

Pirates of the Red Skull

a play in two acts

by

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Pirates of the Red Skull

Cast*

Lady Emmeline
Jasper/Bessie's Suitor
Falcon
Harper
Crull/Minister
Sparks/Military Officer
Red/Passerby Nun/Cloaked Fighter
Bones/Bessie's Mother/Cloaked Fighter
Suzanne/Bessie/Cloaked Fighter
Runt/Passerby Sailor/Farm Boy
Lily/Passerby Girl/Farm Girl
Ensemble (optional)

*The play is constructed so that 11 actors can play all roles

Setting: The Caribbean during the late 1700s

ACT I

The set is abstract and consists of wooden decks and rope rigging representative of a ship. It includes areas which symbolize a staircase leading down to the hold "below", the helm, a crow's nest and a higher level which represents the ship's edge. If your theatre has a cyclorama which can be used as a backdrop, you may project photos or moving images on it.

If you are working in a theatre where creating levels or using traps is problematic, the actors simply enter and exit in the usual way. Dialogue and small additions to the set let the audience know where we are.

Scene 1.

On the deck of a passenger ship on the open sea. A Caribbean Flag hangs from the crow's nest.

If background projections are used, a pirate ship bearing a red flag floats upon a moonlit sea. Battle cries and the sound of swords clanking can be heard offstage.

LILY, an aristocratic child of 9, clamors up from the "below" staircase and runs across the deck chased by a CLOAKED FIGHTER whose face is hidden by a dark hood.

Lily climbs up into the crow's nest.

LILY

Leave me alone, you ugly rat-tailed
vixen!

The Fighter looks up at her and laughs. Long red hair cascades from underneath the hood of the cloak.

LADY EMMELINE, a strong-willed beauty in her 20s, rushes up from the below staircase with a sword in her hand.

EMMELINE

Lily!

LILY

Emmeline, help me!

EMMELINE

Lily, stay where you are!
(to the Fighter)
Let my sister go!

RED HAired FIGHTER

Ha!

JASPER, a dashing nobleman in his 20s, rushes up on deck holding a knife. He is chased by a SECOND and THIRD CLOAKED FIGHTER.

Emmeline attacks the Red Haired Fighter. They fight.

JASPER

Emmeline, no!

The Second Cloaked Fighter draws a knife and attacks Jasper. They fight.

LILY

(from the crow's nest)
Get 'em, Jasper!

The Red Haired Fighter throws Emmeline to the ground. The Third Fighter climbs up into the crow's nest and hauls Lily down to the deck, flailing and screaming.

EMMELINE

You vile beasts!

Lily kicks her way free and starts stomping and punching her captors.

LILY

Stop it, you nasty hags! Emmie, help me!

CLOAKED FIGHTERS

Owww! Be still, you little hellion!
What a punch she has!

LILY

You wicked girls!

EMMELINE

Lily, over here!

As they snatch her up again, Red Haired Fighter points a pistol at Lily. Emmeline backs away.

EMMELINE

Jasper!

Jasper looks up from his fight. He lays down his knife in surrender.

The Cloaked Fighters cart Lily to the ship's edge and retreat overboard.¹

LILY (O.S.)

Help!

Emmeline and Jasper rush to look over the edge. There is the sound of a shot and part of the railing near Jasper is blown off. They crouch down.

EMMELINE

Where is that blasted sea captain?

JASPER

Lady Emmeline, how unseemly!

EMMELINE

Exactly my point.

JASPER

I think he might be dead.

They stand up and look over the edge. There is the sound of another shot and part of the rigging sways. They duck.

EMMELINE

All they were after was children?

JASPER

So it would appear.

They stand. If you are using a cyclorama to project the ocean onto the background, the red ship sails away.

EMMELINE

I know who they are. Pirates!

¹ You may opt to cast an ensemble and stage the kidnapping of additional children in this scene.

JASPER

Pirates?!

EMMELINE

Pirates.

JASPER

But Emmie, they can't be pirates. I saw one of them--a woman.

EMMELINE

So you haven't heard of the old Caribbean legend? Women pirates stealing the children of others! Kidnapping children to raise them in the pirate trade. I heard about it from my old nanny. It started ten years ago. A baby was stolen from a ship by a red-haired vixen waiving a red pirate flag...

JASPER

How frightening. Women pirates!

EMMELINE

Children have been disappearing ever since.

JASPER

I see it now. They're the Amazons of the water!

EMMELINE

Jasper, we have to go after them.

JASPER

No, Emmeline, the Caribbean officials will find her.

EMMELINE

Ha! Where are they now? Hiding below deck! They couldn't even keep us safe on a simple trip to bring Lily home from boarding school!

JASPER

We have money. And resources. The most influential people in the Caribbean are

JASPER (CONT'D)

gathering in Barbados right now for our wedding.

EMMELINE

We may be noble people, Sir Jasper, but none of us are pirates.

JASPER

Wait. You are not thinking...

EMMELINE

Yes. We've got to contact Alexander Falcon.

JASPER

He's a pirate!

EMMELINE

A gentleman pirate.

JASPER

There is no such thing.

EMMELINE

Zander may be a thief, but he's never hurt anyone. I don't care what they say.

JASPER

He kidnapped you!

EMMELINE

That was a misunderstanding. Anyway, I helped lead him to some treasure and now he owes me a favor.

JASPER

Treasure!

EMMELINE

We never did manage to retrieve it. We had trouble reading the map.

JASPER

Penmanship probably isn't a strong point of pirates.

EMMELINE

I suppose not.

JASPER

Are you going to tell the authorities you befriended a pirate when you were eleven years old?

EMMELINE

No. And neither are you. He and I both swore we would never speak of it.

JASPER

How are we going to get home now?

EMMELINE

What does it matter? The wedding is off.

JASPER

What?!

EMMELINE

For now.

JASPER

Oh.

She picks up her sword from the ground.

EMMELINE

Let's get one of those cowardly sailors to land this ship before it hits the rocks. We're close to Saint Lucia Island. That was one of the places Zander liked to visit the most.

JASPER

We may have to go further than that to find the infamous pirate, Alexander Falcon. Maybe we'll have to go to hell.

EMMELINE

Then let's pack for hot weather!

BLACKOUT

Scene 2.

Shipyards on Saint Lucia Island. Day.

A few wooden shipping crates are piled about, including a big crate stamped with a drawing of a falcon. The sound of water, gulls and whistles are part of the background. If a cyclorama is used, images of the docks, ships and the sea may be projected on it.

CAPTAIN CRULL², 50s, and SPARKS, 70s, enter. Crull is armed with a whip and knife. Sparks carries a pipe.

CRULL

Blast it, Sparks, how is it we keep missing Falcon? Hadn't seen him here in Saint Lucia for near ten years and there was his ship!

SPARKS

What do you need to be doin' when we find him, Captain Crull?

CRULL

I need to be cuttin' his throat.

SPARKS

Can't we set him on fire?

CRULL

You do things your way, I'll do things mine.

SPARKS

What's he done that moves you so, Captain?

CRULL

He stole something of mine.

SPARKS

A pirate stealin' from other pirates, eh?

CRULL

He has no honor.

² Pronounced the same as "Null"

SPARKS

He's not in the shipyard, boss. Let's try the inns. How about paying a visit to the Gull?

CRULL

Let's go to the Pie-Eyed Pelican first. They have a good roaring fire and flaming drinks. You should like that, you pyromaniac.

SPARKS

Ho, ho! I do love a good blaze!

They exit. Enter HARPER, 30s, a sexy Native Caribbean who speaks with an island cadence. A guitar is slung over his shoulder. Circumspectly, he addresses the crate stamped with the falcon.

HARPER

Hsst! Captain!

PASSERBY SAILOR BOY crosses with his load. Harper waits until the boy exits.

HARPER

Captain! Captain Falcon!

A sleepy voice answers from inside the crate.

FALCON

What?

HARPER

Are ye in one piece?

PASSERBY NUN enters and stares at him. Harper leans casually on the box, smiling. The nun exits.

HARPER

Captain Falcon!

CAPTAIN FALCON, a handsome rogue in his 40s, pops his head out of the box.

FALCON

What! Oh, it's you, Harper. I was asleep. What a night. Can barely breathe in here.

HARPER

Oh, thank the Lord. I got your message yesterday. You took a terrible long time to get here from the ship.

FALCON

Can't be too careful in these parts.

Falcon pops back down into the crate as PASSERBY GIRL crosses. Harper hums, trying to look natural. When she exits, Harper knocks on the crate.

HARPER

You still in there?

FALCON

(pops up)

What do you think, Harper?

HARPER

Fie! You startled me.

Falcon climbs out of box. The Nun reenters and so does the Girl, who wave at each another familiarly. They glance at Falcon and Harper, who attempt to act natural. The Sailor Boy reenters with another load and greets the Girl and the Nun. They exit.

FALCON

You coming out of retirement?

HARPER

Aye, if you've held my place on the ship. I'm bored with the land life.

FALCON

It's been three days.

HARPER

I can't be away from the sea much longer. The *Night Hawk* calls my name.

FALCON

She's a fair ship, the *Hawk*.

HARPER

If you'd give me the time off to play me music, I wouldn't have to keep retirin'.

FALCON

It's a matter of principle. I can't be
showin' favoritism to my first mate.
Ah, never mind. You're rehired!

They spit into their hands and shake on it.

FALCON

Are my personal effects still at the
Gull?

HARPER

Amazingly they are. They had 'em in
storage.

FALCON

And?

HARPER

The innkeeper wanted ten years of rent.

FALCON

Are you a pirate or what?

HARPER

What's in 'em that's so important, sir?

FALCON

Just something my old friend Captain
Sweets gave me.

HARPER

You mean something you stole from
Sweets.

FALCON

Mind your own business.

HARPER

Why can't you get it yourself?

FALCON

They know my face too well in Saint
Lucia. I'm blamed for the sack of '62.
Ten of the Wentworth family were
murdered as they slept.

HARPER

(crosses himself)

That were a terrible thing. It doesn't bode to be a rich family when evil strikes. But I can't think why they would blame a gentleman such as yourself.

FALCON

I did love one of the Wentworth girls once.

HARPER

I never heard that.

FALCON

'Twere a well-kept secret.

ARPER

I'm sorry for your loss, Alexander.

FALCON

Yes, uh...Now, did you find Jonathon?

HARPER

Who?

FALCON

My dog!

HARPER

I thought we were calling him Sea Scag.

FALCON

A lass I knew had a soft spot for the name "Jonathon" so I called him that as a pup. He won't hold to any proper names.

HARPER

Just don't tell the lads. I can't believe that bilious mutt jumped ship again. That's twice this month.

FALCON

It's just a touch of seasickness. He'll get used to the boat life soon.

HARPER

Captain, he's ten years old.

He hands Falcon a map.

HARPER (CONT'D)

Here are the directions to where the dog 'nappers be. He's with some farmers camping in the town square with their harvest goods. I'll find a way to get your effects and wait for you in the cove.

They look around with caution. Falcon exits but Harper discovers a rock in his shoe and stays behind to remove it.

Emmeline and Jasper enter wearing coats over their ornate clothing.

EMMELINE

Let's go to the Gull first. The innkeeper might know where to find Zander or his first mate.

JASPER

Have you met Harper?

EMMELINE

No, but I've heard of him. He's supposed to be a very fine musician.

Harper primps.

JASPER

I'll go. It isn't safe--

EMMELINE

We'll both go.

JASPER

Emmeline, it's my job to protect you.

EMMELINE

She's my sister. Besides, I want to talk to him about the treasure map.

Harper is all ears.

EMMELINE (CONT'D)

Though I'm sure he would have contacted me if he ever figured out how to use it.

JASPER

Oh, I'm sure.

Jasper and Harper snort in disbelief. Emmeline looks at Jasper, who looks around as Harper ducks. Jasper decides the snort is all him. He sheepishly takes out a handkerchief and blows.

EMMELINE

I know he was fond of me because he said he expected we would meet again one day. He told me I was relentless.

JASPER

It sounds like he knew you well.

Harper stands and clears his throat. Emmeline and Jasper start.

JASPER

Yes?

HARPER

I think maybe I can help you. That is, if you have a little swag.

EMMELINE

What if we did?

JASPER

Emmeline!

HARPER

Maybe we can be of use to each other. I'm Harper.

JASPER

Can we trust him?

EMMELINE

Of course not.

JASPER

Oh.

EMMELINE

We can trust, however, the fact that we
can't trust him.

JASPER

Somehow that's comforting. Lead on,
pirate!

They exit.

BLACKOUT

Scene 3.

The Town Square on Saint Lucia Island. Night.

Farmers, including BESSIE'S MOTHER, a FARM BOY, a FARM GIRL,
and BESSIE'S SUITOR lie asleep next to their harvest goods.
BESSIE, a dirty and unattractive woman, snores with her arms
around a big dog³.

Falcon enters quietly, sneaking about, pick-pocketing a couple
of trinkets from the sleepers before he sees the dog.

FALCON

Hsst! Jonathon! Eh, mutt!

Bessie stirs and wraps herself around the dog.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Eh! Mangy cur! Mutineer! Traitor!
You've left me for a woman, have you?
And after all I did, raising you and
tryin' to get you your sea legs.

The dog groans and sticks a leg up, shaking it.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Now I like that. You were my pride and
joy, but now you're acting like Harper,
hankering for a comfortable bed after a
few months at sea. Come on. Or I'll
take you by force!

³ An actual dog or a realistic artificial animal may be used.
The dog is always held by an actor.

He draws his rapier and the sound of the blade makes the sleepers stir. Falcon waits until they settle down. Then: The dog farts.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Oh, that's the way, is it? Fine. Have at ye.

He puts down his sword and pushes the dog through Bessie's arms. Still asleep, Bessie grips Falcon. He grips the dog.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Shards.

BESSIE

(dreaming)

Oh, darlin', darlin', darlin', not like that.

FALCON

Not like what?

BESSIE

Out in the pig sty? The stable is much more comfortable.

FALCON

The stable?

BESSIE

Or the barn, that's best, remember?

FALCON

That explains your odor.

BESSIE

Or was that you, Billie? Maybe it was Jessie.

FALCON

(struggling)

How many lads have you had, girl?

BESSIE

Oh, yes, move a little bit more. No, that's too much.

The sleeping Bessie wraps her leg around Falcon and rakes her fingers through his hair.

FALCON

Ow, ow ow!

BESSIE

Oh wow oh wow!

The dog barks. The others awaken.

SUITOR

Hey, let go of my Bessie.

FALCON

Your Bessie?

MOTHER

She ain't your Bessie.

SUITOR

Yes, she is, she's my girl.

MOTHER

And I'm her mother, I am. I say she's not your Bessie. Leastways, not anymore.

Bessie's Mother picks up a rifle. Bessie wakes to discover she is wrapped around an attractive man.

BESSIE

Good mornin', darlin', who might you be?

She beams at him with missing teeth.

MOTHER

Bessie, I take it you know the gent?

BESSIE

I do?

MOTHER

(to Suitor)

You see, she's not yours.

FALCON

Really, I think she's everybody's.

BESSIE

I'm all yours now, darling.

SUITOR

What are you in-in-

FALCON

Insinuating?

BESSIE

Yes, what are you insinuat-in'? What does insinuat-in' mean?

FALCON

It means you talk in your sleep.

MOTHER

There, you see! I'll not have you takin' liberties with my girl without a proper wedding. What example is that for these children? Get off her, you!

She and the Suitor pull Bessie and Falcon apart.

FALCON

Thank you so much.

Bessie leans in toward Falcon and tries to kiss him. Her breath causes him to fall back into the arms of the Suitor.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Thanks for the pleasantries. Now, really, I have to be going.

Everyone draws pistols, including the children.

FALCON (CONT'D)

On the other hand, I suppose I could stay for a cup of tea.

The Suitor holds his gun on Falcon as the actors set up the courtyard for a wedding. The Boy seizes the dog and takes him offstage. He returns without him, leading a yawning MINISTER. A dress is dropped over Bessie's nightwear and a top hat set on Falcon's head. His rapier is placed nearby on the altar.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Really, I just came to get the dog.

MOTHER

Now, that's a fine thing to be calling her already. Can't you at least wait till you've been married a while?

FALCON

You're making a mistake.

MOTHER

No tricks, see.

FALCON

Wouldn't dream of it.

Bessie's Mother and the Minister cross to the opposite side of the stage. Bessie blows the Minister a kiss.

SUITOR

Bessie, I love you so. I have since we were kids. You can't go through with this.

BESSIE

Oh boo hoo. I don't see you taking on me mother and rescuing me from this— this—

FALCON

Interloper.

BESSIE

Right, this interloper.

FALCON

How'd you get away with this before? She didn't make you marry the other men who chased you through the barnyard.

BESSIE

Never caught me in the act before.

She skips across the stage toward the Minister.

SUITOR

Oh, Bessie.

FALCON

Look here, do you really want her?

SUITOR
Never got the chance.

FALCON
I think you're alone in that.

SUITOR
What?

FALCON
Nothing, I was just thinking of
being...generous.

SUITOR
Generous?

FALCON
Bessie's generous, isn't she?

SUITOR
Hey!

They look at Bessie, who by now is flirting madly with the
Minister.

SUITOR (CONT'D)
You have a point.

FALCON
Get me out of here and she'll be all
yours. And his. And a few others. But
mainly yours.

SUITOR
How?

FALCON
Just hand me my rapier.

SUITOR
You watch your language.

FALCON
The sword, the sword. It's called a
rapier. It's is on the altar right
behind you.

SUITOR
Nary a chance. You'll kill us all.

FALCON

Then just take it and create a distraction.

SUITOR

I've always wanted to try on a sword.

FALCON

There you see.

SUITOR

Don't know nothin' about swords though.

FALCON

Even better.

Emmeline and Harper quietly enter, swords drawn. Falcon sees them but the others do not.

FALCON (CONT'D)

The only thing is, a sword is no good against pistols.

SUITOR

Oh, that. None of 'um are loaded.

FALCON

Really?

SUITOR

'Cept Bessie's Mother's gun. Shot's too expensive.

FALCON

Ah.

Harper overhears this and motions the others to attack positions as Falcon makes a leap for his rapier. The Suitor intercepts it and holds it against his throat.

SUITOR

Yer right. Sword play is fun.

He looks toward Bessie, who sees this and shoves the Minister aside. She clasps her hands against her heart in swooning delight.

SUITOR

Don't know if she's looking at you or me.

FALCON

Does it matter?

Harper and Emmeline attack and Falcon disarms the Suitor. As Harper disarms Bessie's Mother, her gun goes off. The wedding party exits in a hurry, chased by Emmeline.

SUITOR

Wait for me, Bessie!

HARPER

Easy lot to frighten off, aren't they?

FALCON

A good thing, too.

Emmeline reenters holding the dog, who barks.

EMMELINE

You stop that. Poor pup, don't fret.

FALCON

There you are, ya mutt!

EMMELINE

He is a beauty. Getting a bit grey though, aren't you, Jonathon?

FALCON

Who might you be? And how do you know my dog's name?

EMMELINE

I know because I was there when you named him.

FALCON

Little Lady Emmeline. Grown a bit, haven't you?

EMMELINE

Don't get any ideas, Captain Falcon. This is my fiancé, Jasper.

Jasper enters hurriedly, wearing his coat and looking very unkempt. He is carrying a satchel and a medium-sized case.

JASPER

Emmeline, I told you to wait for me.

HARPER

We got your property out of storage.

FALCON

What? And you showed them?

HARPER

They had the cash. These two are loaded.

JASPER

Uh, not loaded.

Jasper hands Falcon the satchel and case.

FALCON

Hmph. At last! But that case is not mine.

EMMELINE

The innkeeper at the Gull said the two went together.

HARPER

Charged us extra.

Falcon digs through the satchel. He becomes frantic.

FALCON

Where is it?

Emmeline holds up the map.

EMMELINE

Looking for this?

HARPER

You old devil.

Falcon snatches the map.

EMMELINE

There's no time to decipher it now. We need your help. Children have been disappearing all over the Caribbean.

JASPER

They say they're being taken by a pirate ship with women on board.

FALCON

That ship's a dark secret.

HARPER

You know of a ship like that? Thought it was a legend.

FALCON

Best kept in the past.

HARPER

Beautiful women? Keeping the gents warm at night?

FALCON

Pirate women.

EMMELINE

I hear they don't want any men in their lives.

HARPER

Yer talkin' nonsense. Every woman wants a man.

EMMELINE

That they steal other people's children because they don't have any of their own.

HARPER

How could they not want a man?

JASPER

What is the name of this pirate ship?

FALCON

The *Red Skull*.

JASPER

And the captain?

FALCON

Captain "Red" Hart. They call her "Red" because of her hair and her bloody, murderous heart.

EMMELINE

You've got to help us find them. The innkeeper told us some children have been spotted on a ship in the Far Reefs.

FALCON

I'm not going near that woman.

EMMELINE

We got your things out. We rescued you. You owe us.

FALCON

No pirate owes. We take.

HARPER

We'll all be there for you, Charmin' Zan.

JASPER

Charmin' Zan?

FALCON

Every pirate has his nickname.

HARPER

Yes, and you made yours up yourself.

FALCON

Everyone needs an accurate nickname.

HARPER

The islands aren't charted very well in those reefs.

EMMELINE

Please!

FALCON

I'd rather marry Bessie.

EMMELINE

My little sister was taken!

FALCON

Was she now?

HARPER

Come on, Captain. She's only nine.

There is the noise of a crowd offstage.

JASPER

I think the wedding party is returning.

HARPER

Where to, sir?

FALCON

We'll need a bigger ship than the *Night Hawk* if we're going to defeat the *Red Skull*. We'll have to find my old friend Captain Sweets. He's the best fighter in the Caribbean. No one can defeat him.

There is more noise offstage.

HARPER

Everyone, to the ship!

The dog moans.

FALCON

Oh, you poor, useless seasick pup!

JASPER

Run!

They exit. An armed MILITARY OFFICER, Bessie's Mother and the Boy and Girl rush in carrying torches and pitchforks. Everyone looks around in confusion at the empty courtyard. Captain Crull enters and pushes through the crowd.

CRULL

Blast! Missed Falcon again!

BLACKOUT

Scene 4.

On board the pirate ship, the *Night Hawk*. At sea, near dawn.

The *Night Hawk's* pirate flag flies from the crow's nest. It is royal blue with the insignia of a falcon over crossbones.

Captain Falcon stands at the helm with a keg of rum in one hand and the sleeping dog at his feet. Emmeline stands next to him wrapped in a shawl. Harper is in the crow's nest looking out through field glasses. Jasper sits in the rigging.

FALCON

It's good to be back on the *Night Hawk*, eh, Mr. Harper?

HARPER

Aye, it is. Naught but waves and open sea.

The dog groans.

EMMELINE

Poor Jonathon, are you still seasick? Zander, I think there's something really wrong with him.

FALCON

It must have been something those riff-raff gave him. Don't worry, I've been nursing him with this good pirate rum. That should settle his stomach.

JASPER

How much further?

FALCON

We won't find him tonight. You two had best be off to bed. It's nigh to morning.

JASPER

I'll escort you, Emmeline.

EMMELINE

I'm sure I can find it on my own.

FALCON

You don't know how it is aboard a pirate ship at night, do you, lass? Even I'm bewitched by yer new-found beauty.

JASPER

Watch yourself, Captain Falcon. I have a sword, same as you.

FALCON

Don't trust my crew with the likes of you, either. You're a mite too pretty for your own good.

JASPER

Excuse me?

EMMELINE

I can protect myself.

Emmeline drops her shawl and draws Jasper's sword. Falcon takes a drink as he draws his sword and binds hers down.

FALCON

Harper, you'd better go with 'em. And send the relief up on deck!

HARPER

Aye, sir.

Jasper and Emmeline exit below. Harper climbs down and follows them offstage.

FALCON

Finally, some peace.

The dog moans. Falcon gives him a swig of rum and pulls the satchel and case out from behind the helm.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Have a drink, Jonathon. We'll take a look at this booty together, eh? I remember this.

He sets aside the satchel.

FALCON (CONT'D)

But I don't remember this.

He opens the case and pulls out a long shimmering chain.

FALCON (CONT'D)
No! It can't be.

He pockets the chain and pulls a blue piece of woven cloth from the bag.

FALCON (CONT'D)
A baby's blanket? Strange.

The dog whimpers.

FALCON (CONT'D)
Here, Jon, you're looking a mite cold.

He wraps the dog in the blanket. The dog goes into a seizure and lies still.

FALCON (CONT'D)
Jonathon, what's wrong? Stop your jokin'!

He listens to the dog's chest.

FALCON (CONT'D)
Ah, Johnny.

Falcon crosses himself and begins to rock the body, drinking from the keg. Music begins below.

FALCON (CONT'D)
There's a fair eulogy for a pirate mutt. That's Harper, you hear him? No, you're gone.

The music gets louder. We hear male voices singing a tavern tune.

FALCON (CONT'D)
Blast! Where is the relief? Lazy curs!

Falcon exits below with the dog.

As soon as he leaves, pirates of the *Red Skull* board the ship. BONES is a wizened Caribbean Islander in her 60s with the wise presence of a nun or a "seer". SUZANNE, 30s, dim, plump, pretty and of mixed race, follows her onboard. They hide and draw their swords.

Harper, Emmeline and Jasper enter from below.

EMMELINE

You don't need to follow me. I only forgot my shawl.

HARPER

I'm coming with ye, lassie. Captain's orders.

JASPER

Not without me, you won't.

HARPER

What? No one on deck?

Bones signals offstage.

BONES

Alright, lasses! Have at ye!

The battle cry of *Red Skull* pirates offstage and below is heard. The clanking of swords begins.

HARPER

We're a disgrace! All hands! We've been boarded!

The lights onstage begin to brighten as the sun begins to rise. Bones attacks Jasper and Suzanne attacks Harper. Emmeline is unarmed. Due to the early morning dimness no one realizes at first...

JASPER

You're a woman?

BONES

Aye, little playmate. I'm Old Bones, first mate to the *Red Skull*. Such fun it is to toy with young-uns like yourself!

HARPER

It certainly is. Good form!

SUZANNE

Thanks, mum says I filled out early.

BONES

He meant yer fightin', ya nitwit!

SUZANNE

Oh.

BONES

Suzanne's my daughter, you rascal.

HARPER

Really? Your mum's not a bad sight
either, lass. And I do so like older
women.

Victory shouts of *Red Skull* pirates can be heard from the hold
as they defeat the *Night Hawk*.

BONES

Sounds like our crew's got the
advantage.

HARPER

We're a careless lot.

Bones and Suzanne disarm Harper and Jasper and hold them at
sword point.

BONES

You've made it too easy for us, lads.

Captain Red Hart enters wearing a rapier and dagger and holding
a pistol in her hand. She is a fierce, weathered red-haired
beauty in her 40s who always fights in a skirt.

RED

Who be these trespassers to me waters?

HARPER

I don't recall seeing a deed of sale on
the reefs, lass.

RED

It's Captain Hart to you, knave.

JASPER

Uh...how do you do?

EMMELINE:

How do you do?

JASPER

I don't know how else to talk to a lady.

EMMELINE

I'm almost, if not absolutely quite sure that she is not a lady.

Bones takes a step toward Emmeline. Red holds up a hand.

RED

Right you are, girl. And I don't care for visitors, unless they've gold aboard.

EMMELINE

What about children?

Red quickly trains her pistol on Emmeline.

RED

You have children?

EMMELINE

Just one. Just Lily.

RED

A girl, eh?

BONES

Where there be girls there be boys soon enough.

EMMELINE

She's only a baby.

BONES

They grow up fast.

RED

Suzanne, search the hold.

SUZANNE

By myself? She says they don't have-

RED

Search it, I say! Go!

SUZANNE

Aye, aye!

She exits to the hold below.

HARPER

A little rough with your own, aren't you, darlin'?

RED

Don't fret about her, you rogue! Worry about your own safety! She won't come to harm. Your crew's all tied up below.

Suzanne reenters, chased by Falcon, his sword drawn.

HARPER

Oh, are they now?

SUZANNE

There's a pirate loose!

Falcon sees Red and tries to back down the hold stairway, but Bones cuts him off and disarms him. Suzanne scurries to the hold and exits below. Red turns her pistol on Falcon.

RED

Do my eyes deceive me?

FALCON

Um, no doubt they do. See how the clouds sort of, ah, reflect the light onto the water and the glare is very, um, blinding and surely, uh--

RED

Is it morning already?

EMMELINE

It's dawn.

RED

A good hour for dueling.

FALCON

Dueling? What...no--

RED

Alexander Falcon. "Charmin' Zan", as I recall.

FALCON

I'm sure I don't know what you mean.

RED

(stowing her pistol)
Come here, you scalawag. Bones, give him his sword!

BONES

What? Are you sure, Captain?

Red draws her rapier and dagger.

RED

How about a fight to the death?

FALCON

To the death? You heard her, Bones, my sword, my sword!

Bones hands Falcon his sword.

FALCON (CONT'D)

And a dagger? I'd really like a dagger.

BONES

Captain?

FALCON

She's got one.

RED

Give him a dagger.

Bones tosses Falcon a dagger. Red and Falcon circle.

FALCON

Are you sure you want to tangle with me? You know I'm good.

RED

Oh, you're good, to be sure.

EMMELINE

What's she so angry at him for?

JASPER

One can only guess.

FALCON

What happens if I win? Is the ship mine?

BONES

Ship's mine if she loses.

RED

Who says I'm losin'?

FALCON

But we're all free to go once I...uh...kill you?

RED

You've got that the other way 'round, darlin'. It's me that's doing the killin'.

Suzanne enters from below and holds up the baby's blanket.

SUZANNE

No children on board, Captain Hart. But I found this.

RED

So you do have him?

FALCON

Who?

RED

You heartless coward! You deficient inhuman progenitor--

FALCON

What?

RED

You have Jonathon.

FALCON

The old dog? No. He's dead.

RED
He's dead?

FALCON
He was a good mutt, but what's it to you?

RED
You monster. No deals! Bones, you hear that?
(to Falcon)
You all die either way.

Red attacks Falcon viciously. They fight.

FALCON
Watch out! Whoops!

RED
Gotcha!

FALCON
Nearly. You've certainly improved, my dear. But all these are tricks I taught you.

RED
How's this one, darlin'?

FALCON
That one I haven't seen.

EMMELINE
Apparently they know each other rather well.

JASPER
It would seem so.

Red turns dramatically, her skirt billowing wide. She disarms Falcon and aims her rapier at his heart.

RED
Ha!

FALCON
You've bested me, I'll give you that.

Red tries to take a step but her skirt has become tangled around her knees and she falls flat on her back. Immediately Falcon swoops up his dagger and sits on her belly. He holds the dagger to her throat.

FALCON

Never fight in a skirt, darling, that's my policy. But you never listened to my advice on that account, did you, Gwendolyn?

JASPER

(to Emmeline)

Gwendolyn?

SUZANNE

(to Bones)

Gwendolyn?

RED

Captain Red Hart to you, old lover.

FALCON

I was always rather partial to Gwendolyn. Has a nice long ring. Three syllables. Used to sing myself to sleep with it before you took off, Gwennie.

RED

Captain Hart.

FALCON

You're in no position to make demands.

RED

Just tell me one thing.

FALCON

What?

RED

Where is he buried?

FALCON

Who?

RED

Whom.

Red's points at the blanket in Suzanne's hand. Falcon follows her gaze.

FALCON
Whom, Gwennie, whom?

RED
Our child. Jonathon.

Pause.

FALCON
Our child. When, Gwennie?

RED
'Twas nearly twelve years ago.

Falcon tries to take the dagger from her throat but Bones and Suzanne begin to advance. He puts the dagger back and they retreat. It's like a seesaw.

FALCON
Why didn't you tell me, love?

RED
I did tell you!

FALCON
You did not.

RED
I wrote you.

FALCON
I couldn't read at the time, darling,
there's a problem.

RED
I sent word by our friend Captain
Sweets--

FALCON
From Sweets...when? I never--there must
be some mistake--

RED
--and by the time he was two I had your
answer. Our ship was attacked!

EMMELINE

So it's not the *Red Skull* that has been taking the children.

RED

You are the ones taking children!

FALCON

Gwen, I never-

BONES

Why would you think it was us?

EMMELINE

You know, you don't like men... You don't have your own children...

HARPER

You're the Amazons of the deep!

Bones and Suzanne laugh.

BONES

Don't like men? This is humor from a virgin gentlewoman, I'm supposing.

JASPER

Wait a second-

EMMELINE

Not for long.

BONES

Oh?

JASPER

Emmeline!

RED

Zan, is our boy dead or no?

FALCON

No, the dog is.

RED

The dog?

Falcon tries again to take the dagger from Red's throat but Bones and Suzanne once again advance.

FALCON

Look, Gwennie, could you tell those wenches to put up their arms?

RED

Stop calling me Gwennie.

FALCON

That could be part of the arrangement.

RED

What do you want?

FALCON

To help you find our son.

Pause.

RED

Lay down your arms, you scoundrels!

The *Red Skull* pirates slowly lower their weapons. Falcon releases the dagger from Red's throat and pulls her to her feet. They hold hands and gaze at each other in wonder.

BLACKOUT

Scene 5.

At sea on board the pirate ship *The Red Skull*. Dusk.

The *Red Skull's* pirate flag is flying from the crow's nest. The flag is red and bears a white skull design.

Bones is at the helm and Harper is on lookout in the crow's nest. Jasper and Emmeline are up in the rigging.

EMMELINE

I never thought I'd be at sea on a women's pirate ship.

JASPER

Yes. How'd you get Falcon to agree to this?

Falcon comes up from below and runs to the ship's edge, looking out to sea. Red follows him.

FALCON

Are we moving?

JASPER

Oh, now I understand.

RED

We're taking the *Red Skull* to look for the children.

FALCON

This is mutiny!

HARPER

My apologies, Captain. I must have misunderstood when you said you wanted to travel together.

FALCON

I meant on my ship.

RED

I'm not sailing under your flag, Zan.

HARPER

The *Night Hawk* is behind us on rear guard.

FALCON

On rear guard?

BONES

(flirting with
Harper)

We are the bigger vessel.

HARPER

(with innuendo)

That remains to be seen.

FALCON

Enough skibber scabbering! We'll leave things be. But signal the *Hawk* to fall further back. Two pirate vessels so close together are conspicuous.

HARPER

Aye, sir.

FALCON

We'll rendezvous with our own ship at midnight.

Harper signals.

Suzanne enters with a bundle wrapped in a blue baby blanket.

EMMELINE

You do have children on board!

RED

Aye, we do, but Suzanne's husband and our other menfolk took 'em off ship to get supplies. Bones lost her man in last season's storm.

HARPER

Hmmm, did you now?

He looks at her with interest.

BONES

Aye.

Bones and Red cross themselves.

EMMELINE

Things certainly are changing in the Caribbean.

RED

It's a good life for the fairer sex. Some of us don't enjoy being trussed up in gingham and settin' on settees.

SUZANNE

On what?

RED

Oh, it's something to sit on. And gingham's what you wear.

SUZANNE

Oh.

EMMELINE

My sympathies for the loss of your father, Suzanne.

RED
'Twern't her father.

EMMELINE
No?

RED
Tell 'em the story, Bones.

BONES
I spent me childhood in an orphanage filled with girls, so I learned to fight well and early. Mastered hairpullin' when I was a babe and could pick out an eyeball from the time I was two. I still keep my nails nice and long, see?

HARPER
What beauties.

BONES
After that I was in a convent for 16 years.

HARPER
You were in a holy order, were ye?

BONES
I was a nun till they kicked me out.

HARPER
They kicked you out?

BONES
Don't get any ideas about that. I am still a holy woman. I got me holy cross on me at all times.

She and Red draw. They clash their swords together overhead to form a cross.

RED
They didn't ken to her consorting with the priests.

HARPER
Just consorting?

BONES
(without shame)
Consorting without my habit. And my
underthings.

HARPER
Oh.

BONES
(defensively)
I kept my shoes on!

HARPER
Then what did they go kicking you out
fer?

BONES
I wanted to have a child. The other
nuns frowned upon it.

HARPER
Then it's good you left when you did.

BONES
Aye, my daughter is a fair trade.

SUZANNE
Thanks, Mum. Can you take a look? I'm
not sure what's wrong.

Suzanne holds out the bundle. Bones unveils the dog, who feebly
barks.

FALCON
Jonathon!

BONES
He appears to have what ye would call a
"substance abuse aftermath."

SUZANNE
A what?

HARPER
I think she means he has a hangover.

SUZANNE
Poor thing. I'll get him some distilled
potato with a tomato.

RED

Make that a round, Suzanne.

SUZANNE

Aye, Captain.

Suzanne opens a box and takes out vodka and tomato juice. She makes Bloody Marys and serves them to the dog and crew.

RED

That's the mutt you gave our son's name to?

FALCON

I didn't know we were ever going to use the name.

EMMELINE

We will find your son.

RED

When did you and this irascible beauty meet?

JASPER

Everyone wants to know that story.

FALCON

It was right after you and I parted. She was eleven.

EMMELINE

Twelve. Eventually.

FALCON

She was tripping about the docks in Barbados with her dad. Getting supplies, I was...

EMMELINE

You mean stealing.

FALCON

I found the pup there. While my back was turned, the little lass saw him and stepped into my dingy...

SUZANNE

A what?

RED

It's a little boat.

FALCON

I didn't know the little girl was there. She fell asleep with the pup. I was in a bit of a hurry so--

EMMELINE

He accidentally kidnapped me.

FALCON

We got caught in a squall--that's a little storm. The little girl was upset when she woke up--

EMMELINE

It was thrilling--

FALCON

I tried to reassure her--

EMMELINE

He screamed like a scared seagull when he saw me.

FALCON

I had to handle the boat on my own--

EMMELINE

I grabbed an oar--

FALCON

We found ourselves off the charts--

EMMELINE

He had no idea where we were--

FALCON

We lost track of time--

EMMELINE

It was the day before my birthday.

FALCON

She cried all day because I didn't have a present for her. So I showed her the map.

He holds up the map.

EMMELINE

He couldn't read it. But I could.

RED

You can read that map?

EMMELINE

At first I could. And that's when we found the island.

FALCON

'Twas a strange, mystical place where monkeys sat in the trees and threw coconuts at us-

EMMELINE

He's allergic to coconuts.

FALCON

We found a mysterious lair--

SUZANNE

What's a lair?

RED

Suzanne, go up to the poop and swab something.

SUZANNE

(looks back at her
own behind)

It looks clean.

FALCON

It was a place where someone might have lived a long time ago.

EMMELINE

It felt holy.

BONES

Oculto Bim⁴.

⁴ The word *oculto* is Spanish for "hidden" and "bim" is the old Barbadian word for Barbados.

HARPER

Hidden Barbados?

BONES

A lost kingdom, a barbarian empire
where there is said to be hidden
treasure.

JASPER

The Atlantis of the Caribbean.

BONES

The native people of the Caribbean say
the place is blessed. And cursed.

RED

Can you make anything of the map,
Bones?

BONES

It looks like gibberish except for a
riddle written in ancient Bajan⁵. It
says: "Unless you come into the kingdom
of God like a little child, you cannot
enter here."

JASPER

Like a child?

EMMELINE

Like Jonathon? Or Lily?

RED

Perhaps someone is taking the missing
children to Oculto Bim.

EMMELINE

At least we're headed in the right
direction.

RED

Maybe we can meet up with Captain
Sweets on the way. He used to be good
at reading maps.

⁵ The dialect of the indigenous people of Barbados. Pronounced "Bye'-en or Bah-jen".

HARPER

Captain, just say the word and we'll be off!

FALCON

To your posts, lads!

RED

You're on my ship.

FALCON

Oh.

RED

Oh, go ahead.

FALCON

To your posts, lassies!

ALL

Aye, Aye!

The dog burps.

BLACKOUT

Scene 6.

On board the pirate ship, the *Black Diamond*. Dusk.

On the crow's nest hangs the *Black Diamond's* flag, black with a white skull design inside the outline of a diamond.

There is the sound of pirate laughter coming up from the hold. Captain Crull is at the helm armed with a knife. His whip lies nearby. RUNT, a boy in his "tweens", lounges in the crow's nest, whittling. Sparks, wearing an elaborate shark's tooth and feather necklace, is on deck writing in a log.

SPARKS

We should be coming up on the Far Reefs soon, Captain Crull.

CRULL

Runt! What d'ya see from the crows' nest?

RUNT

No land yet. The seabirds are a mite pesky though. They keep trying to perch on the boom but I chase 'em off.

He bats away at an unseen seagull which squawks.

RUNT (CONT'D)

Ha, got ya!

CRULL

How can there be no land if there are gulls about, you nit?

RUNT

There are no gulls now. The *Black Diamond* may be an ugly ship but I make sure there's no poop on the poop deck.

CRULL

What do you mean, "ugly", you insolent git? The *Diamond* is a pirate ship, isn't she? The most beautiful ship there is...one that's profitable. Now put that whittling down, boy, and get to work!

RUNT

Aye, sir. I'll check the lines.

Runt climbs into the rigging. Sparks lights a cigar.

RUNT (CONT'D)

Mr. Sparks, that must be the 5th cigar you've lit this evening. Where did ye get such a hankering for fire, I wonder?

SPARKS

I was born in a lightning storm, Runt.

CRULL

Nah, ya weren't.

RUNT

But Pops, he was!

CRULL

Don't call me that, you miserable
little sea urchin.

RUNT

But I'm your son!

CRULL

You're gettin' too old to call me Pops.

Runt jumps down onto the deck.

RUNT

You don't mean it, Pops!

CRULL

One more time and I'll whip you, boy.
You hear me? I swear it on me mother's
knife. Now do as you're told!

RUNT

Yes, Captain Crull. Sir.

SPARKS

Runt, fourteen is the year you become a
man. Time to pierce that ear and have
a keg.

CRULL

Aye, the right earring can make or
break a pirate in these waters.
Uniform is everything when it comes to
commanding the respect of a crew.

RUNT

(with excitement)

Can we celebrate this year then, Pops?
I've never had a birthday party.

Crull strikes him down with his whip. Runt cowers.

CRULL

Did you hear what I said, you snivelin'
baby sea turtle? I'll string you up
from the crow's nest and dip you in the
soup from the boom if you keep taking
that familiar tone with me.

Crull leans in and speaks to him in a quiet deadly voice.

CRULL (CONT'D)

I'll kill you with me bare hands, Runt.
In front of me first mate Sparks and
the rest of the crew, I will.

(more loudly)

Now get back to work, you lot!

SPARKS AND RUNT

Aye, sir.

CRULL

Sparks, take the helm. I'm going below
to check on the cargo. I need to
breathe some fouler air.

Crull exits below. Sparks takes the helm.

SPARKS

Don't take it to heart, son.

RUNT

Looks like I'm nobody's son anymore.

SPARKS

It's a hard thing for a man to watch
his son grow up.

RUNT

No, it's something else.

SPARKS

You think so?

RUNT

This new cargo is where his focus lies.

SPARKS

A pirate should always be thinking of
treasure, boy. The cargo is our
primary concern.

RUNT

But I don't want to think about the
cargo.

SPARKS

Hush. Enough of that civilian talk.
You shouldn't be mutterin' this way.
Obey your captain.

RUNT

I'm loyal, Sparks.

SPARKS

I know that, lad. But I hear him coming. Back to your station.

Crull enters, whistling. Runt climbs back up into the crow's nest and picks up his spyglass.

SPARKS

(aside to Crull)

I've got to tell you, boss, the crew are wondering where we're going. We've turned southeast and they know there's nothing out that way.

CRULL

They know we're headed for treasure, Sparks. That's enough.

SPARKS

Yes, I know. But we haven't got the map.

CRULL

Aye, but we know who has it.

RUNT

Captain, ship off starboard! Red flag with pirate regalia! Wait, now I don't see her.

CRULL

Can it be? You sure, boy?

RUNT

She was a ways off. But I'm sure.

SPARKS

There are some uncharted islands out starboard way.

CRULL

(aside to Sparks)

That's not far off our course. Perhaps this is where the *Red Skull* has been hiding all this time.

SPARKS

Argh! Those devilish creatures unnerve me. It's unnatural to come across a whole ship of wenches with such fire in their eyes. Downright evil, they be.

CRULL

No worries, Sparks, we'll soon have 'em with us! These pirates'll surrender, or they'll be under the water soon.

SPARKS

Under me in my bed's more like. I've got fire in me they can have.

CRULL

Pirates of the fairer sex...who'd of thought a nag with a curvy nature and soft hands would be any good with a sword?

SPARKS

Who'd have thought they could lift them?

CRULL

Aye.

SPARKS

Are you sure you want to make waves with Captain Red? Remember what happened in your youth.

CRULL

We beat her then.

SPARKS

What about what you took from her? She'll gut you from neck to navel if she realizes it was you.

CRULL

Hush! We don't want the whole ship to know, do we? No tellin' who which of our crew we'll have to kill next. On the other hand, I expect that might be amusing.

SPARKS

You are indeed diabolical, Captain.
I'm always impressed by your
commitment.

CRULL

(loudly)

We're going on a little side adventure,
boys! It would appear the *Red Skull* is
in these waters. We come across her,
we plunder her. There's more than one
kind of treasure aboard that vessel.

Crull and Sparks laugh. There is the sound of additional
laughter from unseen pirates coming up from the hold below.

BLACK DIAMOND

PIRATES

(voices offstage and
below)

Hurrah! Treasure! Onward! (etc.)

CRULL

Take the *Black Diamond* to starboard,
Mr. Sparks.

SPARKS

Shall we light the torches, Captain?

CRULL

Only if we want to get caught, you daft
firebug! Douse the lanterns and full
speed ahead!

BLACK DIAMOND

PIRATES

(voices offstage and
below)

Yo ho! Away! Arghhh!

BLACKOUT

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Scene 1.

Red's Bedchamber, the *Red Skull*. At sea. Night.

Red is abed in a white nightshirt which exposes colorful rose tattoos on her arms. She is the picture of world-weary loveliness. The Book of Common Prayer and the blue baby blanket are in her lap. Her sword is under the bed and her dagger and the skirt she wore earlier lie on a chair nearby.

The sound of a knock is heard in the dimness.

RED

What do you want, wenches? Can you not run the ship when I'm restin'?

Falcon enters, carrying the satchel. He stops short in admiration. Red pulls her sword out from under the bed and points it at his face. Falcon carefully moves the point aside.

FALCON

It's only me.

RED

Hand me my skirt.

FALCON

I'd rather not. I'm admirin' the picture.

RED

Can't you find enough to entertain yourself here? It's a ship filled with women!

FALCON

I'm not looking to be entertained. That's the baby blanket I found, isn't it?

RED

What if it is?

FALCON

That funny part there—is that a mistake?

RED

Oh, so now you've come to criticize my knittin'!

FALCON

Gwendolyn Carnelian Wentworth--

RED

What did you say?

FALCON

Gwendolyn Wentworth--

RED

Hush! Not a word. What are you thinking? You can't be usin' my real name.

FALCON

I've something to show you.

Falcon holds up a long shimmering chain. She stows the sword back under the bed and takes it.

RED

How did you get this? It's mine.

FALCON

I thought as much. The chain was with the blanket you left at the Gull. I expect the innkeeper remembered us and put your things with mine.

RED

Lumpy pillows, that place. Had to bring me own.

FALCON

Why would you go back to the island after it was sacked? Saint Lucia isn't safe for you.

RED

After he was born I took the babe and went looking for you.

FALCON

Did you now? I never would have thought.

RED

Did you ever think?

FALCON

I was a young man.

RED

Can you never admit to makin' a mistake? "I'm a man." "I was young." What about askin' for pardon?

FALCON

Remember, you left me.

RED

I was angry.

FALCON

Oh, I know.

RED

So you have no temper of your own?

FALCON

Alas, I am a wretched soul.

RED

Is there no regret to be found in ya?

FALCON

Some.

RED

I never thought to see this chain again.

FALCON

That is what I wanted to ask you about. It reminds me a little of this box.

He takes a gold box out of the satchel.

RED

Where did you get that, you scoundrel?

FALCON

The map was in a hidden drawer in the bottom of this box when I found it. See.

He pops the map in the hidden drawer and closes it.

RED

I recognize it from my father's study. It's Wentworth gold.

FALCON

I wondered. I came across the box after we went our separate ways.

RED

Oh, you just found it?

FALCON

Not exactly, I-

RED

You have no shame!

FALCON

Here. They are both yours once more. A legacy for the babe when we find him.

RED

Truly?

FALCON

Truly.

RED

Why didn't you go after me? No lad who loves a lass lets go like that.

FALCON

Truth be told, I did look for you. For a time.

RED

What, for a day? An hour?

FALCON

At least an hour.

Red throws the Book of Common Prayer at him.

FALCON (CONT'D)

Deserved that, I suppose. Still, books are sacred things. This here looks like the Book of Common Prayer. So I'll say some uncommon prayers for us, lass.

RED

It would have been his birthday tomorrow.

FALCON

Fair twelve years old, he'd be. He'll have no need of your blanket now.

RED

Don't remind me!

FALCON

Remember, Gwen, he was mine too and I never got to meet him at all.

Pause.

FALCON (CONT'D)

And I did look for you, Gwen. For more than a day.

Falcon exits, leaving Red alone. She stares at the box.

RED

Did you now?

She sets the box nearby and snuggles down into the pillows. After a moment there are multiple knocking sounds.

RED (CONT'D)

What is it this time?

There is the sound of crashing and voices offstage.

RED (CONT'D)

Can ye not all go to bed?

EMMELINE (O.S.)

Zander!

RED

Yet again, Zan? Go away!

Red rolls over and covers her head with a pillow. There is the sound of the dog barking.

SPARKS (O.S.)

Who might you be, you scrappy thing?

BONES (O.S.)

Not a step further, you rascal!

EMMELINE (O.S.)

Jasper, come help!

RED

Stop all your caterwauling, you noisy lot!

CRULL (O.S.)

Out of my way, you old sea cat!

BONES (O.S.)

Captain Hart, be on yer guard!

There is the sound of swords clashing.

CRULL (O.S.)

Get to the helm, Mr. Sparks!

Crull bursts into Red's bedroom as if pushed by an unseen foe. He tumbles into bed with Red, who unsuccessfully tries to reach her sword. Crull laughs and holds her down.

CRULL

If it isn't my old friend Red!

RED

Captain Sweets? Oh, thank the stars.

CRULL

One and the same, you heartless lass.

RED

We've been looking for you.

CRULL

Really? I never thought to hear you say that, Miss Wentworth.

RED

Shush! What if someone hears you use my name? It's too dangerous. Whoever murdered my kin could still be after me.

CRULL

You've been keeping that secret so long you don't even know your enemy when he's right in front of you.

RED

But Sweets, you're our friend.

CRULL

Friend, dear Hart? The early days when you thought Falcon and me were friends was just a ploy to get near the Wentworth gold.

RED

No!

CRULL

Remember the night you decided to run away with him? I gathered me crew and snuck back into town—

RED

You traitorous filth!

Red reaches for her sword but Crull slams her back.

CRULL

I killed them all, Miss Wentworth. All your sisters and the rest of your kin.

RED

Devil from hell!

CRULL

I like that, hellcat! I am a devil. I burned the village church right to the ground. Everyone thought it was Falcon just because he was there.

RED

Let me go!

CRULL

Oh no, Miss Red. I'm not one of your sluttish crew members you can order about.

RED

You liar! You kept my letters!

CRULL

What letters?

RED

He knows now. Zan knows about Jonathon.

CRULL

Oh, my. The lad you had so whorishly long ago?

RED

He's here now and he's going to kill you!

CRULL

What? Falcon is here?

RED

Aye.

CRULL

(notices the box)

Look what else is here. How lucky for me. And now I've got two kinds of booty--you and the map.

As he picks up the box, Red springs up and grabs her dagger from the chair. He leaps back as she points it at his groin.

RED

Those pirate gems of yours will soon be buried at sea, you overheated swine-rat! I'll cut your stones out right now!

He draws his knife and they fight. Picking up Red's skirt, he uses it to fight cloak-and-dagger style. He disarms her.

CRULL

What do you say now, wench?

RED

That it's good to see a man get the
advantage by fightin' in a skirt.

Falcon bursts into the bedchamber.

FALCON

Gwen!

Crull turns and slashes with his knife. Falcon jumps back.

CRULL

No worries, Captain Red, I've got
everything I really need.

He holds up the box and runs out of the bedchamber.

FALCON

That was Captain Sweets!

RED

Aye, but he's sweet no more. He is the
one responsible for the sack of Saint
Lucia. He killed my family to get the
Wentworth gold.

FALCON

What?

RED

He's got the map!

FALCON

After him!

She pulls her sword out from under the bed and they race after
Crull.

BLACKOUT

Scene 2.

On the deck of the *Red Skull*. The pirates are fighting each
other in silhouette.

Runt runs onstage in the dimness carrying a *Black Diamond* flag.
Emmeline enters from the opposite side of the stage holding a
Red Skull flag. Runt sees her and he waves his flag in

defiance. In answer, she brandishes her sword. At this, he turns and flees into the chaos.

Jasper enters with a torch and stumbles into Emmeline. She attacks him with her sword. They fight.

JASPER

Avast, you simpleton! It's me,
Emmeline, your fiancé! You hear me,
wench? Stop fighting, pirate, or I'll
run you through!

EMMELINE

Oh, it's you, Jasper. It's so dark.

JASPER

Aye, it's me, you impudent miss. You'd
think my own girl would know me.

EMMELINE

Wait. Was that pirate talk?

JASPER

Aye, it was, lass. I've been studyin'
on it.

EMMELINE

So am I! Isn't this exciting? I've
already knocked down three of the
plunderers.

She waves the flag and wallops the air with her sword. Jasper jumps back.

JASPER

Desist, lass, or it's me you'll be
sendin' down tide to feed the
cuttlefish!

EMMELINE

What did you say?

JASPER

Emmeline, when we get Lily back, I'm
going to teach her how to fight.

EMMELINE

I am too. And no more boarding school!

She wallops the air again. Jasper ducks.

Sparks and Crull enter running. Red and Falcon race onstage after them followed by Suzanne and Bones.

RED

Pirate lasses, get your fire swords!⁶
Let's burn the vermin off our ship!

BONES AND SUZANNE

(lighting their
swords on fire)

Aye, aye!

SPARKS

Fire at last! Ah ha! Now this is the
kind of fight I like.

RED

(challenging Crull)

I'll have my revenge on you for the
death of my kin.

CRULL

Will you now, Red? How touching. You're
bringing back fond memories of the look
in your father's eyes when I ran him
through. He always thought I was so
sweet.

RED

Die, coward!

CRULL

We'll have to have that fight another
day. Though I won't be forgettin' your
polite request. Or the insult. Sparks,
give it up! We're outnumbered. Back to
the *Diamond*! Pirates, withdraw!

Crull exits overboard. There is the sound of a splash.

⁶ You may use swords which have LED lights in them instead of actual fire or change Red's line to "Pirate lasses, get your torches!" and use fake stage torches.

BLACK DIAMOND PIRATES
(voices offstage and below)
Back to the *Black Diamond*! Retreat!
Withdraw! To the ship! Disembark!

SPARKS
Great fighting with you, lassies!

Sparks exits overboard. There is the sound of another splash.

BONES
(to Red)
They're swimming for it, Captain.
Shall we head on after him? Captain?

RED
(to Falcon)
Where was your ship? The *Night Hawk* was
supposed to be on rear guard!

FALCON
I-it must have been this fog coming in.

SUZANNE
(from the crow's nest)
I can't see 'em, Mum! What a mist! It's
coming in right quick. Shall we light
more lanterns?

BONES
Aye!

RED
What does it matter? All my kin are
dead!

FALCON
We don't know that, love.

EMMELINE
What happened the night your boy
disappeared? Think! Who could have the
children?

RED
I don't know! They snuck on board at
night and doused our torches. I was
carrying my babe when somebody knocked
me down. When I came to, the boy was

gone and the ship near burned to a crisp. They torched my old first mate, the evil lot. I won't describe what else they did to her.

FALCON

Bilge-drinkin' lice-infected sea snakes!

RED

That's the worst curse you can think of for 'em?

FALCON

It's the first one that came into my mind.

EMMELINE

I believe your son is safe.

RED

(to Jasper)

How is it your girl is always so positive?

JASPER

That's just my Emmeline.

Harper enters from below with Runt.

RED

What have we here?

HARPER

This is one of Captain Crull's little cockroaches. Caught him trying to sabotage the hull.

RED

Did you now? Come here, boy!

BONES

He's so young, Captain Hart.

RUNT

I'm older than I look.

RED

He looks like a man to me.

RUNT

I am a man, you scarlet sea serpent.

Red laughs.

RUNT (CONT'D)

Stop that! I'm fourteen, so there!
Return me to my captain this instant.

RED

"Return me to my captain." Ha! The
plank for you.

BONES, SUZANNE AND
EMMELINE

(protesting)

Ah, but Captain, he's a babe, he's
barely grown, etc.

RED

Oh, you weaklings! Give me a better
reason than your youth, young man, not
to run you through.

RUNT

Captain "Sweets" Crull is my father!

RED

Now there's a reason.

FALCON

Yes. Now we have a bartering chip.

RUNT

Let me go!

RED

Believe me, you'll fair better with us
than the likes of that blackguard
captain you're used to.

RUNT

I know he's a devious man. But I'm
loyal. You won't turn me.

RED

(to Bones)

Take him below.

FALCON
Go with her, Harper.

They exit. Falcon takes the helm.

RED
I don't see much point in all this.
Crull has the map!

JASPER AND EMMELINE
(in quick succession)
What? What?

FALCON
Actually...I didn't get a chance to say
this but--

RED
You barnacle-bottomed sorry seadog. You
made a copy, didn't you?

Falcon holds up a copy of the map.

RED (CONT'D)
What a fraud! "Take the map, love...the
box is all yours, Gwennie..." Makin' me
think you trust me!

FALCON
True, but aren't you glad I made a
copy?

RED
Yes.

EMMELINE
Didn't you say Crull had a knack for
reading maps?

RED
Aye, that he does.

JASPER
Then all we have to do is find him.

FALCON
To the island?

RED
To the island.

BLACKOUT

Scene 3.

The *Black Diamond*. At sea. Very late at night, near morning. Heavy fog. The *Black Diamond* pirate flag is flying from the crow's nest.

Sparks is on deck lighting sparklers. Crull is at the helm in a foul mood.

CRULL
It's a foul sludgy fog, this. Dark and dank, like it come from the bowels of hell.

SPARKS
Like Satan's farts it is.

CRULL
Like his body odor.

SPARKS
Like his shorts when he hasn't washed them for days and has tossed them on the ship's deck.

CRULL
Like rotting meat, this fog.

SPARKS
I'm not sure this allegory is going where it should.

CRULL
Shut it, Sparks, just shut it!

SPARKS
My condolences, boss. Hard luck about Runt. I know you liked the kid.

CRULL
Getting' too big for his breeches.

SPARKS
Lasted longer than most.

CRULL

He was getting too old anyway. Bring up the cargo. That'll cheer me up. Let's have ourselves a peak.

SPARKS

You sure, boss? Usually Runt took care of that. The cargo wasn't afraid of him.

CRULL

Since when did you get a heart, Sparks? Bring it up, I say.

SPARKS

I-.

(off Crull's look)

I'll bring it.

Sparks exits below. Crull begins singing to the tune of the classic sea shanty "What Shall we do with the Drunken Sailor?"⁷

CRULL

What shall we do with the drunken
pirate,
what shall we do with the drunken
pirate,
what shall we do with the drunken
pirate, ear-lie in the mornin'?

Sparks brings Lily on deck⁸.

SPARKS

Here's the cargo!

CRULL

There you are, my young property.
(singing)
Way, hey, up she rises,

CRULL AND SPARKS

(singing)
Way, hey, up she rises,
Way, hey, up she rises ear-lie in the
mornin'.

⁷ This tune is common domain and variations on it are easily found on the web.

⁸ If you have cast an ensemble, the other children trail after her.

CRULL

Come on, treasure, add a chorus!

SPARKS

Lily, sing!

LILY

No.

CRULL

Ya hear the man? Sing for your supper,
you ungrateful little wench.

LILY

You're a bad man.

CRULL

Is it just dawnin' on you now, ya imp?
I'll be doin' away with you and your
friends soon enough. Don't make it
sooner.

LILY

Fine.

(sings)

Make him have a baby,
Make him have a baby,

LILY AND SPARKS⁹

Make him have a baby,
Ear-lie in the morning!

CRULL

(stops the song)

Wait a minute, wait a minute. What are
you singing here?

LILY

Sparks said I could make up any words I
liked.

CRULL

Yes, but "make him have a baby"?

LILY

He told me to think of something scary.

⁹ and the other children, if you have cast them.

CRULL

We need something more dastardly,
something more manly.

(singing)

Shave his belly with a rusty razor...

EVERYONE:

(singing)

Shave his belly with a rusty razor,
Shave his belly with a rusty razor,
Ear-lie in the morning!

SPARKS

Captain! I see the *Red Skull*! She's
gaining on us.

CRULL

Is she now?

Sparks looks through his spyglass.

CRULL (CONT'D)

Anything else, Mr. Sparks?

SPARKS

Land ho!

BLACKOUT

Scene 4.

The island of Oculto Bim, on the beach. Early morning.

There is light fog and the sound of waves crashing. Big seashells, dried starfish and driftwood are on the beach. It is very dim. If you are using a cyclorama, a silhouette of coconut trees stands out against a distant sunrise.

Red, Falcon, Harper, Emmeline and Jasper look around cautiously, their weapons drawn. Bones holds Runt, who struggles.

RUNT

Oooo!

RED

Hush!

RUNT

Let me go!

RED

Quiet!

The group scouts the area. After a moment, Red stows her sword.

RED (CONT'D)

All's well. There's no mark of Crull on the beach.

BONES

I never thought I'd see the island of Oculto Bim.

EMMELINE

The monkeys who threw coconuts at us lived over there in those palm trees.

HARPER

Captain, may I have your permission to go scout ahead?

RED AND FALCON

Aye.

They look at each other in annoyance.

JASPER

I'll go with you.

Harper and Jasper exit.

FALCON

I don't fancy meeting up with those coconuts again.

RED

Can't we find a safer way through?

EMMELINE

Maybe a way 'round. There was something about it in the map.

FALCON

That would have been useful information at the time.

EMMELINE

By then I couldn't read it anymore. I remember when it all changed. The sun was straight overhead--

RED

Can you read the map now?

EMMELINE

(taking it from Red)

No.

BONES

You said it was your birthday.

EMMELINE

Yes, I turned twelve. I was born at noon.

BONES

So. At noon you were no longer a child.

FALCON

That is debatable.

BONES

By the old Barbadian island lore, twelve is adulthood--

EMMELINE

--and "the key to the kingdom is to come as a child"...oh!

RED

Bring that little sea mouse over here. Maybe he qualifies as a child.

EMMELINE

But he says he's fourteen.

RED

Balderdash. When is your birthday, Runt?

RUNT

No idea.

RED

He looks ten at most.

RUNT

I'm just small for my age.

RED

Can you read?

RUNT

No, I never learnt!

EMMELINE

Try anyway, Runt.

RED

Or you'll be feeling the side of my blade.

RUNT

(he reads)

"Whoever ye be, from land or ocean,
You'll need a girl strong in emotion.
Take the lead and let her follow,
Heading toward a grassy hollow."

FALCON

That is very bad poetry.

EMMELINE

Does it look like English, Runt?

RUNT

Can't tell. Just know what it says.

EMMELINE

(taking his hand)

I'm a girl strong in emotion. You read
and I'll follow.

RUNT

"Touch her hand and she can read,
though she's reached maturity--"

EMMELINE

Runt, when I touch your hand, I can
read the map!

(reading)

"Holding hands by your birth order,
Now begin to skirt the border,
Heading eastward of the trees,
Taking care, avoid the breeze."

FALCON

Ha! That way the monkeys won't be able to smell us coming.

EMMELINE

There's a hierarchy as to how to walk the path. Youngest to oldest. I'm next.

RED

Then it's Zan.

EMMELINE

(to Falcon)

You're not older?

FALCON

Red's two year's my senior, aren't you, love?

RED

Aye. At least I've got the better of you on that score.

EMMELINE

"Heading for the grassy hollow..."

In the following order, Runt, Emmeline, Falcon, Red, and Bones take hands. They exit.

FADEOUT

Scene 5.

Oculto Bim, another part of the island, near some ruins. One edge of the stage represents a cliff.

Sparks and Crull enter running, covered in monkey dung and protecting their heads with their hands. A coconut is thrown at them from offstage. They duck.

CRULL

Confound those accursed monkeys! Me head is nigh to burst. Cursed fools throwing tree nuts at us!

SPARKS

Not to mention being pelted with excrement.

CRULL

Phew, you stink!

SPARKS

Look at those mountains, boss. This here cliff is quite a drop.

CRULL

Aye, we're up mighty high.

SPARKS

Look at these ruins. Do you suppose this is the place where the treasure lies?

CRULL

Blast it, how can I tell? Where's the cargo?

SPARKS

Don't know, I just ducked and kept running. Lily!

CRULL

The cargo, Sparks, call her the cargo. You don't want to get too attached. Remember, eventually, we've got to do 'em all in.

SPARKS

Ah, Captain, can't I keep her?

CRULL

No!

SPARKS

Fine. Lily!

Crull slaps his forehead in frustration. Sparks takes out the map.

CRULL

Got any shot in that pistol?

SPARKS

Aye. You worried about the *Skull*?

CRULL

Could be.

A defiant and calm Lily enters¹⁰.

CRULL

Look, she's not hurt at all. It's almost like she did it on purpose.

SPARKS

Now, Lily, look at the map.

(he hands it to her)

This time see if you can keep from leading us through any more coconuts.

Lily giggles.

CRULL

Why, you wicked little urchin-

SPARKS

Now, Captain--

LILY

I'm cold.

CRULL

Cold, are ye? I'll show you cold.

SPARKS

Captain--

LILY

I like your feathers.

Sparks fingers his shark's tooth and feather necklace and then carefully removes it. He bestows it on Lily's neck. She examines the map.

SPARKS

Now what?

LILY

There is a door here.

CRULL

A secret door?

LILY

Maybe.

¹⁰ If you have cast additional children, they follow. What Lily does, they do.

CRULL

Maybe! You've been hemming and hawing ever since we landed here. Can you understand the map or no?

LILY

(singing)

What shall we do with the drunken pirate..

CRULL

Stop that!

LILY¹¹

(singing)

What shall we do with the drunken pirate? What shall we do with the drunken pirate, ear-lie in the morning?

CRULL

All right, that's it--

SPARKS

Look, threatening little children isn't going to help. We're here, aren't we? We see a ruin. Let's do some scouting ourselves.

CRULL

No! Listen, you lying little leach! I've fed and clothed you for weeks now and it's your turn to pay me back. If you can't read the map, you're no use to us!

SPARKS

Captain-no! Lily, you'd best save yourself and do your best.

LILY

(relenting, she reads)

"Open here, you're the key,
You of small maturity.
Do not think less of yourself--
Heed the treasures on the shelf.
Knock three times and wait your leisure
Seek and you will find the treasure."

¹¹ If you have cast them, the other children join in.

SPARKS

Where do we knock, Lily?

LILY

Wouldn't you like to know?

Red enters followed by Jasper, Emmeline and Runt. Crull grabs Lily and puts his knife against her throat. Sparks draws his pistol. Red knocks it out of his hand as it discharges.

RED

Unhand the child, you monster.

RUNT

Pops!

CRULL

Ah, there you are, you young scamp.

LILY

Emmie, help me!

EMMELINE

Oh, Lily!

LILY

There's a treasure here, Emmie.

EMMELINE

Is there, dear one?

RUNT

Pops, I want you to know I didn't turn.

Red snatches Runt up and puts her dagger to his throat.

RED

Let go of the girl, Sweets!

CRULL

Or what?

RED

Or your son is dead before noon this day.

CRULL

So?

RED

So?

RUNT

Pops! You don't mean it!

CRULL

Oh, I do.

RUNT

But I swore an oath to you. On that very dagger you hold.

Crull takes the knife from Lily's throat and examines it.

CRULL

Aye, that you did, boy. But I don't recall swearin' one to you.

Jasper slams his body into Crull, who loses his hold on Lily.

JASPER

Run, Lily, run!

Lily scurries into Emmeline's arms. Crull knocks Jasper senseless.

EMMELINE

Jasper! No!

Red shoves Runt toward Emmeline who pulls the children out of Sparks' reach.

Falcon rushes in and sees what is happening. He steps in to protect Emmeline and the children from Sparks.

RED

(to Crull)

So it's you who've been taking the children all these years.

CRULL

Aye, it is.

RED

How'd you get folks thinking it was me?

CRULL

That were a bit of disguise on the part
of me crew. Sparks here especially
likes dressin' as a woman.

Everyone pauses to look at Sparks, who shrugs.

RED

Where's the baby, Crull?

CRULL

What baby?

RED

My son!

CRULL

Lost to you, Red. Long ago. He's in
Davy Jones' Locker now.

RED

I don't believe you.

CRULL

Threw him to the sharks when he was
four.

RED

Liar!

CRULL

No, that's true.

RED

I'll have my revenge on you, I will. In
the name of my father, my sisters and
my child.

CRULL

You still think you can best me, Red?
Then have at ya!

They draw swords and fight.

RED

What kind of a pirate have you become?
You used to be so-

CRULL

Sweet?

RED

Stealin' the gold wasn't enough? Why would you kill my whole family?

CRULL

You think everything was about the gold? When you were yet a young maid in your father's house you'll remember I brought you gifts. Flowers. Sweets. I was a good friend to you, Red. You never even looked my way.

RED

Never thought you were particularly interesting.

CRULL

You were besotted with Falcon!

RED

He's the better man!

Falcon tries to get to Red but Sparks remains an obstacle.

CRULL

I've stolen all from you now, Red. All but your life and I mean to take that next. It'll be fun to hear you squeal like your sisters did when Sparks set your house ablaze.

LILY

Sparks, no, you didn't!

SPARKS

Sorry, Miss Lily. Just followin' orders.

RED

(to Crull)

I'll kill you where you stand!

FALCON

Gwen, no!

Red runs heedlessly at Crull, who disarms her. During the above, the wounded Jasper staggers to his feet.

JASPER

Sparks!

Sparks turns and Jasper stabs him.

SPARKS

Ah! A mortal blow. But I forgive you, lad. Just don't let them bury me at sea. A funeral pyre is what I crave. Big, smoky, with lots of palm trees in it...I can see it now. Firecrackers all around me and lots of pretty sparklers...

He dies in Jasper's arms. Lily solemnly bestows the shark's tooth necklace on Sparks' body.

CRULL

Such sentiment. Over the cliff with you then!

Crull begins to push Red toward the cliff.

RED

Zan, help me!

CRULL

Still with his name on your lips after all these years, you bloody-hearted harlot!

FALCON

(challenging Crull)

Let her go!

CRULL

Oh, now you. First you steal old Red from me and then you take me map. Next you'll be wantin' all the island treasure.

FALCON

Finders Keepers.

Crull hits Red hard with his sword butt and she drops to her knees. Crull knocks Falcon down and drags him toward the cliff.

CRULL

Die like the mongrel you are! Like your son Jonathon! I'll send you to the rocks below and let the ocean take you!

Red crawls behind Crull and pulls his dagger from his belt. She stabs him in the thigh with it and he drops his sword in pain.

CRULL

What, not in the heart, Miss Wentworth?

RED

Maybe I do have a heart after all.

She turns to help Falcon. Behind her, Crull picks up his sword.

FALCON

(seeing Crull)

Gwen!

Red turns back and runs at Crull, giving him a good hard shove.

CRULL

To be sure, lass, it looks like you don't.

Crull disappears over the cliff with a cry which fades into the distance. There is the sound of a far-off splash.¹²

Red looks at Falcon.

RED

But I do.

RUNT

Jonathon? Did he say your son's name was Jonathon?

RED

What is it, Runt?

RUNT

That's my name.

RED

I thought your name was Runt.

¹² If the shove off the cliff's edge is problematic for your stage, Red can just stab him to death.

RUNT

It's just a nickname. Every pirate needs a proper nickname.

FALCON

He does indeed.

RUNT

Here, take the map. I can't read it anymore.

RED

You can't? Zan, what time is it?

FALCON

(looking at the sky)
Nigh upon seven-fifteen.

RED

Our son was born at seven in the morning. Today would have been his twelfth birthday.

They look at Runt.

FALCON

Jonathon?

RED

Jonathon.

There is an awkward pause. Lily crosses the stage.

JASPER

Lily, where are you going?

LILY

To the door.

JASPER

What door?

LILY

Hush. I'm listening.

EMMELINE

What do you hear, love?

LILY

The island is speaking to me.

Lily bends down and knocks on the ground three times. There is a resounding echo and boom. If you are using projections, ancient buildings start to materialize and a moving pattern of gold flowers, vines and other images flow over the screen. The light turns the stage golden.

Bones and Harper enter as everyone looks around in wonder and reverence.

BONES

The treasure...

The light continues to grow brighter until...

BLACKOUT

Scene 6.

Outside. A wedding.

Wedding bells ring. Guests including Bones, Harper, Lily and Runt are onstage dressed in finery. A MINISTER stands next to Falcon who wears a white vest with a white rose in the buttonhole.

Red enters from the opposite side, dressed in a matching white vest and carrying an enormous bouquet of white roses. Falcon approaches her and takes her hand.

Suzanne rushes onstage.

SUZANNE

Captain Hart! We've been looking all over for you. Lady Emmeline was worried sick. Don't you know anything about weddings? You're not supposed to take the flowers with you.

She wrests the bouquet from Red.

BONES

Suzanne! Behave yourself!

SUZANNE

Ho ho! Why, Mum? Are you planning to?

BONES

(putting her arms around
Harper)

No, I don't think so.

The bells morph into a spirited march or an island tune¹³ as Jasper and Emmeline enter as bride and groom. Jasper is dressed in formal attire except for bare feet and a long green leafy vine about his neck. Emmeline wears a mix of European and island regalia.

Everyone throws rice. Suzanne hands Emmeline the bouquet.

Lily runs into Emmeline's arms. Jasper leans down and picks up Lily. He takes Emmeline's hand and they turn to greet their friends.

After a moment, Red and Falcon move apart from the others. Runt crosses to them, looking shy. Red and Falcon look at him with discomfort.

RUNT

Captain?

RED AND FALCON

Aye.

Red and Falcon exchange glances in annoyance.

RUNT

It doesn't matter which one. Captain
Falcon, I guess.

FALCON

What is it, son?

There is a pause.

RED

D'ya have a question, lad?

RUNT

Son?

FALCON

Aye.

¹³ Whatever you do, don't use Mendelssohn's "Wedding March". The playwright hates it. Besides, it wasn't written until 1842.

RUNT

What was it that made you go your separate ways before I was born?

FALCON

Gwennie here wanted to co-captain with me. She so loved bein' a pirate.

RED

You see now how that never would have worked.

RUNT

But isn't that what you've been doing since you started looking for me?

Red and Falcon exchange glances again, this time in realization.

RED AND FALCON

Aye.

RUNT

Sometimes growing up I used to think I could remember my mother.

RED

(she moves closer)

Oh?

RUNT

I know I was a babe but it seemed to me I could remember the way she smelled.

RED

(she moves away)

Oh.

RUNT

You smell like her.

RED

Like sweat and dirt, no doubt. Sunburnt skin. Nothing to miss in that.

RUNT

No, like salt water and sea air. And something else. Like roses maybe.

RED
(jokingly)
That'll be me tattoos.
(more seriously)
And the rosewater your father used to
give me.

FALCON
You still have that?

RED
I'm meaning what you gave me at
breakfast this mornin'.

FALCON
Right, that would be more fresh.

RED
(to Runt)
Will ye forgive me that I was so cruel
to you when I thought you were the
spawn of Captain Crull?

RUNT
I do.

FALCON
(to Red)
Will ye marry me?

RED
I'll think about it.

The music morphs into a lively sea shanty. Everyone begins stamping and clapping.

The crowd parts to reveal Harper making out with Bones in his lap. As Emmeline passes, she hits Harper over the head with her bouquet. They gleefully scurry apart. Emmeline tosses the bouquet to the entire crowd, men and women alike. Bones catches it and hits Harper over the head with it. They fall together and begin making out again.

As the music evolves into a jig, Emmeline and Jasper begin a partnered sword dance. Falcon breaks in and clashes swords with Emmeline. Jasper hands his sword off to Red who breaks in next, crossing swords with Falcon. Emmeline hands her sword to Runt,

who brings it overhead on top of Falcon's and Red's, making a final trio of three swords overhead.

CURTAIN

Director's Notes

Style: This PG-13 comic adventure romp will work best if it is acted by the players as though they are in deadly earnest rather than in self mockery or as high camp.

Diversity: The playwright intends diversity in the ages and ethnicity of the characters. Racially you may cast the play any way you wish. You may also change the ages of the characters to suit your production. Sparks, Crull, Red, Bones and Falcon are older. Emmeline, Jasper, Harper and Suzanne are younger. Lily and Runt are children under the age of 11.

Dialects: A bit of Caribbean flair is essential since but dialects are optional. The British were in the Caribbean during this era but no one knows what they sounded like in the 1770s. For all we know they sounded like Americans.

Adding an Ensemble: If you opt to add an ensemble, try to keep an equal gender ratio in the cast. You can add additional kidnapped children at the beginning of the play who then appear in all Lily's scenes. They sing and laugh with her and generally defy their captors.