

## 48 Hours 121

### Chapter 121: Black Sail XXVI

Zhang Heng stood outside his house and watched the black carriage disappear into the night. He then turned around and noticed the door was secretly opened.

“Didn’t I ask you to go to sleep?”

Zhang Heng knew who was standing behind the door without even looking at it.

“Whenever I think that you went out in the middle of the night, I just can’t sleep. I need to know what is going on,” said Anne.

“Instead of peeking at me, you should help me to figure out a way to recruit more pirates to join my ship. We will set sail in two months. I will figure out a way to purchase a sloop before that. We need at least ten pirates to operate the sloop, especially a cannoneer. Do you have any potential recruits in mind so far?”

“No.”

“....”

“When I make friends with others, I prioritize their loyalty and fighting prowess more than anything else. I don’t usually ask about their background information!” Anne said proudly.

When she saw that Zhang Heng was disappointed by her answer, she immediately made him a promise.

“I will go and ask around tomorrow. I will do it.”

After a short pause, Anne took out a dagger from her back. She then put on a bashful look. It was a rare sight! This was Zhang Heng’s very first time witnessing such a feminine emotion on her. All these while, she acted more manly than some of the men he knew. Most of the time, she would walk around the house with only her bra. Sometimes, she would even hold a beer bottle and glared at whoever that walked into the house. In this era, a girl that behaved like her was extremely rare.

“About that. I want to thank you for inviting me to join your crew. I saw the dagger that you have is broken. I got this dagger from the fight that I won two days ago. I have no use of it. So... So, I have decided to give it to you. You can use it to protect yourself.”

Zhang Heng was very surprised by her gratitude. He took the dagger and did not say a single word to her. All he did was caress Anne’s messy crimson hair.

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Though Orff and the rest of the pirates could not wait to set sail again, the damage on Sea Lion was so severe that they had to hire the best carpenters to fix the entire ship. It took a total of fifteen days for them to fix it. In these fifteen days, Zhang Heng had made sure to not do something that would draw others’ attention.

Basically, he had been staying in his house for the past fifteen days. He even went ahead and utilized the empty land behind his house and planted some vegetables on it. During his time on the island, Zhang Heng had planted quite a number of vegetables and was pretty good at it.

As for Frazer, Zhang Heng did not place his trust in him fully. Though he had acted really sincere that night, Zhang Heng could see that he was getting impatient. That was his first time coming to visit Zhang Heng after so many months. It was not necessary for him to come all the way to Zhang Heng's house to show his gratitude to him.

People like Frazer and Orff were extremely cunning and they were born to be leaders. They had this certain charm where they could make use of it to complete their goal. Also, they could make you believe that everything they do, was for your own good. Underneath their kind-hearted move was actually manipulation. They would continue to use you as a tool to achieve their goal if you trust in them fully.

For example, Kidd's treasure was just a game designed by Orff. With Frazer joining the game, the whole thing would become even more dangerous. The best thing for Zhang Heng to do right was to stay calm and do nothing about it. After he was warned by Frazer, he did not go and look for the Kent, the carpenter. Instead, he did some preparations secretly.

A man that wore a wig with a lace scarf with flower designs around his neck came and looked for Zhang Heng. His name was Baal and he was a famous arms dealer in Nassau. Once he entered the house, he placed one short and one long object that were covered with tarpaulin on the table.

"This is the thing that you want. Check it," said Baal after he took the cup of tea that Marvin had handed to him.

Zhang Heng then opened the tarpaulin and saw that it was a gun. In this era that Zhang Heng was in, guns with the flintlock mechanic were dominating Europe. Actually, rifles were invented in the 15th century. However, it was not as common and famous as the flintlock gun. The reason was because it was extremely troublesome to reload a rifle. While a flintlock gun could fire three shots, a rifle could only fire one shot. And, people with weaker arms might not be able to slide a bullet into a rifle. The only good thing about the rifle was its shooting range and accuracy were far better than the flintlock gun.

All these while, Zhang Heng wanted to buy one rifle as backup. During the critical moment, his LV 2 shooting skill and the rifle might help him to solve his problem. Other than that, the arms dealer brought him three blunderbusses as well. Taking into account the one that he owned right now, he now possessed a total of four blunderbusses. In other words, he would be able to fire four times at once. All the guns in this era would require to reload after they fired once. The only way for him to increase his firepower was to buy more guns.

Zhang Heng was wearing a black jacket. He placed two blunderbusses at his waist and the other two at his gun holsters in front of his chest.

"Hmph! I have to say that you look quite good right now. I wonder how you will perform in a real fight!"

Zhang Heng ignored Anne and proceed to pay the arms dealer 140 silver peso.

Baal checked the coin bag and he was pleased that Zhang Heng paid him the right amount.

"Come and look for me if you need to buy more guns."

Seconds later, Zhang Heng heard a notification came from the system.

[You now have more than three guns. Game points +3. You can check for more information from the character panel...]

The way Zhang Heng played the game had not changed since day one. He would never go and complete those achievements on purpose. He had gained a total of seventeen game points ever since he entered this world. Eight game points were from raiding other ships. Six points were from voyaging at sea. And, the three points that he just gained were from collecting weapons. With this speed, Zhang Heng could easily collect 200 fame points by the end of the game. It might sound a lot but Zhang Heng knew that his estimation was not accurate. Usually, it was easy for the players to complete different kinds of achievement during the early game. When it came to late game, the requirement to complete those achievements would be extremely high. Technically speaking, he should be able to collect more game points than all the players. And the price that he had to pay was to stay in this world longer.

This place, Nassau would probably become part of him when this quest was over. Three days after Zhang Heng acquired his weapons, he was informed that the Sea Lion was fixed and it was ready to set sail again.

“I think everyone should know the final destination of this trip, right? I’m not going to repeat the same thing all over again,” said Orff while standing at the ship’s bow.

Everyone started to laugh after they heard Orff’s announcement.

“This time, we have a lot of new people joining us. I think it’s better for me to explain everything. I don’t care about your background and your past mistake. Once you board this ship, you are now one of us. All of you have to obey our rules. Especially during critical moment. Teamwork will allow us to overcome all kinds of difficulties that we will face in the future. If there’s someone who tries to sabotage us or do something despicable behind our back, you will become the common enemy of this ship! And, we show no mercy to our enemies!”

“Not too long ago, I’ve received news. I was told that there’s a traitor among us right now. Considering that I have fought with him in a few raids, I’m willing to offer him a chance to redeem himself. Come forward and confess your crime against the ship. If not, I can’t guarantee that the person will live to see tomorrow.”

## **Chapter 122: Black Sail XXVII**

The look on all the pirates’ changed right after Orff was done with his speech. All the new recruits that had just joined Sea Lion knew this had nothing to do with them. Besides, Orff did mention that the traitor used to fight with him on this ship. They just sat there, grabbed a bucket popcorn, and watched the drama unfold before them. On the other hand, all the old crew members were panicking.

Some of them chose not to say a single word.

Some of them berated Orff.

Some of them told Orff that he had no right to accuse others if he did not have evidence.

Everyone started to grow suspicious of each other. After Orff made the announcement, he did not say a single word after that. He started to look at everyone on the deck. When his gaze fixed on Zhang Heng, he felt that Orff had stared at him at least two seconds longer than the others.

“Unfortunately, the traitor doesn’t have the courage to admit his mistake. I think I have to give him a hand,” said Orff.

He then started to walk towards Zhang Heng while taking out his gun. Immediately, everyone landed their attention on him. At that moment, there were a lot of things went through Zhang Heng’s mind. One of his hands was holding his Shadow Moment in his pocket.

“Excuse me. Mind letting me through?” Orff said while standing in front of Zhang Heng.

“Orff, you are abusing your power! You are trying to make me pay back for challenging you, right? Are you guys going to just stand there and let him accuse me? He would do the same thing to you if you allow him to do such a thing to me! In the end, he can whatever he wants on this ship!”

The thing that Goodwin had just said managed to make everyone rethink the whole thing. Some of the pirates started to look at Orff in suspicion. Fighting for power was a very common thing on a pirate ship. However, it was rare that the winner would kill the loser. If Orff killed him, all the other pirates on the ship would feel that it was not safe for them to stay on the ship. That was why the winner would usually try his best to deal with the situation as peaceful as possible. It seemed like Orff held a huge grudge against Goodwin. That would mean the whole thing might turn ugly. As for now, Orff was saved from being attacked by the pirates on the ship because he was holding the map to locate Kidd’s treasure. Once the pirates on the ship had their eyes laid on the treasure, they would not hesitate to dethrone Orff. The thing that Goodwin said to the pirates had made them wanted to disobey Orff.

“If I’m not mistaken, you were the first batch of people that left the ship and went to Nassau, right? One hour later, almost everyone on the island knew that we are looking for Kidd’s treasure. Please don’t tell me that is just a coincidence,” said Orff in a calmed manner.

Goodwin had gone through a lot of hardship throughout his life. He was not panicked when Orff confronted him.

“There were around twenty people from the first batch of people that got down from the ship. How sure are you that I’m the one that leaked the news?”

“I asked Owen to interview everyone after that. Every single one of them could provide me with an alibi except you. You told us that you went and take a nap after you got down from the ship. Unfortunately, you have no eyewitnesses to support your claim.”

“What? I need eyewitnesses to prove that I was sleeping?!”

“Of course not. The thing is someone saw you come out from Marshall’s house. How do you explain that? Some of you might now know who Marshall is. He is the biggest loan shark in Nassau. The way he collects debt from people that owe him money is absolutely terrifying.”

Orff then took a good at Goodwin again. His forehead was dripping with sweat.

“While you were plotting to take my place, I know that you have used a lot of money to bribe quite a number of people. I’m really curious. Where did you get that money? You need to pay a huge price if you borrow money from Marshall. No wonder you looked so disappointed when you lost to me. The news of you failing to become a helmsman on Sea Lion was spread to everyone on the island the moment you got down from the ship, right? You had no money to return to Marshall when he came knocking at your door. That’s why you told Marshall about Kidd’s treasure. Am I right?”

Goodwin was sweating all over now. At this moment, he decided to make his last struggle by telling everyone that Orff was falsely accusing him. But, his words were not as trustworthy anymore. Goodwin had to admit that he borrowed money from Marshall. He told everyone that the reason why he went and looked for Marshall was because he wanted to ask Marshall to give him more time to come up with the money that he owed him. He denied the fact that he sold the treasure map news to Marshall and he told everyone that he would never betray Sea Lion. It was too late for him to defend himself. The pirates that had stood beside him started to distance themselves from him. Despair had finally hit Goodwin.

Suddenly, he started to run towards the gunwale. The Sea Lion had just left Nassau’s harbor. He could swim back to the harbor if he managed to jump into the water right now. Before he could do so, Orff pulled the trigger. The bullet was planted deep inside Goodwin’s calf. Immediately, all the pirates jumped at him and pressed him to the ground.

“Killing him right now is no different from showing him mercy. I think we should tie him up at the mast and let the heat from the sun torture him,” said Orff.

“Orff, you are one lying motherf\*cker! Someday, you will be damned to hell!!! I will wait for you there...”

He wanted to say more but his mouth was sealed by the pirates around him. The new pirates that had just joined Sea Lion used a rope to tie him up on the mast. It seemed like they had no intention of treating his gun wound.

“All those that know me know that I’m not a violent person. I don’t like to punish or torture people. However, it is my job to make sure that everyone’s yield is protected. I also have to try my best to make sure that you get to return to Nassau in one piece. I’m not punishing Mr. Goodwin out of a personal grudge. I want to set him as an example. If you dare to betray this ship and your friends, I will make sure that you end up like him. Let’s continue the journey looking for Kidd’s treasure. ”

After that, Orff swung his hands to signal all the pirates on board to return to their position. When Zhang Heng was checking on the Starboard, Orff walked towards him.

“Is everything okay?”

“All is well.”

“That’s good. Rothko thinks very highly of you. He told me that you will become the best boatswain if you are given enough time to gain the experience that you need. Earlier, when everyone voted for boatswain, your vote count and old Michael’s vote count were really close. Don’t be disappointed by it. Just work harder. Sooner or later, you will get the position.”

## **Chapter 123: Ambush**

On the boundless blue sea, the Royal Scarborough patrolled its territory like a lion.

This second-class battleship belonging to the British Navy had a displacement of 2,000 tons with 90 cannons and nearly 700 sailors—the giant of the Caribbean Sea.

Every now and then, the Scarborough would in accordance with the orders of the Admiralty, go out on scheduled patrol to maintain the order of the nearby maritime trade routes. Pirates passing by this area would flee. In fact, just hearing the name Scarborough was enough to send unnerve even the most powerful pirate.

Whence, whenever the Scarborough left the port, she would rarely be involved in any battle—unless you count one-sided attacks where the enemy fled hell for leather.

At the moment, Captain Elmer was sitting on deck, enjoying his wine and a violin performance. He was only starting to immerse himself in the music when someone suddenly interrupted him. The lookout shouted from above, “An armed merchant ship is spotted in the southwest direction!”

Elmer’s brows furrowed, the expression on his face unpleasant.

The first lieutenant quickly marched to the side of the ship and took the copper telescope that was handed to him. After a while, he said, “The flag on the mast is French, very deep draught, traveling at around three knots. They must be carrying a lot of cargo.”

Captain Elmer finally put down the glass in his hand and strolled over.

During this time, the War of the Spanish Succession was taking place. In order to prevent the Bourbon kings from annexing Spain, the new Grand Alliance, which included the United Kingdom, united against France and its allies, and the two sides were in a state of war.

The French merchant ship could only blame its terrible luck to have crossed the Scarborough’s path.

Elmer looked at the sailors on the deck below, and saw their eyes were filled with anticipation.

The captain broke into a smile and said, “If this is a gift from God to us, how can we refuse it?”

The sailors cheered. If they wait until their wages were paid, they would have starved to death. The one thing that motivated them to go out into the sea was extracurricular plunders like this. Even if most of it would end up in Elmer’s and the navy marshal’s pockets, they were satisfied just to be able to drink a little bit of soup. The sailors were already used to it.

With the captain’s permission, the Scarborough began to change its course towards the ‘unfortunate’ ship. The gun port’s lid was opened, revealing the dense rows of black cannon muzzles inside, like a shark flashing its razor teeth.

Although war was about to begin, the atmosphere on the deck was unusually relaxed. The violinist who was performing continued to play his instrument.

The disparity of firepower between the two parties cannot be starker. Had they met each other face to face, the other side would have quickly surrendered and handed their cargo over, so that if Elmer was in a good mood, he might just spare the lives of everyone on the ship.

The sailors of the Scarborough were rejoicing at the prospect of the extra income. Only one officer on board appeared to be slightly uneasy. He said to Elmer, "Captain, isn't it a little too simple? Our route is not so much a secret—why would a French merchant ship show up now?"

Before he received an answer, his colleague interrupted, "When there's absolute power, no conspiracy can take effect. Relax, Burnett, we are on the Scarborough; here in the sea, we are invincible."

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The atmosphere in the Sea Lion was completely unlike the one in Scarborough—the pirates were unusually mum because they were about to face the fiercest battle in their lives.

It had been half a month since they left Nassau. Thanks to Goodwin's betrayal, Orff's standing on the ship had skyrocketed. Right now, even if there was someone who was dissatisfied with him, they dared not reveal it.

Yet, it was in this particular circumstance that when Orff announced that the fifth piece of the map required them strike the Scarborough, even the most zealous treasure-hunting pirates found it hard to continue to stand by the helmsman.

Because this had nothing to do with courage at all. It was just complete madness.

All the pirates in the Caribbean knew that the Scarborough was untouchable, and although there was no official ban, all piracy activity would make sure to steer clear of the navy. That attack on the navy's supply ship earlier was already a very risky move. Moreover, the Sea Lion paid a very heavy price for it.

For the sake of Kidd's treasure, and because the supply ship's firepower was almost the same as that of the Sea Lion, the crew had reluctantly accepted the decision. As long as the command was expedient, it was possible to win the battle heroically. The Scarborough on the other hand... That was an entirely different topic.

The most experienced gunner was the first to speak up, "The Scarborough has three times the number of cannons we do and are way more powerful. They also have a longer range than we do. We cannot fight this battle. Needless to say, our ship's hull is not as sturdy as the warship's. One volley of firing and we'll fall to pieces. Mr. Orff, I've always believed in your leadership abilities, but this time, I really have to voice my opposition, because this is going to get all of us killed."

The majority of the other pirates backed him up.

Orff had to raise his voice to be heard, "Gentlemen, I completely agree with what you're saying. We are indeed at a disadvantage in terms of firepower. If we were to fight them head on, we really wouldn't stand a chance at all, which is why our only option is to connect the bridge."

"Connect the bridge? I know that we have recruited some really good hands, but even if we include the cook, the doctor—the technical staff—at most, we have only 173 men. How are we supposed to fight 7000 people? Besides, the most alarming thing is the Scarborough's firepower. I'm afraid we'd sink before we could even draw close to her." Owen, too, raised his concern.

"Yes, you are all right. That would be exactly the case under normal circumstances." Orff paused for a moment before continuing, "Except we don't have to go to the Scarborough—she will come to us."

“How is that possible?”

“That’s impossible, of course, if we raise our black flag. Once the Scarborough finds out that we’re pirates, they would definitely fire their cannons at us. But if we let them think that we are just a cargo ship, the whole situation would be completely different. No one would rob a boat of chinaware, right?”

Orff pushed everything off the table and spread the map of the ocean on top of it. “Back on the island, I heard that a Dutch ship was carrying porcelain and is on its way to selling them at New York. We’ll take the ship halfway there and then move the porcelain to our ship. Then we’ll raise the French flag and wait at Scarborough’s route.”

## **Chapter 124: Ambush II**

“Is this why you wanted me to recruit ten French-speaking men back on the island?”

“Yes. We will keep thirty men on deck, pretending to be sailors of a merchant ship. Mm, try to pick those who don’t look aggressive and appear thinner and weaker. The rest will wait in the secret mezzanine. Oh, right, the cannons. We have too many cannons on board, get rid of half of them.”

“Are you serious? Keep only sixteen cannons to battle against the most powerful English warship on the Caribbean?”

“Trust me, it wouldn’t make a difference even if we had thirty-two cannons—not when you’re up against the Scarborough.” Orff shrugged. He glanced around and asked, “Anymore questions?”

“Even if we do as you say and are lucky enough to be able to trick the people on the Scarborough into believing that we are a French merchant ship, and successfully connect the bridge, we are still at a disadvantage in terms of manpower.” Zhang Heng who had been quiet all along also spoke up.

“Good question. We all know that there are 700 men on the Scarborough. But the number is actually pretty diluted. Captain Elmer is of noble birth and lives in luxury. This is true even on the Scarborough. He spends his money on musicians, private chefs, and stewards... all kinds of people to ease his boredom, people who are not equipped to fight. Then there’s also the logistics on board. The actual number should be only around 600 men.”

“Like you said, I don’t see how 600 people is any different from 700,” Owen said.

“I’m not done yet. The situation in Marbella is very tense. At the beginning of this year, the navy hired a group of experienced sailors from the New World. Right now, about two-thirds of the Scarborough are new recruits. Most of them are fishermen and farmers from the colony who had undergone only two months of training. Their combat skills are average. As long as we stun them with our first attack, they will very likely break ranks after that. So, our real enemy is only the 200 veterans; everyone on this are real men. One-on-one, I don’t believe that you will lose to anyone.”

Orff’s last comment successfully stirred the crew, but only a few of them responded.

That was mainly because of the Scarborough’s reputation. She had always been every Caribbean pirate’s nightmare. Just the thought of challenging this behemoth extinguished whatever morale that was roused.



Orff clapped his hands. “Gentlemen, I know what you’re worried about. I’ve already said since the beginning—this is not going to be an easy journey. The treasure will not come looking for us. There is no doubt that on this voyage, we will go through trials, face challenges, but as long as we work together...”

Owen could not help but interrupt him. “Challenging the Scarborough is not just any kind of trial. This is too dangerous. Even if nothing goes wrong, we don’t know if we’ll really be able to take her. You said that we have to keep the treasure map a secret, and for so long we’ve been obeying your instructions unquestioningly. I’m afraid not this time. If you want us to agree to this, at least tell us why we should do it.”

Owen’s resonated with the other pirates.

When Orff saw that that was the general opinion, he nodded. “Alright. Since we’re so near to the target already, I should tell you guys that I’ve received confirmation that the fifth piece of the map is in the hands of Bellomonte.”

“Bellomonte? The earl of New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire?”

At first, some of the pirates did not understand what the name meant. But when they heard this question, they inhaled sharply. If there was a list of the most powerful people in the New World, then Belmonte would be among the top few. It was nearly impossible to take the treasure map from a man of such standing.

“Yes. He was also the one who sent Kidd to the gallows. After Kidd’s death, a large portion of the relics fell into Belmonte’s hands—not just the fifth piece of the treasure map, but also the clues related to the sixth piece of the map.” Then Orff threw out the final card. “What’s more, his net worth is no less than a piece of treasure. If we manage to capture him, we could, at the very least, get 400,000 pounds for his ransom.”

The number had everyone holding their breaths. Kidd’s treasure was still far away, but the ransom money was right before their eyes.

But it was Orff’s final statement that really played a decisive role. “Belmonte will leave his territory after a month and a half and go to Charleston to attend his youngest daughter’s wedding. That is our best chance. After we take the Scarborough, we can seal off the Port of Charleston and go ashore to capture our man.”

...

“I must have lost my mind when I voted in favor.” Marvin’s hand trembled as he picked up the potato peeler. “We’re dead, right? Scarborough’s cannons will rip us to shreds, or the sailors would rush aboard and slaughter all of us. My god, I should’ve listened to you and voted against.”

“It’s useless. Even if you vote against it, they would still carry out the operation.” Zhang Heng said, holding a spoon and as calm as ever. If he could decide the direction of things, he would not have chosen this. Orff was the one who wore the pants on Sea Lion. Even though he had voted against, other than Marvin, he did not try to dissuade anyone else.

Now that things had gotten to this point, there was no use complaining. The only way out of this was to take down the entire the Scarborough together.

Since Zhang Heng's and Marvin's 'less menacing face', they were chosen to be part of the group acting as the crew of the merchant ship. They were now the cooks of the 'French merchant ship'.

Zhang Heng took off his black clothes and handed all the weapons he had on him to the ambush group for safekeeping in the mezzanine. But as insurance, he kept a dagger in case he needed to defend himself; and that dagger was hidden under the pile of potato skins by Marvin's feet.

After a while, they heard footsteps approaching the door. It was the record keeper Griffin coming down from the deck. "The Scarborough has taken the bait. They are approaching. Mr. Orff asked me to inform you to get ready. Don't give anything away."

Clearly, the poor man had not done anything like this before. He was so nervous he was stuttering a little. But given the circumstance, that they are about to encounter the British warship, it was expected.

### **Chapter 125: Where Have I Seen Him Before?**

The Scarborough opened fire once as a warning, and the French merchant ship compliantly slowed down until it came to a stop.

Seeing how courteous the French merchants were, Elmer's mood improved, and he returned to the table and tied a napkin around his neck.

The chief officer directed the Scarborough to draw near the side of the Sea Lion, and the officer who had spoken up earlier said, "Sir, we should have our gunners on standby and send someone to assess the situation first."

The chief officer frowned. He was not some rookie who had never been out on the sea before; of course, he knew what he had to do. It irked him to have a subordinate exhorting him and giving him directions. Had it not been because of Burnett's lineage, he would have flipped already. It was really no wonder why this man was ostracized by his colleagues.

"Do your own job, Burnett." The chief officer warned. He had originally wanted to instruct the gunners to wait for orders but he felt terrible after being instructed by his subordinate.; however, having been in the navy for so many years, he managed to overcome his emotions with logical reasoning, and issued orders in an orderly manner according to plan.

Burnett stood aside, unspeaking but with his chest forward and head raised as if he had just won a major battle.

He just wanted to chop him into pieces right now. Fortunately, the first team of 24 men were boarding the French merchant ship, and helped distract his attention.

The captain of the merchant ship was a French man with slightly curly hair. Standing with him, ill at ease, on the deck were his sailors. Obviously, he understood what it meant to encounter the Scarborough. In the face of such overwhelming firepower, even if he was unwilling, he still had to hand over the ship's inventory.

The officer in charge pointed his musket at the men on the deck who had surrendered, then sent a few subordinates to search the storage room. After a while, Zhang Heng and Marvin were being led up the deck from the kitchen.

The latter's legs trembled, especially when he saw on the giant warship with its galore of cannons and the mass of men's silhouettes; he was instantly filled with despair.

His frightened appearance amused the British sailors—some of them whistled and the others sneered. Only one man frowned at the sight of him.

"What's wrong, Lanny?"

"I don't know. It's just that this guy looks very familiar. I can't seem to figure out where I've seen him before," said the sailor named Lanny.

"Now that you mention it, he does look familiar..." The other guy agreed.

The air on the deck was suddenly very tense.

But suddenly the other guy continued, "He looks a little like your wife. Aw... Poor little Lanny. Can't wait to let it out already, huh? Maybe our tubby friend here won't mind."

"Go \*bleep\* yourself, Stephen!"

This little interruption loosened the tension and things were back to the relaxed and jovial state. The task was easy and no one paid too much attention to it. After a while, the people who went down to search the cargo returned.

"All clear. It's all porcelain crockery down there. They look pretty good. We're going to earn good money this time, guys!"

The English sailors looked ecstatic.

The officer in charge nodded. "Keep an eye on these men. I'll go report to the chief officer and the captain."

He returned immediately, with the inventory, to the Scarborough. A few minutes later, the sailors on the Scarborough were mobilized.

In order to facilitate the moving process, the chief officer ordered for more gangplanks to be laid. About sixty new recruits tasked to move the porcelain crockery put down their weapons and got to work.

When the pirates hiding in the mezzanine heard footsteps above them, they gulped nervously. So far, the plan was going better than they imagined. They were almost halfway there. For Sea Lion and Scarborough to successfully connect, they just had to wait for the group of unarmed British sailors to board their ship, and then attack.

But they were growing even more anxious by the minute, fearful that some accident on the deck might reveal the secrets underneath—their whole plan would be ruined.

Only one among them was an exception. He sat in the corner with his eyes closed as if he was asleep. His huge body was like a mountain in the dark; his black beard rising and falling as he breathed. It was

very crowded in the mezzanine, they were practically squashed against each other, yet no one stood within a foot from him. Most people who chose the life of a pirate were unruly but whenever they were in the same room with him, they would all turn into well-behaved little kittens.

The crew looked at him in awe as if they were looking at a lord demon.

The plan to attack the Scarborough was a dangerous one. Even if the success rate of Orff's plan was 50/50, the majority of the crew had voted for it. Apart from the allure of money and treasure, the man before them also had a big part in it—the only thing that could vanquish fear was another kind of fear.

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One by one, the sailors of the Scarborough jumped onto the Sea Lion, eagerly entering the storage room. The men in charge of watching Zhang Heng and the others were also in repose. Only the one called Lanny kept his eyes glued on Marvin, wearing a contemplative look on his face.

The farmer's son was very troubled. Other than his own father, he knew no one else in the New World, and was captured by pirates on his way there. He was certain that he had never met the bloke before, and could not understand why that Scarborough sailor would not stop staring at him. Marvin could not help but wonder if he really did resemble the man's wife.

Just as the other British sailors were discussing amongst themselves about where they would go after they got the money, the Lanny guy suddenly shouted, "I know—they are pirates!"

Lanny quickly raised his musket and pointed at Marvin.

Marvin was both horrified and disconcerted. What had he done to give the game away? In fact, he was not the only one. Lanny's associates were just as flabbergasted. Instead of raising their weapons, they asked Lanny, "Are you out of your mind?!"

Lanny quickly answered, "I remember where I saw him now! I saw a sketch of him at the port! About ten months ago, a merchant ship was robbed by pirates. They killed the captain and most of the sailors on the ship. They only gave the remaining passengers a small boat, a bucket and a little food. Fortunately, the survivors were later rescued by a passing ship. According to them, four of the people on board joined the pirate—one of them is this fatty. His features stood out the most which is why I remember him very clearly. Oh, they also mentioned that there was an oriental. He's probably the one next to the fatty."

## **Chapter 126: Fierce Battle**

As Lanny was speaking, Marvin's forehead began to sweat, and by the time Lanny finished his explanation, the farmer's son was as white as a sheet.

He never expected that to be a problem. No matter how he looked at it, the chances of the people on the tiny boat surviving were marginal—it was because of that that he chose to join the pirates, and became a cook on the Sea Lion in exchange for a chance to survive.

Who would have thought that they would miraculously be rescued? Had he known, he would have stayed on the boat, and would probably be basking in the sun on his farmer's farm.

Worse still, the survival of those people brought on a whole series of trouble. The account of the four joining the pirates was circulated, and thus, destroyed all possibility of the four of them ever returning to the civilized world. Unless they were pardoned by the queen, they would forever be identified as pirates.

Of course, these were all things they had to worry about in the future. Right now, there was a more urgent, more terrible thing awaiting him.

Once Lanny was done speaking, the sailors guarding the 'merchants' sobered up. They raised their weapons and the whole atmosphere quickly turned hostile.

Someone pulled the trigger—no one knew who. At the loud bang of the gunshot, Marvin's heart contracted and his mind went blank. He thought that he was going to be dead for sure this time, but when he opened his eyes, there was no wound on his body.

Rather, it was Lanny, the sailor who exposed him who gawked at the bloodstain on his chest with a look of disbelief.

The beast had awakened from its sleep.

No one knew when, but the man with the black beard opened his eyes fierce as a lion, his entire person exuding a formidable force. He withdrew the still smoking gun and said in an unusually low voice, "The war has begun. Let's go hunt together!"

The guards on the deck could hardly believe what had just happened. They had taken control of the entire boat and confiscated all of the weapons found on the crew. Where did this bullet come from?

It was not until two seconds later that someone realized what was happening. But it was too late. The deck under their feet suddenly opened up and a few sailors standing on it fell down into the hole. Before they even hit the ground, their throats were slit. Then a cluster after another of pirates, armed to the teeth, appeared from under the deck. The heads of the rest of the sailors were chopped off before they could even pivot their gun's muzzle.

Because of the unexpected Marvin accident, the battle started half a minute earlier.

Most of the unarmed sailors who were transferring the porcelain crockery were already on board the Sea Lion. Only about ten of them were still standing on the deck. Upon realizing that something went wrong, they immediately fled back to the Scarborough.

The others, however, were not as lucky. The twenty over armed British officers were the first to be killed. All of them were either injured or terminated during that one confrontation.

After Owen took down a British sailor, he returned Zhang Heng's clothes and weapon to Zhang Heng. The other pirates had ignited the hand grenades; the ones used in the 17th and 18th century was very different from the one in the modern-day. They were shaped like pomegranates, which was also where its name was derived from. During that time, the grenades were basically an iron shell filled with gunpowder-filled lead pellets or metal pieces, and could cause serious damage when thrown into a crowd. The sailors on Scarborough wanted to crossover to help, but were severely wounded by the explosion.

Some of the new recruits who were fleeing panicked, and in a split moment of terror, pushed and shoved each other as they were crossing the gangplank so that the unlucky ones fell into the water.

The gunner on Scarborough asked the chief officer, "Sir, should we fire? We can sink the entire ship in a matter of minutes."

However, the latter appeared to be somewhat hesitant. For the most part, he was thinking about the china on the other ship. But before he could open his mouth to speak, Burnett who was next to him beat him to it. "No! Our men have not returned! How can we shoot now?! If we do that, how can you expect these people to fight for us in the future?"

His argument was not unreasonable. Already, they had a big problem with the rock-bottom morale of the sailors because the Admiralty owed them their wages. Scarborough was no exception to this matter. If they had fired at the 'merchant ship', while only a small portion of their men were sacrificed, the real damage would be the breach of trust with the remaining crew.

More importantly, there were over six hundred men on the Scarborough. They were at an advantage in terms of numbers, and although the pirates had launched a wave of sneak attack, the damage they suffered was not really that severe. Should a battle really take place, there was no way Scarborough would lose.

However, as a result of his hesitation, the pirates had breached their ship.

Today, Elmer the captain, also experienced embarrassment like never before. Despite the fact that he was unharmed, he was so startled by the sound of the explosion that he spilled the red wine all over his uniform. By the time he came around, he was blind with rage. As he reached down to pull out his saber, he spat, "What the hell are you still doing standing there? Go and get rid of those lawless pirates and bring back all our porcelain!"

Since the captain had spoken, no one protested. The chief officer immediately dispatched a gunner to counter the enemy's attack. But the pirates were more cunning than they expected. And even instead of killing the sailors who boarded the ship, they were mixed among them rushed together. Instead of slaughtering all of the sailors on the ship, they stood among the sailors, using them as shields.

The gunner spent an awfully long time aiming without even an opportunity to open fire. Not after, their enemy and his own men were right before him—and that was when the difference between a rookie and an old timer was significantly evident.

Under tremendous pressure, a rookie would panic and randomly fire so that the bullets were everywhere; most of it would end up nowhere while a small portion would hit his own men, and the pirates would be barely harmed.

The man with the black beard took the lead, beheading a sailor in front of him, then using the body as a shield as he made his way to the musketeers. With incredible speed, he pulled out the saber at his waist and plunged it into the chest of his enemy. The tip of the knife protruded from the back of the poor musketeer. He twisted the blade twice and blood came spewing out of the sailor's mouth onto his clothes. Now he really looked like the king of hell.

Those nearby who witnessed the whole scene were so terror-stricken that they ran for their lives.

This time, it was a battle of life and death. Zhang Heng did not hold back as he swung his saber at the incoming enemies; his movements, unlike the bearded man's, were much nimbler and more graceful. His previous attempt to integrate karate into his sword fights and was finally seeing some success. He focused on sidestepping his enemy's attack, and when the right opportunity presented itself, disarm the enemy. But just as the tip of his saber was about to slit his target's throat, someone drew a knife at him.

"Your opponent is me," Burnett said, his voice thick with confidence. He was very sure of his sword skills—back in London, through his family's connections, he had studied under numerous prestigious mentors, and was convinced that no one would be able to beat him.

Zhang Heng took one look at the sailor from the corner of his eyes, pulled out the pistol at his waist and pulled the trigger, unhesitating.

### **Chapter 127: Compromise**

Even after he had taken care of the young officer whose name he did not know, Zhang Heng did not have to relax, because almost immediately after, two other men came charging at him. He only had time to take a few breaths before having to jump into the fight again.

The pirates' first wave of attack was very fierce. They followed the group of scattered British sailors onto the Scarborough so that the ninety cannons of the Scarborough were completely useless. Soon, however, they were left in a bitter fight.

No matter how you put it, there were nearly 700 men on the Scarborough, whereas the pirates only had less than 200 men. Because they were so short-handed, even Marvin, a cook, had to participate in the battle. Marvin, still trembling, armed with a boarding axe, and charged with the group of pirates. But only halfway forward, he was already regretting it. Bullets were flying everywhere, and there was smoke all around him. The cries of pain, and the bodies sprawled all over the floor, the gushing blood—it was all a torture to his mind.

He wanted to turn around and bolt but there were people all everywhere. He was so overwhelmed with fear that his mind froze. By the time he snapped back to reality, he was already standing on the deck of the Scarborough. Once on the ship, the pirates around him dispersed, searching for a prey. A moment after, something grabbed his leg and when he looked down, the farmer's son realized that the hand belonged to a British sailor with a bullet in his chest. The man's hand was covered in his own blood, and he was muttering something. Marvin fell to the ground, his boarding axe landed right next to him. He rolled and crawled to escape the hand; the only thought in his mind was to escape this purgatory.

All around him people were fighting. Less than five feet away from him, a pirate who was shot six times, refused to go down. He waved the cutlass in his hand, an angry determination in his eyes, until someone stabbed him in the abdomen. On the other side, an overwrought attempting to reload his gun had his hand cut off as he was reaching for the gunpower.

Marvin could not look anymore. He lowered his head and continued to move on his hands and knees. He had only crawled a few steps when a hand grabbed him by the throat and lifted him off the ground. It was an extremely Herculean sailor. From the bloodstains on his uniform, Marvin could tell that he had

fought pretty well today. The sailor looked up and grinned at the Marvin who was desperately trying to kick his way out with his short, chubby legs.

The sailor pointed his saber at Marvin's back, ready to go for the kill when blood suddenly exploded from his forehead. His towering body swayed and then finally dropped to the ground with a loud thud, motionless.

Zhang Heng withdrew his pistol. He had just gotten rid of two enemies when he turned around and saw that Marvin was in trouble. He rescued the farmer's son, and then quickly moved on to another side.

The pirates had the absolute upper hand in the first round of melee combat. The musketeers had barely performed their duties when the enemies rushed in and slaughtered them. The new recruits' performance was especially terrible. They held the fort for only a while and already they began to flee, breaking the formation.

Of course, the pirates took this opportunity to advance and butcher the enemy. In five minutes, the navy had suffered over a hundred casualties. But Zhang Heng knew that this was just a veneer. With Scarborough's number, once they were able to secure their positions, it was only a matter of time before the pirates were defeated.

Winning this uphill battle was going to be very difficult. The only way to do it was to kill the commander of the ship.

The morale of low-level sailors, especially the new recruits, were very unstable. Without someone directing them, they would easily crumble in the face of death.

The person who shared Zhang Heng's view was the man with a black beard, who also happened to be the pirate who terrified the British sailors the most. The way he fought them, one too many, throwing himself into the enemy cluster to slaughter them, spilling blood everywhere. Most impressive yet, all that killing did not seem to tire him at all. Later on, before he even made move, the sailors would flee at the sight of him. Many of them were so petrified by his violent demeanor that they abandoned their weapons and ran for their lives.

Both Zhang Heng and Black Beard had their eyes on Elmer who was standing not far away, urging his men to bring him his saber. When the captain saw how bad the situation was, he said no more about rushing into the battle to fight the enemy but began to survey his surroundings, looking for a way to retreat to the level below and give up the deck.

However, that would be an embarrassing to say aloud, and he had not made up his mind.

The chief officer next to him who had been his partner for so long knew what he was thinking, of course. Elmer was hoping that the chief officer would take the initiative to make the proposal so that he could then reluctantly agree to the plan. Frankly, the chief officer was just as shocked by the pirate's performance. But, he was an experienced old man in Admiralty who had participated in the Battle of Vigo Bay and had fought hand-to-hand against the French—he was not going to be that easily frightened by a bunch of ferocious pirates.

To him, even though the current situation did not look good for them, it was not exactly detrimental. He had already sent some men down to deploy the staff. They just had to hold out for a little while longer



until the fresh troop comes. Conversely, if they were to lose the deck before that, it was not going to be easy to get it back.

In the end, he decided to say nothing.

Next to him, Elmer was growing increasingly anxious. When he saw pirates coming in their direction, he gave up saving his face, and said, "I have to admit that we really underestimated the barbarians this time. We have a lot of casualties—we cannot continue like that. Does anyone have any ideas?"

He said this while looking at the chief officer next to him. The latter felt bitter inside but since the captain had spoken, he could not remain silent.

This Lord Elmer before him might not be best person for his current position, and was lavish in his lifestyle. He was born of a distinguished family, and had good connections and resources. He was promoted quickly in the navy and was married to an even more powerful wife who was said to have friendly relations with many powerful people—it would be no better to offend him than to be killed by a pirate.

The chief mate weighed his options and decided that to compromise. "The situation is unfavorable to us. We need more manpower. We need someone down there to regulate the navy..."

Before he could even finish speaking, Elmer interrupted him. "You're right. Let's not delay the matter. I'll go down. You hold down the fort. I'll bring come back with reinforcements as soon as possible."

With that, he hurried to the gangway with a team escorting him. Just as that was happening, a group of pirates came running towards them. Fortunately, the officers guarding Elmer were very experienced sailors. They reacted quickly, raised their guns and perforated the bodies of the two pirates in the front of the group with bullets. But it was during this delay that the most vicious killer caught up with Elmer and his men.

### **Chapter 128: Put Down Your Weapons!**

This time, Elmer was really panicking—especially when after that man with a black beard killed his two escorts, he cut off one of their heads. The blood-filled ball of flesh rolled up to Elmer's feet. The Lord Elmer who had lived like a prince his whole life nearly threw up at the sight of the decapitated head. His remaining escorts, on the other hand, were beside themselves.

Fortunately, the chief officer who immediately worked out the pirates were intent, responded quickly by sending a team of sailors to help. At the same time, the people on the lower level finally climbed up the gangplank.

All at once, several sabers were pointed at the bearded man. Although Black Beard was bold and fierce, he was still human. In a circumstance as such, he could only carry on the fight while beating a retreat.

The pirates had finally reached the most precarious juncture of the battle. If they let Elmer retreat to the second level, then their hope of ever winning this battle would be very slim. By this time, everyone was boosted with adrenaline shots—not just the navy, even the pirates came to support their allies. They somehow managed to force the enemies to retreat by fighting fiercely.

Both sides engaged in a fierce battle to complete for the gangway exit. The bearded man took advantage of this opportunity, turning his attention Elmer who was standing on the other side, and led his men to push their forward a few times. In the end, however, the attempts were unsuccessful and he had more wounds added to his body.

When the British sailor realized that the frightening figure was not invulnerable, their morale soared. The pirates guarding the exit of the ramp were taking on more and more damage.

The scales were tipping.

Zhang Heng used the last short musket on the enemy in front of him, and then took out the rifle gun from the oilcloth. Initially, he aimed his weapon at Elmer. From what he had observed since the beginning this guy was the captain of the ship. But just as he was about to pull the trigger, he hesitated.

The situation they were in right now was not exactly what they had expected. Although Elmer was the highest-ranking person on the Scarborough, the person who had been directing the battle all the while was the chief officer on board. Getting rid of Elmer now might not mean that he had eliminated the head of the snake. The chief officer would take over the command of the battle and that was clearly not an ending that Zhang Heng wanted.

There was not much time left for him to think. His comrades could very well lose their position at the ramp. In the shortest time available to him, Zhang Heng made a decision and shifted the muzzle.

At first, the chief officer was also under protection. But when Elmer was in danger, he had to send nearly all of his armed men over to help, leaving himself with only three men. When he saw that Elmer was safe for the time being, he relaxed a little. They just needed to hang in there for another two minutes, then the pirates blocking the ramp would all be killed, and the whole situation would turn around.

The chief officer turned his attention to the ongoing battle on the other side, completely unaware that he had become the target. And although the three sailors guarding were monitoring the surrounding, they were unsuspecting of the possibilities of dangers coming from farther away.

Having undergone Simone's special training, the gun now felt like an extension of Zhang Heng's own body. Once he was in the zone, his mind would automatically shield itself from any distractions. His whole person would be completely still and calm like a reef by the shore. Zhang Heng took a deep breath and gently pulled the trigger with his forefinger.

The guards had no idea what had just happened. All they knew was that the chief officer's head suddenly snapped backwards and he fell to the ground. It was not until they saw the blood gushing from his head that they began to panic.

Simultaneously, the voice of the system prompt spoke in his ear.

[Successfully killed a senior commander of the Royal Navy, +15 game points. You can refer to the character panel for more information.]

The man with the black beard was keenly aware of the fleeting chance for an attack, and swiftly led the six remaining pirates towards Elmer, ignoring his bleeding shoulder.

The short muskets in their hands roared like thunders in the night.

Now that they had lost their commander, the British navy was in complete disorder. But the pirates themselves were also spent. The tug-of-war at the exit of the gangway was finally resolved and the British sailors on the second floor broke through the blockade and rushed to the deck.

The addition of this new force was disastrous for the exhausted pirate. A look of relief and excitement washed over Elmer's face but one minute later the smile froze his lips.

The last escort who was standing in front of him fell to the ground, and he looking into a pair of wild, beast-like eyes.

The moment the eyes looked back at him, Elmer felt as if he had fallen into an endless abyss and his blood and soul had been completely frozen.

The owner of those eyes pressed a cutlass at Elmer's throat and said in a deep voice, "Tell your men to surrender."

Lord Elmer was extremely unwilling. All they had to do was endure a little longer, maybe just another half a minute, and the whole situation would have been entirely different. The screams of the pirates ringing in his ears gave him so much pleasure.

Elmer thought about his lineage and his family, and wanted to show some moral integrity. But when the blade cut his skin, Elmer abandoned all courage and quickly gave orders to the sailors on the deck. "Put down your weapons!"

The sailors hesitated to obey the order. Elmer was furious. "What do you think you're doing? Are you going to disobey your captain's orders?"

The sailors exchanged looks. Unfortunately, the highest-ranking officer at the time was the captain alone, not enough to convince the crew. Finally, however, under Elmer's influence, someone finally put down their weapon.

And once someone started to do it, a few more followed.

The man with the black beard spoke, "Your captain has already surrendered to me. I am willing to swear on my name that I will spare the lives of those who surrender."

Immediately, more people dropped their weapons. When the rest saw that they were on their own, they also gave in.

In the end, the Sea Lion miraculously won the battle at the cost of 47 pirates' lives, and 29 injured. Nearly everyone who survived were wounded. When they returned to their ship to be patched up after the battle, they found out that the doctor on board had died in the battle.

Fortunately, the Scarborough also had doctors on board. The one with the best medical skills was forced to join the Sea Lion. Zhang Heng searched the faces around him, thinking that there was no way the farmer's son could have survived this vicious battle, but when they were clearing up the battlefield, he found the guy behind a cannon, bleeding at the mouth and shaking like a leaf. Next to him was the body of a British sailor, the flesh on his throat bloody and mangled.

## Chapter 129: Queen Anne's Revenge

The pirates pushed Zhang Heng to the military restaurant. During the war, Zhang Heng's incredible shooting skill had managed to impress many, especially the last shot. It was enough to turn the tide around. That was why every single pirate now had massive respect for him. When the war was over, they wanted to head to the bar with him and drink with him. Even Marvin was asked to drink with them as well. They wanted to know how did he use his teeth to kill the soldier that attempted to kill him. All these while, Marvin was not a popular guy on the ship. After the war, the pirates on the Sea Lion changed the way they treated him. Marvin was elated when two pirates put their hands on his shoulders.

While they were on their way to the restaurant, they crossed paths with Orff. For a moment, all of them were worried that Orff might reprimand them. After all, there were still a lot of things to do after the battle was over. Every pirate was tasked with a different task. Logically speaking, it was not the right time to head to the restaurant to have a drink to celebrate victory.

To everyone's surprise, Orff did not scold anyone. Instead, he nodded at Zhang Heng and said, "Good job!"

They then cheered for him and continued to head towards the restaurant. Orff told them to finish their task after the celebration. Unfortunately, no one paid attention to him. Few of those that heard him pretended they did not hear him. Orff shook his head and knocked at the captain's door.

"Come in."

"The prisoners are being transferred to the Sea Lion batch by batch with small boats. Owen is there helping with recruiting potential men that are willing to join us. Right now, we need someone that knows how to use the cannon on board. Considering that we now have 90 cannons. And, the guy is locked inside the carpenter's room. To be honest with you, I thought you would kill him just now."

"Do you really think that I'm the kind of person that can't see the bigger picture?"

The man with a black beard was still wearing the coat that was tainted by blood during the war just now. His arm was bleeding, but he did not look for the doctor to treat his wound. It seemed like he did not mind blood was coming from the injury. He then took out two glasses from the drawer and poured some red wine into them.

"The culprit of that incident is still alive. As compared to him, Elmer is a nobody. We cannot stop just yet. Knowing Elmer is an accomplice, I will make sure to make him pay for what he has done. I promise you."

Orff took the wine and continued the conversation.

"It's been 14 years, and we are finally here. To be honest with you, I was thinking of giving up the whole thing for a few years. I thought all hope was lost. Right now, Belmont is the last person on the list. Our mission is coming to an end soon. I'm not that young anymore. Once this thing is over, I'm planning to retire. I want to look for a place with no people around me. I would love to do some fishing and gardening after I retire. How about you? What's your plan? Does Miss Agnes still write to you?"

The man with a black beard was left speechless.

“You and I should know better. Once we choose this patch, there’s no way for us to turn back. Isn’t that right? Orff. If civilization fails to bring me justice, I will use brute force to destroy it.”

“Haha. This is what you would say. Let me walk this final journey with you.”

Orff lifted the glass, bottomed up the wine, and stood up.

“For now, the morale on our ship is quite good. The Frazer that I know is not going to give up this easily. That old bastard is like a venomous snake. He is now hiding from us. Once we show our weaknesses, he would not hesitate to bite us.”

“You are the helmsman of this ship. I’m pretty sure that you will help us to deal with this threat, right?”

“I will try my best. Just like before, you are in charge of combat, and I will deal with the pirates on our ship. I can’t imagine what will happen to you if I leave this ship.”

Orff shrugged and walked toward the door, and thought of something suddenly.

“Oh, right! I almost forgot an important matter. We should give this ship a new name since it now belongs to us!”

“A name? Let’s call her Queen Anne’s Revenge.”

The black beard man’s eyes were burning with passion, but his tone was extremely calm.

“Sounds good. I like the name. Enjoy the victory for now, Teach. I will deal with the rest of the matter.”

After that, Orff left the captain’s room and closed the door behind him.

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Zhang Heng had lost count of how many glasses of beer he had drunk. Luckily the alcohol content in that beer that he had drunk was not that high. Every single pirate was celebrating the miraculous victory. A total of 170 pirates had miraculously taken down a battleship with 700 hundred people on it. After the battle, they had captured a total of 400 people. No one would believe in it if they did not see it with their own eyes. A tale like this was enough to talk about it over and over again in a tavern. With this battleship, they could now dominate the sea. In other words, they could rob whoever they want with a 100% success rate.

Usually, pirates could never sit still. After they finished their drink, most of them wanted to check out this battleship. Through voting, they had decided to let Elmer’s band stay here. These poor musicians were forced to walk with the pirates and play the song of victory at the same time. Before this, they would play popular songs from the aristocrats. Unfortunately, all those pirates did not like those popular songs. This was not their first time being forced to play something fun and exciting. It was hard for the musicians to watch their works of art being tainted. However, when they saw the pirates waving their sabers in front of them, they knew that they had to put down their egos and do what they asked.

“I can’t imagine that we did it!”

A cannoner was touching a 24-pound cannon that was located on the second deck.

“With this thing, I can destroy everything that comes in our way.”

“Be careful, Bill. Only a real man can handle such a big thing,” said an old cannoneer.

Immediately, everyone laughed at Bill.

“I can’t wait to shoot some ships with this cannon! Imagine the reaction of those merchant ships that cross paths with us. I’m starting to feel sorry for them.”

“Why did you guys stop playing the music? Did I ask you guys to stop?”

“I’m the one that asked them to stop.”

Orff strolled towards the crowd slowly.

### **Chapter 130: Target**

“I’m sorry. Did I interrupt your celebration?” asked Orff.

He then took a look around at all the pirates. A few pirates that stood close to Orff wanted to sneak away secretly.

“Don’t worry. I’m not here to reprimand you guys for not doing your job. After all, we have just won a huge battle. I just want to tell everyone that it’s my honor to fight alongside all of you. I think this is a good time for all of us to relax a while. Am I right?”

Immediately, all the pirates let out a sigh of relief. The celebration carried on right after that. Some of them started to tease Orff about a young sailor that almost landed a shot at his private part.

“Just now I heard that someone mention wanting to do something big,” said Orff with a smile on his face.

“Mr. Orff. All of us here want to know that when can we do something big enough to shake the whole world. With this ship, we can defeat all kinds of ships that go against us!”

Owning a battleship like the Scarborough was every men’s dream. Some of the pirates were still injured, but the excitement that they had right now made them want to rob another ship right away.

“Great. Let’s test the firepower of the giant cannon,” said Orff.

“Right now?”

All the pirates around Orff were left baffled. The battle was over, and there was no target around them. How was he going to test the firepower of the cannon? Was he going to shoot it in the air?

“Who told you that we don’t have a target? Isn’t that our target?” said Orff while pointing at the Sea Lion.

All the captured British navy soldiers were transferred to Sea Lion earlier. Most of them were upset and felt lost. They still could not figure out how they lost the battle. It killed them for not knowing what was going to happen to them. Not only they lose the possession of the Scarborough, but many of the navy soldiers were also killed during the battle as well. Even their captain was being held hostage by their enemies. And, the enemies were just a group of pirates but not navy soldiers from other countries.

Usually, they were the ones who went after them. This incident was one of the most embarrassing moments for the royal navy.

Looking at the Scarborough, many of them started crying.

On the other hand, the pirates that stood on the second deck of Queen Anne's Revenge was left in silence. The world saw them as monsters and villains. They did not deny the saying. On the contrary, they were happy that this was how the world saw them because one had to be strong enough to survive on the sea. The storm was their companion whenever they set sail to loot other ships. Not only that, but they also had to face navy soldiers, reefs that were hidden under the sea, bounty hunters, and pirates. The weaker one would always be eliminated. Those that survived on the sea for a long time considered themselves as fearless warriors. Queen and laws meant nothing to them. However, that did not mean that they do not have a principle.

As men, they valued promises a lot. Earlier, their captain told the enemies that they would not kill them as long as they surrendered their weapon. Right now, Orff was trying to break the promise. He wanted to kill a large group of people that could no longer fight back. It was hard for the pirates to execute such a heartless decision.

"We have never done this before. Is this order directly from the captain?"

"Why would I fake an order?"

"According to the rule, we are required to follow the captain's orders 100% during the battle. Now that the battle is over, I think we should vote."

"You are so damn naïve! Do you know what they will do to us if we let them live? They will tell everyone that the Scarborough is in pirates' possession. By that time, they would call for more people to attack us with more cannons! Once Bellomonte knows about this, he would definitely not travel to Charleston to attend her daughter's wedding. If we miss the golden opportunity, it's not going to be easy for us to capture such a high-value target anymore. This is the risk that we cannot take. The captain said that he would spare their lives because he wanted to stabilize the whole situation. Don't you forget that. Our enemies outnumber us, and we are at a disadvantage. There were only 100 of us left just now, and we were exhausted. A strategy was what we need to force 400 armed navy soldiers to surrender to us. Everyone, please remember the end goal of this voyage. Without the treasure, why would we risk our lives to take over this battleship?!"

Orff's final sentence had managed to make every single pirate rethink their goal. In order to look for Kidd's treasure, they had sacrificed a lot of things to get to where they are today. Right now, there was only one-third of them left. No one would be happy if the whole plan went south.

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The small boat made a last trip to send the captured prisoners to Sea Lion. The pirates on the Sea Lion tossed down stairs that were made of rope to allow the prisoners to get on Sea Lion. All the captured prisoners felt extremely lucky that they were still alive. Though they had lost the battle, they knew that hope was always there as long as they were still breathing. In a circumstance like this, the hierarchy system in the navy did not really matter anymore. The quartermaster was distributing the biscuits with worm to all the captured prisoners. And the captain room was reserved for those that suffered severe

injuries during the battle. Suddenly, the crowd was left in a panic. They saw the cannon from the Scarborough aimed at them—like a sea monster ready to devour them.

“Oh, god!”

The basket in the quartermaster’s hand dropped on the floor, and the biscuits were scattered everywhere. His mouth was wide opened, and his eyes were filled with despair. At the same time, panic and fear spread to everyone on Sea Lion like a deadly virus. Their survival instinct told them to run, but there was no place for them to run. Those that could still stay calm went to release the mainsail, but it was all too late. They knew precisely how far the cannon could shoot.

Edward Teach was standing in the captain’s quarter and witnessed the Sea Lion being engulfed by fire. After five minutes of continuous shooting, the Sea Lion ceased to exist, and the sea was covered in flames. Only a broken mast could be seen, and it was carried away by the wave.

“Too bad. Your god is not with you today.”