

PYRATES
by
Wayne Mitchell

Dramatis Personae

CALICO JACK RACKAM.....Captain
RICHARD CORNER.....Quarter Master
GEORGE FETHERSTON.....Sailing Master
JEAN HOWELL...Ship's Gunner
PATRICK CARTY...Bosun
NOAH HARWOOD.....Ship's Boy
LT. LORD CONKLIN
MRS. TISDALE
MAGGIE
BRIDGET
GRACE
KATHERINE
JAMES BONNY
ANNE BONNY
SOLDIERS

Setting: "Trade Winds" tavern in the pirate stronghold of New Providence Island in the Bahamas. UC is a heavy wood bar behind which is a door that leads to the kitchen. L is a staircase, which leads to an upper gallery and several doors to the boarding rooms. R is the door to the tavern, which leads out onto a mud street. The décor is decidedly nautical, ship's wheels, figureheads, brass bells, etc. Scattered down stage are two rough tables.

Time: 1719

At Rise: The tavern is in chaos as several of the pirates are discovered in mid-brawl. They are, RICHARD CORNER, GEORGE FETHERSTON, JEAN HOWELL and PATRICK CARTY. CORNER is quartermaster aboard the pirate ship "RANGER" and a pirate in the Blackbeard tradition. Vastly huge, bearded and long locked he wears a great cocked hat, jackboots and an over abundance of weapons. GEORGE, by contrast, is slight and lean he wears the bearing, and partially the uniform, of the navy man he used to be. JEAN is a foppish French clotheshorse dressed in lace and silk. He is lethally fast with his rapier. PATRICK is young, impetuous and cheeky. He is dressed like a British mariner of the day and carries a cutlass and pistol. The focus of the altercation is between JEAN and PATRICK. As CORNER and GEORGE attempt to break up the fight CORNER is struck by PATRICK and GEORGE by JEAN. The result being PATRICK is fighting both JEAN and CORNER while JEAN fights both PATRICK and GEORGE. Also involved are, the "Trade Winds" proprietress, MRS. TISDAL, her serving wench MAGGIE and kitchen girl BRIDGET along with MAGGIE'S younger sister, KATHERINE and friend GRACE. MRS. TISDALE is well into her fifties, five foot five both ways and solid as stone. MAGGIE is in her late twenties and is beginning to show the wear that her lifestyle causes. BRIDGET is a classic scullery maid about twelve years old. KATHERINE and GRACE are typical older teenage girls. Suddenly the outside door bursts open and LIEUTENANT CONKLIN, flanked by two redcoat soldiers, enters.)

CONKLIN: Silence in the name of the King! (*CONKLIN is generally ignored. He fires a pistol in the air, which creates silence.*) I hereby place you all under arrest for disruption of the peace, destruction of property and public displays of drunk and bloodthirsty behavior. Kindly lay down your weapons and come along quietly.

CORNER: It'll be a cold day that sees that happen!

CONKLIN: Then we shall have to take you by force. Privates, arrest these men.

PRIVATE: Yes, M'Lord.

(They move to do so but are interrupted by the entrance of CALICO JACK. He is a tall, handsome, swaggering figure. His head-kerchief and shirt are made of the fabric from which he derives his colorful name and white pants are tucked into the top of his sea boots. Across his chest are a brace of pistols and at his side a cutlass. He is withal a redoubtable figure. With him is Noah Harwood, ship's boy.)

JACK: What's all this then? Mr. Corner?

(*CORNER continues to glower at CONKLIN in silence.*)

JACK: Mr. Fetherston?

GEORGE: Where've you been Captain? You nearly missed the fun.

JACK: Put that weapon away Mr. Fetherston. All of you, arms down this instant!

CONKLIN: And who might you be?

JACK: Simply a loyal servant of the crown here to keep the peace.

CONKLIN: Just so? And why is it that he called you "Captain?"

JACK: These lads are just a bit sentimental. A term of affection from the old days. Now then, Lieutenant...

CONKLIN: "Lord" actually. I am Lieutenant Lord Conklin and you, sir, will address me with the proper respect.

JACK: (*After a moment's hesitation.*) Of course...M'Lord. Now, I hate to keep you from your duty, so perhaps if you can tell me the meaning of all this we can settle things like reasonable men.

CONKLIN: These men are under arrest.

JACK: On what charge?

CONKLIN: Disruption of the peace and destruction of property.

JACK: Mrs. Tisdale, this is your property isn't it?

MRS. TISDALE: Yes.

JACK: Do you want to see charges pressed against these lads?

MRS. TISDALE: I don't suppose there's anything here that can't be fixed.

JACK: Thank you Ma'am. (*Deliberately dropping CONKLIN'S honorific.*) And what was the other charge Lieutenant? Disrupting the peace?

CONKLIN: That's right.

JACK: What do you say we settle that up right here and now between us? Mr. Harwood?

NOAH: Yes sir?

JACK: The red pouch if you will.

(NOAH tosses JACK a bag full of coins who in turn holds it out to CONKLIN.)

JACK: I think this should more than cover it. Now you can pay that score for us without having to go through the bother of taking these poor seamen to the brig.

CONKLIN: Are you attempting to bribe a representative of the king?

JACK: I wouldn't think of it! I put this money in your hands with the absolute good faith that every penny it will find its way into Governor Roger's purse. What you and your lads choose to do with it on the other side of that door is your affair.

CONKLIN: *(After a moment's thought CONKLIN takes the money pouch.)* Very well. But I had best not hear of any more trouble or I shall close this establishment and arrest every person inside.

JACK: Understood Lieutenant, and I thank you for such faithful execution of your duty.

CONKLIN: *(To JACK.)* I'll be keeping an eye on you. *(CONKLIN and other soldiers exit.)*

JACK: Just what we need around here another petty noble with a store bought commission. *(Rounding on the crew.)* Now would someone mind telling me what in the devil is going on here? *(To CORNER and GEORGE)* I would expect ship's officers to *keep* the peace, not disrupt it.

GEORGE: That's what we were trying to do, sir...*(finishing lamely)* when the lobsterbacks interrupted.

GRACE: It weren't their fault, Captain.

JACK: Then whose blessed fault was it?

GRACE: Katherine put Patrick up to it.

KATHERINE: I never!

PATRICK: *(Indicating JEAN.)* He started arguing with me!

JEAN: This is not so. You said that you are better shot than me.

PATRICK: Because I am! I just out shot you by a long sea mile!

JEAN: Shooting for sport but you can not make the shot when it counts!

PATRICK: You know bloody well I can!

JEAN: Not the day we boarded "The Lady of Spain." Who was the better man that day!

PATRICK: My pistols were fouled! The point is, I just proved that, shot for shot, I can out gun ye.

JEAN: We shall put it to Calico Jack! Captain, which of us is the better shot.

PATRICK: Ye don't have to answer that captain 'cause I just proved that I was. *(He pushes JEAN'S chest.)* And

the wind was against me besides!

JEAN: You did not prove anything. (*Pushing back*) Now if you want to see who is the better marksman, suppose we each fire a round off at the other and see who is the happier man at the end of it! (*It's all about to start up again.*)

JACK: Belay that talk! A smart lot of good you'll do this crew if you both wind up killed. Now, you're both fine shots.

JEAN & PATRICK: Aye.

JACK: But neither one of you is half as good as me so don't make me prove it against your thick skulls. (*PATRICK and JEAN relax.*) We're just lucky that Conklin is as crooked as a corkscrew or there'd be the devil to pay.

PATRICK: Aye Captain.

JACK: Mr. Howell?

JEAN: Oui Mssr.

JACK: Good. Now get to work and set this tavern aright.

MRS. TISDALE: And that means you ladies too. You had as much hand in this little ruckus as anybody.

JACK: You too Mr. Harwood.

NOAH: But I didn't make no mess!

JACK: We'll have no idlers here.

(All except JACK and MRS. TISDALE go to work with a will at restoring proper order.)

JACK: My apologies Mrs. T. I'm afraid they've been touchy ever since we got our pardons. I don't think these lads are suited as landsmen.

MRS. TISDALE: Never you mind, Jack. They're just letting off a little steam and I'm sure that showing off for Maggie's sister and her friend had more than a little to do with it.

JACK: Just the same, let me give you something to cover the damage. (*Shouting to NOAH.*) Mr. Harwood?

NOAH: (*Crossing to JACK*) Yes, sir?

JACK: The brown pouch if you will. (*He snaps and holds out his hand to NOAH who places a small pouch of money in it. JACK stares at his hand a few seconds and then stares meaningfully at NOAH. NOAH sighs and places a few more coins in JACK'S hand before returning to work. JACK hands the money to MRS. TISDALE.*)

MRS. TISDALE: Thankee M'Dear.

JACK: And I'm afraid they're just going to get more land mad. Sometimes I wonder if I did the right thing signing articles.

MRS. TISDALE: Don't treat yourself so harsh. These lads would be shot or hanged if you hadn't ransomed them when the "Ranger" was taken. And don't think they don't know it.

JACK: In the meantime what do I do with them? We both know the seas aren't the same these days. Freebooting is done.

MRS. TISDALE: Aye, the Crown means to expand out here in earnest now. Just look at New Providence here. Two, three years ago buccaneers owned the island. Now there's a garrison right in Nassau town and King George's men walk the streets as bold as brass.

JACK: They're even hiring old sea dogs to turn privateer and chase down their own shipmates.

MRS. TISDALE: Mark my words, two or three years from now every pirate who hasn't signed a pardon will be dancing a jig in mid-air at execution dock and don't think they'd bother to spare the young'uns.

NOAH: I ain't scared of no redcoats!

JACK: *(Cuffing NOAH affectionately.)* It's not the soldiers you need to be afraid of. It's the bloody politicians! Now, back to your duties. *(NOAH goes back to cleaning as JACK continues speaking to MRS. TISDALE.)* It's true though. The common man makes these waters civilized and just when he gets things the way he like them the Crown sells it off to the bankers and lawyers.

MRS. TISDALE: You know the motto. "Make the world England!"

JACK: Lord, the very idea gives a powerful thirst. Maggie?

MAGGIE: Aye?

JACK: Bring me an ale. There's a lass.

GRACE: I'll get it!

KATHERINE: No, let me! *(They race to the bar to fill a tankard.)*

JACK: What's got into them?

MRS. TISDALE: They're just being young women.

JACK: When did that happen?

MRS. TISDALE: It happens.

JACK: Huh. *(Returning to the subject at hand.)* "Make the world England!" And how do they go about it? In the person of scheming devils like Little Lord Conklin there.

MRS. TISDALE: And don't forget our beloved Governor Rodgers.

JACK: That bandit has extorted and embezzled more money than all of the pirates combined!

KATHERINE: You're making a mess!

GRACE: You shoved me!

KATHERINE: I never!

MAGGIE: *(At the bar.)* Leave off you two. I'll get it!

MRS. TISDALE: If you make a mess over there you'll be cleaning it up. *(Back to JACK)* You should be grateful. If he were honest you wouldn't have been able to buy those pardons off him, like as not.

JACK: *(Slapping a stack of parchments on the table.)* True enough but honest or not we've got them now.

GEORGE: *(Having finished righting the room.)* I'm sorry that you came back to such a brawl Captain.

JACK: It's to be expected I suppose.

GEORGE: Where've you been?

MAGGIE: (*Handing JACK the tankard*) Here y'are Jack.

JACK: Thank-you love. I just took the Widow Atwel Lame Ben's percentage of our last spoils.

GRACE: You always had a weakness for them poor old ladies Jack.

MAGGIE: A weakness for all of the ladies if you ask me.

MRS. TISDALE: Nobody's asking you, missy. Now, enough of your sauce and trip down to the butchers and see if they haven't got some meat we can throw on the spit for tonight.

MAGGIE: I was just sayin'...

MRS. TISDALE: Enough now! Off you go and take Grace and Katherine with you. Heaven knows they've stirred up trouble enough. (*MAGGIE, GRACE and KATHERINE fetch their cloaks and exit grudgingly.*) Saints above but those girls are devils for the gossip.

BRIDGET: Grace mostly.

MRS. TISDALE: And that's quite enough of your sauce Miss Mischief. I'm sure that there's plenty of crockery that needs to be washed up?

BRIDGET: Yes Ma'am.

MRS. TISDALE: Then go get to it or I'll pin your ears back.

BRIDGET: Yes Ma'am. (*She exits into the kitchen*)

CORNER: All I'm sayin', Captain, is that we're scarcely in the line o' work for charity. You remember what happened to Captain England.

PATRICK: Aye. His own crew cast him adrift for showing mercy to prisoners.

MRS. TISDALE: Died a beggar, poor lad.

GEORGE: And him a right good captain.

JACK: See here, this isn't charity. It's the rules. If a man dies while a sailing with me then his widow and children are entitled to his lawful share.

MRS. TISDALE: Besides, I thought that wasn't the life for you lads no more.

JACK: Too right. Now that Governor Rogers says that we're pardoned men. We'll have to set up as an honest gents.

CORNER: And just how do ye mean to do that?

JACK: (*Teasing*) I don't know. Maybe marry Mrs. Tisdale here and run myself a grog shop.

MRS. TISDALE: Oh get away with you!

GEORGE: We need to talk to you about that pardon Jack.

JACK: Say, that's right. Richard, did you learn anything while you were out today?

CORNER: 'Bout what you'd expect. We...

(He is interrupted by MAGGIE entering in a rush.)

MAGGIE: Quick! Where's Calico Jack?

JACK: I'm right here, lass! What's the commotion?

MAGGIE: King's men! Dozens of them.

JACK: Stay a bit. What sort of men?

MAGGIE: Royal Marines...I...I think.

CORNER: That's all we need! Bleeding webfeet!

MAGGIE: They're hunting for something.

CORNER: Are Conklin and his lot among them?

MAGGIE: I'm not sure but I don't think so.

JACK: No. That bribe in his pocket will keep him away for at least a little while.

MAGGIE: They're searching all of the inns and houses.

JACK: What's their mood?

MAGGIE: They be riled about something. They even beat an old woman.

GEORGE: An old woman?

JEAN: Bloodthirsty brutes!

PATRICK: By the powers! Someone will pay for that!

NOAH: Let me after 'em. I'll teach 'em a lesson!

JACK: Now settle down there swab. We need to think this through. Where're the other girls?

MAGGIE: I sent them ahead to the butcher's so it wouldn't look suspicious when I doubled back. Hurry Jack, it's only a matter of time until those soldiers get here!

CORNER: That should concern us why?

MAGGIE: *(To all of them.)* What if they're looking for you?

JACK: Why would they be looking for us? We've got our pardons. Bought and paid for.

MRS. TISDALE: Let me see those pardons, Jack. *(She crosses to the stack of parchments JACK put on the table earlier.)* Bless my soul! My Dear, I don't think these are genuine.

JACK: What?

MRS. TISDALE: This isn't the Governor's seal!

CORNER: Are ye sure?

MRS. TISDALE: Absolutely. Maggie fetch me those papers tacked to the bar. *(MAGGIE moves to do so.)* I had to get a charter so I could buy from the merchant ships.

MAGGIE: (*Crossing to MRS. TISDALE.*) These ones?

MRS. TISDALE: (*Taking the papers*) Look. They have the Governor's seal on them but it looks nothing like the one on your pardons!

CORNER: It's a trap Captain or I'm mistook.

JACK: Blast! The blackard took my silver and gave us these bogus papers so that he could arrest us a second time for the bounty. How could I have been so stupid?

NOAH: What are we waiting for, Captain? We can take them all!

JACK: Sit down Mr. Harwood before you get hurt.

GEORGE: What do we do?

JACK: Quick, lads, bar the door.

(*JEAN and PATRICK cross to the door and bar it.*)

JEAN: Do we make the fight of it?

JACK: How can we? They more than outnumber us in port. We'll have to think of something else.

CORNER: Whatever we do them soldiers might be here in a minute and we can't let them capture you captain!
(*To the other men*) Quick take him out the back.

JACK: Wait! I have a better plan. Let's make sure what their scheme is. Mrs. Tisdale, do you still have that battered old cloak that was left here?

MRS. TISDALE: That shredded old scrap of rag, you mean?

JACK: The very one.

MRS. TISDALE: I'm sure its here somewhere.

JACK: Bring it to me.

MRS. TISDALE: (*Shouting into the kitchen*) Bridget!

BRIDGET: (*Appearing at the door*) Yes Ma'am?

MRS. TISDALE: Bring me that old cloak by the back door.

BRIDGET: Yes Ma'am. (*She disappears back into the kitchen*)

JACK: And, Patrick, give me your hat. (*PATRICK hands JACK his hat.*)

PATRICK: What should the rest of us do Captain? It's too late to run for it.

JEAN: If those are marines they will catch us for sure.

JACK: Stow away aloft but sharp's the word. Keep your cutlasses and pistols ready and you come running if I cry havoc.

BRIDGET: (*Entering with the cloak*) Is this what you're talking about?

MRS. TISDALE: Give it to Jack, such as it is.

JACK: Perfect!

MAGGIE: Aye. A perfect nest for vermin. What do you mean to do with it?

JACK: Wear it of course!

MAGGIE: If you're determined to let me help you with it, love.

JACK: Thank you lass. *(Jack puts on PATRICK'S hat as MAGGIE helps him with the cloak. JACK stoops and takes a few tottering steps while the rest watch him curiously.)* Now I just tie a kerchief over my eye for a patch. There now, how's that?

BRIDGET: Why, you look just like an old beggar!

JACK: Right you are lassie. Those soldiers will never recognize me dressed like this.

MAGGIE: Your own mother wouldn't recognize you dressed like that.

PATRICK: What do you mean to do Captain, beg them King's men for pennies?

JACK: Not exactly. It's information I'm going to be begging. *(There is a loud knocking)*

CORNER: They're here Jack!

ANNE: *(Offstage.)* Open this door.

JACK: Aloft now, double quick.

(Crew and MAGGIE exit up the stairs and hide behind the gallery railing. As NOAH moves to follow them BRIDGET takes his wrist and drags him to the kitchen where they leave the door open a crack to eavesdrop. MRS. TISDALE dashes behind the bar as JACK sinks down at a table and puts his head down as if he were passed out. The knocking continues.)

MRS. TISDALE: Come in! Come in! Before you make us deaf with that foolish noise. *(She unbars the door to admit a fair-faced youth. It is ANNE disguised as a boy. She is dressed in the loose, baggy clothes of a sailor, which are clearly too large for her. Her hair is tucked beneath a cloth hat and her face is smudged with dirt.)*

MRS. TISDALE: Oh! *(With a laugh of relief.)*

ANNE: Are you open Madam?

MRS. TISDALE: Forgive me, son, you gave me a turn. You're not who I expected.

ANNE: Is this the "Trade Winds" Tavern?

MRS. TISDALE: Home to the finest rum and ale.

ANNE: And you are open to business?

MRS. TISDALE: Noon and night, lad.

ANNE: Then why'd you bar your door in the middle of the day?

MRS. TISDALE: I only just stepped out the back for a minute and with so many soldiers in the street...well, you know how soldiers are when the rum's unguarded. Now, can I fetch you a mug of something?

ANNE: I'm told that here is where I can find Captain Jack Rackam.

MRS. TISDALE: Why are you looking for a pirate, son? You don't much look like a soldier to me.

ANNE: Were you expecting them? I can fetch one if you like.

MRS. TISDALE: I don't have to tolerate a tone like that, young man! Now, you obviously have the wrong grog shop so order something or clear out!

ANNE: I think not.

MRS. TISDALE: Clear out or I'll holler for the soldiers. They can be here in a minute.

ANNE: I don't think that you want to do that. Those soldiers are more interested in your friend Calico Jack than me.

MRS. TISDALE: What makes you think I know this rogue you keep talking about?

ANNE: I had a messmate who kept talking about the "Trade Winds" tavern. Said he was going to come here to join up with Rackam's crew.

MRS. TISDALE: Just so? I don't see this messmate of yours.

ANNE: That's because I sent him on a fool's errand to the North end of town.

MRS. TISDALE: The North end?

ANNE: He drove me half mad with his questions. Had I heard that Captain Jack was ashore? Had I seen his men about? Did I think that he was here for a new vessel and crew? So I told him that I thought the "Trade Winds" was across the river and why didn't he go find it while I minded the baggage.

MRS. TISDALE: That's a fearsome part of town. He's likely to get his throat cut or worse.

ANNE: And would serve him right too. As if any famous captain would let the likes of him join.

MRS. TISDALE: So that's his story then? What about you?

ANNE: I'm a different stripe of fish aren't I? Rackam would jump at the chance of having me!

(Suddenly the door opens and JAMES BONNY enters. He is something of a dandy presently armed and dressed like he aspires to be a mariner.)

ANNE: So, there you are you nasty piece of work. I'd hoped to see the last of you.

BONNY: Davie Commons again is it? *(He suddenly slaps ANNE in the face and continues to clutch her by the shirtfront.)* You're lucky I don't cut your liver out!

(ANNE attempts to keep a brave demeanor in the face of BONNY'S abuse.)

ANNE: What was that for?

BONNY: That inn you sent me to was full of the worst sort of scoundrels!

ANNE: Fancy that. How did you manage to escape them?

BONNY: I went back to where I met you and followed your tracks, and then when I lost sight of them I asked after you in the street. I only narrowly escaped with my life!

ANNE: Aye. Well...that was my mistake then.

BONNY: Not half the mistake you'll make if you find yourself asleep around me. *(He slaps her across the face again.)*

ANNE: Do that again. I dare you!

MRS. TISDALE: Settle down the two of you! We'll have none of that in here! *(BONNY grudgingly acquiesces and releases ANNE. MRS. TISDALE speaks to BONNY.)* This is your messmate then?

ANNE: *(Butting in.)* Not any more. I'm on my own.

MRS. TISDALE: You seem a wee bit raw for that sort of thing.

ANNE: I can take care of myself.

MRS. TISDALE: What about your family? *(She offers ANNE a wet rag for her face.)*

ANNE: *(Accepting the rag and giving BONNY a sidelong look.)* I have no family.

MRS. TISDALE: But, your parents...? Where you from?

ANNE: Lots of places. My father and his doxy left Ireland for the Carolinas to avoid the scandal.

MRS. TISDALE: She was your mother then?

ANNE: I suppose you could call her that. *(Pause.)* She blames me for them having to abandon their home in the old country.

MRS. TISDALE: And your father?

ANNE: You ask a lot of questions.

MRS. TISDALE: And you'll answer every one or else march back out that door.

ANNE: I don't see what this has to do with...

MRS. TISDALE: I'm not concerned with what you see Mr. High and Mighty.

ANNE: He says it's my fault his first wife left, alright?

MRS. TISDALE: So they beat ye.

ANNE: That and worse.

MRS. TISDALE: *(With understanding.)* Look, Love, I can see that your life was hard but a life at sea ain't all fun and adventure either. Are ye sure ye know what your doing?

ANNE: Last year I ran away and met Bonny here. Ever since then we've been making our way here to New Providence. Believe me I know about hardship at sea.

MRS. TISDALE: That ain't the same as...

ANNE: As what?

MRS. TISDALE: Well, as piracy. Do you know who Calico Jack is?

ANNE: Why else would I join him? Look, my father is a merchant-trader, ma'am. Who knows? If I plunder enough ships, I might drive the old bastard out of business!

MRS. TISDALE: That's a lot of hate, lad.

ANNE: And he's earned it. Every inch.

MRS. TISDALE: Well, it's not a bad plan as plans go except that you got one little problem.

ANNE: Which is?

MRS. TISDALE: Jack Rackam ain't your man for the job.

ANNE: *(Desperate)* Why?

MRS. TISDALE: The word hereabouts is that, now that the Crown has seized his ship, he be retiring.

BONNY: That's just as well. He wouldn't take you anyhow, like as not. A captain needs experienced seamen.

MRS. TISDALE: Like you I suppose?

BONNY: That's right.

JACK: *(From the table, in an unsteady voice.)* I wouldn't swear to that if I was you, swabby!

BONNY: Did you address me?

JACK: No offense intended Guv'nor but this lad here's got pluck and all's we've seen of you is that you can clout back the ears of a young boy!

(BONNY grabs JACK up and attempts to bully him by holding a dagger to his throat.)

BONNY: *(Cruelly amused.)* That's brave talk from an old bundle of rags. I have a mind to show you what kind of pluck I have.

JACK: Easy, Master, easy. It's just that I know Jack Rackam.

BONNY: A likely story.

JACK: Seen him up close I have.

BONNY: Where?

JACK: He robbed me, just this morning, down on the pier.

ANNE: Robbed you?

JACK: Of my last penny.

BONNY: This morning eh? So he *is* in port.

JACK: If you let me go I can lead you to him.

BONNY: What makes ye think I can't find him on my own? Devil a doubt: the world won't miss one more beggar. It'll leave more rum for the rest of us.

ANNE: Easy now, James, he ain't worth the effort.

BONNY: Did I speak to you?

NOAH: *(Bursting from the kitchen with BRIDGET trying to detain him.)* Get your filthy hands off him!

BRIDGET: Noah! Wait!

CORNER: *(Entering down the stairs with cutlass drawn.)* Avast there! If there's to be knife play about, let me join in!

BONNY: Lay off you! This matter isn't any of your concern.

CORNER: Is that so? Suppose I be making it that way? Now you just come over hear and hold that knife to my throat.

(BONNY backs up while secretly reaching for his cutlass but stops as he backs into the muzzle of MRS. TISDALE'S blunderbuss)

MRS. TISDALE: That'll do right there lubber.

BONNY: Steady, Mrs. Steady.

GEORGE: *(Entering down the stairs pistol drawn.)* What's the worry here?

CORNER: This bilge rat here, was threatening a poor, unarmed swab so I thought perhaps it were time for me to even the score.

GEORGE: What's this old sea tramp done to you?

BONNY: He insulted me, didn't he.

CORNER: *(To MRS. TISDALE)* Is that true Missus?

NOAH: *(Cutting in.)* No Mr. Corner, it ain't.

BRIDGET: *(Indicating BONNY.)* He started it!

ANNE: Not Richard Corner?

CORNER: As ever was.

ANNE: You Quarter Master to the "Ranger" when Jack Rackam deposed Charles Vane!

CORNER: That I was.

BONNY: Then you served with Rackham! You're who I've come to see.

GEORGE: Aye, but right now the "Ranger" is bleaching herself dry in the Navy shipyards. So I reckon that makes Mr. Corner the Master of nothing much at all.

ANNE: *(Butting in.)* But Captain Jack means to get a new ship doesn't he?

JACK: Well lad...

ANNE: It don't matter what ship he sails. I...

BONNY: Pay the lad no mind sir. Lets us send him and the old tosspot about their business and you and me talk square.

CORNER: What makes ye think that if the Captain were to go back to sea he wouldn't rather take the likes of these two than a vermin like yourself?

JACK: Thankee kindly Mr. Corner.

BONNY: What cause would he have to take on two homeless ruffians like this?

GEORGE: Homeless, says you? And I suppose that you have a hearth and home and fine young wife to return to.

BONNY: *(Casting ANNE a sidelong look)* Suppose I do?

ANNE: Then what cause does a family man like yourself have to go living aboard ship?

BONNY: Enough out of you or, by Jove, I'll teach you to respect your betters!

CORNER: You ain't swayed me that ye ARE his better.

GEORGE: It seems to me that you've been asked a question. What makes you think the Captain would take you?

BONNY: Why wouldn't he?

JACK: *(Mocking)* Why not indeed?

CORNER: Hmm. You'd have a heap of persuading to do first.

NOAH: Let's give him the test.

GEORGE: *(Grinning)* Now there's thinking lad. *(To BONNY)* Y'see the Captain's got a special test that all of his new recruits have to pass.

BONNY: A test?

CORNER: Just so.

GEORGE: It's a test to find out just what kind of a man ye are.

ANNE: Can I take the test too?

GEORGE: He hasn't refused anybody so far.

BONNY: You seem to know a fair bit about him. How is it that you say you don't know where he is?

CORNER: I never said no such thing. How 'bout you George?

GEORGE: Fact is I'd wager that old Jack might be closer than some of us think.

JACK: *(Throwing off the cloak.)* Who says they know where Jack Rackam is? That swab owes me money!

BONNY: You!

JACK: The same. Didn't I tell ye that I had seen Calico Jack up close and personal? *(All laugh.)* And I have it on good authority that he'd have me for his crew long afore he'd have the likes of you. *(More laughter)* Come on down lads and meet our guests. *(JEAN and PATRICK bound down the stairs cutlasses at the ready. Trailed by MAGGIE who is brandishing a dagger.)*

PATRICK: So, you swabs wanted to meet the famous Calico Jack and his crew did you?

GEORGE: Well here they are, such as are at hand. Patrick here was Bosun.

PATRICK: And this elegant frog, Jean Howell, was ship's Gunner. He don't speak no English.

JEAN: Ha! I speak it better than you do.

GEORGE: My name is George Fetherston, late of his Majesty's navy.

JACK: Mr. Fetherston was the "Ranger's" Sailing Master, young Noah here is ship's boy and apparently Mr. Corner you know. Maggie girl bring us a tot of rum will ye? There's a girl. (*MAGGIE crosses behind the bar and busies herself there getting JACK his drink.*) So, that's us then. Who might you be?

BONNY: My name is James Bonny and I've been looking for you.

JACK: These days a lot of people are looking for me. What kind are you?

ANNE: (*Under her breath.*) He's as bad as they come.

BONNY: Shut your mouth you. (*Back to JACK*) I mean to join up with your crew.

JACK: Oh, do you? And?

BONNY: (*Searching*) And...and to battle anybody who dares to challenge us.

CORNER: (*Aside to JACK.*) Speaking of folks looking for ye, Cap'n, those soldiers must be getting close. Is this the time for this blather.

JACK: These two might just be working for them. Let's see what they know. (*Back to BONNY.*) So you fancy yourself a man of action eh?

BONNY: That's right.

JACK: Well we'll see about that. (*To ANNE*) And you, my buck? Who might you be?

ANNE: Davie Common is my name.

JACK: And what brings ye to the "Trade Winds" young Master Common?

ANNE: (*Eagerly.*) I want to sign with ye Captain Rackam, if you'll have me. I haven't had much time at sea but I learn quick! I could come on as cabin boy...

NOAH: Aye. Then maybe I could be promoted.

JACK: (*Cuffing him lightly.*) Quiet you.

ANNE: Or...or do odd jobs for the crew or I could even be cook's monkey if you would only...

JACK: All right stay a bit lad.

ANNE: And maybe after I served you faithfully you'd let me join on proper and take my share as a fighting man.

JACK: And why would I do that?

ANNE: Because...because I would be loyal to you and no other.

JACK: Why me in particular? (*ANNE is unable to answer him. She looks at him pleadingly then down at the floor.*) Speak up, lad or there's the door.

ANNE: Please...

JACK: Mr. Carty, show the boy out.

ANNE: No! Please.

JACK: Well then?

ANNE: When I first ran away, before I met that bilge rat Bonny...

BONNY: Watch your m...*(Attempts to backhand ANNE but his arm is stopped by GEORGE.)*

GEORGE: Let him speak.

ANNE: I boarded a ship bound for Jamaica. Just before we arrived, you and your crew boarded us.

JACK: Could be. I don't remember. We boarded a fair sum of ships to be sure.

ANNE: I was more than half fearful. *(Pirates all laugh.)*

CORNER: I can't blame ye for that.

ANNE: But then I saw how civil you were to the passengers, and especially the ladies.

MAGGIE: Figures.

ANNE: You recognized a tavern keeper who had been traveling with us, a Jamaican by the name of Hosea. After you plundered the ship you released the crew and paid the Captain for Hosea's passage, insisting that the world needed more tavern keepers!

PATRICK: Do you hear that Mrs. T?

MRS. TISDALE: Scuttle me, but that was sharp thinking!

ANNE: Right then I knew that you were not just common cutthroat but a man of character.

JACK: Character is it? Governor Rogers didn't think so. He wanted to hang me for a pirate.

ANNE: We both know who the real pirate is.

JACK: Do you know what kind of life you're asking for?

ANNE: All I know is that if ever got the chance, I wanted to ship out with Captain Jack Rackam!

JACK: An apt yarn. Well lads, what say you?

CORNER: We don't even have a ship. What do we need a bigger crew for?

JEAN: What do you care? It is not like we have to pay them.

CORNER: Eh?

JEAN: No ship, no spoils. No spoils, no percentage to cut into. Why not have two more?

CORNER: We don't know anything about 'em. All we have is their word on it.

JACK: I didn't know anything about you when you signed on.

CORNER: That's different. I'm honest.

(All laugh.)

NOAH: There's one way to find out for sure. Put 'em to the test!

ALL: Aye! The test!

BONNY: What test? This is the second time you've mentioned it.

JACK: I don't accept just any sea scum off of the docks. If you want to be one of my lads you must be quick to action and know the rules by heart. Now, it's the will of this crew that you be put to the test to see what you're made of.

BONNY: What does it demand?

JACK: Don't fret. It's not dangerous...*if* you're the sort I'm looking for.

ANNE: If you're not?

JACK: It can get mortal tiresome.

(All of the pirates laugh.)

JACK: So what do you say? Refuse the test and you walk out of here free and clear but mind, I never want to see you again. Accept the test and its join or hang. Those are the terms. Master Commons?

ANNE: Aye. I'll test.

JACK: Brave boy. And what about you "Man of Action?"

BONNY: I'll test. I'm not afraid.

JEAN: This shows a lapse in wisdom I think. *(All laugh.)*

JACK: If you're sure then. Mr. Fetherston?

GEORGE: The test is in three parts. Fail one part and the crew votes if we let you continue. Fail two and the Captain alone, can grant that you be allowed to finish. Fail all three and the devil himself can't save you from Davie Jones. Understand?

ANNE: Yes.

BONNY: Aye.

JACK: Good. Gather round lads and sit in judgment. James Bonny, Davie Common we, as master mariners, put you to the test to say if you be worthy to sign articles and join the crew of Captain Jack Rackam. For the first part, any member of the crew can question you as to proper code of conduct aboard ship according to the Brotherhood of the Coast. The rules are few and simple so you're only allowed one miss. *(To the crew.)* Now then me buckos, let's see how much these two know.

JEAN: You, boy. What is the punishment for any man that snaps his arms or carries a lighted candle without a lantern in the hold?

ANNE: He receives the Law of Moses.

JEAN: Which is?

ANNE: Thirty-nine lashes across the bare back.

CORNER: Huh. Now sees if you know this. How are spoils aboard ship to be divided?

ANNE: All are entitled to an equal share of all prizes...

NOAH: 'Twould be a lucky day as saw that!

ANNE: (*Continuing*) Excepting only the ships boy, who receives one half share, the Captain who receives one and one half full shares and the other officers who receive one share and a quarter.

GEORGE: He has you their Mr. Corner. Answer me son. What should your conduct be if you meet with a prudent woman?

NOAH: Like Maggie here? (*There are general chuckles as Maggie playfully slaps NOAH.*)

GEORGE: Perhaps you thought I was addressing you Mr. Harwood?

PATRICK: (*To JACK*) Ah Captain he was only joking.

JACK: Quiet you lot and let the lad answer the question.

ANNE: Any man that offers to meddle with a prudent woman, without her consent, shall suffer present death.

JACK: Smartly answered lad. Now you, Mr. Bonny, let's see if you know the laws of the Brotherhood as well as this boy.

BONNY: This is absurd! Am I supposed to believe all of this "honor among thieves" nonsense?

JACK: Now just what's that supposed to mean?

BONNY: For pirates it's nothing but pillage and plunder isn't it?

GEORGE: Do you think that just because we live and die by the sword that we are not men of honor?

BONNY: Fine talk about honor from one who obviously got turfed out of the navy.

GEORGE: What is that supposed to mean?

BONNY: Did you think I wouldn't recognize the uniform?

GEORGE: (*Coldly*) I was never drummed out.

BONNY: A deserter then?

PATRICK: Don't take that talk from him, sir.

GEORGE: Damn your eyes, a patriot! The country I serve stretches from gunwale to gunwale and from bow to stern (*pointing at JACK*) and he's the bloody King of it.

BONNY: Ha!

GEORGE: And in my country every man is treated square and equal. Can your bloody King say that?

BONNY: What does...

GEORGE: Do you think that Britain never made war for profit?

PATRICK: More like every one it fought!

GEORGE: In the Brotherhood of the Coast every captain is a free prince with as much authority to make war on the whole world as any monarch with a hundred ships in their fleet.

BONNY: A pretty speech but I'm hardly interested in your Republican politics.

PATRICK: *(Enraged.)* You have a smart mouth Bonny! Captain, if it's battle he wants I'll have him for the second test!

CORNER: Settle down Paddy you ain't in the temper for it.

JACK: He's right Mr. Carty. You'd do well to tighten your disposition.

PATRICK: Captain!

JACK: No. The mind you're in, you'd have him dead as soon as not.

PATRICK: Aye!

JACK: That'll do Mr. Carty! *(To BONNY)* Pillage and plunder is it? We see plenty of both but it's precious little you'll see of any of it if you don't make a more impressive showing. You just failed the first test. Mr. Commons you will proceed to the second test. Bonny, it's up to this crew to decide if you're to be allowed to the second.

BONNY: Failed! How? I haven't even been asked a question.

JEAN: You do not even know that we *have* rules let alone what they are.

BONNY: I know this much! *(Jealous at ANNE'S advancement.)* I know what it means to accept a woman into your crew.

JACK: What's that supposed to mean?

ANNE: James no! *(BONNY removes ANNE'S hat and a cascade of hair comes tumbling out. There is a moment of stunned silence as the crew takes this in.)*

CORNER: By the powers...

ANNE: *(Servicing BONNY with a kick to the fork of the legs that sends him reeling, much to the amusement of all.)* Maggot! Traitor! *(She is poised to continue the stomping but is intercepted by a hugely guffawing CORNER.)*

CORNER: *(Through his laughter.)* Here now, enough of that!

JACK: Brawls aren't tolerated aboard ship and I'll not have you get in the habit here.

(KATHERINE and GRACE enter from the street)

GRACE: We're back but there's still soldiers...

KATHERINE: What's going on here, Captain?

JACK: *(Suddenly serious.)* Just the question I would ask Mr. Bonny here.

BONNY: That wench was trying to sneak aboard your crew by disguising herself as a boy.

JACK: *(Fiercely to ANNE.)* To what end missy?

NOAH: Most likely to spy on you.

JACK: Is that so?

ANNE: No! *(Silence.)*

JACK: Is that all then? "No?"

ANNE: No. I would never...

JACK: Then what?

ANNE: I...I can't say.

CORNER: (*Drawing a pistol.*) By The Powers! You will say or we be ending this right now.

JACK: Easy now Mr. Corner.

CORNER: This ain't no time to play gentleman, Captain either she tells what she's up to or I'll finish her here and now.

JACK: I said stand down. I'm Captain here and, by thunder, I'll have my say. (*CORNER relaxes slightly.*) Now then, young lady, will you tell me the truth or do I let Mr. Corner have it his way?

ANNE: I want to be a sailor. It's all I ever wanted. There is no way for a woman to go to sea legally so I thought...

JACK: Thought you'd sign up with old Jack as a buccaneer eh?

ANNE: Something like that.

JACK: Do you think me a fool?

ANNE: (*Horried*) No! Of course not!

NOAH: Ha! A woman pirate!

KATHERINE: (*Considering*) Well...why not?

CORNER: Bloody hell!

GRACE: You're quick enough to believe that she's a spy. Why not a sailor?

GEORGE: She seems to be a better hand at the work than Mr. Bonny here.

PATRICK: Do you know what you're sayin'?

JACK: Mr. Fetherston makes a good point. Is that why you gave her away Bonny? Couldn't stand to be beaten by your lady friend?

ANNE: He's no friend of mine! (*Pause, then bitterly*) He used to be my husband.

BONNY: I *am* your husband!

ANNE: And a fine loving one you are.

JACK: Enough. Maggie?

MAGGIE: Aye.

JACK: Take Mrs. Bonny aloft until we decide what to do with her.

ANNE: Never call me that!

JACK: You'd do well to keep a civil tongue with me missy.

ANNE: *(After a moment, subdued.)* Please, don't call me that!

JACK: And just what should I call ye?

ANNE: Call me... call me Anne.

JACK: Take Mistress Anne aloft!

MAGGIE: Aye, Jack.

TISDALE: I'll go along with you and see that she's more suitably turned out. I know just the thing.

GRACE: Can we help too.

KATHERINE: Yes can we?

TISDALE: In fact that's probably best. Come on up. *(To ANNE)* Come along dearie. *(ANNE pauses.)* Come along. *(They all exit up the stairs as BRIDGET looks after them hopefully.)* You too Bridget.

BRIDGET: *(Rushing after them.)* Hooray.

PATRICK: *(Starting to follow.)* This might just be worth a look.

JACK: That'll do Mr. Carty. *(PATRICK stops and turns around.)*

BONNY: What do you mean, until you decide what to do with her? You're not actually still considering her for your crew!

JACK: I don't see that what I'm considering is any of your business.

PATRICK: Much as I hate to agree with the likes of him Bonny's right. According to the rules.

JEAN: Everyone knows that to bring a woman aboard a fighting ship carries a death sentence.

JACK: Is that so Mr. Fetherston?

GEORGE: No it ain't...well...not exactly.

CORNER: The devil it doesn't!

GEORGE: What it says is that any man who carries a woman aboard *disguised as a man* should be marooned or shot.

JACK: There you have it Mr. Corner. Problem solved. Every man here knows that she's a woman. It would be powerful hard to disguise her as a man now wouldn't it?

BONNY: You're mad!

JACK: Strong language for a man as deep in trouble as you are my friend.

BONNY: Trouble?

JACK: You *knew* that your wife was a woman when you tried to get her aboard my crew. What did you say was the penalty for that Mr. Fetherston?

GEORGE: Marooned or shot.

JACK: Marooned or shot.

CORNER: Which is it to be Mr. Bonny?

BONNY: That's not so! I tried to send her away. You saw!

JEAN: Since we are not at sea we can hardly maroon him.

CORNER: (Cocking a pistol.) Shooting it is.

BONNY: Wait! I...I revealed her identity didn't I? Didn't I? Before she ever got onboard your ship!

CORNER: Settle down ye lubber. It makes me nauseous to kill ye bawling like a whelp.

JACK: Let's talk about that. You seem to have no love lost for this lady.

BONNY: The woman is willful, temperamental, unpredictable....

PATRICK: (*Mocking*) All I know, Mummy, is she's not the girl I married. (*Pirates all laugh.*)

CORNER: Why not throw her over then?

BONNY: Because if I were to divorce her I'd lose her father's fortune. Is that reason enough?

PATRICK: I'd wager that you ain't rightly in line for that fortune as it is or you wouldn't be offering to go a pirating (*All laugh again.*)

JACK: But if its money you want, I have an offer.

BONNY: What kind of offer?

JACK: Let me buy her divorce off of you.

JEAN: What?

GEORGE: Captain!

BONNY: *Buy* it?

JACK: That's right.

BONNY: (*Incredulous*) Buy a divorce?

JACK: Cash on the barrel.

BONNY: That is positively heathen!

JACK: What do you say Mr. Howell? Am I heathen?

JEAN: To say so would be an insult to heathens around the world.

GEORGE: It may be heathen in Boston, Mr. Bonny, but it's common practice here in New Providence.

JACK: I'll offer you 500 pounds.

BONNY: For a slave?

JACK: Hardly that.

BONNY: What then?

CORNER: Aye. What then?

BONNY: I'd sooner have her flogged.

JACK: I believe you would, rot you. You'd flog a wife you don't want for an adultery she didn't commit. 1000 pounds then.

BONNY: Never!

PATRICK: (*Leering*) Careful Mr. Bonny. Calico Jack may have your pretty wife either way before the day is done and one way you'll be 1000 pounds richer.

JACK: Easy Mr. Carty. You're speaking about a prudent woman.

BONNY: And you'd best keep a civil tongue when you speak to me or...

PATRICK: Easy Mistress, you frighten me.

JACK: Time enough for that later, Patrick. (*To BONNY.*) Do we have a bargain? (*The ladies all enter from upstairs beaming. ANNE looks just like you hoped she would. She is dressed in a large, plumed cocked hat beneath which a mane of hair cascades, framed by large, gold hoops. She is also bedecked in a loose fitting blouse, trousers and tall boots. A cutlass is tucked into the sash at her waist. The men are stunned.*) By the powers!

GEORGE: Think decent things, Captain.

CORNER: I'll be split and sunk.

JACK: That's a fair improvement, ladies, thank you.

ANNE: Does it suit me?

PATRICK: (*Tipping his hat.*) I reckon it suits everybody.

BONNY: (*Dragging her away jealously.*) Indecent! How dare you flaunt...

ANNE: Take your hands off me!

(She breaks away and BONNY attempts to pursue her but is headed off by JACK.)

JACK: Mr. Bonny, I can't begin to decipher what sort of man you are.

GEORGE: Aren't we supposed to be having a test to find that out?

JACK: Thank you, Mr. Fetherston, brisk for business.

NOAH: Wait! He failed his first test.

JEAN: Aye. Now it is up to the crew to decide whether he continues.

JACK: True. Very true. What'll it be lads? Do we let him go on?

ALL: (*Enthusiastic*) Aye!

JACK: Oh, Mr. Bonny, I'm afraid you've made no friends here.

BONNY: They said I could take the second test!

JACK: Oh aye. But you see, for the second test you must select a man of my crew and fight him square. It seems like *all* of the lads want a go at you.

PATRICK: That's right you two lucky devils! If you want to join our crew you have to be bloodied into it.

GEORGE: You're each to duel a member of this crew with whatever weapons you choose. The fight will go on until first blood or one of you cries halt. Understood?

ANNE: Do you mean that you would still consider me for your crew?

JACK: You look dressed like a formidable buccaneer to me, missy. Am I right lads?

PATRICK, GEORGE, NOAH & JEAN: Yea! Hurray! *Etc.*

JACK: Mr. Corner?

CORNER: *(After a moment's pause.)* I suppose that's what this here test'll find out. *(All cheer)*

JACK: That was a fair blow you gave that husband of yours. Are those hands as ready for a brawl when they're holding steel?

ANNE: Watch and find out.

JACK: Bravely spoken! Who will you fight?

(ANNE carefully looks each pirate up and down. Finding no particular weakness she picks JEAN.)

ANNE: I suspect you'll do.

JEAN: I suspect that you have found more than you bargained for.

JACK: *(Attempting to speak privately in JEAN'S ear.)* Go easy Mssr. She's only a woman.

JEAN: Are you implying a Frenchman does not know how to handle the fairer sex?

ANNE: *(Overhearing.)* I can take care of myself. Now do we duel or not?

(They each draw their swords and fight as the crew shouts and laughs out loud. At first JEAN is thrown by ANNE'S speed and precision but he rallies well and eventually gets the better of her.)

JEAN: Do you yield?

ANNE: *(After a pause.)* Yes. I.... yield.

BONNY: Ha. There's a female pirate for you!

GEORGE: So that's one passed and one failed test to the lady.

JACK: Mrs. Tisdale, could you and the ladies look after the lass here?

MRS. TISDALE: Of course Jack. Come with me Dearie. Bridget, run to the kitchen and fetch me a cold cloth. *(BRIDGET dashes out and back with a wet cloth as MRS. TISDALE leads ANNE around the bar where she and MAGGIE give her a drink and check her for wounds.)*

JACK: Now you, Bonny. Let's see if you fare any better than your wife. Who will you have?

JEAN: Careful Noah. You are the only one of the proper size to give him a fair fight. *(ALL laugh.)*

NOAH: What's fair about it? I could whip him with one hand!

PATRICK: *(Drawing his sword.)* I call to mind that you wanted satisfaction from me, me hearty. *(To JACK)* Let me take him.

JACK: Put your cutlass away, Mr. Carty, I'll not speak to you again.

GEORGE: I'll try you if you judge that you're man enough.

BONNY: And to spare.

(They fight. GEORGE fairly well drubs him but forgetting to disarm him or ask for a yield he prematurely turns his back. BONNY seeing his opportunity, viciously wounds GEORGE from behind.)

PATRICK: Damn your eyes, Bonny. That was uncalled for!

BONNY: Didn't the rules say until first blood?

CORNER: Aye but not like this. I've a mind to...

GEORGE: Enough! He's right. He had me. I shouldn't have turned my back.

BONNY: Quite right.

JACK: *(Suddenly slaps BONNY to the ground from which he glares up malevolently.)* You're opinion holds no weight here Mr. Bonny so you'd do well to hold your tongue. Mrs. Tisdale, here's one more for your tending.

MRS. TISDALE: Aye Jack. Come along George. *(She takes him to the bar where she tends to his wound.)*

JACK: Bonny, you're as bent as a boathook to be sure but I can find no fault with your swordplay. Against my better judgment I reckon I'll have to advance you to the third test. The third part of the test is simple. Each of you must walk alone to the end of the quay and then return here to the tavern. When you get back you must tell us everything you noticed, land and sea.

BONNY: What's the trick?

JEAN: Trick?

BONNY: It's too easy.

PATRICK: Not so easy as you guess I reckon.

BONNY: But we landed at that very harbor and walked through these self same streets. There's nothing out there but shops and seawater.

ANNE: *(To JACK)* Is that all then?

JACK: Enough for now lass. Now off you go. When you reach the street Bonny, you turn to starboard, Anne, you to larboard take separate streets and end on separate piers. Now go and observe what you will. *(They exit but BONNY hesitates at the door before crossing out.)*

CORNER: If that Bonny notices anything it will be the devil's own luck.

JACK: Don't be so sure, he was a clever enough swordsman. I think that one's slyer than he lets on. Mr. Howell, follow Bonny, but don't let him see you. Then come back and tell me what you see.

JEAN: Oui, Captain.

NOAH: I can follow the girl!

JACK: You'll sit tight and stay out of trouble. Patrick, you follow the girl. Look sharp now.

PATRICK: I'll stick to her like a barnacle, Jack.

JEAN: Barnacle is it? She wouldn't be the first to want to scrape off your company.

PATRICK: I've had enough of you and your...

JACK: Stow that talk and get to your duties. *(PATRICK and JEAN exit cautiously.)* I only wish those two fought the enemy as well as each other.

MAGGIE: Jack, you don't mean to let that girl actually join your crew do you?

GEORGE: What's the matter, Maggie, jealous?

MRS. TISDALE: If you ask me she's twice the man that Bonny is.

JACK: Aye and you may lay to that but this here third test will tell the rest of the tale. And now ladies, if you'll excuse us, I have a bit of business to discuss with these lads here.

MRS. TISDALE: Of course Jack.

MAGGIE: But I wanted to...

MRS. TISDALE: Never mind what you wanted missy, now come along. *(They exit into the back MAGGIE still protesting.)*

JACK: You too Mr. Harwood.

NOAH: Naw, I'll stay with you.

JACK: Maybe you thought I was asking. Now, scat.

(NOAH exits grumbling)

JACK: Now that that lot's out of our hair, Richard, you were going to tell me what you learned in town today. Since we know Governor Rogers isn't planning to honor his pardon we'd best figure out what he *is* planning.

GEORGE: He's planning something alright. We went disguised into the garrison, like you told us, and something was definitely afoot.

JACK: Were you recognized?

CORNER: They'd be lucky ones that managed that.

JACK: Good. What seemed suspect?

CORNER: It looked like they were putting a troop together.

JACK: Probably the same one Maggie saw in the street earlier. Did they ask any questions about me?

CORNER: Not as such, but one sergeant wanted to know if we knew the way to the "Trade Winds."

(All laugh.)

GEORGE: Even offered us a half a crown if we took them here.

JACK: How many men?

GEORGE: Maybe twenty.

CORNER: Well-armed but scurvy looking dogs.

JACK: What were they doing?

CORNER: Fixing to go on the march if you ask me.

JACK: So we have to add them to the ones that Maggie saw in the streets.

GEORGE: That sergeant told us that they had been offered a hundred crowns if they could bring in a certain scurvy sea dog.

JACK: And you think they mean me?

GEORGE: We weren't sure at the time but now...

JACK: But now it seems obvious.

CORNER: Who else if they're looking for the "Winds?" Mark me, Captain they mean to surprise us.

GEORGE: Richard's right Jack. King Georgie will stop at nothing to get you.

JACK: So it would appear. What about Conklin?

CORNER: That infernal swab of a soldier who was here earlier?

JACK: If they're looking for us and this here grog shop why didn't he high tail it back with some of those troops?

GEORGE: Could be it's like you said and he didn't want to have us, that bribe money and his officers all in one place where we could lay blame on him.

CORNER: If that's as may be, he's had just about enough time to stow them coins someplace and be tellin' his tale to his betters.

JACK: Or maybe he wasn't sure enough of who we were yet. Maybe he's waiting until he has more proof.

GEORGE: Do you think that's what Bonny and that girl are doing? Spying?

JACK: Could be. That's why I had them followed. I hope we're wrong lads but we must keep a careful watch all the same. (*PATRICK enters out of breath. Hearing the door open, MRS. TISDALE, MAGGIE and NOAH enter from in back.*)

PATRICK: Captain!

MRS. TISDALE: Back already? That was quick.

JACK: Where's the girl?

PATRICK: Isn't she here? I thought she must have come back before me.

GEORGE: You didn't follow her?

PATRICK: I did but I lost her.

CORNER: Lost her? How could ye lose a female dressed like that!

JACK: (*Concerned*) A fine lookout you are Patrick Carty, get out there and find her! Anything could happen to her in those streets!

PATRICK: How?

JACK: What do you mean "how"? Look for a beautiful girl in a cocked hat and men's trousers!

MRS. TILSDALE: And be careful you don't lose your own trousers this time.

JACK: Be careful you don't lose your head. We're in a tight spot. Away with you Patrick.

PATRICK: Aye, Captain. (*He exits hurriedly.*)

MRS. TISDALE: (*Knowingly.*) "Beautiful girl" Jack?

JACK: (*Rattled*) I just meant...I didn't...it's just that dressed like...

MRS. TISDALE: Never you mind Dearie.

JACK: (*To the men.*) You lads don't think that...

NOAH: Yuck!

CORNER: Uh...what we think might best be kept to the matter at hand, Cap'n.

GEORGE: That's not like Patrick to lose his quarry is it?

CORNER: No. It ain't.

JACK: Aye, Patrick's a tolerably good seaman for all his bad temper.

CORNER: That girl's safety seems of more than usual concern to ye Captain.

JACK: (*Changing the subject.*) Mrs. Tisdale I seem to have run dry here if you'll oblige me? And a pint each for the lads.

MRS. TISDALE: Is that wise Jack? With the soldiers so close?

CORNER: I'm likely to fight better with another pint in me.

JACK: Quite sure.

MRS. TISDALE: Alright then.

(She begins to exit but is interrupted by JEAN & PATRICK entering in great haste.)

JEAN: Quick, Captain, we have something to tell you...

JACK: Is Bonny with you?

JEAN: This is what I...

JACK: And what are you doing here Patrick? I sent you after the girl.

PATRICK: Never mind that now. We saw...

(BONNY enters.)

JACK: Stay a bit. (*To BONNY*) So, you're back again?

BONNY: Yes, I've returned.

JACK: You've done as you were asked?

BONNY: I tried.

JACK: Tried, eh? Go on and tell us what you saw.

JEAN: Yes. Tell him what you saw.

BONNY: This is a child's game. I saw nothing.

CORNER: Nothing?

BONNY: Nothing of note. Shops and seawater just as I thought.

GEORGE: What kind of vessels were moored at the docks?

BONNY: I'm not sure I know what you mean.

GEORGE: Were there any navy ships? Frigates? Brigantines? Ships of the line?

BONNY: Can't say there were.

NOAH: Like he could tell the difference.

CORNER: And in town?

PATRICK: Tell them if you saw any soldiers in town!

BONNY: Uh...I don't know...maybe one or two.

CORNER: How were they armed?

BONNY: How should I know? In the usual way I expect. What does it matter anyway?

JACK: Our lives may depend on it. *(Meaningfully)* And so might yours.

JEAN: Captain...

(ANNE enters from outside.)

JACK: And here's young Annie, safe and sound.

ANNE: So. Master Bonny you've arrived before me I see.

JACK: Mr. Bonny was just informing us that he saw nothing between here and the shore.

ANNE: Ha! He saw more than enough and I'd wager that it was something that might be of interest to you!

JACK: Is that so?

JEAN: It is Captain. This is what we have been trying to tell you.

PATRICK: He met a soldier.

NOAH: A soldier?

BONNY: Rubbish! Your man is imagining things.

ANNE: No such thing. I saw you too!

NOAH: Let's hang him!

BONNY: A lie!

ANNE: Would you call me a liar on top of every other wrong you've done me, James Bonny? Say it again! I dare you!

BONNY: Captain Rackam, I have had enough of this fairy tale. I've come to join your crew. I've taken your test. Am I in or not?

JACK: That bloody well depends now doesn't it? *(To ANNE)* Tell me everything.

ANNE: I had traveled scarcely a block when I found I was being followed by a seaman *(indicates PATRICK)* him there. I wasn't sure what he wanted so I gave him the slip in a thick crowd. When I was sure I was alone I made my way to the quay. There are British ships moored there! Navy ships!

JACK: What class?

ANNE: I saw at least two men o' war and a sloop. I don't think the Governor means to pardon you. I think it's a trap!

MAGGIE: Then I was right about those soldiers.

ANNE: That's not all. I couldn't help but notice that my worthless former husband never arrived at the quay so I trailed the streets I knew he must have taken and found him in alley talking to a soldier. He didn't see me so I listened in. He offered to bring them here, Captain. Sold us all out for money!

JACK: How do you answer this Mr. Bonny?

BONNY: It's a trick. This harlot's half-baked attempt to get revenge on me!

JEAN: No such thing, Jack. I saw him take leave of the soldier myself.

PATRICK: We both did.

MAGGIE: And the streets are thick with King's men!

JACK: Well then missy, it seems that you have already served me well. It's pleased I am to welcome you to this crew. *(To the crew)* So say we all?

JEAN, PATRICK, NOAH and GEORGE: Aye.

JACK: Mr. Corner?

CORNER: *(Grudgingly)* Aye.

BONNY: And what's to become of me?

JACK: You Mr. Bonny? You've come here under articles of truce to join my band only to betray us. To me that makes you a spy. Mr. Fetherston?

GEORGE: Aye.

JACK: What do we do to spies, according to the articles?

GEORGE: We hang them.

NOAH: Told you we should hang him.

BONNY: They're lies, I tell you! You can't hang me based on lies. Show me your high and noble justice of the high seas! Or is that as false as this mysterious soldier you talk about?

JACK: You'll have all the justice you can stand Bonny!

BONNY: Where is this phantom soldier? If you believe I was informing to someone, then show him to me!

JACK: Mr. Howell, did you see where this soldier went?

JEAN: He is with the rest of the troops by now, I should not wonder. Waiting for this villain to lead them to our hideaway.

JACK: Can you fetch him round?

JEAN: Not now. Not with all of those king's men everywhere.

PATRICK: If at all.

BONNY: Of course he can't! There was no such man!

ANNE: Listen to me. I didn't tell you all. After James left I made sure that the soldier saw me. I knew he would suspect I overheard and would try to stop me, so I lead him a merry chase right up the blind alley behind this tavern...

CORNER: And?

ANNE: And I imagine I'm at a match for one lone soldier.

JACK: Brave lass! Is he dead?

ANNE: Nothing like. But he's knocked out as cold as an icehouse floor. *(There is a small shriek from the kitchen)* I shouldn't wonder if that wasn't the ladies finding him now.

JACK: Mr. Fetherston? Mr. Corner? Would you be so good as to fetch aft our guest?

GEORGE & CORNER: Aye, Captain. *(They exit out the kitchen door.)*

BONNY: It couldn't be! He was right behind me.

ANNE: You speak as if there was somebody you had been talking to, James.

BONNY: Shut up! This is just another of your tricks.

(Sound of disturbance is heard offstage as GEORGE and CORNER drag in a semi-conscious CONKLIN, followed by BRIDGET, GRACE and KATHERINE.)

CORNER: Here he is, Jack.

KATHERINE: He was knocked out in the back alley!

GEORGE: Just as the lady said.

JACK: Is this just another trick then, Mr. Bonny?

GRACE: Lying there he was, cold as a mackerel.

JACK: You're a clever girl, Anne Bonny. Bring him around, George. Mrs. T would you and the ladies be so good as to bolt the door and windows? *(They move to do so as GEORGE pours some rum down CONKLIN'S throat.)*

CONKLIN: *(Sputtering and gagging.)* Enough! Enough!

CORNER: Come aboard Lieutenant.

CONKLIN: *(Looking around and realizing his situation.)* You! But how? *(Seeing BONNY for the first time.)* I told you no good would come of this James Bonny!

PATRICK: James Bonny is it? So you're old shipmates it seems!

CONKLIN: *(Still groggy)* Hardly. I just met him in the street.

JACK: To what end?

CONKLIN: He said that he could prove what I already suspected.

JACK: That I was Calico Jack.

CONKLIN: And for a share of the reward he could hand you over to me.

ANNE: Now who's the liar, James?

BONNY: Shut your mouth Conklin!

CONKLIN: Would that you had never opened yours to land me in this mess. I was for going to the Colonel but you were so sure they'd be gone by the time we were reinforced.

BONNY: Rubbish, you whey-faced lick spittle! You were as anxious as I to have that reward for yourself!

PATRICK: *(Roaring)* I've heard enough!

(All Pirates explode and shout at once)

GEORGE: Hang 'em!

CORNER: Keel haul 'em.

JEAN: Cut them up for bait!

JACK: Quiet down! All of you! You, James Bonny, sought to deceive us. You proposed to join this company just so you could betray us to your useless king! You wanted to ship out with us and go to sea. Well so you shall. From the head up on the end of a bowsprit.

MRS. TISDALE: Oh no you don't Jack Rackam! I'll not have any more blood shed in my tavern!

JACK: Right you are Mrs. T. Take him outside lads!

BONNY: May the devil take you! You cur!

JACK: In due time. *(The crew begin to hustle BONNY and CONKLIN out.)* Wait! Not the lobster-back. You. Lord Conklin.

CONKLIN: What do you want with me?

JACK: I have no quarrel with you. You're just a dupe of this turncoat and your fool king. Still, I can't have you running to your betters with news of Calico Jack's hiding place. So you've got a choice.

CONKLIN: What choice?

JACK: You can join your comrade here at the end of a yardarm or sign articles and join our crew.

CONKLIN: Are you joking? Join pirate scum? Where a commoner has as much influence as a Lord? I'd sooner die than take orders from a peasant like you Rackam!

JACK: Well, that's your answer then. Lads, take these two gentlemen out back and see to them...*(Suddenly there is a furious knocking at the door. BONNY uses the distraction to sucker punch PATRICK and draw his sword. In the meantime CONKLIN has pulled away from CORNER and runs toward the bar where BONNY severs his bonds and hands him a cutlass from over the bar.)*

SOLDIER'S VOICE: *(Offstage)* Open in the name of the King!

GEORGE: Look sharp lads!

PATRICK: Quick! Out the back!

CONKLIN: *(Blocking the exit.)* No you don't.

JACK: Make a fight of it then m'hearties!

(PATRICK, JEAN and NOAH put their backs to the door just as an outside force crashes against it. Meanwhile CORNER and GEORGE throw open the shutters and fire offstage out of the open window. Return fire and offstage voices are heard as BRIDGET, KATHERINE, GRACE, MAGGIE and MRS. TISDALE furiously reload for the embattled buccaneers. In the meantime ANNE has squared off with CONKLIN and JACK faces BONNY.)

ANNE: Come on then you coward. Or are you afraid to face a woman a second time?

(CONKLIN and ANNE commence fighting.)

JACK: So, you're to die in a stand-up fight after all, eh Bonny? Well it's more than you deserve.

BONNY: We'll see who dies and who gets what they deserve.

(BONNY and JACK join the fray. As they do so the door bursts open and several soldiers burst into the room. The pirates engage them and force them out the door. Meanwhile BONNY is knocked unconscious by JACK while ANNE is hard pressed by the furiously battling CONKLIN. Finally she is disarmed and CONKLIN stands above her triumphantly.)

CONKLIN: Ah, my beauty, who is the one afraid now?

(He moves to strike her down but the blow is interrupted by JACK'S rapier. He unceremoniously slugs CONKLIN in the face and runs him through. JACK helps ANNE to her feet and she embraces him passionately.)

CORNER: Woo the wench later, Captain! We've got them on the run!

JACK: *(Stepping away from ANNE)* Then run 'em aground lads and fight them in the open. We can't let any of them get back to the garrison with news of our whereabouts!

GEORGE: Aye Captain!

(All of the pirates exit in haste, swords and pistols at the ready)

JACK: Mrs. Tisdale. *(Indicating the bodies of CONKLIN and BONNY)* You'd do well to dump these two out back.

MRS. TISDALE: Right you are! Maggie, Bridget help me haul them to the alley with the rest of the trash. Girls, make yourselves useful.

(MAGGIE, KATHERINE, GRACE, BRIDGET and MRS. TISDALE begin to cover the body of CONKLIN with a cloth. JACK crosses to ANNE and embraces her.)

JACK: I don't know what to make of you Anne Bonny.

ANNE: Am I that difficult to understand?

JACK: Well...

ANNE: Or are you just that stupid?

JACK: Look here...

ANNE: Don't you see? That day I first saw you on the ship bound for Jamaica...

JACK: What?

BRIDGET: He *is* that stupid!

MAGGIE: You're telling me?

MRS. TISDALE: So it seems.

MAGGIE: Jack! She loves you!

MRS. TISDALE: Maggie! Mind your manners!

KATHERINE: Anyone can see it!

JACK: Loves me? *(To ANNE)* Why?

GRACE: A foolish question to ask "why!"

ANNE: Because I've seen so called noblemen all of my life...men like Conklin. They may have been noble by birth but they're cowards and villains at heart. You're the only man I've ever met that possesses *true* nobility.

JACK: Lass, you'd do better to settle down with an honest man.

ANNE: Like who? Like my father? Like my husband? Don't make the mistake that just because a man serves the crown that he's honest.

JACK: True enough.

ANNE: Besides, I've seen the look your eyes ever since you first saw me as a woman. You love me too. Deny it if you can.

JACK: I wouldn't if I could. I've never seen your equal.

(They kiss. During this scene the four fail to notice that BONNY has risen from the ground and approaches his back, cutlass raised.)

BRIDGET: Captain look out!

(ANNE pushes JACK out of the way, steps in distance and knifes BONNY in the gut.)

ANNE: And now I'm rid of you!

(BONNY falls dead just as GEORGE, PATRICK, NOAH, CORNER and JEAN enter in great haste.)

CORNER: Captain! We'd best go now. We put the fear of the devil into this lot but they'll be back afore long and more of 'em.

PATRICK: Mr. Corner is right. We can't win this.

NOAH: Sure we can! The Captain can whip 'em.

JACK: Not this time son. We're stuck on this lee shore lads. No ship or crew to man her if we had one.

GEORGE: So what'll be Jack?

JACK: The way I see it, we fight like men or we hang like dogs.

CORNER: I ain't afeard of any man alive and I don't mean to meet my fate at the end of a rope. I'll stand by you Captain.

JEAN: So will I.

PATRICK: So will we all.

NOAH: Aye.

ANNE: *(An idea dawning.)* Wait! There's another way!

JACK: How?

ANNE: Remember? When I was down at the quay I noticed a small sloop anchored there.

CORNER: By the powers that's right? With a skeleton crew we could pilot a wee ship like that!

PATRICK: At least until we reached Barbados. Then we could reman her.

JEAN: Did you see her name?

ANNE: It was called the *William*.

GEORGE: I know that vessel Jack. The lass is right. The *William* might well just be the fastest ship in the Carrabies. If we were to slip aboard her now and were able to get the wind of those men-o'-war we might just be able to outrun 'em!

JACK: I don't know...

ANNE: Jack, did you mean it when you said that you loved me?

JACK: Of course.

ANNE: Then let's not throw it away now before we even get started. Let's take this chance!

GEORGE: Captain? If we're to be going we best do it now. What will it be?

JACK: We take our chances either way and I'd just as soon do it at sea. Are ye with me lads?

ALL: *(A resounding chorus)* Aye!

JACK: All right then. Out the back door by twos, weapons ready mind you. Form up in the street and we'll go down together. *(Pirates exit except for JACK and ANNE. JACK turns to MRS. TILSDALE)* Well m'darling, it looks like I'll have to wait another turn before I can persuade you to marry me.

MRS. TISDALE: Enough of your sauce Jack Rackam! You best be on your way before half of the Army gets here.

JACK: Will you be alright?

MRS. TISDALE: A poor old widow woman overrun by cutthroats? Who could ever put that on trial? Especially when I rid myself of this wee piece of evidence. *(She hands JACK a folded flag, which he unfurls to reveal a Jolly Roger. Skull over crossed daggers.)*

JACK: *(Overcome.)* My old colors. Mrs. T, how can I...?

MRS. TISDALE: I just thought you might need it. Go on with you, now. Trouble's coming.

JACK: Maggie, be careful. Keep these girls out of trouble.

MAGGIE: Be careful your own self Calico Jack *(indicates ANNE)* you might have met your match with this one.

ANNE: Might?

MAGGIE: See what I mean? I always knew that you had a weakness for the ladies.

NOAH: *(Sticking his head in)* Time to heave away Captain!

JACK: *(To ANNE)* Are you ready?

ANNE: Now and always.

(They draw weapons and run out the back door as the lights fade to Corner.)