaw pulls her to her feet.

SHAW (CONT'D)
C'mon Morgan, get a hold of yourself
and tell me what's happened here!

Violently twisting from his grasp--

MORGAN
YOU KNOW DAMN WELL WHAT'S HAPPENED HERE!

And suddenly, as their eyes meet in the firelight, Morgan recognizes Shaw.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
YOU AND YOUR GOD DAMNED PIRATE FRIENDS KILLED MY FATHER!

Fists still clenched, she glares at Shaw, frozen with passionate hatred. The pirate hunter raises his hands in surrender and--

SHAW
Listen to me, Morgan. I'm no pirate. I had nothing to do with this. Why would I have risked my life to cut him down..?
(he pauses, softly)
I'm sorry, I-- I only wish I'd gotten here sooner.

Before Morgan can attack again, Shaw reaches out a closed hand. She bats it away, but arm still extended, the bounty hunter opens his fist.

MORGAN'S LOCKET

dangles between his fingers. KERRACK! the roof caves in behind them in a shower of sparks.

SHAW
This is yours? I found it on the road.

That does it, Morgan breaks down crying uncontrollably. As she takes the locket, Shaw takes Morgan into his arms. He strokes her hair letting her cry on his shoulder.

EXT. THE JUNGLE - LATER

With a large flat stone, Shaw scoops the last of the dirt onto Black Harry's grave while Morgan sits on a fallen palm tree quietly watching. As Shaw finishes--

MORGAN

kisses her fingers, then presses her hand into the soft earth, the moment of tenderness not lost on the bounty hunter.

MORGAN
(a small voice)
If you're not a pirate, what did you want with my father?

Wiping his hands--

SHAW
I'm a pirate hunter; that's why I came here.

MORGAN
You were after my father? He was a privateer in the war with Spain, he wasn't a--

SHAW
Morgan, he was.

She tense up, listening, and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Yes, once ago, both your father and Don Francisco were pirates. Those men at the bridge came here to collect something from your father and by the look of things they got what they came for...

A thought occurs to the pirate hunter and tactfully--

SHAW (CONT'D)
...or did they..? Um, did they?

Morgan answers with a blank stare, Shaw pursues it a bit further with--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Did your father maybe give you something to hide?

MORGAN
(suspicious)
What are you talking about?

SHAW
This afternoon I overheard him say you were protecting something for him. I just figured--

Her gaze going back to her father's grave--

MORGAN
You were going to arrest him, weren't you?

Shaw's shoulders sag; this isn't the right time.

SHAW
That's how I make my living... Jesus, how was I to know what kind of man Black Harry's become, that he has a family--

Shaw's sympathy is sincere but he stops when he sees Morgan bite her lip. She's fighting to keep control of her emotions.

SHAW (CONT'D)
I wish there was some way I could have prevented this.

Morgan looks up, eyes watery once more.

MORGAN
I'm sorry, you've been very noble and I have no right to judge you...I wouldn't have had the strength to bury my father without you.

They share a sad smile and--

MORGAN (CONT'D)
If only he hadn't been in such a rush to meet Don Francisco.

SHAW
Don Francisco? Don Francisco is next! Do you know where he is?

Morgan gives the bounty hunter a quizzical look, and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Morgan, he's in the same danger as your father. The Scar's probably headed for him right now.

Swelling with new strength Morgan rises with--

MORGAN
The Scar? That's who did this?

Shaw's silence is answer enough. Seized with new vitality Morgan takes a last look at the grave then starts for the road. Shaw waits a moment, collecting his thoughts then mutters--

SHAW
I can worry about her map later; It's Don Francisco's I need now.

And the pirate hunter jogs after Morgan.

SHAW (CONT'D)
C'mon Morgan, you're not going to take on the Scar alone. Tell me where Don Francisco is, we'll put you someplace safe and I'll avenge your father for you.

MORGAN
Shaw, this isn't your problem; my bullet gets that bastard!

Realizing this is an argument he won't win--

SHAW
Fine. All I want is...

Morgan turns and looks him in the eye. Averting his gaze--

SHAW (CONT'D)
...the Scar's bounty. We'll go together.

Morgan doesn't respond and almost tagging along, Shaw follows her back to the road.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Morgan, just one thing? Did you have to shoot my sword?

MORGAN
What Shaw? Took a...little piece of your manhood, did I?

Looking at Morgan then down at his injured Toledo steel...

SHAW
Yeah. You did.

EXT. THE PUERTO BELLO WHARF - NIGHT

Emerging between a seedy tavern and a dirty flop house, Morgan and Shaw move onto a wide cobbled road dividing the city's facade from a seawall and the fogged-in Caribbean bay beyond.

SHAW

peers into the curtain of mist; there isn't a soul in sight. Stopping short in his tracks, Shaw is filled with suspicion as a silence like death hangs over the wharf. Suddenly behind them, CREAAK--

Their eyes flash to the flop house where a STRANGE MAN stares down, nervously SLAMMING closed his shutters.

Cocking his pistols in his belt, the pirate hunter cautiously follows Morgan onto--

EXECUTION DOCK

where four gallows swing corpses near the seawall. Shaw can't help but be impressed as Morgan doesn't even bat an eye at the bodies or the rats scurrying over them. Stopping, Morgan points thirty yards down the seawall to the fog enshrouded form of--

A LARGE TWO STORY BUILDING

perched on the wall and extending on stilts out over the dock and the water below. A ship looms like a phantom, bobbing before it.

MORGAN
That's Don Francisco's warehouse.

Moving closer, Shaw scrutinizes the warehouse. A single window on the side wall flickers with a dim and eerie light. Glancing around to the front--

A FLATBED WAGON

pulled by a nervous four-horse team waits alongside a string of seven horses, before a set of double doors. The doors are shut while the crates of supplies stacked in front, appear abandoned.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
C'mon.

But as Morgan takes a step toward the doors, Shaw grabs her around the waist, his strong arms gently pulling her back. A tiny cry of shock escapes Morgan's lips, but for an instant she kind of likes it and doesn't want to resist, until Shaw's strong hands slide up her ribcage and suddenly he's picking her up and lifting her to the window. Hissing through gritted teeth--

MORGAN (CONT'D)
What the hell are you doing, Shaw?!

SHAW
Shhh. What do you see?

But she's not looking inside, and really twisting now she collapses the both of them.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
What the hell kind of move you
trying to pull?

Standing and dusting himself--

SHAW
Morgan, something's off here.

MORGAN
Yeah, you.

SHAW
No, this warehouse, it shouldn't be so quiet. I've been out on this port a hundred times on a Saturday night and it's never been this dead. Listen, if you want the Scar, you're gonna have to trust me. When it comes to pirates I know exactly what I'm doing.

With an expulsion of breath, Morgan gives Shaw a skeptical look, but he brushes her cheek with his hand, and smoothly--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Just trust me.

And before she can react, Shaw jumps up to the window, and catching onto the wide sill, pulls himself up for a look--

SHAW'S POINT OF VIEW - THROUGH WINDOW - CRATES AND SUPPLIES

In the dim flicker of candlelight, Shaw can see that this crowded upper level extends halfway out across the room. From within comes the sound of LAUGHTER AND VOICES.

As Morgan watches, Shaw pries the window open with his dagger. With some effort, he pulls himself halfway through, and reaching down from the sill--

SHAW (CONT'D)
C'mon Morgan, I promise I won't bite.

Reluctantly she gives him her hands and he pulls her inside.

INT. DON FRANCISCO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

As Shaw and Morgan creep between the stacks of crates, the sound of MOANING now mingles with the LAUGHTER and VOICES, as coming out around the provisions their breath is taken away as they see--

THE LOWER LEVEL OF THE WAREHOUSE

and the corpses of SEVERAL DOZEN SPANISH SAILORS strewn about the floor. THIRTY RUTHLESS CUTTHROATS laugh as they either pick through the bodies or steal kegs and supplies from stacks around an open trapdoor in the floor, and take them up ramps to--

THE DEVILFISH

revealed in all her evil glory towering in the water broadside to the warehouse, the outer wall having been blown away by fifteen cannons, smoke still wafting from their barrels.

At the frigate's Forecastle railing, scimitar in one hand, pistol in the other stands the grimly satisfied--

JAGGARD CURREN

his thick scar reflecting the candlelight like a beacon to hell.

Morgan swiftly draws her pistol as she recognizes the disfigured captain, with--

MORGAN
The sick bastard, I'll--

But Shaw gently covers her mouth with--

SHAW
We can get a better shot from over there.

And as Shaw nods her forward towards some racks closer to the edge, Morgan eases the hammer back down on her gun. She crawls after the pirate hunter.

ON THE DECK OF THE DEVILFISH-- Nathaniel Vickers approaches the Scar with--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
Men have searched all the bodies, Cap'n, ain't no sign of Don Francisco here.

Grinning at his swarthy first mate--

THE SCAR
Oh, he's here, Vickers, he's here.

And scooping up a grappling hook, Jaggard Curren swings it and calls sing-song--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Don Francisco, come out and play!

ON THE UPPER LEVEL-- Shaw and Morgan crawl through racks of cargo towards the overhang only to freeze at the sound of heavy breathing somewhere close by.

THE SCAR (O.S./CONT'D)
Don, I know you're up there and I'm very angry at you...

Peering around a stack of boxes Morgan espies--

DON FRANCISCO

Badly wounded, eyes darting crazily at the sound of Curren's psychotic voice, he cocks twin pistols and lunges to his feet, but before he can take two steps, Morgan grabs his arm with a harsh whisper of--

MORGAN
Governor, wait!

Whipping his guns into Morgan's face it takes Don Francisco an instant to recognize her, then as Shaw moves in beside them--

DON FRANCISCO
Morgan, get the hell out of here!

And ripping free from Morgan's grip, Don Francisco gives Shaw a desperate look with--

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
It's in the chest, I gotta get the chest!

Before either Shaw or Morgan can react, Don Francisco dashes to a winch at the edge of the overhang where pinned beneath the body of a dead sailor is--

A SMALL CHEST

secured to the winch rope.

Below, a group of pirates see Don Francisco and--

THE PIRATES
He's up there!/On the bleedin' ledge Cap'n!/Aye, dere 'e is!

Coming down the ramp onto the warehouse floor, the Scar swings the hook, eyes on--

Don Francisco who frantically tugs at the corpse trying to free his chest. Don Francisco FIRES into the midst of pirates taking one down.

But as the cutthroats raise their muskets to blow him away--

THE SCAR
HOLD FIRE! HE'S MINE!

Morgan's eyes fastening on the Scar, her hands shake as she tries to catch him in her sights, but moving through his men, the cutthroat steps from Morgan's view. Not to be stopped, Morgan swiftly moves past Shaw, intent on destroying the pirate.

Shaw watches the Governor and--

As Don Francisco rips the dead sailor from the chest, the man's limp arm hooks on the winch's wooden release lever and triggering it, drops the counterweight. Don Francisco makes a frantic grab for--

THE CHEST

but it's torn from the Governor's grasp, the winch rocketing it fifty feet up into the rafters.

DON FRANCISCO
My chest!

Leaping to his feet, he aims his last pistol at the Scar with--

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
You'll never take me alive, Curren!

But WOOSH! Curren sends--

THE GRAPPLING HOOK

sailing through the air and SMACK! it hooks into Don Francisco's leg. Blinded with pain he FIRES as--

The Scar gives a hearty tug and--

DON FRANCISCO (CONT'D)
AAAAHHH!!!

pulls the Governor to the floor below.

THE SCAR
You'll be happy to know I have no intention of taking you alive-- oh, by the way, congratulations on the election.

Turning to Earless Tom Groat and another pirate FISHEYE DOOLEY beside him--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
When you light a house on fire, a married woman'll always grab for her baby, an unmarried one for her jewelry box.
(pointing into the dark rafters)
Earless Tom, the map's in the chest. Get it!

As the two pirates grab their own ropes and boarding hooks--

Shaw flashes his eyes between Morgan, and the hanging chest, the map as easily his as anyone elses. He's got to make a choice...

Morgan's found her angle and--

MORGAN
He's dead that son of a bitch!

But out of the corner of her eye she's shocked by the sight of Shaw who unnoticed by everyone else, climbs a wooden ladder up into the darker rafters after the chest.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
(mimicking to herself)
"I'll avenge your father, just trust me--"
(then shouting)
YOU LYING DOG, SHAW!

The pirate hunter freezes with--

SHAW
Shit! She's pissed!

He hugs the ladder as--

Morgan BLASTS LEAD at Jaggard Curren. The bullet rips across the Scar's shoulder. All eyes flash to Morgan. Momentarily forgetting Don Francisco writhing at his feet, the Scar grabs his shoulder.

THE SCAR
Who is that bitch?!

But Morgan drops from sight behind the cover of a crate and swiftly reloads.

MORGAN
HEY SCAR: THAT WAS FROM ME, THIS'LL BE FROM MY FATHER!

She spins out again, but Morgan is thrown to the floor by a RAIN OF BUCKSHOT ripping into the crate, fired by--

NATHANIEL VICKERS

manning a ten pound swivel gun from the Forecastle Deck of THE DEVILFISH. As a panting Dogface Cubbins swiftly reloads--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
I'll be boned six ways come Monday, Dogface! That be the girl from the coach--

And shouting down to the Scar--

NATHANIEL VICKERS (CONT'D)
CAPTAIN, THAT BE BLACK HARRY'S DAUGHTER UP THERE!

Flashing his eyes between Morgan's position and Vickers--

THE SCAR
She may have his map! Vickers, get some men, I want her alive!
Dogface, man the swivel gun! Pin 'er down and keep 'er down!

As Vickers leads a group of pirates down the ship's ramp towards a stairway leading to Morgan on the upper floor--

THE SCAR

turns his attention to Don Francisco twisting with pain before him. Grabbing some slack in the grappling hook's rope, the brutal cutthroat dexterously ties its end to a cannon at the edge of the trapdoor that is open to the ocean below.

At that moment pulling himself from the ladder up into the shadows of crisscrossing four-by-eight rafters, Shaw locates--

THE CHEST

It hangs from a pulley five beams across and thirty feet over. Fighting to keep from looking down--

SHAW

tries to mask his dread of heights with--

SHAW
Just like crossing the floor.

And almost painfully, he takes his first step out onto the wooden tightrope. So far so good, then--

CRACK! CRACK! two grappling hooks catch into the beams on the opposite side of the rafters, the chest equidistant between them.

Thrown off balance, Shaw totters, watching as--

Fisheye Dooley and Earless Tom climb their ropes like monkeys up toward the rafters.

Behind her crate, Morgan can hear the sound of footsteps coming up stairs to her right. Cocking her flintlock, she rolls out and BANG!--

pegs a pirate square in the chest, sending him reeling back into Vickers and four others, tumbling them all back down the stairs.

Morgan glances down for the Scar, but yipping with glee, Dogface FIRES driving her back. Pissed, Morgan glances up for Shaw as she quickly reloads.

Up in the rafters, Fisheye Dooley sends A BULLET whistling past Shaw's ear then prances toward the chest, leaping between beams with the grace of a ballet dancer.

SHAW
Show-off.

And cocking both--

HIS FLINTLOCKS

he NAILS Fisheye Dooley three steps from the chest, pirouetting the man to the floor below.

As Shaw fumbles and stumbles his way out ten more feet and two beams over, he catches sight of--

EARLESS TOM

still climbing up his rope. Pointing his second weapon down, Shaw takes aim only to watch with dismay as--

GUNPOWDER AND BULLET

pour out his barrel.

SHAW (CONT'D)
You'd think someone could invent a better gun!

And as Shaw considers the future, Earless Tom pops up into the rafters and tries to end it for him. BLAM! Earless Tom's shot PINGS away and thrown off balance--

THE PIRATE HUNTER

suddenly finds his arms windmilling through the air, hands automatically dropping his pistols. He hops two more beams and saves himself by catching onto a support post.

Steadying himself in the rafters, Shaw watches Earless Tom make his way to the chest. Drawing his shortened longsword--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Think attitude not altitude.

And with reckless abandon he charges across the tightrope-like beam.

While below, Morgan's cover is more or less sawdust.

With Vickers and his gang almost upon her, Morgan peers left around the decimated crate hunting for a shot on the Scar, but pulls back as--

Dogface FIRES again, yet this time it's to her advantage as wood chips fly into Vickers's eyes, stopping him in his tracks, his four men bunching behind him.

With one bullet left and a veritable army between Morgan and the Scar, it's certain death if she remains.

Morgan FIRES into Vickers's men, taking down another, then charges for the double doors-- her only escape.

Clearing his vision, Nathaniel Vickers takes up pursuit calling--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
DON'T RUN, PRETTY! I'M AN OL' SHIPMATE OF YER FATHER'S WANTIN' JUST A CHAT.

And with his sickening cackle he and his last three cutthroats, MONK, PIGMAN and a West African, CAESAR, move after--

MORGAN

as she squeezes through the doors.

Back in the rafters, Shaw charges down a beam closing in on Earless Tom Groat, a knife clamped in the pirate's teeth, the chest dangling between them.

Shaw leaps for his opponent from one side, Earless Tom from the other but instead of meeting to fight, Earless Tom lands on the chest, riding it like a swing.

Chuckling at his own cleverness, the pirate tries to figure out how to lower himself and the pendulating chest. Yet jerking his head to scan the pulley, the knife in his mouth accidentally slices the rope. SNAP! goes the rope and in his final moments a mental giant--

Earless Tom spins through the air learning all the Laws of Physics, then CRUNCH! meets the floor and graduates to Statistics.

SHAW

can only gape in astonishment. Gripping a support post and catching his breath he suddenly hears MORGAN'S SCREAM from out on the street. The pirate hunter's lost one chest, but he can still save another.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Morgan!

A wall of shingles between him and her scream, Shaw runs across the beams for all he's worth.

Lying on the floor, his hands twitching at the hook through his leg--

DON FRANCISCO

watches helplessly as the Scar steps to the splintered chest and rolling Earless Tom aside comes up with--

DON FRANCISCO'S MAP

With a mocking bow--

THE SCAR
Well, that'd be the end then, partner.

DON FRANCISCO
I'll see you in hell, Curren!

THE SCAR
(a demonic laugh)
THIS IS HELL!

The Scar steps back to the cannon and putting his shoulder into it, slowly pushes--

THE HEAVY WEAPON

through the trapdoor. As it drops from sight, the slack in the rope disappears and--

Don Francisco whips across the floor past Curren and down into the blackness of the unforgiving sea.

EXT. DON FRANCISCO'S WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Morgan stands in the driver's seat of the flatbed wagon, beating back Vickers, Monk, Pigman and Caesar with the horse whip.

The jittery four-horse team SNORTS nervously behind blinders while the other seven horses chomp their bits and stamp in fear.

Monk YOWLS as he's lashed across his glossy bald head. The whip SNAPS for Vickers's eyes, but Morgan can't hold them all back.

Cutlasses glinting, Pigman and Caesar climb into the back of the wagon. As Morgan turns to face them, Vickers grabs her ankle when--

CRASH! blasting in a shower of shingles from above--

SHAW
I'M COMING, MORGAN!

He drops atop Pigman and Caesar, the former pitching over the side.

SHAW

swinging his broken Toledo longsword, squares off against Caesar and his cutlass, and flashes an errant smile at the struggling Morgan with--

SHAW (CONT'D)
I'm here to save you!

MORGAN
(face burning)
I hate you, Shaw!

And Vickers yanks at Morgan who in motion with the whip is pulled off balance and, SSSCRACK! rakes the whip across--

THE LEAD HORSE'S BACK

WHINNYING, the beasts shoot into the street and Vickers is thrown to the cobbles. Morgan has but an instant to grab the reins in a bid to keep from flying from the cart.

As they race toward Execution Dock, in the back of the wagon, Shaw fights Caesar, his longsword dancing with silver light.

Back at the warehouse Vickers, Monk and Pigman waste no time grabbing three other horses, swinging up into their saddles--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
HA!

They take up pursuit.

Unable to control the wild horse team, Morgan cringes as they careen for the four gallows, as in the back--

Shaw feints for Caesar then comes in with a low lunge only to have the massive West African pin--

HIS TOLEDO LONGSWORD

to the bed and CRACK! break another six inches from the blade with his boot.

Flabbergasted, Shaw's eyes are almost tearful as his shocked gaze moves from his broken longsword to the smirking Caesar--

SHAW
Un-fucking-believable!

WOOSH! the wagon skims past the first gallows, WOOSH! the second and--

As Shaw scoops up a block and tackle for defense, Caesar swings his cutlass in for the kill when--

SPLAT! he's caught full on by one of the hanging corpses and ripped from the flatbed as the wagon rockets past.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Good work, Morgan!

MORGAN
I meant it for you!

And Shaw has an instant to drop to his stomach as they shoot under the final corpse and sharply turn into--

EXT. A NARROW, TWISTING STREET - NIGHT

Monk is three horse-lengths ahead of Vickers and Pigman. As they thunder forward they close the distance between themselves and the wagon.

Holding on for dear life, Shaw can do little but bounce as Monk spurs his mount alongside Morgan. She swings at him with the whip SSSCRACK! SSSCRACK! SSSCRACK! only making the horses go faster. Urging his mount to full speed--

MONK

draws a huge, wheellock pistol from his holster. As--

SHAW

tries to rise in the back of the ballistic wagon--

Vickers and Pigman RAIN LEAD upon the pirate hunter who is thrown to his back.

The four horses barrelling on before her, Morgan cracks the whip across Monk's hand, sending his pistol flying just as the wagon bounces over a high curb, KRAAK!

THE REINS

rip from Morgan's grip as out of control, the wagon skids into a tight alley.

It's path suddenly closed off, Monk's horse panics, SLAMMING Monk into a wall and out of his saddle.

The runaway wagon takes another corner on two wheels and heads for an angular fork. As Morgan hunts for the reins, Shaw lurches up behind her with--

SHAW
Left Morgan! Go left!

But the horses choose right and the cart jolts through ruts and potholes as Vickers FIRES, from behind and--

MORGAN/SHAW
Ahhhh!

Morgan and Shaw flatten themselves across the driver's seat as they plunge into a low tunnel at fifty miles an hour. Faces inches apart--

SHAW
Why didn't you go the other left?

MORGAN
You lied to me!

Chasing behind, Vickers and Pigman, lean over their horses' necks, their hair skimming the roof.

The wagon blasts out of the tunnel and RUMBLES over a stone bridge, toward the old part of town: the darkest, windiest Byzantine mess of alleys ever built.

VICKERS

sees the reins trailing between the traces and shouts to Pigman with--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
GET THE REINS AND STOP THOSE HORSES!
I WANT THAT GIRL!

Shaw and Morgan hear these words, Morgan shooting accusing daggers at the pirate hunter as--

PIGMAN
Ha! Ya! Ha!

The pirate urges his mount past the wagon up to the horses. As Shaw and Morgan watch--

PIGMAN

leaps onto their lead horse.

SHAW
May I?

And he takes the horsewhip from Morgan, smiting Pigman as the crusty pirate rides the lead horse, his hands groping for the dangling reins. SSS-CRACK! the bounty hunter swings again, but this time--

Pigman catches the long leather tongue and with a vicious tug pulls--

SHAW

from the seat next to Morgan sailing him out over the back two horses. Barely catching onto their rigging--

The pirate hunter dangles between their backs then pulls himself up onto the other front horse and drills his fist into Pigman's face.

The pirate flies from the horse team, diced by their sixteen hooves and run over by the wagon as--

Vickers, a dagger in his teeth, hurls himself into the bed of the speeding wagon.

Morgan, intent on Shaw in front, doesn't realize she has company until--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Behind you, Morgan!

She whirls as Vickers gives his nauseating laugh, pulls the knife from his mouth and throws it right at Shaw.

THE DAGGER

whistling for his face, the bounty hunter has no alternative but to dodge and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Shhiiit!

The pirate hunter falls between--

THE FLYING HOOVES

of the lead horses, his back inches from the cobblestones speeding beneath him at fifty miles an hour.

MORGAN
Shaw!

Filled with dread, she leans forward searching for the bounty hunter, when Vickers grabs her from behind.

SHAW

does the only sensible thing. He lets go of the traces, tucking his body into a ball, and the--

HOOVES

flying for his brain, rolls in a twisting flip over the cobbles, catching the trailing end of--

THE REINS

and landing on his rear beneath the wagon. Bouncing up and down in a blur, Shaw digs his heels downward lifting his battered body, putting resistance on the reins and slowing the horses just enough so that with a frantic jerk he brings the wagon to an abrupt halt.

NATHANIEL VICKERS

catapults into his view from above, and eating cobblestones lands in a heap at the base of a ruined wall. The swarthy rogue doesn't move.

Deliberately crawling from the underside of the wagon--

SHAW
(weak)
Morgan?

No answer. He looks into the wagon, fear giving strength to his voice as again--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Morgan?!

Nothing. He slowly turns and KAPOW! Morgan jackhammers her fist into his dirty jaw. Shaw's knees buckle and he drops on his ass in the middle of this--

EXT. DIRTY ALLEY - NIGHT

Morgan stands over Shaw burning with passionate fury and--

MORGAN
I've wanted to do that since the first time I saw you.

Checking his jaw to see if it's broken, Shaw warily watches Morgan as he pulls himself up the side of the wagon. Morgan meets him face to face and this time hits him harder than any fist with--

MORGAN (CONT'D)
You're despicable Shaw! You didn't care about my father! You didn't care about Don Francisco! You don't care about me! You don't care about anybody but yourself! Shaw, I saw you up in the rafters trying to steal Don Francisco's chest!

Shaw opens his mouth to interject but Morgan's barrage continues full-force--

MORGAN (CONT'D)
No, Shaw! You're no better than the cutthroats you claim to hunt-- you're the worst kind of greedy, selfish man I've ever met-- you'd trade your heart for a bag of coins!

And with that, Morgan spins away finished with the bounty hunter forever. For a brief instant, Shaw bites his tongue, letting her go, then--

SHAW
Wait!

And he leaps after her, grabbing her by the arm, trying to turn her with an earnest plea of--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Morgan, please, I--

MORGAN
SCREW YOU, SHAW! What are you going to do now, steal my clothes?!

SHAW
I can explain.

Cheeks flushed, eyes glistening Morgan rips her arm from his grasp--

MORGAN
Explain?! You don't need to explain a God damn thing! It's all perfectly clear: Because of you my father was brutally murdered! The Governor and all his men are dead! And I have nothing, Shaw, just ashes and YOU'RE TO BLAME!

SHAW
That's not fair...

Shaw pauses for a split second as if expecting Morgan to interrupt him again, but she only glowers at him with hurt and angry eyes. Softly--

SHAW (CONT'D)
You're right, I wasn't solely in this to help you catch the Scar... I was after a map, and I apologize...

And Shaw stares intensely at Morgan, willing her to believe him.

SHAW (CONT'D)
But Morgan, I didn't cause any of this and it all would have happened the same whether I was here or not.

Morgan looks at Shaw half-waiting for another lie, half-wanting the bounty hunter to make some sense out of the chaos. Taking a deep breath--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Ten years ago, for whatever brave and noble reasons, your father, Don Francisco and some other pirates made a pact with the Scar over a tremendous fortune in Spanish gold. But when you deal with the Devil, even the best men's souls are burned; the Scar betrayed them, and they barely escaped with their lives.

(more)

SHAW (Cont'd)
They split the map into three parts, and it's your father's and Don Francisco's portions the Scar's been hunting ever since.

MORGAN
What does that have to do with--

SHAW
When they agreed to meet in the open at the Carnival, they sealed own their fates...I didn't.

Shaw lets the truth of his words sink in. Morgan finally breaks his gaze, looks him over and--

MORGAN
Thanks for the story, Shaw, but it's all the more reason to say good-bye to you. Like you said, my father and Don Francisco were motivated by brave and virtuous reasons. Even hunted by the Scar they followed their beliefs till the end. But you? There's no one hunting you, you're free to do whatever you want and you choose to feed your greed off other people's misery.

Shaw is stunned; she's hit a major nerve. Morgan drops her eyes, turns and starts off down the alley. Holding back then--

SHAW
What do you know about me?! I do what I do because it's all I've got.

The pirate hunter's words echo down the alley and Morgan stops in her tracks, her back tensing as she listens. Leaving the wagon and Vickers behind, Shaw slowly moves forward.

SHAW (CONT'D)
I indentured myself to a planter in the British colony of Port Royale, but you know how the scam goes: instead of working off my indenture, my debts to the planter grew... By the time I was eighteen I owed him the rest of my life as a slave.

His words have brought him right behind her. Whether it's the tone of his voice, the force of his words, or that once in a lifetime experience when another offers you their heart, it compels Morgan to turn and face Shaw as a human being. This time there is no anger in her eyes.

SHAW (CONT'D)
There was an Indian woman, a slave who had cared for me for years. Her husband died and she didn't have any way to pay for his burial so the overseer was going to burn his body the next morning with the garbage. That night I snuck out of our hut, found the body, took the overseer's bible and buried the man myself. This was an inexcusable crime...and I knew my punishment would be severe.

Morgan cannot speak. The bounty hunter continues--

SHAW (CONT'D)
But it was harvest time and my healthy back was needed, so the next morning, instead of whipping me, they tied the old woman to a whipping post and killed her. Three days later I took the rest of the slaves and escaped into the jungle. But while they were Indians able to disappear from our world with ease, I was a British subject bound to English Law. So if I ever go back to England I'll hang unless I can pay my entire debt and the price of every Indian I freed.

Somewhere along the way Shaw's hands have made it to Morgan's shoulders, and even though he's smiling, this time it's his eyes that glisten. Slowly shaking his head--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Hunting pirates was the most honorable and beneficial work I could find. I've been doing it for seven years, but at this rate I'll be doing it for another seventy. I need more gold than any bounty can ever bring me just to purchase back what each of those slaves and I were born with. Our freedom.

Staring deeply into her eyes--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Your father said you have his map. Now I believe you when you say you know nothing about it, but somehow you are carrying that map, and if the Scar finds you he'll kill you for it. And I can't let that happen.

Suddenly Morgan finds that she's in his embrace and her emotions all mixed up, her face a mask of strain, it's like a final test when--

MORGAN
You're just saying that because all you want is the treasure.

SHAW
No, because all I want is this.

And he kisses her, more tenderly and lovingly than would seem possible for this man, the last brush of his lips like a promise, and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
I've wanted to do that since the first time I saw you...

She smiles at him as--

SHAW (CONT'D)
I promise you one thing, Morgan: as long as I'm around the Scar won't lay his hands on you.

CRACK! A block and tackle smashes across Shaw's back. Morgan stumbles from his arms as reeling from the blow--

SHAW

spins around only to catch the heavy block in the throat.

NATHANIEL VICKERS

a cut and bloody mess, wields the block and tackle like a thresher and with his nauseating laugh, CLONK! connects with it again. Flying into a wall--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Run, Morgan!

But unable to leave him--

MORGAN

takes a faltering step back towards Shaw, who trying to stand is hit again, sent sprawling fifteen feet into a mound of rat-infested refuse, this time unable to rise. Vickers leers at Morgan, whose eyes meet Shaw's.

SHAW (CONT'D)
(barely audible)
...run...

But it's too late. Turning to flee, her path is blocked by--

The wounded Caesar and Dogface Cubbins.

Vickers pulls a tiny pistol from his belt and aims it at--

SHAW'S HEAD

as he lies covered with garbage in the shadows. Morgan SCREAMS, and as Dogface grabs her--

BLAM! Vickers sends a lead ball for Shaw's forehead. It doesn't miss.

The pirates drag Morgan away.

FADE OUT.

BLACKNESS

for an uncomfortable moment, then bleeding through it, the sound of SCUFFLING and--

FIRST MAN (V.O.)
Is he dead?

SECOND MAN (V.O.)
Oh yeah, look at all that blood.

FIRST MAN (V.O.)
Lord have mercy on his soul.

SECOND MAN (V.O.)
Never mind that, find his purse.

FADE IN:

EXT. THE DIRTY ALLEY - PRE-DAWN

Filled with a clinging ground fog, TWO TATTERED PEASANTS grunt as they roll Shaw's limp body over in the dirt. Scabby hands grope through the folds of Shaw's garments--

FIRST MAN
Here it is-- Jesus it weighs a ton!

As his partner leans in, eyes wide at their good fortune, the First Peasant straddles Shaw and pulls open the drawstring.

FIRST MAN (CONT'D)
It's gold! It's--GRRRK!

The First Peasant stiffens as latched around his throat is--

SHAW'S HAND

gripping tighter and tighter. As the Second Peasant scuttles back a safe distance, the First Peasant, releases Shaw's purse, his own hands prying at Shaw's fingers.

SHAW
No one steals my gold.

FIRST MAN
Ppplease, s-s-s-sir. You--ggkgkk
You're ch-choking me.

Face covered with blood and muck, Shaw's eyes flicker wider and with a half-hearted shove throws the terrified peasant away. The two frightened men scurry off into the mist. To himself--

SHAW
No one steals my gold...

Hand shaking, the bounty hunter, closes his purse, then painfully rolls himself onto his hands and knees. Crawling to a wall, Shaw pulls himself up. Back against the wall and panting, he tentatively touches his head.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Aaahh!

Clamping his jaw against the pain, Shaw traces the path of the bullet across his temple and over his ear. He's lucky to be alive.

His hand dropping to his side, the pirate hunter rolls around and faces the wall, then pulling himself along the stone, disappears into the mist.

Over this comes the sound of BELLS ringing inside--

INT. ISABEL DELAROSA'S BORDELLO - DAWN

Isabel, wearing a diaphanous gown, an ivory handled walking stick clutched in her hand, rushes to answer the door through a sitting room of plush velvet furniture, draperies of Oriental silk and tables dripping black Spanish lace.

ISABEL
Just a minute, your Excellency,
silly-you forgetting your stick--
(BELLS again)
I'm coming...

And opening the door, ready to hand out the walking stick--

SHAW

slumps across the doorstep at her slippered feet. For a moment Isabel is too stunned to move and weakly--

SHAW
...you were expecting someone
else..?

Recognizing Shaw, Isabel throws aside the cane and shouts--

ISABEL
Maria! Katrina!

She kneels, brushing the back of her hand across Shaw's cheek.

ISABEL (CONT'D)
Oh, Shaw, what happened this time..?

EXT. THE RUINS OF BLACK HARRY'S HOUSE - MORNING

The property scarred with freshly dug holes, Caesar sifts through the charred beams of the house with a pick while by the well--

THE SCAR

watches Dogface Cubbins strain at a taut rope around his waist as he pulls a pirate, NERVOUS JOHNNY, burning torch in hand, up out of the well.

THE SCAR
Well, you jittery milksop?!

Shaking his head, his eyes and nose twitching from the smoke--

NERVOUS JOHNNY
Tweren't no sign a nuthin' down there 'cept water an' moss.

THE SCAR
What about below the water?

NERVOUS JOHNNY
Beggin' yer pardon, Cap'n?

To Dogface Cubbins who's scratching his fleas with the rope--

THE SCAR
Send him down again! This time SEARCH the well and FIND THAT MAP!

With a GASP, Nervous Johnny is dropped back into the well as--

A dirt smudged and furious--

MORGAN

thrashes out of the jungle. Following behind, a musket at her back, comes the leering Nathaniel Vickers.

Eyes fastening on the Scar, Morgan darts for him screaming--

MORGAN
You monster! I swear to God I'll kill you!

But Vickers is right on her heels, pushing her to the ground. Keeping his rifle on her--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
You try a thing like that again and I'll finish you for sure.

Morgan stops struggling, eyes darting as she catches her breath. Gun still trained, Vickers steps up to the Scar.

NATHANIEL VICKERS (CONT'D)
I made 'er dig it up, but alls we found was just Black Harry's body, nothing else.

Curren absently fingers his angry knotted scar, and sighs deeply. Putting his hands on his hips he turns to Caesar.

THE SCAR
What about you? Find anything? Any hideyholes, steel boxes?!
(glancing at Morgan)
Any dead fathers?!

But squinting into the morning sun, Caesar looks at the Scar and shakes his head.

Choking, Nervous Johnny is pulled from the well. His torch is as sopping as he is. He and Dogface approach the Scar.

NERVOUS JOHNNY
Torch went out when I dropped it.

For a second the Scar just smiles at him, then with an explosion of energy begins kicking the dim-witted pirate who falls, whining in the dirt.

THE SCAR

turns to Dogface Cubbins who shrugging repeatedly, swiftly retreats. Spinning, the Scar hoists Morgan to her feet. Spittle flying in her face--

THE SCAR
WHERE THE HELL'S THE MAP?!

And right back at him--

MORGAN
THERE IS NO MAP!

Curren's face goes as white as his scar, then he smiles, the last drop of blood draining from his lips. Through his teeth--

THE SCAR
I've been easy on you, little miss Black Harry, because I'm a reasonable man who respects a lady. But my first mate, Vickers..? He ain't as refined as me-- takes pleasure in giving pain in ways that'd make Satan blush... I'd hate to see the color of your insides, but I need that map, and I need it now.

Her eyes wandering to the Nervous Pirate's pistol almost falling from his belt as he rises--

MORGAN
Even if there was a map, I'd die with joy knowing I kept it from you.

THE SCAR
Joy? Let's see your joy.

And twirling her around, the Scar tosses Morgan back to Vickers.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
The only place we haven't looked is the girl.
(to Nervous Johnny)
Do something right and search her!

With Vickers's help, Nervous Johnny tears Morgans jacket from her body. She tries to grab his loose pistol, but--

NERVOUS JOHNNY

steps back and holding the jacket out, goes through the pockets. Nothing. Nervous Johnny drops the jacket and shrugs stupidly to--

THE SCAR

Impatiently, the Scar motions him to continue. Under the lascivious eyes of the other pirates, Nervous Johnny's dirty fingers unbutton--

MORGAN'S BLOUSE

As he pulls her shirt open, Morgan's hand seeks out his loose pistol. The pirate's glance moves from her bodice to--

HER FACE

and--

MORGAN
(smiling)
Looks like heaven, don't it?

Nervous Johnny grins back at her and BANG! gripping the pistol, Morgan sends the creep to hell.

Nervous Johnny crumples to the ground. As the other pirates react with confusion, Vickers throws Morgan to the ground, pulls his cutlass about to finish her when--

The Scar grabs his arm and gives a slight shake of his head. Vickers reluctantly sheathes his weapon. Looking down at Morgan--

THE SCAR
(laughing heartily)
He was always a pain in the ass.
You saved me the trouble.

Glancing from the somewhat exposed Morgan, he regards his gaping men.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Whether she's got the map or not,
the tides are only rising.

NATHANIEL VICKERS
What about the wench?

Curren lingers over Morgan's body caressing every curve with his eyes.

THE SCAR
(lecherously)
I'll finish searching her myself
on the ship. So Vickers, gather
the men: we're heading for Cutthroat
Island.

He extends his hand out to Morgan like a gentleman, but her only response is to spit in it and stand by herself.

Pushing Morgan before him, the Scar heads down the trail to the beach, and the Caribbean beyond where THE DEVILFISH awaits them.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ISABEL'S BOUDOIR - AFTERNOON

All the decadence of Ancient Rome rolled into a bedroom of female sexuality, Shaw awakens smothered in a feather bed. A beautiful young prostitute, KATRINA, sits beside him, stroking his hand. He tries to speak, but--

KATRINA
Shhh...

His forehead wrapped with a linen bandage, Shaw looks up into Katrina's dusky eyes and again opens his mouth to talk, but--

KATRINA (CONT'D)
Shhh...please...

Katrina keeps petting him, making CLUCKING noises in her throat like one would to a sick animal. Shaw rolls his eyes, which hurts, winces then smiles at the girl. A moment, then--

SHAW
ISABEL!

CRASH! Katrina is startled right off the bed and an instant later Isabel bursts through the door. She surveys the room, and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Thank her for her kindness, but I'm not an animal, I'm a human being.

Isabel sighs, then with a nod to Katrina, dismisses her from the room. Isabel sits on the edge of the bed and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Thanks.

She nods, reaching out and checking his bandage. Shaw winces.

ISABEL
Sorry.

But Shaw smiles at her, and--

SHAW
So how long have I--

ISABEL
About ten hours. You've lost some blood, but--
(glancing down the sheets)
the rest of you checks out just fine... What happened anyway?

Shaw's smile vanishes. He edges up the headboard into a sitting position, and--

SHAW
I lost her, Isabel. I promised to keep her safe and I lost her to the Scar.

ISABEL
I'm sorry, but I gotta tell you after last night's events at the Governor's warehouse everyone was more than happy to see the Devilfish sail away.

SHAW
(to himself)
Then he's either found her part or is headed for the island hoping to get by on only two pieces.

ISABEL
(confused)
What?

The gleam building in his eyes as his mind clicks into overdrive he grabs Isabel's wrist and looking her right in the eye--

SHAW
I need weapons Isabel. Will you help me?

Knowing there's no stopping him, Isabel nods, rises and steps to the door. Shaw hides his pain as he rolls from bed and pulls his swordbelt from a chair.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Find me two pistols, a crossbow and a dagger.

ISABEL
You want another sword?

Drawing his broken longsword and gazing at it as if it were Excalibur--

SHAW
Are you kidding? This is still the best damn Toledo steel ever forged in the fires of Spain.

Isabel gives a wry smile, Shaw will always be Shaw. Isabel pauses in the doorway. Looking back over her shoulder--

ISABEL
Do you do this for money or for the girl?

Shaw sheathes his short longsword and catches Isabel's eye. With his characteristic half-laugh--

SHAW
What do you think?

He tosses her his purse of gold. Isabel looks at it and smiles knowingly as--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Put what's left with the rest of my stash. I gotta get to that island and there's only one man left that knows where it is...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. THE PUERTO BELLO SILVER MINE - DUSK

The setting sun glinting off the edge of Shaw's broken Toledo longsword lying in the weeds beside him, Shaw hides in a junk pile holding a brass spyglass to his eye and--

SHAW
...Mordachai Fingers.

SHAW'S POINT OF VIEW - THROUGH THE SPYGLASS - MORDACHAI FINGERS

Magnified in close-up, the pirate is clearly swearing up a storm of salty words as his claw swats at a swarm of flies that have decided to take up a residence in his hair and beard.

PANNING THE GIANT QUARRY-- Mordachai is one of the HUNDRED PRISONERS that huddle in clusters eating their gruel among the ore chutes, ladders and ledges that encase the deep walls.

A wooden elevator tower rises two hundred feet from the floor where its winch, driven by oxen, pulls ore in a wooden pen up to a platform extending from--

A STOREHOUSE

over the edge of the mine. Beside the storehouse--

THREE GUARD SHACKS

are perched on the ring directly across from Shaw, while--

Fifteen well-armed GUARDS and the three MINE OFFICIALS sit at a long, shaded table eating a noisy supper.

SHAW

SNAPS shut his spyglass and tucks it in his belt beside two new pistols. Shaw picks up his longsword and a small sack.

SHAW
A piece of cake.

Looking around, his eyes latch onto a wooden wheelbarrow. Pulling it from the junk pile, the pirate hunter hacks off its two stubby legs then--

SCHHK! strikes a match on the heel of his boot and lights a cigarette. Swinging a crossbow from his back, the bounty hunter cocks it then dumps the contents from his sack, revealing--

FOUR BLACK IRON BALLS

covered with lethal spikes, each with dangling fuses.

Shaw loads the first grenade, lights its fuse and taking aim--
WOOSH! fires it out across the quarry.

THUNK! it embeds in the side of a guard shack.

Shaw cocks his crossbow, blows on the tip of his cigarette, lights the next one and fires.

Fuse sparkling, it hits the store house platform.

WOOSH! WOOSH! two more sail out, one hitting an ore chute, the other biting into the leg of the noisy Guards' dinner table. Not noticing they continue feeding. Then--

SHAW

moves his wheelbarrow to the edge of the steep pit, climbs inside and rocks forward as--

BOOM! The guard shack EXPLODES in a ball of fire.

Napkins still sticking from their necks the Guards leap from the table, pistols coming out as their eyes frantically search for the perpetrators as--

Barely in control, Shaw rockets down the steep embankment and--

The platform BLOWS OFF the side of the storehouse and begins sliding down into the quarry.

Prisoners panic, scrambling like bugs over the ledges and--

Shaw bounces faster and faster down the wall in his sled.

Two guards pick Shaw out of the confusion and RAIN LEAD around him as the table EXPLODES throwing the guards to the dirt.

An ore chute EXPLODE from the wall. Rocks slide.

Guards rush down ladders, into the mine, as rising to his feet in a group of prisoners--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

watches in perplexity as jetting right toward him comes--

SHAW

Totally out of control, he plows into the old buccaneer with bone-jarring force, both men tumbling in a flying mass of arms and legs, wood and chains.

Shaw is the first to rise, and quickly sweeping his eyes over the smoke-filled, dust-billowing chaos, grabs Mordachai by the arm and pointing with his broken sword--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Hey old buddy, I hope you're ready to run 'cause we got maybe two seconds to make it up that elevator.

Shaw's ready to set off, but--

MORDACHAI

yanks his arm free and with a sarcastic smile reaches down and grabs--

HIS ANKLE CHAIN

with--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Meet the family.

Shaw follows the links and--

SHAW
Oh. Shit.

The scoundrel is chained to SEVEN RICKETY OLD MEN, their mouths cracked in blithering broken-teethed grins as they rise holding their chains.

Over the bounty hunter's look of disaster comes, CLANG!

PRISON BARS-- SLAMMING in his face.

INT. THE SPANISH DUNGEON OF PUERTO BELLO - NIGHT

The gaunt and waxy Spanish Warden snickers as he locks the bolt on Shaw and Mordachai Fingers, then moves to a table in this dark and damp prison. The Warden sits and begins playing solitaire.

The old pirate leans in next to Shaw's ear and--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
"You'd have to be a fool to try and escape the silver mines," YOU STUPID, BLOCKHEADED SEA TURTLE TURD!

The Warden ignores Mordachai's outburst; he could give a shit. But Shaw screws up his face and regards Mordachai with--

SHAW
Is that any way to treat the guy who's going to get you out of here?

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Get me out of here? GET ME OUT OF HERE, SAYS YOU?! THE ONLY WAY I BE GETTIN' OUTTA HERE IS AT THE END OF A ROPE, THANKY-KINDLY MISTER SHAW!

Standing on tiptoes he stares down his nose at Shaw with bulging eyes, then stomps off into the corner of the cell and sits on the edge of the single cot muttering--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (CONT'D)
(in his own world)
Why I oughta take me silver hand, and rip out 'is gizzard. Ha! then I'll poke out 'is eyes, I will, and shoot marbles with the devil hisself. Ohhhh, I never thought I'd see a day when honest seafaring men like meself would--

SHAW
Hey, what did you just say?

Fingers spins to face Shaw who holding the bars, glances back at him.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
I were recountin' the sorry state of affairs, the barbs and hooks, that ol' Mordachai is forced to suffer. Where's honor, I ask meself, where's dignity? Where are the days when young men had respect for a heroic captain?

SHAW
(shaking his head)
Jesus, Fingers, get out of the past! We're practically in the seventies here, not the forties.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
'Aye, but sixteen-and-forty-two it was when--

SHAW
I DON'T WANT TO KNOW! I asked you a question, I wanted to know about that gardening tool attached to your wrist.

Shifting his glance from the bounty hunter to his steel claw, he twists off the hand and holds up like a piece of art. Mordachai steps to Shaw with--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Only the finest sterling silver for Mordachai. Knew a Johnny-come-lately in Hispaniola, had a timber leg. Poor wretch, worms got to it they did, and one day crossing the street they ate right through it. One moment he's walking, the next he's face down in the mud, a wagon wheel squashin' him like a cockroach. Said to meself--

Shaw snatches Mordachai's claw from his hand. Before the sea scoundrel can react, Shaw thrusts the metal claw through the bars and--

SHAW
Pssst..! Warden...! PSSST! WARDEN!

The Warden slowly looks up from his cards. Seeing Shaw waving the steel claw, Mordachai groping after it, he decides to check it out. Stepping up to Shaw--

SPANISH WARDEN
Yes, Senor Shaw?

Shaw grins.

SHAW
How would you like to make a deal. I'll give you this hand if you help us escape.

Eyebrows raising--

SPANISH WARDEN
The hand? What would I want with this fool's hand?

Mordachai bristles at the comment, blustering for words, but--

SHAW
It's solid silver. Sterling silver.

The Warden's eyes light up at that. Mmmm, cash. Tentatively he takes the three-fingered claw. He lifts it to his lips then suddenly bites it.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Aaaaaggh!

As if bitten himself, the old pirate reels backwards. Shaw keeps grinning, but--

SPANISH WARDEN
(indignant)
This, this hand, is steel. Not silver.

The bounty hunter gives a nervous half-laugh with--

SHAW
Steel?

And whirling on Mordachai Fingers--

SHAW (CONT'D)
It's steel you liar. I--

SPANISH WARDEN
Of course if you had some gold, Senor Shaw, maybe we could work something out, no?

Shaw and Mordachai lock eyes then slowly the pirate hunter turns back to the Spanish Warden.

SHAW
How much gold?

SPANISH WARDEN
Mmmm, fifty pieces each?

Shaw scratches his stubbled chin, and cocking his thumb back at Fingers--

SHAW
The mine took a lot out of the old sot. He's hardly worth it. Fifty for me, we leave him here.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
(charging in)
WHAT?! AFTER ALLS I'VE DONE FOR YOU I--

SLAP! without looking, Shaw clamps a hand over the pirate's mouth. The Warden makes a weasely face, snorts, then--

SPANISH WARDEN
Eighty pieces for you both.

SHAW
(smiling)
Done. Now listen: you know Senorita Delarosa's house?

The Spanish Warden's eyes sparkle lustily at the mention of Isabel's establishment. He nods.

SHAW (CONT'D)
Good. Go tell her the score and she'll work out the rest.

Tapping Mordachai's claw into the palm of his hand--

SPANISH WARDEN
Very well, but how do I know this is not bull--

SHAW
Keep the hand.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
NOOOOO!

Holding back the enraged scalawag--

SHAW
Absolutely. It may be worthless in monetary terms, but as you can see, it has a strong emotional value to us. Take it in good will.

The Spanish Warden considers the proposition a moment longer, then chuckles and wordlessly leaves.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Of all the stupid ideas as ever I've heard! He'll never get away with something like this and we'll all be caught a'fore dawn.

SHAW
By who? He's the warden, he runs the place.

Pushing the flabbergasted Mordachai aside, Shaw crosses to the cot and lies down as--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Then why, I be askin' ya, didn't you just pay him off in the first place and avoid all this rigmarole?

The two men stare each other down, then--

SHAW
Shit, Fingers-- never thought about that. Oh well.

Fingers sneers, opens his mouth to speak, but--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Uh, uh, uh, Fingers, I swear to God, one more peep out of you and I'm not taking you with me to Cutthroat Island.

Chest swelling, cheeks puffed, having been on the verge of a verbal explosion, suddenly all Fingers can manage is--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
(hopefully)
We're gonna go to Cutthroat Island?

SHAW
(closing his eyes)
Shhh, don't blow it.

Mordachai Fingers looks at the empty socket of his missing hand, and for the first time in many days, he smiles.

CUT TO:

A SHRIVELLED, SEVERED HAND

Lying in a velvet-lined box, a piece of weathered parchment clutched in its stiff fingers. PULLING BACK reveals--

INT. THE SCAR'S CABIN - NIGHT

Aboard THE DEVILFISH, candlelight flickers with the sway of the ship over the box with Mordachai's hand and map which rests beside Don Francisco's map on a baroque table in the center of this garish, low-ceilinged cabin,

THE SCAR

sits at the maps his hand clutching a jug of beer, concern etched across his face as he considers his options.

MORGAN (O.S.)
(singing)
"...the moon it was bright and it lit up the night/So in through the sash came the fairies... They took up her hair, and curled it there/with visions of love in her dreams..."

Disturbed by the endless singing, the Scar glances up with--

THE SCAR
God, why doesn't she shut up with that song?

Then with a weary sigh, he takes the two parts of the map and spreading them out on the table tries to make sense of them.

MORGAN (O.S./CONT'D)
(continuing her song)
"...I'll take the house with the chimney mouse/and never shall I roam..."

Trying to match the edges it is clear to the Scar that the center portion is missing. Fury beginning to shake his hands, his finger traces--

A LINE OF BLOOD

across Mordachai's portion and begins tapping on a tiny landmark with the words--

"CLIFF WALL"

indicating the continuing path. The Scar goes to Don Francisco's map to match the "cliff wall" with anything that might correspond. There's nothing until--

MORGAN (O.S./CONT'D)
(her song continuing)
"...walking on the cliff wall by the sea..."

As if struck by lightning--

THE SCAR

spins in his seat, staring at the door and the sound of the singing behind it.

MORGAN (O.S./CONT'D)
"Under moonbeams bright you'll dream through the night/Lost by your bright red hair..."

A huge smile spreads across the Scar's face and he lunges from the room.

INT. A SUPPLY ROOM ON THE DEVILFISH - NIGHT

At first unseen in this cluttered cabin of food and supplies--

MORGAN (O.S.)
"...They took up her hair, and curled it there/with visions of love in her dreams/For every red strand a trail they had planned, a romance without any seams..."

There's a sudden KERACK, from behind a stack of crates and louder--

MORGAN (O.S./CONT'D)
"At first her mind hazy, her dream path quite lazy/Annabelle was lost in the gloom..."

MORGAN

is revealed hidden at the base of a bulkhead, a piece of wood, bristling with nails in her hand that she's using to pry and cut her way through the wall. Snapping off a large splinter, she stops singing and examining her work is pleased to discover she's made a tiny hole. Morgan excitedly puts her eye to it--

MORGAN'S POINT OF VIEW - THROUGH HOLE - THE LOWER GUN DECK

Empty save for the rows of cannons.

Morgan grips her makeshift tool and RESUMING HER SONG to cover any sound, continues working.

INT. A COMPANIONWAY - NIGHT

The Scar stoops as he rushes through a low doorway, excitement burning in his eyes and moves toward the supply room door, each step bringing him closer to--

MORGAN (O.S.)
"Three hunters came calling/for Annabelle darling/to see who would take her to sup...They took off so fast/with their dogs they ran past/leaving her 'lone with a little slow pup..."

Hand on the latch, the Scar licks his lips listening to the CONTINUING SONG, then taking a key from around his neck quietly inserts it in the lock when--

MORGAN (O.S./CONT'D)
"...then she gave a frown, the ceiling came down/And Annabelle laughed in the smoke."

THE SCAR
Frown..? Ceiling came down..?
(eyes lighting up)
The vapors room! The God damn vapors room!

INT. THE SUPPLY ROOM - DAY

Morgan pauses in her song long enough to reach her hand through the widening escape hole, when--

CRASH! The door flies open--

THE SCAR

bursting into the room.

MORGAN

leaps to her feet in fear, her hand hiding the nail-covered stick behind her back. The Scar grins malevolently, and approaching--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
And what is me little songbird doing in the corner?

Before Curren gets there, Morgan edges out, trying to keep him from discovering her work. The Scar stops and for a moment, just stares at her, then--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Sing.

MORGAN
(suspicious)
What?

THE SCAR
(threatening)
You heard me! Sing!

Hoping to distract the Scar from her escape hole, Morgan swallows and jumps back to the middle of the song, the Scar mouthing each word, understanding in his gaze as--

MORGAN
"At first her mind hazy, her dream path quite lazy/Annabelle was lost in the gloom/Then rounding a bend/her thoughts flooded in and the fairies they sent her a groom..."

THE SCAR
That'd be rounding a bend in the path or something, then...

Morgan stops, troubled, unsure of what is going on.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
I DIDN'T TELL YOU TO STOP!

Swallowing, and dreading what Curren might do, Morgan picks it back up.

MORGAN
Um..."...the table set backwards, her bridal meal of pork/it was dinner for breakfast so she picked up her fork..."

Her voice falters. The Scar steps closer getting better at the riddles with--

THE SCAR
A fork in the trail, KEEP SINGING, WENCH!

MORGAN
(jumping to the end)
"Then her sweet lover dear/he turned with a tear and faded from Annabelle's mind..." That's it, that's all I know.

The Scar grins with triumph and--

THE SCAR
Where did you learn to sing such a pretty song?

Her fear growing, Morgan doesn't answer him. But with a huge outburst of laughter--

THE SCAR
The blood of Black Harry's map is running in your veins, it is.

MORGAN
Oh my God...

And he suddenly crushes her body to his own, his mouth hungrily kissing hers, his hands moving toward her chest until BAM! Morgan brings her nail-festooned board hard into Curren's back. HOWLING with rage--

THE SCAR

throws her into a stack of barrels, his hands tearing the instrument from where it's lodged beneath his shoulder blade.

MORGAN

cringes on the floor, the fallen barrels exposing--

THE HOLE

she's made in the wall.

Dazed, his howl becoming cruel laughter, the Scar brutally grabs Morgan, pulling her to her feet and CRACK! backhands her, splitting her lip and spinning her into the opposite wall.

THE SCAR
Oh, but a feisty girl stirs my loins.

Hatred gleaming in her eyes, Morgan grabs up a keg brandishing it over her head. She's not going to go down without a struggle.

Rubbing his shoulder, the Scar looks at the keg and thinks better of the fight. He laughs at her with--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
I'd love to have this dance, but right now my energy is needed for more important things.
(a yell out the door)
MATES!

As the Scar stares Morgan down, FOUR PIRATES run into the room.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Our guest is full of vinegar. Tie her up boys, and if she gives you any trouble, nail her to the floor.
(to Morgan)
And you, you'll sing for me again, my darlin'-- in more ways than one.

As the pirates move in to subdue Morgan, the Scar leaves the cabin, a spring in his step.

INT. THE SPANISH DUNGEON OF PUERTO BELLO - NIGHT

Darkness and the sound of MOVING FEET is suddenly broken by the flash of a shuttered lantern swiftly opened illuminating the cold stone passage ahead of the Spanish Warden as he leads Shaw and Mordachai Fingers to the base of a stairway. Shining the lantern like a flashlight--

SPANISH WARDEN
(whispers)
I've escorted Senorita Delarosa into the courtyard. Up these stairs she awaits us with the money. She wouldn't give it to me until she saw you safe. But I warn you, if there's any double cross I'll call the guards.

SHAW
Don't worry, don't worry. You have my weapons?

SPANISH WARDEN
Si.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
And me hand?

SPANISH WARDEN
(impatiently)
Si, si, si.

Fingers sneers trying to look dangerous to the Warden who continues with--

SPANISH WARDEN (CONT'D)
I take the money and you go over the east wall.

Shaw nods, and with that the Warden closes the shutter on his lantern and the three men move up the stairs in darkness.

EXT. THE COURTYARD - NIGHT

Exiting through the massive door of the formidable dungeon, Shaw and Mordachai squint into the night, picking out the figure of--

Isabel waiting just inside the portcullis beside a stairway that leads up to the ramparts.

Silently the Warden walks them to Isabel who hands him Shaw's purse. Pointing up the stairs--

SPANISH WARDEN
This is the wall. You're weapons are up there waiting. Good luck.

And before they can react, the waxy Spaniard runs back to the dungeon doors. Shaw watches his retreat for an instant, then--

SHAW
Time's a wasting, let's go-- oh, and thanks, sweetheart.

With a peck on Isabel's cheek, Shaw leads them up the stairs.

At the top of the east wall, true to the Warden's word awaits a covered bundle. Shaw swiftly pulls out a coil of rope. Next come his pistols and his broken sword. Then rising--

SHAW (CONT'D)
That's it, follow me.

But Mordachai frantically grabs the bounty hunter with--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
(an urgent whisper)
Me hand! "See, see, see," the Papist puppethead says, but what about me hand?!

Shaw looks Mordachai Fingers in the eye, watching the pirate prepare for a full burn, then--

SHAW
Ta-da!

He pulls--

THE HAND

from between the coils of the rope. Breathing a sigh of relief, Mordachai screws it back on as the bounty hunter throws the rope over the wall and down they climb.

EXT. THE DOCKS - DAWN

Isabel stands on the docks, watching as Shaw climbs on board Mordachai's dilapidated sloop, THE SPARROWHAWK, Mordachai pushing right past and disappearing through a hatch.

As Shaw and Isabel exchange a quizzical glance, there comes the sound of SMASHING OBJECTS from within then--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

emerges from the hatch, a dusty bottle of rum raised high in his fist. Cracking off the stem with his steel claw, the old buccaneer tilts his head back and drinks the whole thing.

Shaw and Isabel stare at Fingers's grandiose display, as smashing the bottle on the deck--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
I'm ready to--
(hiccup)
sail.

INT. THE SCAR'S CABIN - DAY

The Scar stands at an open stained-glass window breathing deeply of the fresh morning air. He turns at the sound of FOOTSTEPS.

The cabin door swings open and entering--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
Well Captain, we've picked up a fair wind, to be sure.

The Scar nods as he steps back to his table and his maps. Nathaniel Vickers is silent for a moment, then closing the cabin door blurts out--

NATHANIEL VICKERS (CONT'D)
The crew knows where we're headed Captain and they're scared down to their souls. They've lost a lot of friends in them caves over
(more)

NATHANIEL VICKERS (Cont'd)
the years, what with the vapors and pits and all... Why are we going back now when we don't have the last piece?

THE SCAR
(levity in his voice)
Vickers you surprise me, we've been doing this for the past ten with only one part of the map.

Stepping up and leaning over the table.

NATHANIEL VICKERS
But at least when we failed we had the hope of returning the next year with the whole map, but now, there ain't no hope at all.

Clapping Vickers on both shoulders with unbridled enthusiasm--

THE SCAR
Ah, Vickers, my good fellow, how wrong you are. That girl had Harry's map all along.

Drawing back, a phlegmy noise of surprise in his throat becomes--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
But where? How?

Tapping his ugly scar, his eyes burning like coals--

THE SCAR
It was up here, floatin' in her mind like a ship on a calm sea.

Realization glowing in his face, Vickers is infected by Curren's ferocious smile and begins his nauseating laugh, as--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
That treasure'll be ours soon enough-- I'll see to that myself-- but you, I've been making other plans for my first mate, Vickers.

Vickers swallows and tries to maintain a smile, unsure what Curren means, and--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
It's a miserable bunch we got sailin' under us-- gouty old men and cocky young bastards-- any one of them wanting to stick a knife in our back over a treasure that rightly only belongs to you and me. I have plans for them, so hear me out...

INT. THE COMPANIONWAY - DAY

Dogface Cubbins trots down toward the Scar's cabin, a dopey grin on his face. About to knock, however, Dogface freezes at the sound of--

NATHANIEL VICKERS (O.S.)
Maroon them you say? Do you think we can?

Dogface tenses up, listening.

THE SCAR (O.S.)
Can and will, my good fellow, just like in '59 our motive will be the same, but our method'll be different.

INT. THE SCAR'S CABIN - NIGHT

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
It's the only way, Vickers, and it's the right thing to do.

The Scar stares evilly at his first mate. A chuckle builds like bile in his throat and Nathaniel Vickers bellows his nauseating laugh overjoyed at being included. KNOCK-KNOCK. The two men look up like thieves in a church, then--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Come.

The cabin door opens and grinning his dopey grin--

DOGFACE CUBBINS

steps into the room, panting as though he had just arrived.

DOGFACE CUBBINS
The reef Cap'n Curren! We've come to the reef!

THE SCAR
Excellent! You're a good man, Dogface, don't think I won't forget you.

And Dogface's grin grows; he waits hoping for the Scar to say something more, but stuffing his maps in his jacket, Curren rushes from the cabin.

As Vickers turns to follow, Dogface Cubbins paws at his arm.

NATHANIEL VICKERS
What is it man?!

DOGFACE CUBBINS
I be needin' yer counsel sum'pin fierce, Mister Vickers, sir.

EXT. THE BOW OF THE DEVILFISH - DAY

CREAKING RIGGING and GROANING WOOD are the only sounds, as the crew silently parts from Curren's path and he dashes to the railing, Vickers trailing behind. Looking out to sea--

THE TWENTY MILE REEF

extends into a thick, mysterious fog, the waves and foam beating uncontrollably at the humongous, labyrinthine clusters of--

SHIP-KILLING CORAL

rising out of the water, the entrance littered with the blighted skeletons of a fleet of wrecks, ghostships boiling in the pits of hell. As--

THE SCAR

smiles in anticipation, Vickers sidles up beside him and recoiling from the devilish waters, drops his voice.

NATHANIEL VICKERS
Beggin' yer pardon Cap'n, but look at the reef, the tide's already rising. We're too late.

Narrowing his eyes the Scar considers his first mate.

NATHANIEL VICKERS (CONT'D)
We'll get in there, sure, but it'll take too long to find the treasure; even if we do, we'll never get out. Now that it's guaranteed maybe we should wait till next year.

Patting Vickers's back in reassurance the Scar turns to the crew with--

THE SCAR
PREPARE THE LONGBOATS, WE'RE HEADIN' IN!

As the crew scrambles to lower a longboat, the Scar faces the reef once more, and tentatively--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
There be one last thing, sir. Dogface be knowin' of our plan. The softhead wants in...

The banner of King Death CRACKLING in the wind high above him, without even looking at Vickers--

THE SCAR
I'm surprised at you. Quit actin' like an old woman. There's no need to worry. I'll do the only sensible thing one would in a situation as such.

Smiling and nodding, back to his old self--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
You're right, Captain... Should I do it now or--

THE SCAR
No! Vickers..? I'm feelin' good about life right now. I'll kill him myself.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE REEF - DAY

A thick chain runs from the bow of THE DEVILFISH out to a longboat that, bouncing dangerously in the CRASHING WAVES, acts like a tug, its crew of fifteen men straining at their oars, carefully towing the Scar's frigate past the multitude of wrecks into the colossal maze of the fog-enshrouded reef. Standing in the bow, acting as navigator, sways a terrified--

DOGFACE CUBBINS

The rest of the frigate's crew nervously stands at the rail of THE DEVILFISH watching the longboat battle its way deeper into the fatal waters while the Scar, standing in the center, points out directions with his scimitar.

INT. DOGFACE CUBBINS'S LONGBOAT - DAY

Waves crashing over the gunwales, Dogface interprets the Scar's signals, eyes flashing between the reef and the frigate as--

DOGFACE CUBBINS
Steady lads, steady on...

Looking out he sees that they are entering a narrow channel. Only one way to go: straight, but looking back at the ship--

The Scar signals him to go left.

Dogface is confused. CRASH! a wave washes over the longboat, the men banking their oars, some shooting panicked glances up at Dogface who waves his hands back at the Scar shouting--

DOGFACE CUBBINS
IT'S STRAIGHT CAP'N! STRAAAIGHT!

But smiling the Scar shakes his head and his scimitar says, "left."

SMASH! another wave drenches them, bringing the little boat closer to the black coral wall.

BEADY EYES

swishing between the Scar and the channel, the obedient seaman till the end, Dogface takes the suicidal order and--

DOGFACE CUBBINS
(calls out)
Port mates! Pull port and may the Lord have mer--

And as they do, A HUGE WAVE SLAMS them into the razor sharp stone, the boat exploding in pieces, all hands lost.

EXT. THE DEVILFISH - DAY

Turning from the railing, the Scar nods to Vickers--

THE SCAR
Dead dogs don't bite. We'll be needin' another longboat, Vickers, and fifteen more "volunteers."

As Vickers turns to the crew, the pirates meet his gaze with unconcealed fear.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

SHAW'S POINT OF VIEW - THROUGH SPYGLASS - THE REEF - SUNSET

Looming in view, the tide even higher than before, THE DEVILFISH nowhere in sight as the waves blast about like CANNON SHOTS at the mouth of the massive reef.

SHAW (O.S.)
I hope you're sober enough to do this Fingers.

MORDACHAI FINGERS (O.S.)
If'n I were sober, I wouldn't even attempt it.

SHAW

snaps shut his spyglass, and looking sea-sick, gives a weak half-laugh and gripping the gunwales the bounty hunter is at the mercy of the dangerous current as--

THE SPARROWHAWK

rockets into the reef. As it weaves through the treacherous maze, it's clear that the old pirate knows what he's doing.

EXT. CUTTHROAT ISLAND - SUNSET

THE DEVILFISH anchored before the beach, the sun sets behind the haunting island, its flames mimicked by the bonfires on the beach lit by the Scar's festive crew, their five longboats pulled up onto the black sand.

NATHANIEL VICKERS

solemnly watches from the Main Deck of the frigate.

INT. THE SEA CAVE - NIGHT

The black water choppy and rising, the coral shelf is now only fifteen feet out of the water, while atop it--

The Scar and SIX "VOLUNTEERS" quickly set up a winch in a circle of four burning torches. The Scar supervises the process with a keen eye, while his other hand grips the back of Morgan's neck in a less than friendly way.

THE SCAR
Well Missy Morgan, I hope you brought me your church voice.

Hands tied behind her back--

MORGAN

stiffens, refusing to speak, but the Scar only smiles. His men finish by laying out five ropes from the winch's spool and--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Good job, boys. Now I want three of you to man this winch. These five ropes'll be for the chests.

The Scar pulls--

TWO THIN CANDLES

from his coat, one six inches, the other four. Handing one of them the six-inch candle--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
When we enter the tunnel light this candle. As soon as it burns down begin reelin' the ropes in, fast as you can-- we'll follow behind, helping the gold through any snags.

With that the Scar pushes the captive Morgan ahead of him and starts across the coral reading off Mordachai Fingers's map. To his "volunteers--"

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Well, come on!

Quickly drawing lots between them, the three losing pirates--

BIM, ZEKE AND QUINCE

exchange frightened glances with the Three "Volunteers" left behind, then grab extra torches and uncoiling the ropes, follow their captain across the deadly coral, disappearing into the bowels of the island.

SHHCK! the First Volunteer strikes a match and lights the candle.

CUT TO:

INT. A DEAD END CHAMBER - NIGHT

Torches and the ECHO OF HURRIED FOOTSTEPS signal the party's approach as Curren leads them splashing into a chamber shaped like a dome, its walls curving down to the water that is the entire floor.

The Scar's still reading from Mordachai's fragment of map, but the tunnel ends and it appears there is no way out. The party halts and hesitantly--

QUINCE
What now, Cap'n? We take a wrong turn or sumptin'?

THE SCAR
(impatient)
No, this is the way and since you're such a bright lad, you'll be my pathfinder.

And before Quince can protest--

THE SCAR

exchanges a wrapped, unlit torch for the pirate's rope and taking him by the arm, pulls him through the water, moving deeper and deeper into the pool until they reach the far wall.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Swim under this wall, then rise and light this torch in the next room so this fine map of mine don't get lost when she follows.

Quince nods and dropping into the pool, disappears under the wall.

INT. VAPORS ROOM - NIGHT

Gasping for air, Quince bursts to the surface. All is dark as the pirate sniffs, smelling something, then climbs onto a broad ledge and unwraps the torch. As he takes--

A FLINT

from his pocket a FAINT HISS can be heard overhead, but humming softly Quince strikes the flint--

KAWHUUMP! The gas filling the room EXPLODES in a massive ball of fire incinerating the SCREAMING Quince.

INT. DEAD END CHAMBER - NIGHT

The pool of water flashes a dazzling orange. The Scar grins with--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Well he was brighter than I thought.

As Bim and Zeke recoil in unconcealed fear, Morgan scowls refusing to look at Curren.

BIM
(frightened)
What the hell was that?!

THE SCAR
Those were the vapors. Now move you cowardly bastards!

And without further explanation, the Scar wraps his pistol in an oilcloth and pushes Morgan beneath the surface of the water.

Gripping their ropes, Bim and Zeke have no choice but to follow.

INT. THE VAPORS ROOM - NIGHT

Brightly lit, this stone cavity encases a large ragged floor that rises like an island from the water lapping the walls at both ends of the room.

SPLASH! in a shower of water the group bursts to the surface, Morgan, Bim and Zeke are horrified, taking in--

Quince's charred and smouldering bones, as well as the remains of ten more men-- one for each of the passing years.

Morgan's attention is drawn to--

THE CEILING

engulfed in ROILING FLAMES. The hiss from before is now a DULL ROAR as the burning gas begins filling the room; a lowering ceiling of fire.

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
The vapors come fast and in a quarter hour will fill this room with a fire that won't go out until the caves flood again, so you better know your song good, because when your father hides a treasure, he really fucking hides a treasure.

Leading the group onto the ragged floor, the Scar takes delight in the hand-tied Morgan's struggle; chuckling, he roughly pushes her toward the far wall, back into the water, beneath the wall and out the other side.

EXT. THE SPARROWHAWK - NIGHT

Bathed in moonlight, the sloop glides in to a stop, hidden behind the backside of a towering break of coral reef that forms the island's protective lagoon.

MORDACHAI FINGERS

moves from the wheel to a green-looking Shaw who wrapping his pistols in oilcloths draws his broken sword. He tests its edge for sharpness, then frowning, reaches out with--

SHAW
Here, let me see that potato masher of yours for a sec.

And before Mordachai can react Shaw grabs the scalawag's wrist and to the old pirate's vast annoyance begins sharpening his--

TOLEDO STEEL

between two of the claw's fingers. SHING, SHING, SHING! tiny sparks begin to fly and--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Me arm, Shaw, it's gettin' warm.

And he fidgets trying to pull his claw away, but SHING, SHING!

SHAW
That thing's fake you can't feel anything.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Why of all the weevily rancid festering insults; ten years younger I'd take you and--

Shaw cuts him off by releasing the claw. As Fingers blows on his claw like it's burning--

SHAW
Sorry. I'm finished, okay?

And testing the sharpened edge once more before sheathing his sword--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Let's just go over the drill one more time. Sneak attack. Keep the sloop hidden here and while I'm in the cave, all you gotta do is sink their ship so they can't follow us. The last thing I want is that thirty-gun monstrosity chasing us outta here.

Mordachai Fingers puckers his lips in thought, his eyes peering beyond their cover at the form of THE DEVILFISH one hundred yards away, silhouetted against the island and the glowing bonfires on the beach...

MORDACHAI FINGERS
...And I can trust you to bring me gold?

SHAW
I got things covered.

The pirate hunter rises and looks over the edge of the coral break, sees the water below and shudders. To Mordachai's amusement, Shaw grabs up one of the buccaneer's kegs of rum.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
(a knowing smile)
Ah, you're comin' around: rum's the best thing for moments like these. I'll take a little nip meself.

But hand extended, Mordachai goes pop-eyed as Shaw ignores him and opening the spigot, drains the keg into the sea, with--

SHAW
I need a float, Fingers. I can't swim.

And with that, Shaw climbs over the coral break. Awkwardly plugging his nose and shutting his eyes, he clutches the keg to his chest, and jumps into the lagoon leaving--

Mordachai Fingers behind him, his face contorting into a thousand expressions as he moans softly at the injustices of life.

INT. THE SEA CAVE - NIGHT

The Three Volunteers nervously surround the winch, their eyes glued to--

THE CANDLE

wax dripping, it's burnt halfway down.

DISSOLVE TO:

ANOTHER CANDLE

burning at the same length, clutched in the Scar's beefy fist as--

INT. THE CAVES TO HELL - NIGHT

Trailing their five ropes, torchlight illuminating their path the party stops at a tight array of a dozen tunnels.

THE SCAR

skims the bottom of the candle off the edge of Don Francisco's map; the trail could lead in any number of directions. Under the frightened eyes of the pirates, he quickly checks Mordachai's fragment, then to Morgan--

THE SCAR
And now my sweet map, this be the Caves to Hell. The candle ain't giving me much more time. Sing me Black Harry's song!

Morgan doesn't respond. Squeezing Morgan's neck painfully--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
Sing or die!

Her hands still tied, there's nowhere to run, so voice cracking--

MORGAN
"A girl that I knew/named Annabelle Sue/Had a pile of hair that was red... Her mother proposed/keep the windows all closed/When you--"
"When you sleep on your pillow in bed..."

Thinking, figuring out the lyric--

THE SCAR
No, no, no that's not it!

MORGAN
But that's how it goes!

THE SCAR
Goddammit, I know! That's just the starting! The "red hair's" the blood and the "pillow's" the map-- Jump ahead, to the dream part, that's where the answers are!

Regarding the Scar with hatred, Morgan quickly goes through the lyrics in her mind, HUMMING THE TUNE, then--

MORGAN
"...Lost by your bright red hair..." Um-- "Three hunters came calling/for Annabelle darling/to see who would take her to sup/They took off so fast/with their dogs they ran past/leaving her 'lone with a little slow pup."

THE SCAR
(rubbing his scar)
Hunters... Fast, past... Sup... Slow pup..? Slow pup. Slope up!

And indeed one of the paths before them is an inclined plane leading up. Bim and Zeke rush in with their ropes and torches, and--

THE SCAR

shoves Morgan in front of him into the tunnel, the candle burning lower in his fist.

INT. THE SEA CAVE - NIGHT

Shaw arrives at the Three "Volunteers'" gig boat and lets go of his keg. He flounders in the the rising tide for a moment, then crawls unobserved onto the rocks below the coral shelf and listens to the FAINT MUTTERINGS of--

The Three "Volunteers" ten feet above clustered around their diminishing candle.

Exhausted, Shaw stands, thinks things through, then swiftly climbs the ledge to join them.

His sudden arrival surprises the nervous pirates whose attention turns from the flickering clock to--

SHAW
(with authority)
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?!

Their mouths pop open and the three pirates exchange baffled looks. They don't know who this dripping man is, but then again he's not drawing a sword... Scratching his head--

FIRST "VOLUNTEER"
Pulling out the treasure?

That's good news and the pirate hunter gives a half-laugh--

SHAW
Well, right... Good. Good work.

Shaw nods, but now these "volunteers" start to wonder and their torpid looks dissolve as the pirate hunter grabs a lit torch and pushes past them, starting quickly after the ropes.

SECOND "VOLUNTEER"
Look, mate, why don't you tell us what you're doing here?

SHAW
(calling as he moves)
Nothin' to worry about. Vickers sent me. The Scar forgot part of the map.
(patting his chest)
Got it right here. Thanks for your help.

And WHISTLING like a guy who knows just what he's doing, Shaw disappears into the tunnel. The three pirates trade uneasy glances and--

FIRST "VOLUNTEER"
You know I don't remember if'n I ever remember seein' that guy on ship. Am I forgetting or what?

SECOND "VOLUNTEER"
Me, I don't like to cross Vickers... And the Scar--
(then thinking)
But didja see how wet he was? Swam here he did or sumpin' else, surely... Still we'd be more stupid than bold to leave the winch, so--

His hand slipping to his sword--

THIRD "VOLUNTEER"
Shit, I'm thinkin' we fucked up... I'm gonna go get him.

And grabbing up a torch in one hand, cutlass drawn in the other he takes off after Shaw, his feet dancing down the dangerous coral path.

INT. THE CAVES TO HELL - NIGHT

Another fork in the road. Sweat beading around his ugly scar, Curren trails his finger off the edge of Don Francisco's parchment and looks to Morgan.

THE SCAR
Well, map, what's your song tell us?

Licking her lips, Morgan slowly sings...

MORGAN
"The table set backwards, her bridal meal of pork/It was dinner for breakfast so she picked up her fork..."

Thinking fast, Morgan thrusts her chin toward the left fork. The Scar smiles and raising the candle, nods Bim forward.

Bim leads the way three steps into darkness, followed by his sudden SCREAM and a moment later the THUD of a falling body striking stone.

Flashing his eyes at Morgan, Curren draws a pistol and CLICK-CLICK! is ready to kill her--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
You lied, bitch!

Morgan gives a malicious grin and--

MORGAN
That's right, and if you kill me, you'll never get your treasure.

The Scar smoulders, finger twitching at his trigger, then--

THE SCAR
(thinking fast)
Set the table backwards, didja say..? Guess that means to civilized lubbers like Harry that the fork's on the right. Ha! Fine, from now on, you go first.

Reluctantly, Morgan leads the hurried party in the proper direction.

EXT. THE STERN OF THE DEVILFISH - NIGHT

Quietly swimming through the silvery moonlit waters of the lagoon--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

a double-barrelled flintlock clamped in his teeth, collides with the back of the frigate.

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Ouch!

And grabbing the rudder chain--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (CONT'D)
(talking to the ship)
Thinks you can bump into ol'
Mordachai's head, you do, do you?
Well, we'll see who has the last
laugh here, you Godforsaken bloody,
worm-rotten canoe!

Continuing to GRUMBLE, the old buccaneer fights his way up the cable, then catching--

HIS CLAW

on a window sill, Mordachai pulls himself up onto the castle and begins edging along the windows.

EXT. THE MAIN DECK OF THE DEVILFISH - NIGHT

Nathaniel Vickers looks out across the water toward the beach fifty yards away.

The bonfires have died down, the twenty remaining pirates of the crew strewn across the sand in drunken disarray.

Vickers moves to a Spanish windlass and laboriously turning the drum, begins to raise the anchor.

INT. THE LOWER GUN DECK - NIGHT

Climbing through a hatch over an "eighteen pounder"-- a massively heavy cannon-- Mordachai Fingers is jolted CRASH! onto the floor as THE DEVILFISH slips anchor, and begins moving. Crawling back to the hatch, Mordachai looks out.

The frigate is slowly drifting toward the cave a quarter mile down the shore from the drinking pirates.

Looking at the cannon--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
This oughta do the trick.

No time to lose, Mordachai cuts the recoil ropes on the eighteen pounder and begins the painfully slow process of dragging the huge gun away from its port.

INT. THE CAVES TO HELL - NIGHT

Morgan stumbles dangerously close to the edge of a narrow cliff. Don Francisco and Mordachai Fingers's maps in one hand, the Scar grabs the cord around Morgan's wrists and hoists her to her feet, his anxious eyes gleaming through the dust at--

SIX PASSAGEWAYS

leading off the ledge. Eyes transfixed by his candle which now little more than a stub, with a hint of panic--

THE SCAR
We're jumping off the maps again. Go to the part of the song about the cliff and lead on from there.

Shutting her eyes and thinking for a moment, then--

MORGAN
...uh, "...to fix a leaky roof."

The Scar and Zeke flash their gaze from Morgan to the forth passage where--

DRIP-DROP. DRIP-DROP. DRIP-DROP. a tiny stream of water splashes down from the ceiling.

Curren pushes Morgan forward.

INT. THE DEAD END CHAMBER - NIGHT

Feet splashing through the water, Shaw follows the ropes into the dead end chamber only to be arrested by the sound of RUNNING FOOTSTEPS following behind him. Shaw scans the room with his torch, but there's nowhere to hide.

The Third "Volunteer" pirate charges toward Shaw, cutlass drawn.

SHAW
I guess this means you didn't believe--

The pirate slashes at Shaw, as KACHING! out comes--

THE TOLEDO LONGSWORD

Seeing the ridiculous-looking broken sword, the pirate LAUGHS at Shaw figuring him an easy mark, until--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Think that's funny? Watch this!

And with a brilliant slash and thrust from Shaw, it's all the Laughing Pirate can do to leap backwards from death and CACHANG! he meets Shaw's blade. WOOSH! the Laughing Pirate jabs his flaming torch for Shaw's face.

CUT TO:

A GRINNING SKELETON

sitting against a stack of--

FIVE TREASURE CHESTS

in--

INT. THE TREASURE ROOM - NIGHT

The trail ends atop a pillar of stone that rises from a bottomless pit, a precipice on three sides.

Lunging past the others, the Scar gives a MANIACAL HOWL of utter joy and conquest out above the pit's black darkness.

THE SCAR
YEEESSS!! BY THUNDER, YEEEESSSSS!

As the candle flickers out in his hand, the Scar stands on the edge of the precipice, and--

MORGAN

sees her chance. Hands still bound behind her back, she drops her shoulder and charges the Scar.

ZEKE
LOOK OUT, CAP'N!

And the instant before Morgan connects with his back, Jaggard Curren dodges, and missing, it is Morgan who stumbles at the edge. As she falls--

THE SCAR'S HAND

shoots out and catches her collar. As the Scar lets Morgan dangle over the edge--

ZEKE (CONT'D)
Drop 'er, Cap'n! Kill 'er!

But with a psychotic grin, sweat dripping down his face, Curren's voice becomes a whisper and--

THE SCAR
Oh no. That's too easy for the daughter of Black Harry. Before I'm finished with her, she'll
(more)

THE SCAR (Cont'd)
look back to this day, and wish she had fallen.

Yanking her up, he hurls Morgan into the skeleton, scattering the bones just as--

THE ROPES

come to life beginning their path back out of the caves. The Scar spins to Zeke with--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
The ropes!

As Zeke grips the ropes in a violent tug of war with the far off winch--

THE SCAR

lunges for the chests, grabbing two, dragging them thirty feet past Zeke.

ZEKE
I'm losin' em, Cap'n!

THE SCAR
Lose them, you lose your life!

And swiftly repeating this with the last three chests, the Scar rips--

THREE OF THE ROPES

from the pirate, creating slack as he throws Zeke forward with--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
HELP ME TIE THEM OFF, GODDAMMIT!

As Zeke jumps to the Scar's command, Morgan looks at the maniacle Curren securing the ropes to the chests. He is the Devil personified.

INT. THE DEAD END CHAMBER - NIGHT

The Laughing Pirate attacks with torch and cutlass as Shaw holds **his sword** two-handed GROANING with every blow KRANG! CHING! **CHA-CHING!**

As the combatants flail through the water now glowing orange from the raging fire in the vapors room next door--

THE ROPES

quickly reel out of the cave. SPLASHING toward the ropes, Shaw's leg entangles and he goes down losing his broken longsword in the water. The surface churning--

THE FIRST THREE CHESTS

blast into view and plow past Shaw as the pirate leaps for him ready to deal the death blow. Searching for his weapon--

SHAW

sees a glint below the surface. His faithful sword. As the Laughing Pirate swoops in for the kill, Shaw falls over--

HIS LONGSWORD

both hands bringing it up under his armpit and THHWAAP! the pirate impales himself on Shaw's broken point. The laughter dies. As--

THE FOURTH CHEST

foams up from under the wall, Shaw reclaims his sword and splashes through the water following the fifth and final rope, under the wall and into--

INT. THE VAPORS ROOM - NIGHT

The fiery ceiling has descended halfway, filling the room with BLASTING FLAMES as Shaw breaks the surface in time to see--

THE FIFTH CHEST

followed by--

MORGAN AND THE SCAR

as they bubble up from the pool on the opposite side of the room. As the chest bounces up onto the ragged floor, all three of them freeze, stunned, then hurling her body after the chest--

MORGAN
SHAW!

But as the pirate hunter throws himself to meet her--

THE SCAR

lunges from the water grabbing Morgan and shoving a pistol into her temple. In the same instant--

SHAW

rips out his own pistol and moving across the room, aims it at the bastard's ugly scar.

MORGAN

looks at Shaw with a mingling of utter joy that he's alive and terrible fear that they will die.

SHAW

narrows his eyes at the Scar and his finger begins to squeeze the trigger, yet the oilcloth wrapping long gone--

SHAW'S PISTOL

drips as soaking wet as he is.

SHAW
I know what you're thinking, you son of a bitch. Wet powder or dry? Wish I could help you, but I don't really know myself... This is between us now, so do yourself a favor and let her go.

Cocking his pistol and breathing in Morgan's ear--

THE SCAR
This your boyfriend?

Feeling Morgan's spine go rigid, his eyes move to Shaw with--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
I'll kill her!

And pulling Morgan, he sidles across the ragged floor after the fifth chest that disappears down into the water and out of the room.

Circling around the floor in the opposite direction, Shaw quickly assesses the situation--

SHAW
Go ahead kill her then, but you pull that trigger, I'll be up one bullet on you... And all that gold'll be coming with me.

The joy in Morgan's face is gone in a flash.

MORGAN
Shaw, you asshole! I can't believe--

SHAW
Shut up, this doesn't concern you.

Morgan begins a slow burn twice as hot as the ceiling descending upon them. Morgan drills her gaze through Shaw's heart, unaware as the Scar sees out of the corner of his eye--

Zeke's head slowly breaking the surface of the water. Buying time as Zeke inches his way among the skeletons across the ragged floor toward Shaw--

THE SCAR
I've never been a man to fight a losin' battle. Since you hold all the cards now, you can-- excuse the pun-- call the shots. I've got a right mind that you'll be gettin' everythin' that's due you.

But as a victorious smile breaks across Shaw's face--

ZEKE
Aaargh!

CRASH! the pirate slams into Shaw knocking the gun from his hand as--

Morgan rams the back of her head into the Scar's face and tumbles across the floor.

BOOM! the Scar fires after her, then quickly scrambles into the water and under the wall after his treasure.

Shaw drills his fist into Zeke's face as the pirate struggles to draw his cutlass.

On her back, looking up at the descending fire, Morgan scrapes her binds across the rock as Zeke drives--

HIS CUTLASS

for Shaw who dives, rolling and sweeps up--

A SKULL

blocking the flashing blade KRACK! As bone fragments scatter, Shaw kicks him with both feet sending him right at--

MORGAN

She twists away, falling into the water as Zeke hits the wall and dazed, drops to his knees.

SHAW
Morgan!

He dives to the edge for Morgan. Pulling her SPLUTTERING from the water, their eyes meet and PSSHHHT! she spits a mouthful of water in Shaw's face.

Shaking his head as he lets Morgan go, Shaw spins in time to duck a decapitating cutlass blow from the revived Zeke.

ROARING FLAMES

kiss the tops of their heads. Before Shaw can draw his sword--

WOOSH! Zeke swings for him again. But this time, THWACK! Shaw drives the tip of his boot with the force of a sledgehammer up between the pirate's legs.

ZEKE
YEEOOW!

The attack on his manhood shoots him rigidly up to his full height, his scream instantly cut off as--

ZEKE'S HEAD

disappears in the tumultuous fire. With little time left himself--

SHAW

scrambles into the water and grabbing the resistant Morgan pulls her beneath the surface and under the wall as with the sound of ROLLING THUNDER the vapors room is consumed in flame.

INT. THE CORAL LEDGE - NIGHT

The five chests and the two pirates at the winch awaiting him, the Scar swiftly crosses the coral bridge, shouting--

THE SCAR
GET THOSE CHESTS LOADED!

Snapping to action the First "Volunteer" scrambles down the coral ledge to the longboat, his partner immediately lowering down the chests.

INT. THE DEAD END CHAMBER - NIGHT

The water now blazing a fantastic orange and yellow reflection of fire, Shaw and Morgan burst to the surface, the latter's emotions barely in control.

MORGAN
I can't believe you, Shaw! I-- I thought you were dead-- What am I saying, I WISH YOU WERE DEAD!

And trying to avoid her level of outrage, the pirate hunter draws his sword and reaching out to the struggling girl--

SHAW
Take it easy, Morgan, I just want to--

He carefully reaches for her bound hands; she wrenches away.

SHAW (CONT'D)
I just want to free your hands.

MORGAN
YOU TOLD HIM TO KILL ME!

Grabbing her wrists, trying to cut the knot--

SHAW
A lot was said in the heat of the moment-- just hold still, please.

But yanking away from him one more time--

MORGAN
A LOT WAS SAID?! NO KIDDING! I BELIEVED ALL YOUR BULLSHIT IN THAT DAMN ALLEY! I--

SLICE! Shaw cuts free her hands and steps forward into KAPOW! one of her roundhouse specialties. Shaw's lip is split and Morgan tries to stare him down, but Shaw just grins and swiftly grabbing her shoulders, pins her arms and--

SHAW
I know we've just met, but there's something besides your fist that knocks me on my ass, calls me on my bullshit and I never thought it would hit me like this... Can't you see what I'm trying to tell you Morgan? If all I came for was the treasure, don't you think I'd have come up with a better plan to get it out of here?

She looks into his eyes with--

MORGAN
Shaw, I don't know what to think. What are you trying to say?

SHAW
Morgan, when I find myself blasting through walls fifty feet in the air with only a voice to guide me... Hell, I love you.

And he kisses her like there's no tomorrow.

INT. THE LOWER GUN DECK OF THE DEVILFISH - PRE-DAWN

The massive cannon has been tilted it off its carriage and aimed straight down, right alongside the main mast that runs through the hold, as--

MORDACHAI FINGERS

sits cross-legged beside the gun, weaving six-inch fuses through the fingers of his steel claw, miraculously tying them into a long chain. Knotting the last one--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Like the buttercups I made for me mum...

And clicking his tongue at the memory, the old buccaneer turns to the cannon. Attaching one end of the fuse, he moves to an open gun hatch and looks into the half-light before dawn.

Before him lies the mouth of the cave almost blocked by the rising tide. All is quiet.

Looking back down at the fuse--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (CONT'D)
Yep, you'll be just long enough to give ol' Mordachai his getaway.

Mordachai lights a cigarette, but as he throws the match from the gun port, something glints in the darkness, and out of the cave comes--

THE LONGBOAT

Sitting on the chests, the Scar watches as his two men row hunched over, backs toward him. Curren's hand moves and the source of the glint Mordachai saw is clear--

A FIVE-INCH, BELL MOUTH, BLUNDERBUSS PISTOL

that the Scar is aiming at the two pirates. BOOM! he fires it into the two men, it's wide-spread grape shot killing them instantly. Throwing the bodies overboard the Scar scoots to the oars and with five powerful strokes, brings the longboat up beside THE DEVILFISH.

EXT. THE BEACH - PRE-DAWN

The SHOT ECHOES over the island. A GROGGY PIRATE coming out of his stupor looks for THE DEVILFISH. It's not where it's supposed to be. Scanning the lagoon, he finds--

THE FRIGATE

a quarter mile across the water, where he can just make out Vickers helping the Scar hoist the treasure chests aboard ship. Everything comes clear in an instant.

THE GROGGY PIRATE
MAROONERS!

Stumbling to his feet, he regales the sloppy crew beginning to rise in the black sand from their empty rum casks, with--

THE GROGGY PIRATE (CONT'D)
DOUBLE-CROSSIN' MAROONERS, I TELL YA! DEATH TO THE SCAR!

And pulling two pistols from his belt, he FIRES ineffectively at the frigate, then nineteen pirates behind him, they race for their longboats and begin pushing them into the breakers.

EXT. THE MAIN DECK OF THE DEVILFISH - PRE-DAWN

As GUNFIRE echoes from across the lagoon, Vickers unfurls--

THE SAILS

as--

THE SCAR

quickly lowers his treasure through a cargo hatch, the rope holding the chests together still attached to a davit pulley on deck beside the main mast. Curren then flies up the stairs to--

THE FORECASTLE DECK

and manning the swivelgun, BOOM! pulls the flint's ripcord and fires into the pirate longboats with--

THE SCAR
COME ON AND HAVE A TASTE OF MY LONG NINE GRAPESHOT!

Swiftly ramming in another load and cocking the flint, SNAP! he pulls the string and--

EXT. THE LAGOON - PRE-DAWN

One of the longboats EXPLODES in a shower of wood and men.

THE GROGGY PIRATE
ROW FOR YOUR LIVES, LET'S GIVE 'EM HELL!

The four remaining longboats, sixteen pirates between them, row determinedly for the frigate now only two hundred yards ahead.

EXT. THE REEF - PRE-DAWN

With Morgan towing Shaw in a rescue swim, the pair makes their way through the rising tide to the coral break where--

THE SPARROWHAWK

awaits them: still hidden near the exit from the lagoon. As Shaw and an exhausted Morgan scramble over the coral and aboard the sloop--

SHAW
Morgan, I hope you know how to sail.

MORGAN
(catching her breath)
You're not telling me--

SHAW
You guessed it, I don't know a thing about boats.

As Shaw pulls up the anchor--

MORGAN
Are you kidding me?! You don't know how to swim, you can't sail a ship, and you carry a sword that has no point.

SHAW
Because of you.

Plunging on--

MORGAN
A pirate bounty hunter? I bet you don't even like rum. Why the hell did you say you're in this line of work?

SHAW
(loading his pistols)
'Cause when all's said and done, every morning the sun comes up on two kinds of men: one with a gun and one looking up its barrel. Guess I'd looked up the barrel long enough. You want something in this world you got to fight for it.

MORGAN
What's that supposed to mean?

SHAW
I don't know, I just always wanted to say that...

Shaw catches Morgan's ironic look, cocking his pistols--

SHAW (CONT'D)
C'mon, Morgan, we've got work to do.

Morgan lets down the sails and CRACK! the wind kicks into the fabric and THE SPARROWHAWK shoots into the vicious tide on a perpendicular course to intercept THE DEVILFISH one hundred yards away.

EXT. THE FORECASTLE DECK OF THE DEVILFISH - PRE-DAWN

Racing into the reef, BOOM! the Scar fires the swivelgun at the longboats, as--

Vickers stands at the helm, fighting through the coral maze and pummeling tide.

The Scar looks out over the railing back at--

THE FOUR LONGBOATS

their own single sails now billowed, flying into the reef two ship lengths behind the frigate, two men in each waiting with boarding axes in the bows. A pirate SHOOTS at--

The Scar, but it isn't the bullet that makes his eyes go wide, it's--

THE SPARROWHAWK

coming right at him from the left.

Rocketing through a lethal corridor of coral, Shaw recklessly standing on the bowsprit hanging to the flying jib. The pirate hunter takes aim with his pistols, SHOOTING as--

Trying to shake the pursuit, KKRRREEE! Vickers accidentally scrapes the frigate into coral slowing down the ship. Whirling from the rail--

THE SCAR
WHAT THE HELL YOU DOING? THEY'LL RAM US BROADSIDE!

Curren charges across the deck, pushing Vickers from the helm with--

THE SCAR (CONT'D)
I'll man the helm! You get more shot an' powder an' take the gun!

As Vickers scrambles down through a door, the Scar looks to--

THE SPARROWHAWK

on a collision course with the frigate's broadside, and--

SHAW
HOLY SHIT, MORGAN!

Shaw throws himself back across the deck his eyes on--

MORGAN

who like a woman possessed is going to have her revenge at any cost, but an instant before THE SPARROWHAWK explodes into the frigate's side--

THE SCAR

practically wrenches his arms from their sockets as he skillfully pulls his craft starboard cutting around a huge coral pinnacle.

THE SPARROWHAWK plows into the lead longboat BLASTING IT into the coral pinnacle as Morgan miraculously slews her boat into THE DEVILFISH'S wake--

The three remaining longboats ripping right after them.

EXT. THE LOWER GUN DECK - PRE-DAWN

His head sticking through a gun port, cigarette clenched in his jaw, Mordachai Fingers blinks sea-spray from his eyes as he watches THE SPARROWHAWK in pursuit of THE DEVILFISH.

Mordachai can't help but smile as--

Morgan courageously mans the helm and Shaw reloads his pistols, but neither of the two notice the pirate longboat coming in right behind them. As the pirates raise their boarding axes--

Mordachai hollers as loud as he can--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
BLAST IT, SHAW, LOOK OW--

INT. THE LOWER GUN DECK - PRE-DAWN

POW! Nathaniel Vickers coldcocks Mordachai from behind with a huge wooden ramrod. The old pirate rolls across the gun deck, cigarette flying from his lips as--

HIS PISTOL

flashes into his hand.

VICKERS

kicks the weapon from his grip.

NATHANIEL VICKERS
(drawing his sword)
On your feet, you drunken fool! This time I'm takin' more'n your hand and there's no Black Harry, Don Francisco or anyone else to save your sorry ass!

KACHING! Mordachai Fingers draws his cutlass and--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Come at me, you vomit-eating dog!

KERASH! Steel bites steel and the battle begins.

EXT. THE REEF - PRE-DAWN

And CRACK! boarding axes eat into THE SPARROWHAWK from behind, and--

FOUR PIRATES

leap from their longboat into the sloop's stern attacking Morgan who's caught by surprise at the wheel as--

In the bow Shaw spins with his pistols, BLAM! BLAM! sending two into the churning waves.

As the third pirate attacks Morgan with a sword, she releases the wheel and grabs his wrist as--

SCRRAAAP! jagged coral tears the deck railing from the unmanned sloop, the collision sending the fourth pirate reeling for Shaw. The bounty hunter ducks and grabbing the man by the belt, throws him over his shoulder--

THE PIRATE
YAAAA--

KERSPLASH! out of the boat. Turning to help Morgan, Shaw sees her stick the sword-wielding pirate's head between the deadly spinning cotters of the wheel--

CRACKETY! CRACK! CRACK! CRACK! The pirate releases the sword to the floor and his immortal soul to hell.

Lifted by a massive wave, the last two longboats are blasted straight past THE SPARROWHAWK right for the swishing rudder of THE DEVILFISH, but the wave drops from under them and KERASH! one of the longboats explodes on a suddenly exposed anvil of coral.

Morgan regains the helm, going hard port, hard starboard, around the anvil of coral as--

The last longboat, three cutthroats looking to the Groggy Pirate in the bow, splashes down alongside the frigate.

THE GROGGY PIRATE
NOW OR NEVER, MATES!

And he sails his grappling hook for THE DEVILFISH'S rail.

EXT. THE MAIN DECK OF THE DEVILFISH - PRE-DAWN

THUNK! the hook catches into the railing, as--

On the Forecastle deck above, battling his own vessel through the towering waves, the Scar watches as--

Three more grappling hooks dig into deck. Wrapping one arm around the wheel--

THE SCAR

draws his scimitar and waits.

INT. THE LOWER GUN DECK - PRE-DAWN

Fingers and Vickers battle among the cannons, their clothing beginning to tatter as each sport bloody gashes on their arms, legs and chests.

Vickers parries a thrust from Fingers and comes down with a killing blow, CLONG! Mordachai blocks the blade with his steel hand and--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
You can thank yourself for that one.

But Vickers only fights harder, driving Mordachai back across the deck, the old buccaneer's foot accidentally kicking--

THE CIGARETTE BUTT

spinning it onto the fuse. FZZZPT! it ignites.

EXT. THE REEF - PRE-DAWN

CRASH! THE SPARROWHAWK plows into the frigate. Doused by a wave, Shaw grabs the end of one of the jiggling pirate ropes with--

SHAW
Let her go, Morgan! We're going up!

As Shaw grips the rope, Morgan shoves the pirate's sword in her belt and leaves the wheel.

MORGAN

grabs the rope from Shaw, ready to climb, but the bounty hunter takes her wrist and forces--

A PISTOL

into her hand. Morgan smiles bravely then starts up the rope, Shaw securing the end to a cleat on the sloop's deck.

EXT. THE DEVILFISH - PRE-DAWN

Led by the Groggy Pirate the cutthroats spot Curren at the ship's wheel. They race across the Main Deck, and up the stairs to the Forecastle Deck in a flashing steel attack on the Scar.

SLASH! SLASH! Two instantly fall to Curren's blade, causing the Groggy Pirate and his partner to pull back.

As the Scar sees Morgan leap over the Main Deck rail, pistol in hand, thinking fast he uses the pirates' fading morale to his advantage.

THE SCAR
YOU FOOLS'D SEND US TO HELL! LOOK BEHIND YOU, IT'S BLACK HARRY'S DAUGHTER HERE TO KILL US ALL!

A hint of worry crossing Curren's face--

Morgan cocks her pistol, and--

The Scar waves his scimitar imploring the cutthroats to look. Morgan takes aim, the pirates turn, and the Scar releases the wheel, grabbing the Groggy Pirate as a shield. Morgan FIRES, instantly killing the Groggy Pirate. As the Scar drops the body--

THE LAST PIRATE

flashes his eyes between Curren and Morgan. The line has been drawn, it's time to choose sides. SCREAMING, the Last Pirate charges over the railing--

Down to the Main Deck and toward the side of the ship for Morgan.

INT. THE LOWER GUN DECK - PRE-DAWN

The fuse burning closer to the cannon, his cutlass flashing, Mordachai Fingers holds Vickers back from the eighteen pounder. Forgetting the fight and trying frantically to reach--

THE FUSE

before the cannon blows--

NATHANIEL VICKERS
IT'S SUICIDE, FINGERS, PUT IT OUT!

But Mordachai just shakes his head, winks at Vickers and KABOOM! in a cloud of smoke and fire the old buccaneer is thrown into the swarthy rogue, both men tumbling across the room as--

the cannonball rips a chunk from the base of the main mast, blowing a massive hole through the hold.

As the smoke clears, the two pirates are left eyes closed and unmoving in a blood gushing embrace. As they both come to, they look at each other, the possessor of the mortal wound uncertain until a smile slowly spreads across--

MORDACHAI'S FACE

and--

VICKERS'S EYES

roll back into his head. With his good hand Mordachai throws the body off of--

HIS BLOODY THREE-FINGERED STEEL CLAW

And glances down to--

THE HULL-- WATER GUSHES IN.

Mordachai limps to the stairs.

EXT. THE MAIN DECK OF THE DEVILFISH - PRE-DAWN

As Morgan's sword meets the Last Pirate's cutlass, Shaw leaps over the railing beside her and spinning the cutthroat around--

SHAW
It's not nice to pick on ladies.

He attacks with his broken Toledo steel.

Morgan swivels her eyes up to the Forecastle Deck for the Scar, but the wheel spinning, the frigate lurching out of control in the vortex of the reef, Jaggard Curren can't be seen.

Morgan races across the Main Deck brandishing her sword with--

MORGAN
COME OUT AND FIGHT!

THE SCAR (O.S.)
With pleasure.

Morgan whirls, looks to the Forecastle rail where touching punk to fuse, KABOOM!

THE SCAR

fires one of two deck guns at her. Morgan hits the deck as SHHWOOSH-BOOM! his shot goes wide, chewing another chunk out of the main mast.

KERREAK! mainsails FLAPPING, rigging RIPPING FREE, SNAPPING through the air--

THE MAIN MAST

crashes down, SMASHING across the Forecastle Deck, narrowly missing the Scar who is thrown aside in a tangle of debris.

As Morgan pushes herself to her feet--

The Last Pirate presses Shaw back beside the open cargo hatch. CHING! CLANG! parrying blows, Shaw's running out of strength, there's no way he'll win this one, until looking down--

THE FIVE TREASURE CHESTS

await fifteen feet below his feet one of them cracked open its thousands of gold pieces shining fiercely in the morning light, while the other four chests are still tied to the rope that runs right up to the davit beside Shaw. Eyes on the rope--

SHAW

resists the Last Pirate with renewed purpose, his broken sword blocking a flurry of blows. The Last Pirate swings for Shaw's head, but missing SNAP! his cutlass hacks--

THE ROPE

as the pirate hunter runs him through. As the line whistles through its pulley falling into the cargo hatch--

SHAW
Shit!

He grabs the trailing end of the rope.

Taking the stairs two at a time, Morgan meets the Scar in the mess on the Forecastle Deck, cutlass to scimitar. CLANG! with one blow, the Scar disarms her.

Reeling in the treasure with all his might--

SHAW (CONT'D)
JESUS, MORGAN! PRETEND HE'S ME AND KNOCK HIM ON HIS ASS!

But KERACK! the ship hits the reef and shudders, the stern shooting up as the bow pitches below the waves and--

MORGAN

is thrown over the Forecastle railing, into a tangle of the main mast's rigging where she's suspended struggling above the Main Deck.

Hoping Morgan's safe for the moment, Shaw grips the end of the rope and hanging precariously on the tilting deck, looks down through the cargo hatch to--

THE FORTUNE IN GOLD

Attached to his rope, as water starts swirling around it. But, pounded by waves, the sinking frigate shifts, and horrified--

SHAW

watches half the loose gold pieces, fall through a giant gash in the hold. Realizing that only if he acts fast, can the treasure be his--

SHAW (CONT'D)
No you don't!

And as Shaw struggles up to his feet, and puts everything he's got into pulling up the last four chests--

Rising to his feet, the Scar sees that Morgan is at his mercy. His scimitar lying in a mess of sail canvas, the Scar moves to reclaim it.

As Shaw tugs at the rope, his eyes inadvertently flash across the Forecastle Deck to--

The Scar, who scimitar swishing before him, carefully climbs over the fallen mast heading for the helplessly hanging--

MORGAN

Veins bulging in his head, Shaw reels in--

THE TREASURE

with superhuman strength, just one more foot and he can tie the rope off. From across the deck comes MORGAN'S SCREAM...

SHAW

darts his eyes between--

THE CHESTS

hanging right at the edge of the hatch, he only needs an inch, and--

MORGAN

hanging and defenseless, the Scar grinning triumphantly as he thrusts--

HIS SCIMITAR

over the railing at Morgan who uses her last ounce of strength to wriggle just out of reach, and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Somehow I knew it was going to come down to this.

He releases the line, SWWISSH! and with a final lost look at--

THE TREASURE

plummeting down through the hole in the hold--

THE PIRATE HUNTER

throws himself onto the splintered end of the broken mast, racing up its length in the direction of Morgan and the Scar. Seeing Shaw coming, the Scar leans out that extra distance to assure his kill, draws back his sword, and as Morgan squeezes shut her eyes--

WHONK! WHONK! WHONK! Shaw chops his longsword straight through all the hawser ropes as he runs up the mast until the rigging unfolds dropping--

MORGAN

to the decks below as the Scar's thrust skewers air and--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Aaaaahhh!

He launches himself from the mast into the cutthroat, both men losing their weapons and clattering across the tilted Forecastle Deck, tangling in sails, rigging and broken wood.

THE SCAR

rises first BELLOWING RAGE, foam flying from his mouth and grabbing Shaw by the shirt--

BAM! BAM! BAM!

drives his fist into the pirate hunter's face, then CRUNCH! body slams Shaw right onto the deck. Unable to stand--

SHAW

struggles to drag himself to his knees. The Scar rips out--

HIS GULLY KNIFE

and grabbing the beaten Shaw by the top of the head is ready to slit his throat.

Eyes coming into focus on the knife, Shaw snatches up a broken wooden spar, and brutally smashes it into the pirate's midsection. Losing his knife--

THE SCAR

flies backwards, SMASHING off of the ship.

CRACK! comes a sound from the side of THE DEVILFISH, and as a dazed--

MORGAN

regains her senses, she glimpses--

JAGGARD CURREN

through a gun hatch where he's saved himself by catching onto--

THE BARREL OF A CANNON

As the cutthroat pulls his chest over the deck gun's mouth, his hands clutching up its length for a better grip--

MORGAN

carefully removes the flint from her pistol and stepping to the eighteen pounder, holds it over--

THE FUSE HOLE

with--

MORGAN
Say goodbye to Cutthroat Island.

Eyes wild with terror--

THE SCAR
Black Harry wouldn't kill a man like this.

MORGAN
Well he raised his daughter different you son of a bitch!

And bringing down the flint, TZZZZ-KABOOOM!

THE CANNON

fires blowing the Scar straight to hell.

KERUNCH! the stern breaks, crashing down, the ship split in two, now level with the waves. As the smoke clears--

SHAW

joins Morgan, then turning, espies the battered--

Mordachai Fingers bracing himself against the fallen mast, standing over the treasure hold. Looking down the old pirate watches--

THE LAST GOLD COIN

disappear through the hole in a flash of sparkling light.

With a twinkle in his eye--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
If'n we hurry we can still get it before it's pulled down with the ship.

Struggling toward the old buccaneer through the sweep of seawater that's claiming the frigate--

SHAW
I'm sorry, Mordachai, the treasure--

Moving forward, grabbing the two with an urgent hand--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
Who the hell be talkin' 'bout treasure?! Why you dunderhead! It's me Sparrowhawk I be worried about.

And leading them across the sinking ship--

MORDACHAI FINGERS (CONT'D)
You think this be the only gold worth stealin'? Why as long as I gots me sloop, there's always other ships just waitin' to be plundered!

And shaking his head, Mordachai Fingers takes them to the broken rail of the dying ship, where below-- a miracle that she's still floating-- bobs--

THE SPARROWHAWK

As they climb aboard the waterlogged sloop, Fingers cuts the line that holds them alongside THE DEVILFISH and they immediately drift off exiting the reef.

EXT. THE OPEN SEA - DAWN

As the old buccaneer attends to the rigging--

MORGAN
I'm sorry about the gold, Shaw.

Looking back at THE DEVILFISH sinking in a veil of early morning mist, Shaw's ice-water eyes dance as the glow of dawn filters through the fog giving the illusion that the gold's right there to touch.

SHAW
Nothing to be sorry about.

Morgan's eyes go wide, she didn't expect that answer so easy.

MORGAN
(embracing him)
That's right, Shaw, we have each other.

Shaw returns the embrace with--

SHAW
And we're going to have the best of everything now that we know right where the gold's gonna be waiting for us next year.

Morgan pulls away.

MORGAN
Next year? Are you out of your mind?!

Frowning like he's just glimpsed the abyss that separates a man's mind from a woman's sense--

SHAW
Huh..? Morgan, we'd be out of our minds if we left it and just sailed off into the sunset.

MORGAN
Sunrise.

SHAW
Right.

And climbing over the deck toward Mordachai Fingers, he calls to the craziest of them all with--

SHAW (CONT'D)
Tell her, Fingers. The tide goes down every year, we can just come back with a net and scoop it up.

Mordachai Fingers grins at Shaw, his steel hand glinting in the sunlight and in a rare moment of crystal-clear sanity he winks at Shaw with--

MORDACHAI FINGERS
If it were that easy, my boy, there wouldn't be any need for pirates.

As the old buccaneer turns the wheel, Morgan smiles and Shaw, resigning himself with a shake of his head, mutters--

SHAW
So long freedom.

Taking Morgan into his arms, their lips come together in love, and they leave Cutthroat Island, the dangerous reef and it's fortune of gold beneath--

THE BANNER OF KING DEATH

Floating in the waves from the tip of THE DEVILFISH'S broken mast, the flaming skull and blood-dripping crossed cutlasses, like an "X" on a pirate's map.

FADE OUT

THE END