

THE PRIVATEER

A Fucking Pirate Adventure

By John Graney

Based on
The Memoirs of Jean Laffite

A truly False Story

TEASER

EXT. THE DORADA - DAY

POV: Through the view of a spyglass, the wide open Gulf of Mexico is a sun-baked, barren, watery desert.

Moving across the horizon only reveals more horizon.

SUPER: Gulf Of Mexico 1805 ...

THEN: ...ish

Suddenly, a ship comes into view. All motion stops and the focus shifts to bring the thing into clear visibility.

VOICE (O.S.)

SHIP!

The spyglass is tossed aside by its holder, SKEEBS, a disgusting, weather-worn, pockmarked, toothless old Pirate.

SKEEBS

FUCKING SHIP!!!!

He jumps down from the poop deck, running to the rail of the stern-castle of THE DORADA, a truly shitty pirate ship.

The scattered crew of tired and filthy pirates clamors to their feet, moving to get a view of the ship.

MARTIN, a younger pirate, runs up the ladder and grabs the spyglass as the rest of the men scramble to prep the ship.

In a nanosecond, the energy on this sad excuse for a pirate ship goes from sleepy to explosive.

PIERRE LAFFITE (23) bursts through the main deck doors. God damn, this is a fucking good lookin' pirate. Contrasting the rest of this crew, he looks alive and brimming with murderous energy.

PIERRE

Where? Show me! Show me!

The crew point to the horizon. Pierre squints and sees the tiniest black dot. It's all he needs.

PIERRE

Fuck Yes!! All hands Ahoy! Set heading for that ship! Move!

The crew moves like lightning, hooting and cackling as they climb the masts. Ropes drop, Sail fly.

They all laugh and high five as they go. All except ...

MARTIN

Wait. Wait wait. Stop! They are flying a French flag!

Boner kill.

PIERRE

What? No. Fuck.

Pierre climbs the ladder and grabs the spyglass. Looking for a second before shoving it back to Martin.

PIERRE

Doesn't look French to me. Carry on, lads!!

MARTIN

Sir, no! We are a privateering vessel, sailing on letters of marque *from France*. We may only attack British or Spanish ships. On penalty of--

Oof! Pierre KICKS Martin in the balls. Martin doubles over.

PIERRE

Onward!!

The crowd HOLLERS along with him and starts to get back to it. Martin hollers from the ground.

MARTIN

We'll be hanged!

Pierre has had it with this dude. He points to two nearby pirates.

PIERRE

You, hold him! You pee in his mouth.

Pierre turns back to the crowd as the one pirate holds Martin from behind and the other undoes his pants.

PIERRE

Anyone here afraid of being hanged?
We've been out under this sun for
two months with nothing to show for
it. So what if they're French!
Who's with me!?

The crowd roars, except ...

SKEEBS

I don't want to be hanged.

DANIEL BOWERY (21) A cleaner pirate with an actual twirly
mustache, PUNCHES the old man in the stomach.

BOWERY

Fuck you, Skeeps! Hanged for what?
We attack the ship! We sell its
crew for slaves in Mexico. We sell
its wares in New Orleans. Who will
ever know!?

VOICE (O.S.)

Avast!

BOWERY

Any man who wants to stop us from
plundering that ship can--

BOOM! A gun shot pulls everyone's attention from Bowery over
to the door of the Great Cabin.

JEAN LAFFITE (24) yawns, still holding his pistol up in the
air. Imagine a young Woody Allen in a pirate outfit.

JEAN

Stop! I said avast already, jeez.

He awkwardly tries to shove his gun in his belt. After
repeated failure, he decides to casually point it at Bowery.

JEAN

Is your name Jean Laffite?

Everyone looks confused.

JEAN

I heard the captain of this ship is
named Jean Laffite. You seem to be
shouting orders around, so ...

BOWERY

Sir I--

PIERRE

Jean, don't be a dick.

JEAN

Oh, I'm Jean Laffite? Oh wow. So I guess that makes me the captain. So how come this chowder headed, weasel dick, rat fucker is barking orders on my ship?

BOWERY

Captain, there is a ship--

JEAN

Oh my god. Stop talking.

Jean approaches the crew as he talks.

JEAN

Yes, I know about the ship. You were literally screaming. Wait, is that guy peeing in that guy's mouth?

He is. He still is. Jean takes this in, almost impressed.

PIERRE

Brother. It's been two months. We're pirates. This is what we do! Now let's raise the sails and--

JEAN

We are not pirates! We are privateers. We have principles. We have dignity. We will not attack their ship out on the open waters. We will not 'sell their crew as slaves to Mexico'. Slaves with mouths that talk about how the Pirate Brothers Laffite sacked their ship. Idiots!

The crew looks disappointed.

JEAN

We will raise our French flags and approach them in peace as brothers on the water. We will inquire of any other ships they have seen in their travels. We will offer them any provisions they may be in need of. And when they least expect it, we will slaughter every mother fucking last one of them.

Wait what?

JEAN

We will trade their goods,
dismantle their ship and sell it
for parts. We will make it seem
like that ship never even existed!

The crowd cheers!

SKEEB

Dead men tell no tales!

JEAN

Ugh. Really?

PIERRE

Raise the colors and set sail for
that ship!

The crew flies into action.

Jean pats Pierre on the back and they both look out towards
the horizon. Then Jean remembers something.

JEAN

Oooh, also, real quick ...

He points at two pirates standing next to Bowery.

JEAN

You hold him, you pee in his mouth.

BOWERY

What!?

The pirates grab him.

EXT. THE FRENCH SHIP - DAY

Jean stands alone atop the Quarter Deck looking down on a
bloody shit show of a pirate, ahem, *privateer* massacre.

His expression drifts from smug to severely-grossed-out as a
Frenchman's head lands on the deck next him. He gags.

SUPER: THE PRIVATEER

THEN: Based on The Memoirs of Jean Laffite

THEN AGAIN: A Truly False Story

A french soldier jumps and grabs the railing, preparing to climb and attack Jean, whose discomfort spirals.

JEAN

Hey. Somebody!? Um. A little help!?

Pierre pulls the soldier down and stabs him through the gut, ripping the sword out sideways and gutting him completely.

Jean lets out a sigh and smiles. Holding up a hand to holler down to Pierre.

JEAN

Thanx!!

END TEASER

ACT ONE**EXT. PORT-AU-PRINCE HARBOR - DAY**

In 1805-ish, Haiti is in a constant state of revolution. The port is run down and virtually deserted.

The Dorada and The French Ship are docked side by side. The French Ship looks like it has been through hell.

Laffite's men are busy hauling anything and everything off the ship and spreading it out to be inventoried on the docks.

Jean comes storming down the ramp from The Dorada, yelling.

JEAN

No! No no no! Nothing gets left out. It can't be seen. Everything goes straight onto our ship.

Pierre comes down the ramp from The French Ship with a large ornate necklace in his hand.

PIERRE

Who is going to see it? The Haitians have literally killed everyone. Relax.

JEAN

I'll relax when that ship is gone. We are just here long enough to dismantle it and sell its parts. The goods are all bound for New Orleans.

PIERRE

If you're so concerned about it being seen, then why didn't we just dismantle it at sea?

JEAN

Did you just say that out loud?

PIERRE

No.

JEAN

Dismantle a ship while on the water? You're right that's exactly what we should have done.

JEAN (CONT'D)

Then use the scraps to build wings
and fly all the way up to heaven
and get a blowjobs from the angels.

PIERRE

Yeah, no I'm hearing it now. Dumb
idea.

JEAN

I do the thinking, you do the
stabbing. K?

Jean reaches for the necklace.

JEAN

What's this? Ooh, it's heavy.

PIERRE

I found it in the captain's
quarters. It's for Zora.

JEAN

Oh good. I'll give it to her.

PIERRE

What? No. I'll give it to her.

JEAN

No. You'll stay and make sure that
ship comes apart without any
trouble.

Jean stuffs the necklace in his belt and moves to leave.

PIERRE

She's my grandmother too!

JEAN

And you're my first mate. You have
duties. Besides, I have something I
need to discuss with her.

PIERRE

Well what if I have something I
need to discuss with her?

JEAN

You should have thought of that
before being born second.

Jean is already walking away.

JEAN

I'll tell her this is from you.
When I come back I don't want to
see a ship there!

Pierre huffs and heads back to The French Ship.

PIERRE

Hey, hurry up! Come on! Let's tear
this bitch apart!

EXT. OPEN ROAD - DAY

Jean is driven in a hired carriage out of the town of Port-Au-Prince and into the surrounding hills.

Buildings and homes and have clearly been recently bombarded with gunshot and bombed or burned to the ground.

Destroyed buildings give way to barren Haitian countryside until eventually they approach a single, humble, Spanish style home, nestled in the hills.

JEAN (PRE-LAP)

I can't do this.

INT. ZORA'S HOME - DAY

Wood, dark tile, and candles. Ancient curtains cover the windows. It smells like literally everything in here.

Jean sits, head in hands, on a cozy chair.

JEAN

I can't. I cannot do this anymore.
I feel like I am being torn apart
by the sea. And the men. They're
all just, fucking ... disgusting
idiots. The stress. Ugh, the
fucking stress. Do you have any
idea what it's like living under
constant threat of literally every
military ship in the world
murdering you? Do you? Constant
diarrhea. Diarrhea for years. I'm
amazed I'm not shitting my pants
right now. I'm out. I'm telling you
I cannot do--

CLANG! A pewter goblet of rum flies into frame and smashes Jean directly in the face.

He reels from the pain and sneezes from the rum all over his face.

JEAN

Ah! Grandmo--

ZORA (275? 435? A THOUSAND YEARS OLD MAYBE?) Jean's grandmother. Built entirely out of wrinkles and tough love. She eyes him like a dog who shat on the carpet.

ZORA

Ugh, with the whining. You're giving *me* diarrhea. You remind me of your fucking father.

JEAN

What? You said no one ever knew who my father was.

ZORA

EXACTLY!! You are a Laffite. You belong on the open sea and on the pages of history.

JEAN

Here it comes ...

ZORA

Look at your Uncle, René and your brother, Alexandre. Both well regarded and highly ranked in Mr. Bonaparte's glorious military.

JEAN

Alexandre is a cannoneer, Grandmother, not exactly a--

ZORA

This is what our family is! Maybe not your incredible disappearing father, but your uncles, your grandfather. It is in your blood. It IS your blood.

JEAN

Then why do I hate it so much?

ZORA

Well, your blood is complicated. You're a Spanish Jew. The Jew in you was tortured and killed by the Spaniard in you during the inquisition. And the Spaniard in you is a fucking bastard so ...

Zora spits on the ground.

JEAN

I can't. I've run out of steam. It takes every ounce of me just to stay alive out there. And I don't even have one ounce left. If I go back out there. I'll die.

Zora leans back in her chair, eyes never leaving his sunken face. She breathes that in.

ZORA

Alright.

Really?

JEAN

Alright? You mean ...

ZORA

I mean alright. If you can't you can't. You say you're out then you're out.

Jean's energy and mood lighten a trillion fold.

JEAN

I can stay here in Haiti and manage the business affairs, even grow the trade business locally.

ZORA

Sure sure. Pierre will take over the seafaring privateer operation. He'll become captain of The Dorada. He'll lead his men out into the gulf and he'll be dead inside a week.

JEAN

That's not true Pierre is a brilliant seaman. He'd make a better captain than me. He was born for this. Pierre is--

ZORA

Pierre is a fucking maniac. He lives for the sea and he will die by it without you to watch over him.

That sinks in.

ZORA

So. Fine. You want to kill your brother, go ahead. I get it. Some might call it selfish, but, no I get it. Hey, diarrhea is the worst. If killing your brother can cure it then, you do what you have to do, right?

Jean just sits and stares at her coldly. She gives it right back to him.

JEAN

I love my brother.

ZORA

And I love you both.

JEAN

I would never let anything happen to him.

ZORA

Nor I to you.

The staring continues. Finally Jean rises and lets out a giant sigh. Zora has won this round and he knows it.

Remembering suddenly, he reaches into his belt and removes the necklace.

JEAN

By the way, I brought you this. Pierre didn't get you anything.

EXT. CAPTAINS QUARTERS - THE FRENCH SHIP - DAY

The room has been emptied and stripped to its bones. A giant and ornate desk still stands in the center of the room.

Pierre and Bowery work like crazy to remove it. It's not going well.

BOWERY

This is the heaviest thing in the world. Remind me again why we are doing this.

PIERRE

Because this desk is amazing. I mean, look at it! Scrap the ship, sure, but this? I'm keeping this.

BOWERY

That's not what I mean. I mean why are we dismantling a perfectly good ship?

PIERRE

You know why. Captain's orders.

BOWERY

He's your brother. Tell him what's what.

PIERRE

And what's 'what's what'?

BOWERY

He's a scurvy fucking knave is what!

Pierre rises and grabs Bowery by the shirt.

PIERRE

He's your fucking captain is who he is and if--

BOWERY

Is he? If we had followed your orders out there we'd own this ship. We'd have gold in our pockets from selling those Frenchies as slaves.

PIERRE

Jean's way was smarter. Safer.

BOWERY

His way was *harder*. He's a fuckin' weenie! I know it, and the men know it. We all know who our true captain is.

PIERRE

This is mutiny.

BOWERY

Not mutiny. Franchising. If he likes that ship so much, let him keep it, and any of the men who choose to stay with him. You take command of this ship.

Pierre sits back, extremely tempted, thinking.

PIERRE
But, he's my brother.

BOWERY
And he'll still be your brother.
But you'll be captain of your own
ship. Captain Pierre Laffite.

PIERRE
Captain Pierre Laffite.

BOWERY
If you want this desk so much. I
say we leave it right here. On your
ship.

Pierre can't help but smirk.

JEAN (O.S.)
What a brilliant idea..

Shit. Fuck. Both men scramble to turn and see Jean leaning
against the door frame.

BOWERY
Captain. I was just--

JEAN
No, no. I love it. I've been
meaning to expand the fleet for a
while.

PIERRE
You have?

JEAN
Yeah. Absolutely. And this is the
perfect ship to start with.

BOWERY
I mean, it is actually in better
shape than The Dorada.

Jean has moved to the desk and is inspecting its ornate
trimmings.

JEAN
That it is. And it comes with so
many other ships as well.

PIERRE
What?

JEAN

Well yes, of course. The countless French naval ships that are already wondering where it has disappeared to and are looking for it out on the gulf as we speak.

Pierre and Bowery know now that Jean is fucking with them.

BOWERY

We can paint over the name. They'll never recognize--

Jean spits in Bowery's mouth while he's talking. While he coughs and wretches, Jean kicks him in the balls.

JEAN

They'll never recognize your fucking face when I'm through with it!

PIERRE

Jean!

JEAN

And you! Is this the kind of talk you have with the men while I'm not around?

PIERRE

Don't you fucking talk to me like that. I'm not one of your--

Boom! Boom! A giant commotion upstairs shakes the entire ceiling. Screams and general trouble are at a 10 up there.

Jean looks back to them both.

JEAN

This isn't over.

All three of them scramble out the door to see what is going on upstairs.

EXT. THE DECK OF THE FRENCH SHIP - MOMENTS LATER

As Jean, Pierre, and Bowery reach the deck, a BLONDE BEARDED PIRATE slams into them, holding his bloody hand to his face.

BLONDE BEARD

She bit me! She fucking bit me!

In the center of the deck a young woman is circled by the entire crew. She is disheveled and crazy eyed.

One pirate lunges towards her and she knees him in the balls. As he doubles over in pain, she kicks him in the balls again.

Once he falls to the ground, she literally stomps on his balls, and again, and again.

ARIANE DE GUERMANTES (21) is not one to be fucked with. Her super fancy rich lady dress has been torn to tatters.

Two more pirates try to grab her from behind. She begins to make quick work of them, but Pierre has had enough.

He storms straight over and taps her on the shoulder. As she turns around, he PUNCHES her, hard, square in the face.

As she reels from the blow, he folds her arm into a lock and holds his knife to her throat.

She slams the heel of her boot into his foot. That kinda shit won't work with Pierre. He's a maniac, remember?

He kicks her legs out from under her and she is overpowered.

JEAN

What in the fuck is going on up here!?

The pirate whose balls she smashed responds from the floor.

BALLS PIRATE

She was hiding in a trunk. Jumped out and ambushed us. Must've hid there when we boarded the ship!

BOWERY

Well she'll fetch a nice price on the Haitian whores market!

JEAN

No! No, no, no. How many fucking times to I have to explain it to you people? No one can know what happened with this ship, or we'll have the entire French military up our ass!

Everyone looks glum and disappointed.

JEAN

Yeah, she has to die. Pierre, would you?

Pierre smiles.

ARIANE

If you kill me you'll have to
answer to William Claiborne and the
might of the United States
Government!

The entire crew stands stunned for a moment - then bursts
into hysterical laughter.

PIERRE

The *might* of the United States
what? BAAHAHAHA!!

BOWERY

The United States? That spineless
puppy dog of a newborn country?
Ooooh. Shiver me timbers.

Pierre leans into her ear.

PIERRE

No one is going to avenge you
sweetheart. No one even knows who
you are talking about.

JEAN

Stop!

Everyone looks to Jean. He looks distressed and is holding
his gut. Indigestion? Gas? Both?

JEAN

I know who she is talking about.
Fuck. I know exactly who she is
talking about. Fuck we're fucked.
This is exactly the kind of
mishegoss my stomach does not need.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO**EXT. GULF OF MEXICO - EVENING**

The Dorada sails at full speed on the high seas. She's a piece of shit, but she looks lovely in this light.

INT. CAPTAINS QUARTERS - EVENING

Jean sits behind the desk from the French Ship (they kept it after all) He runs his hand along the ornate wooden details.

JEAN

Dang. You were right, Pierre. Look at the craftsmanship on this thing.

THUMP. Ariane is slammed down into the chair on the opposite side of the desk. Pierre untied her gag, but not her hands.

JEAN

Madame. I am prepared to offer you a deal. If you--

ARIANE

You are in no position to be making deals. Take me to New Orleans or--

JEAN

Still talking!! Rude. I *am* taking you to New Orleans. Alive or dead. The deal is, cooperate and I won't have to kill you.

ARIANE

You mean have me killed. You've never killed anyone in your life.

JEAN

Shut! Up! Why would you say that?

ARIANE

You have beautiful hands.

JEAN

Thank ... you?

PIERRE

This is fucking stupid. Let's just kill her!

ARIANE

My name is Ariane De Guermantes. I have been brought from France by Mr William Claiborne, Governor the United States territory or Orleans to be wed to Mr. Felipe Benoit.

PIERRE

I seriously think she just made up all those names.

JEAN

She did not. I know those names. William Claiborne is the reason we have been having a harder and harder time selling weapons in New Orleans.

ARIANE

He is dedicated to bringing order to the lawless port city.

JEAN

Shush. This is good. This is actually good.

PIERRE

How is this good?

JEAN

We bring her in. We say that we rescued her from the band of pirates who destroyed the French ship.

PIERRE

We are the pirates who destroyed the French ship.

JEAN

Privateers. Shut up. This is exactly what we need to win his favor, begin to build a relationship, secure solid business in New Orleans.

ARIANE

There is one problem with your plan.

JEAN

No there isn't.

ARIANE

The truth. You expect me to go along with your lie just to help you?

JEAN

I expect you to go along with my lie or I'll kill you.

BOWERY (O.S.)

Lets just fucking kill her, bring him her dead body, and say the other fake pirates did it. Everybody wins.

It turns out the 'chair' that Jean has been sitting on this whole time was actually Bowery on all fours. Punishment for his insubordination earlier.

JEAN

Oh. My. Actual. God. Are you aware that you are literally only alive right now because I am too busy to have devised a death worthy of your idiocy!? Shut Up!!

EXT. PORT OF NEW ORLEANS - MORNING

The kinetic energy of the fastest growing port town in the new United States territories is an infectious thing.

Jean escorts Ariane down the ramp from The Dorada as his men load the last of their wares for sale onto a hired carriage.

JEAN

When you have secured final sale you are free to enjoy yourselves in this glorious city! But be back by nightfall! We set sail at dawn and I don't need any of you drunk and hungover and pukey and gross and ... you get the idea.

The men all cheer, including Pierre.

JEAN

Oh, not you. I need you to stay with the ship.

PIERRE

What? Fuck no.

JEAN

Um. Fuck yes. You think we are the only pirates in New Orleans?

PIERRE

Privateers.

JEAN

Don't get smart. She's not safe left alone. You are first in command after me.

Jean escorts Ariane towards another hired carriage. Looking back to Pierre as he goes.

JEAN

Stop pouting. I'm off to secure our position in this city! When I come back we will own this place, you can play around in it all you please.

Pierre slumps back on the ramp and holds a middle finger up to Jean who closes the door to the carriage and rides away.

INT. CLAIBORNE'S PARLOR - NOON

Ariane sits in the fanciest chair you've ever seen while Jean paces the floor in the fanciest room you've ever seen.

JEAN

I'm beginning to believe Claiborne doesn't give a shit about you. We have been waiting over an hour!

ARIANE

Suits me just fine. I'm in no rush.

JEAN

You could be a little more grateful. I didn't have to spare your life.

ARIANE

You're right. Thank you so very much for saving my life from you, and then handing it over to someone else.

JEAN

You know, finding you on that ship was not exactly part of my plan.

ARIANE

Nothing that ever happens in my whole life is part of my plan!

JEAN

Ok, this meeting with Claiborne is important. I need to be exceedingly charming and you are not helping my vibe.

ARIANE

Sucks to your vibe.

JEAN

I'm not going to dignify that with a response.

They pout in silence.

JEAN

Do you really think I have beautiful hands?

CLAIBORNE (O.S.)

Ariane! Darling!

WILLIAM CLAIBORNE (46) swings the doors wide and bounds in like a rhinoceros. He does everything like a rhinoceros. In fact why don't you just picture a rhinoceros instead of a person, that's a good way for you to imagine this douche.

CLAIBORNE

My dear, you are even more beautiful than I was led to believe. I was shocked to hear of your unfortunate adventures getting here. Thank God you are alright.

Ariane stands. Claiborne bows and kisses her hand. She curtsies. Jean just stands their awkwardly.

CLAIBORNE

And you must be the man I have to thank for our lovely bride's safe passage through the gulf.

JEAN

Mr. Claiborne I am pleased to make your--

CLAIBORNE

This way this way. Both of you please. Lets chat in my office.

Like a force of nature, he ushers them both out of the room.

INT. CLAIBORNE'S OFFICE - STILL NOON

Dark wood, velvet drapes, gold and ivory and money everywhere in here. Claiborne heads straight for the bar behind his giant desk.

CLAIBORNE

Sit sit. This calls for a drink.

Jean and Ariane find the nearest seat and take it.

JEAN

Most kind of you.

CLAIBORNE

Nonsense. It's the least I can do.
You saved my most prized
investment.

JEAN

Investment?

CLAIBORNE

The girl. Didn't she tell you?

Claiborne returns from the bar with two glasses of rum and hands one to Jean. Nothing for Ariane.

CLAIBORNE

I brought her here as a gift to a
Mr. Felip Benoit.

JEAN

A gift?

Jean looks at Ariane like "is this guy for real?" - Ariane seems unfazed.

CLAIBORNE

A peace offering really. I know New
Orleans looks beautiful but really
it's a bucket of bullshit.

He downs his entire drink in one gulp.

CLAIBORNE

I've been appointed Governor of the
new American Territory, but
everyone here is still French. Well
everyone with money anyway.

He pours himself another drink.

CLAIBORNE

Until this territory becomes an official State, my title means virtually nothing without these fat French elites on my side. So ... Benoit being the fattest elitest french fuck of them all ...

He motions to Ariane before lifting his glass in a toast and downing the second drink.

JEAN

Brilliant plan, sir. With such a beautiful bride, Benoit is sure to help bring the community to your favor. And speaking of favor--

CLAIBORNE

I mean, I don't have to tell you how fucking lawless and bloody this area is.

JEAN

Not at all. The gulf is its own bucket of bullshit, to borrow your colorful phrase. It takes men of virtue like ourselves to keep places like this in order.

CLAIBORNE

Men of virtue. And yet just this morning I heard stories of Jean Laffite calling for the slaughter of an entire ship of innocent men.

Jean chokes on his drink.

JEAN

Eh, Jean Laffite. Yes. I heard that too. He's a ... fucking maniac.

CLAIBORNE

I was under the impression you were Jean Laffite.

JEAN

Ha! Me? No no. That's my brother. I'm Pierre Laffite. The responsible Laffite. The, y'know, Good Laffite.

Claiborne looks confused.

JEAN

I'm just like you. Fighting the good fight out there on the waters against all those lawless foreign fuckers and ... people like my brother always causing trouble. It's bad for business.

CLAIBORNE

And what business is that?

JEAN

Privateering sir.

CLAIBORNE

On letters of marque from which nation?

JEAN

Well, I'll tell you which nation I'd prefer. If I had letters of Marque from the United States it would make it a lot easier for me to keep these waters safe for the likes of you and your fat French elites.

Claiborne finally gets what this whole meeting has been about. He pours himself another drink and leans back in his chair, smirking at Jean.

EXT. THE DORADA - NOON

Pierre pees off the back of the ship, gazing lifelessly out over the port.

SKEEBS (O.S.)

As many men, and dogs, and fish, and birds have all been pissin' into the water since time began. Do you ever wonder the entire sea is just made of piss?

Pierre turns to see Skeeps lazily lounging on the deck.

PIERRE

What are you doing here? You're free til nightfall.

SKEEBS

I never leave the ship. Land sickness.

PIERRE

Then make yourself useful and clean the deck.

SKEEBS

But you just said I'm free til nightfall.

PIERRE

And then I ordered you to clean the fucking deck.

SKEEBS

Mmm. You're not the captain.

PIERRE

I'm the first mate and in the captain's absence you will obey my orders.

SKEEBS

Will I?

Pierre is furious. He's had enough. He grabs his coat and storms towards the ramp to leave.

SKEEB

Where are you going?

PIERRE

Wherever I fucking want.

INT. CLAIBORNE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Claiborne and Jean are both laughing their asses off. Ariane sits still, annoyed.

CLAIBORNE

... Exactly! They expect me to maintain control over the entire port with ONE military vessel from Washington!

JEAN

Well. With the appropriate letters of marque, you would have my entire fleet at your service. You get the port patrolled and kept safe, and I get safe trade route through New Orleans.

Claiborne smiles and slaps his desk.

CLAIBORNE

You know, Miss De Guermantes, I am beginning to think that your unfortunate abduction on the sea might have been the best thing that ever happened to me.

Ariane stands, abruptly, knocking her chair back behind her.

ARIANE

My name is not Ariane De Guermantes!

Both men turn to her, shocked.

CLAIBORNE

What?

JEAN

Yeah, what?

ARIANE

It's Yvonne Laffite. Ariane died at sea! This man is my brother. He is attempting to pass me off as a dead woman in order to win your favor and get you to write him letters of Marque!

JEAN

What the fuck?

CLAIBORNE

What the fuck indeed!?

All three of them stare at each other for a tense second before ...

CLAIBORNE

Guards!!

Jean scrambles up to his feet, throwing his drink away and running fo the door. Claiborne jumps up to follow, drunk and staggering.

JEAN

God damnit!!

Jean runs out the door to the right.

Moments later he darts past heading left. Two armed guards follow close behind.

Claiborne blunders through the door like a boulder after them.

As noises from the struggle between Jean and the guards echoes down the hall, Ariane smiles calmly to herself.

She walks over to the desk and downs the rest of Claiborne's drink. She then walks over to the door and heads out to the right.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE**EXT. STREETS OF NEW ORLEANS - AFTERNOON**

Pierre is enjoying his defiance of Jean's orders as much as the bustling life of the streets of the young and dirty melting pot of New Orleans.

He flinches as a large crowd next to him all HOLLER and CHEER at once.

He looks closer and sees it's a large game of street dice. Intrigued, he steps closer.

BERNARD MARIGNY (BERNIE) (28) a man who is clearly worth as much money as everything on this neighborhood, collects gold from players of the chalk-marked street and resets the ball on a portable betting wheel.

BERNIE

Bets in! Bets in! The next round will start as soon as you've all placed!

PIERRE

I could be down for a game of Hazards.

BERNIE

It's not Hazards. It's a brand new game of my own creation.

PIERRE

What do you call it?

BERNIE

Craps!

PIERRE

Shitty name.

Bernie laughs at this and extends a hand.

BERNIE

Bernard Xavier Phillipe de Marigny de Mandeville.

Pierre extends his own and shakes.

PIERRE

Another shitty name. Pierre Laffite.

Bernie laughs again.

BERNIE

Pleasure, Pierre. Call me Bernie.
Bets in!!

Pierre places two gold coins and smiles as the game begins.

INT. CLAIBORNE'S PARLOR - AFTERNOON

Jean is pushed up against the wall by two guards as Claiborne watches.

JEAN

She is lying! And you let her get away!

CLAIBORNE

Kick him.

They kick him. He YELPS.

CLAIBORNE

We'll not waste our time chasing your sister through the streets while you make your escape. Did you think I was not aware of your deception the entire time!?

JEAN

Mr Claiborne. Think! I am far more valuable to you out on the water than locked in a cell. I meant what I said before. I could be your eyes and ears out in the gulf, spying on the pirate community, for you! Your Spyrate!

One guard laughs. Claiborne shuts him up with a glare.

CLAIBORNE

I was listening before. And I think it's a brilliant idea. I have every intention of placing a spy on the water. Just not you.

JEAN

Mr. Claiborne, you can't trust a pirate. I'm not like them. I'm like you. We're the same.

CLAIBORNE

That's exactly what I'm worried about. This territory rests on a knife's edge, and my claim to power around here cannot afford another me out there challenging my position.

The police carriage arrives out front.

JEAN

Mr. Claiborne, just listen to me!

CLAIBORNE

No you listen to me, Pierre Laffite. New Orleans is mine. This is what happens when you try to fuck with my things.

He waves the guards away and they drag Jean out the front door towards the police carriage.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW ORLEANS - AFTERNOON

The crowd roars and cheers the end of another round. Pierre is not fucking pleased.

PIERRE

Cheating!!

BERNIE

It's a wooden wheel, friend. It doesn't cheat. If you want your money back, I suggest you play again.

PIERRE

I have no more gold.

BERNIE

Then good day, sir!

Pierre fumes. Thinks. Removes his coat, offering it.

PIERRE

What if told you this coat once belonged to Napoleon Bonaparte?

BERNIE

It didn't.

PIERRE

What if I told you it did?

BERNIE

Then I would tell you "it didn't".

PIERRE

Look just take th--

Beyond the crowd, Pierre sees Ariane cautiously making her way through the streets.

PIERRE

What the actual ...

He bolts through the crowd towards her, forgetting his coat in Bernie's arms.

As Ariane turns a corner, Pierre pushes through people violently, racing after her.

He turns the corner to see her halfway down the block.

PIERRE

Bitch!!

She turns, sees him, mouths "fuck", then turns and runs.

Pierre runs after her. He is fast and unafraid to destroy anything in his path.

Ariane gives good chase, but he nabs her within moments, shoving her into an alleyway and holding a knife to her throat.

PIERRE

Where is my brother!?

ARIANE

He's not with you? We finished our business with Claiborne and he said he was heading back to the ship.

PIERRE

So what the fuck are you doing out here?

ARIANE

Just ... out for a walk?

PIERRE

You're a worse liar than me. Come on.

He yanks her out of the alley.

EXT. CAPTAINS QUARTERS - THE DORADA - AFTERNOON

The door bursts open and in bounds Pierre, dragging Ariane behind him.

PIERRE

Jean!!

Yeah he's obviously not in here. The look Pierre gives Ariane would kill most people.

He drags her by the hair to the wall, covered in swords, crossbows, trinkets. He shoves her into it, hard.

He grabs the crossbow and shoves it into her stomach, pressing her against the wall.

PIERRE

This is the part where you tell me where my brother is, and if I don't find him there, I kill you so slowly, by the time I'm done, you'll forget I even started.

She thinks.

ARIANE

Wait, what?

PIERRE

Where is my brother!?!?

EXT. THE DECK OF THE DORADA - AFTERNOON

A handful of bored pirates linger on deck prepping for the return of the rest.

Pierre bolts out the door, racing for the ramp and tossing the crossbow to one of the men tying up ropes.

PIERRE

Everyone come with me!

They all look confused.

ROPE PIRATE

But ... what about capn's orders?

PIERRE

Fucking now! Shit!

They scramble up.

INT. CLAIBORNE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Claiborne sits with his feet up on his desk, twirling yet another glass of rum. Someone sits in the chair opposite him. Who though?

CLAIBORNE

You were right. He is a liar and a scoundrel. I very much appreciate the early warning. I could use a man like you, out on the water, keeping an eye on the pirate community for me. A spy if you will.

BOWERY

A spyrate.

You guys. It was Bowery.

INT. CAPTAINS QUARTERS - AFTERNOON

Ariane wakes up on the floor. Her head pounding. She tries to get up only to find that she is shackled to the desk from the french ship.

She tries to break free, but it's no use. Her chains are wrapped around the leg of the desk.

She tries like hell to lift it with her shoulder, but Bowery was right, the damn thing is too heavy.

Determined, she keeps trying.

INT. POLICE CARRIAGE - AFTERNOON

Jean sits, manacled, accompanied by one STOIC POLICE OFFICER as they ride through the city towards the station.

JEAN

It must be hard fighting crime in such a lawless community, huh?

No answer.

JEAN

I get it. I'm a privateer. I deal with lowlifes and pirates literally every day. I mean, fucking pirates, am I right?

Nothing.

JEAN

Ok look. Name your price. Ok?
Anything. All you have to do is
unlock these manacles and look the
other way.

Nope.

JEAN

Did I mention I'm a privateer!?
Seriously, anything you want, I can
get it for you, just for the price
of not noticing that I happened to
slip out the door of the carriage.
Woopsie.

Less than nothing. Jean thinks.

JEAN

What if I told you this coat used
to belong to Napoleon Bonaparte?

KABLAMO!! The entire carriage lurches to the side, locks its
wheels and flips over to the left.

Both men are thrashed about as the carriage slides 10 feet
along the dirt street before screeching to a halt.

Jean coughs up dust and blinks to try to focus on what the
fuck is going on.

A swift CRASH, and a CRACK, and the carriage door opens up in
what is now the ceiling of the sideways vessel.

A crossbow arrow ZIPS in through the opening and straight
into the policeman's head.

An arm extends down into the carriage. Jean recognizes and
takes it immediately, being hoisted out of this mess in a
single pull.

EXT. STREETS OF NEW ORLEANS - AFTERNOON

Pierre lifts Jean out and up onto the side of the fallen
carriage.

Jean is as happy to see his brother, as he is to be free, as
he is impressed by the fact that he pulled off this rescue.

PIERRE

Who's the smart one now, huh?

THUNK! An arrow hits the carriage just below them. They look to their left to see ...

Evidently Pierre managed to take down the carriage roughly 20 feet from the New Orleans police station.

A mountain of police officers pour out of the building, brandishing swords and crossbows and yelling.

POLICEMAN 1
Seize them!!

THUNK! There's another arrow. Fuck.

JEAN
Run!

PIERRE
Run!

One of their men takes an arrow in the neck and goes down. Jean pulls a sword off a dead policeman's body, Pierre pulls his own.

They jump down off the back of the carriage and run like hell through the streets of New Orleans with literally all of the police behind them.

PIERRE
Get to the ship!!

JEAN
I hate you so much right now!!

Shut up and run, boys!

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**INT. CLAIBORNE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON**

Bowery now sips his own rum as he and Claiborne discuss business.

BOWERY

I shall require my own ship and crew of able bodied men.

CLAIBORNE

What? No. Who do you think I am, the Queen of England? This is an unincorporated territory in the United States, I barely have two pennies to shove up your ass.

BOWERY

Well at least the ship, then. I can find good men on my own.

CLAIBORNE

What part of 'no' don't you ... I only have one ship of my own. One military vessel for this entire port city.

BOWERY

I can hardly be a good spyrate ...

CLAIBORNE

Don't say spyrate.

BOWERY

... If I don't have a ship with which to spy and pirate.

CLAIBORNE

Not my problem. The deal is this. You continue to live your worthless pirate life however you see fit, and in exchange for giving me information, I will keep you out of jail.

BOWERY

And line my pockets.

CLAIBORNE

No! God damnit! I am offering you--

A policeman bursts through the door. Claiborne shrieks a little.

POLICEMAN 2
Sir! Laffite has escaped!

CLAIBORNE
What? Get him! Send everyone you have!

POLICEMAN 2
We did, sir. He had help. They've made it to the docks! They are prepping their ship to embark right now.

CLAIBORNE
Well Deploy our ships!

BOWERY
You've only got one ship.

CLAIBORNE
Fuck you, Bowery! Ugh!!

POLICEMAN 2
Sir!?

CLAIBORNE
Deploy the USS Montgomery! Now!

POLICEMAN 2
But sir, it's just a couple of pirates, sir.

CLAIBORNE
They're Privateers you nitwit! Now Go!!

The policeman rushes out, Claiborne hurls his glass against the wall, smashing it to pieces.

EXT. THE DORADA - AFTERNOON

Jean, Pierre, and what remains of their crew fight off the police.

The crew continue to man the ramp as Jean runs up onto the deck to prepare to launch.

Pierre runs around the perimeter, cutting the ropes currently tying them to the dock.

JEAN
Stop! Stop!

PIERRE
We need to go now!

JEAN
We will need those!

PIERRE
Jean, when it's time to talk smart things, talk smart things. When it's time to be a pirate, shut the fuck up and let me do my thing.

JEAN
Oh, is stranding us, helpless at the police station your thing too?

PIERRE
Fuck you, Jean!

Pierre swings to cut another rope.

JEAN
Just STOP! We WILL need those!

Pierre reluctantly stops and runs to help the men drop sails. Jean unties the rope and pulls it in. He yells down to the men defending the ramp.

JEAN
We are clear! All aboard!! We launch NOW!

As the ship begins to pull away from the dock, Jean looks up to see police climbing all over the USS Montgomery in the distance. She'll be away in moments as well. Fuck.

INT. CAPTAINS QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Ariane struggles to push the desk upwards with her back. It's an awkward site and it's useless, the thing barely budes.

To make things worse the ship has begun to toss and roll as it pulls out of the harbor and out to sea.

Ariane begins pulling her chains back and forth against the wooden leg. Maybe the chains will break or maybe the leg - at least it's something.

BOOM! The entire room lurches to the side. The desk raises off the ground just an inch for a split second and then slams back down into the wood floor.

ARIANE

What in the world?

Ariane cranes her neck to try to see out the window behind the desk. She can see the bow of the USS Montgomery following not too far behind, cannons aimed directly at The Dorada.

She tugs and squirms to get a better look -- BOOM! Another jolt drags her and the desk further away from the window.

She gets an idea. She crouches down and pulls her chains tight against the wood leg, waiting.

BOOM! Another jolt lifts the desk off the ground for just a split second - long enough for her to pull back and FREE HERSELF from the desk.

Ariane flies back awkwardly, barely getting to her feet before wobbling backwards into the wall, knocking the lit GAS LAMP and sending it flying and spraying gas and flames everywhere.

Fuck. Ariane gains composure and darts to the center of the room away from the wall which has completely lit on fire.

She looks down at her still chained up hands.

ARIANE

Keys. Keyskeyskeys.

She looks around the room for where the hell they might be. Her gaze drifts to the wall that is literally on actual fire.

The keys hang neatly on an iron hook, surrounded by flames.

Shit.

EXT. THE DORADA - LATE AFTERNOON

The Dorada is now far from the docks of New Orleans and sails at full speed along the Mississippi River with the USS Montgomery close on its heels.

Have you ever seen a pirate ship chase in the middle of the Mississippi delta? No, you have not. But it's happening. Right now.

BOOM! Another round of cannon-fire from the Montgomery rocks The Dorada. Pierre bounds up the stairs of the poop deck to where Jean stands.

PIERRE

Jean! We have to slow down.

JEAN

What? We have to speed up.

PIERRE

We can't speed up. Not fast enough. They are faster than us in their sleep.

JEAN

Pierre. When are you going to listen? This is about strategy. They have more cannons than we have. If they get along side us, our ship will be torn to pieces.

PIERRE

Our ship is being torn to pieces. We will not outrun them, and we will sink before we reach the gulf. Our only chance is to stop and defeat them in hand to hand combat.

JEAN

Cannons, Pierre!

PIERRE

We send our men through the gun ports to attack their gunmen first. Then we focus attention on the deck.

BOOM!

JEAN

That's hysterical! Get down there and tell--

PIERRE

You want to be a fancy pants privateer, fine! Well I am a fucking pirate. This is what I know. This is what I do! And if you won't stop this ship, I will.

JEAN

Are you threatening mutiny?

The two brothers look at each other in a stalemate soaked in sweat.

Brrrrrrrt.

PIERRE

Did you just ...?

JEAN

Ugh. Yeah, sorry. It's the stress.
I swear, danger makes my guts just--

PIERRE

I don't care. Can I stop the
fucking ship now?

JEAN

Yes, sorry, yes yes, you are right,
stop the ship.

Pierre jumps down to give the order, Jean turns to look at the approaching Montgomery, holding his guts like they are on fire.

INT. CAPTAINS QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

As the fire spreads to a second wall, Ariane tears her dress, wraps it around her hands, and approaches the flaming wall where the keys hang.

She takes a deep breath and reaches into the flames.

Fuck! Ouch ouch too hot. She psyches herself up, takes a few heavy breathes, grits her teeth and dives back in.

She shoves her hands into the flames and grabs the keys.

Ripping them off the wall, she stumbles backwards, the dress wrapped around her arm in full flames.

She shrieks and acts fast, unraveling the flaming fabric in seconds and kicking it away.

She grabs the keys and immediately yelps and drops them as they singe her fingers.

ARIANE

Idiot.

She uses whats left of her dress to grab the keys safely and start testing them one by one on her shackles.

The flames grow and grow all around her.

EXT. THE DORADA - CONTINUOUS

From the deck of The Dorada, the Montgomery appears to be approaching fast as lightning.

Half of the Laffites' men crouch in a hiding position.

PIERRE
(in hushed tones)
Wait for it. Let them think they
are catching us ... and Now!

Three men stand and tug at the main sail, screeching their ship to a rapid halt.

PIERRE
AAARRRGGGHHH!!!!!!!

As the Montgomery slams into the side of The Dorada, Laffite's men jump from their positions and leap across onto the Montgomery, catching the crew by surprise and attacking them viciously.

GUN DECK

The gun ports swing open and out pour more of Laffite's men, jumping across into the gun ports on the Montgomery.

Once inside, throats are slit, chests are stabbed. It's a full out giant pirate attack. A real one. It ain't like the fuckin' ride at Disney, kids.

THE DECK OF THE USS MONTGOMERY

Pierre is finally loosed upon a worthy opponent, a horde of police. He is pretty magnificent to watch in battle. The true image of a blood thirsty pirate warrior. He may indeed be the dumb one, but god damn can this dude fight.

THE DECK OF THE DORADA

Meanwhile, Jean runs for his life, swinging his sword at policemen as they raid the ship, but swinging it more like a fly swatter than a weapon.

Jean manages to trick one of them into stabbing their sword into a wooden mast. Jean kicks him hard in the balls and then shoves him off the edge of the ship.

As the policeman flails through the air down to the water, Jean runs for the safety of his captain's quarters.

Pierre and his men are driven back to the deck of The Dorada by the crowd of police streaming up from below deck as Jean reaches his quarters and swings the door open to find ...

CAPTAINS QUARTERS

By now, the fire started by Ariane has consumed the entire room. His room is a hellscape.

JEAN

Fuck!!

In the center of the room, he sees that the TRAP DOOR down to the gun deck below is open.

GUN DECK

Ariane struggles to make her way through the lower deck as the ship heaves, lurches, and bashes against the Montgomery.

Debris from the captain's quarters has begun to fall through the trap door, spreading the fire down here ... where all the gun powder for the cannons is. Fucking perfect.

Whats even MORE ... the holes from all that cannon fire earlier are officially taking their toll. Ariane is running through a full foot of water right now, which means the bottom two decks have to be nearly full already.

Everything. Is. Fucked.

THE DECK OF THE DORADA

Jean nearly falls over as the ship tips a bit to the left. He looks around at the chaos and madness everywhere.

He notes that the side rail of The Montgomery is now a full foot higher than the side rail of The Dorada.

In an instant, Jean accepts what is happening and calculates a plan.

JEAN

Pierre!!

On the bow of the ship, Jean's yelling distracts Pierre, allowing the policeman he's fighting to knock his sword clear out of his hand.

The policeman stabs but Pierre grabs his arm. Pierre is pinned and sword-less.

JEAN

Here!

Jean draws his own sword and THROWS it to Pierre.

Pierre reaches his arm out to grab it.

It lands like five feet short. Throwing swords is really not Jean's thing.

JEAN

Fuck!!

Jean runs through the madness on deck to help his brother.

Meanwhile, an annoyed Pierre head-butts the policeman, breaks his arm, takes the sword and runs it through his torso.

Pierre rights himself handing Jean his sword.

Jean notices he's already literally taken care of everything.

JEAN

Ok nope. Just kidding.

PIERRE

What were you going to say?

JEAN

We're fucked.

PIERRE

I know.

JEAN

We've already lost a foot.

PIERRE

We need to retreat.

JEAN

They'll just catch us.

PIERRE

Got a better idea?

JEAN

Of course. Having a better idea is what I do, baby brother.

Pierre smirks. He does have to concede that point.

JEAN
Remember I said we would need the
rope?

PIERRE
Nope.

JEAN
If we're going down. They're going
down.

PIERRE
What?

JEAN
Just follow me god damnit!

Jean runs. Pierre follows.

STERN

Ariane bursts up through the deck door to find herself in the middle of a crazy ass Pirate riot.

She is drenched, head to toe, as the lower decks are officially flooded.

She dodges left to avoid Skeeps as he runs a policeman to the edge and off the ship. Skeeps screams bloody murder through his all but toothless jaws and runs back into the fray.

SKEEBS
FUCK THE POLICE!!!

Ariane watches his madness, almost impressed, then ducks fast to avoid being hit in the head by SOMETHING ...

It's Jean. Swinging from the fucking mast. In the distance, she sees Pierre doing the same.

She watches in awe as both boys swing, respectively, to the foremast and the main mast of The Montgomery. They both wrap their ropes around the mast multiple times.

They untie the Montgomery's own ropes and swing back to The Dorada. It is an awesome sight to behold.

Another JOLT to the ship and her concentration is pulled away from the swinging Laffites.

THE DECK OF THE MONTGOMERY

As The Dorada Lurches, so does The Montgomery. As their ship begins to lean heavily towards their opponent, they begin to realize what is happening.

POLICEMAN 3

Shit! Cut the line! Cut the line!

POLICEMAN 1

What line!!

POLICEMAN 2

Cut all the lines!!

It's no use, as The Dorada continues to drop, The Montgomery leans so far to its side the gun-ports begin to flood water into the inner decks.

THE DECK OF THE DORADA

Tying off the last of the ropes, Jean rushes to Pierre, yelling out to his crew.

JEAN

Abandon ship, boys!! Abandon ship!!

He grabs Pierre and they head to the stern.

PIERRE

I thought the captain was supposed to go down with the ship.

JEAN

We're pirates, Pierre. No one gives a shit about that.

PIERRE

I thought we were privateers.

JEAN

Pierre, not now. Besides. We're not abandoning our ship we're just trading down ...

PIERRE

What?

JEAN

The brothers Laffite row away in a cockboat safe and sound as the idiots sink into--

PIERRE
Can you please call it a dinghy?

JEAN
It's a cockboat!

Jean and Pierre reach the launching deck of the cockboat (dinghy/escape rowboat) ... and it's fucking gone.

JEAN
Balls.

They look up to see said cockboat about forty feet down river, drifting swiftly towards the Gulf of Mexico, being rowed by Ariane.

Pierre fumes.

EXT. COCKBOAT - CONTINUOUS

Ariane sucks at rowing, but she is doing it like her life depends on it, because it literally does.

BOOM!! KABOOM!! BANG!!

Scared shitless by the sound, Ariane looks up to see both ships explode into fireballs. Evidently her fire finally reached the gunpowder reserves and ... y'know. Boom.

Splinters fly. Masts go up in flame before falling to the side. The wreckage begins to swiftly sink below the water.

Ariane has never seen anything this completely insane before. Which is why she doesn't notice when Pierre BURSTS up into the boat behind her, pulls her back into a hold, and puts his knife to her throat.

Jean awkwardly clamors into the front of the boat from the water and notices them both looking back at the giant flaming wreckage. He looks back at it as well.

Brrrrrrrrrt.

JEAN
Sorry. Stress.

END ACT FOUR

TAG**EXT. BARATARIA ISLAND - SUNSET**

Finally clear of the Mississippi, our heroes row through the swampy bay of Barataria to a small, desert, little island.

After dragging the cockboat up onto shore, all three of them collapse, exhausted on the beach.

JEAN

First and foremost. Why? Why did you do that?

He looks at Ariane.

ARIANE

Do what?

JEAN

"My name is Yvonne Laffite! This man is my brother! I'm a stupid asshole!"

ARIANE

I saw a chance to be free and I took it.

JEAN

You had a chance to be rich. You should have taken that.

ARIANE

Next to freedom, money is pale dog. I would expect a pirate to know that.

JEAN

Privateer.

PIERRE

Can I please just fucking kill her now?

JEAN

No. No you cannot. With our ship destroyed, she is officially the most valuable possession we own.

ARIANE

Excuse me! I am not a possession that you own!

JEAN

I'm actually the one saving your life right now, so maybe cool it with the sass.

PIERRE

She has fucked everything! She is an everything fucker! We should have just killed her when we found her!

JEAN

I agree, she is problematic, nevertheless, I repeat, she is of extreme value to us. We will need that value to get us out of this mess.

ARIANE

I am right here! Stop talking about me like an object!

JEAN

Ok, do you not understand what is happening right now? He wants to kill you and I am trying--

ARIANE

I feel like I am the *only* person who understands what is going on right now!

PIERRE

We are stranded in the middle of nowhere with no ship, no gold, no nothing. All because of you--

ARIANE

You want a ship? Go steal a ship. I have personally witnessed the ease with which you take ships at will.

JEAN

She is right, we are exceptionally adept at ship theft.

ARIANE

Frankly, I don't understand what either of you are complaining about. You were pirates when you woke up this morning and you're still pirates now.

JEAN
Privateers.

PIERRE
Shut up!

JEAN
This morning we didn't have the
hatred of the Mr. William Claiborne
and the entire United States
Military--

ARIANE
The United States Military?

Ariane can't help but laugh.

ARIANE
Are you listening to yourself? Were
you paying attention at all this
morning in Claiborne's office?

JEAN
Indeed I was. I was about to close
a deal with him if you'll recall--

ARIANE
I recall him telling you that he
has no power! The local French hate
him. The government only gave him
one military ship. And we just sank
it.

JEAN
We?

ARIANE
The entire area is a lawless joke
that isn't even a United State yet.

PIERRE
I was wondering about that. What is
the difference between a state and
a territory? This new country is
very confusing.

ARIANE
This place is nothing. But it is
going to become something. When it
does, whoever controls the water
controls the land. Think about it.
It's a port town.

PIERRE

We sunk their ship. They aren't going write letters of marque to the people who sank their fucking ship. Without letters of marque we can't control shit!

JEAN

Brilliant.

PIERRE

Thank you.

JEAN

Not you. Her. "This place is nothing. But it is going to become something."

ARIANE

Of course. It's the only port in the gulf. The shipping gateway to the western Americas.

JEAN

No, no. THIS place. Right here.

ARIANE

I don't follow.

PIERRE

I do.

JEAN

You do?

PIERRE

No. Keep going.

JEAN

We build a commune. Here. Right here on this island.

Ariane grimaces at the sight of the place.

JEAN

It's perfectly placed. We can intercept and view any and all ships going in and out of the gulf and New Orleans.

PIERRE

Ok. But what about the letters of marque?

JEAN

We write them ourselves. She's right. Until the United States incorporates this area, letters of marque from Claiborne may as well come from anyone.

ARIANE

May as well come from us.

PIERRE

No, not us! You are not part of us.

JEAN

Yes she is. Ariane. If you go through with your marriage to Benoit but swing his loyalty to us instead of Claiborne then half the war is won.

ARIANE

No.

JEAN

What?

ARIANE

I won't do it.

JEAN

I feel like we were getting into a really good rhythm there and then you just ruined it.

ARIANE

My name is not Ariane De Guermantes anymore. It's Yvonne Laffite, and we Laffites do not marry for loyalty, we simply take it.

JEAN

Take it?

ARIANE

Well, buy it.

PIERRE

Wait, you're a Laffite? I'm confused.

JEAN

No, I'm confused. Buy it?

ARIANE

Benoit doesn't care about me. He cares about the dowery. From my father.

PIERRE

Still confused.

ARIANE

The dowery which is still in the trunk on the french ship at your dock in Port-Au-Prince.

JEAN

(remembering)

Shit! We never dismantled the ship!

ARIANE

We buy Benoit's loyalty with that Dowery. Move the family operation here. Establish ourselves as the biggest privateering and shipping business, controlling the largest port in the Gulf Of Mexico--

JEAN

And when the United States incorporates New Orleans, our business becomes legitimate.

Jean's eyes are on fire. The future is fucking bright.

JEAN

I don't have to be a pirate anymore.

ARIANE

Privateer.

JEAN

Privateer.

PIERRE

Privateer.

Jean and Ariane both look at him, confused.

PIERRE

You both said it, I thought I'd say it too.

The three of them look at one another, understanding the enormous undertaking they are about to carry together.

PIERRE

So what do we do?

JEAN

Have you not been listening?

PIERRE

No I mean, what do we do right now?

JEAN

Oh. Yeah the current plan is really more long term. The immediate future is ... well, it's fucking bleak.

The three of them look out towards the west as the sun sets on their past and darkness washes over their strange and convoluted future.

END