

Northwest 39

Chapter 39

The pirates were ready to kill and came at her in groups of three. Lil backed away as fast as she could with her short strides, while she stabbed the first one that was within her range. When she managed to pick up another one of their swords, the pirates paused for a moment.

Whoa there!

Lil used their hesitation cleverly and stabbed another pirate. Her attack instantly killed the guy and his large wound poured out blood aimlessly. In the meantime, Lil had to cut off an arm that came for her necklace. Their distance was gradually narrowing, slowly her eyesight was only filled with beast-like bastards who unconditionally attacked her. There was no time nor space to come up with a new strategy, so Lil stabbed, hit and slashed everyone within striking distance in the hopes to get rid of them.

Get lost!

Suddenly, someone popped out from behind. Lil, startled, turned around and only needed a second to confirm his identity.

Its that guy. That dirty face and yellow teeth. Its that pervert who assaulted me on the way to the deck.

You bastard!

The man ran towards her with a grin on his face and grabbed the necklace. His strength took her by surprise, as the guy was a lot stronger than he looked. Lil immediately raised one of her swords, but when she swung her arm to slash him, the perverts other hand pushed her hard. Lil lost her balance due to her tied feet and fell backwards

Huh?..

Her body floated in the air

Tuk

The string broke

My necklace!..

Die!..

Ed blocked the bald mans sword that was coming toward him with a sword he picked up moments ago.

I cant keep the bastard that dared to spit on me alive.

The recollection fuelled his anger and Ed swung his sword like a madman. Because of this, he wasnt aware of what was happening on the other side of the ship. He only reflexively turned his head in that direction when it suddenly became noisy.

Hes falling over!

The prisoners getting away

Grab him!

He was just in time to see Lil falling off the hull. As she was already falling, Ed only saw a figure disappearing over the railing.

Was she pushed or did she jump to defend her necklace? Maybe she was trying to cover up her appearance after it was already taken away

He hurriedly looked around, but he couldn't see anyone in possession of the red jewel.

Shit. There was only one thing we had to protect, but I got distracted by this baldy over here.

Ed looked at the pirate next to the bald head, who was running rampant with an axe. Seeing the crude blade gleaming in the sun, an idea popped up in Ed's head.

If I play my cards right, I could break out of these chains. This could be my only chance.

With no time to think it through, Ed recklessly rushed forward. When he was close enough, he swung his elbow and struck the big forearm.

Ugh!

The axe lost its owner due to the sudden attack and spun wildly in the air. Ed frantically dived forward and stretched his wrist as far as the chains allowed.

If I'm unlucky, my hand or even my arm will be severed as the axe looks like it will cut through anything. But it's my only hope, in this state I will never be able to break through that crowd.

Ed widened his eyes as he fell down. The rotating metal weapon, which reflected the sunlight, descended quickly.

The sound of air being sliced pierced his ears violently as he tried his best to put his wrist under the falling axe.

I know those minimal adjustments won't make much of a difference, but I really don't want my wrist to be cut off.

Quak!

Startled, the bald man took a few steps back. Ed opened his eyes and looked at his trembling wrists. The blade of the axe, which was deeply embedded in the floor, had not only split the chain, but the deck as well.

Great. But I can't celebrate just yet.

Without further delay, he pulled out the axe and struck the chain between his ankles. As the owner of the axe was coming for him at the same time, Ed had to dive and roll to avoid him. After he stood up, he hung the axe on his waist and ran towards the bow as fast as he could.

Stop him! Stop him!

Damn it!

Ed dodged enemies coming from all directions as he twisted and jumped to avoid them. Rather than attacking him directly, it felt more like they were trying to block his path. Ed laughed while being

chased. His life became rather dull and uneventful over the past few years, so being reunited with some action was a nice change of pace.

Tsk. How stupid. I can clearly see the next one coming.

Ed took two guns from a young pirate and immediately fired them.

Bang! Bang!

However, the gap kept narrowing.

Shit.

Ed increased his speed. No matter how skillful he was, he couldn't change the fact that he was badly outnumbered. Furthermore, the railing from where Lil fell was getting farther and farther away as he had no choice but to run in the opposite direction. For now it seemed impossible to go back.

I need to find a way.

Ed looked around, wondering if there were any ropes to grab. Suddenly, the rigging between the main mast and the foremast crossed over his head.

When he lifted his head, sunlight immediately rushed into his vision. Ed squinted his eyes and looked at the position of the pulley. He didn't know if he could swing it all the way to the opposite railing if he only relied on the momentum of the rope.

It's not an easy trajectory, but this is the only thing that is catching my eye. The fact that the air is clear of any other rigging definitely increases my chances.

Ed took the fore-roof stairs three steps at a time, stepped on the railing and ran towards the rigging while keeping his balance. He grabbed a rope and inserted a dagger into the pulley joint. The taut rope shot through the pulley as it suddenly lost its tension, dragging Ed to an immense height. Ed clung to the end of the rope and flew through the air.

The rigging on the wide-open jib³ circled him in a semi-circular track. From down below several guns were fired and one of the bullets flew right past him. His body shuddered at the thought of being shot.

As his legs struggled a few times to dodge the bullets, the railing where Lil had fallen off flashed into view.

I think it was around here.

Ed took a deep breath.

3, 2, 1

Without hesitation, he let go of the rope. Before flying over the hull, his body dived in a parabolic shape. The sound of gunfire stayed persisted. However, it was almost impossible for the pirates to aim at a target falling at high speed. Ed bent his head down and adjusted his form, so his feet would hit the water first. The air resistance caused a pain so severe that it felt like his eyes, nose, and ears were about to rip off. The same resistance made it also hard to catch his breath, but nonetheless, he inhaled to the fullest. The bluish-green surface was rapidly approaching as Ed prepared himself for impact.

I feel like a bird bitten by a predator and dragged into the sea.

As soon as that thought crossed his mind

Splash!

The sense of alienation hit all over his body as if he was entering another world.

Pain immediately hit his ears because he jumped from such a great height. Despite the temptation to blow out his air, Ed kept his mouth and nose closed. It was the best way to protect his lungs against the water pressure. Eventually, Ed rose to the surface, emerging his head above the water. As he was getting his breath, he could see the pirates hanging over the railing. In unison, they threw their daggers and arrogantly shouted phrases full of swear words.

Hahahaha! You cant run from us pirates!

Ed himself flashed his middle finger up.

It was my pleasure, Ill never forget you! The next time we meet, Ill make sure to repay the favour! So, I suggest you watch your neck, it will be a messy one!

Fire! Cannon! Bring the cannon!

The voice of the bald one reached Eds ears. Then a sudden, uncanny voice shot up to the sky. The bald man, who couldnt overcome his anger, drew his gun and aimed it at the sea. Ed laughed at him, before he dived underwater.

Tung! Tung!

Bullets from different directions swam bluntly by his side.

When Ed looked around, he noticed how poor his vision in the water was. He couldnt see any fish ahead, let alone Lil. By change, he felt a weak downward flow. He followed the small stream of current and not long after the anchors line caught his eye. It was a great discovery, as he couldnt differentiate between up, down, left, and right anymore. He decided to follow the line and dive deeper, thinking Lil did the same.

Ed descended alongside the rope that was as thick as his leg. The water mixed with sand caused the sea to be cloudy. As a result, Ed could only see some faint reefs ahead.

Fortunately, its a bright day, so the corals are better visible than normal. But I dont know if Ill be able to find that specific one if my vision stays so blurry.

Ed swam further downward, trying to remember the air conch Lil had told him about.