

LAST TALES

of

# MONKEY ISLAND





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## PART I - THE TOMB OF THE TITAN



## Episode I - The last inhabitant of Scabb Island

*Deep in the Caribbean...*

*Scabb Island*

So I break into the stinkin' deck of his demon ship and tell him: "Now you're in for it, you bilious bag of barnacle bait! So LeChuck cries: "Guybrush, have mercy! I can't take it anymore!

Yeah, I'm Guybrush Threepwood, Mighty Pirate. I'm sitting here, deep into the night, right in front of a nice crackling fire on the beach of Scabb Island, telling one of my stormy adventures. Just look at all these people sitting around to listen to me! Hundreds! Maybe thousands! And everyone's here, standing still, pining for every single word of my thrilling story. Voodoo, fork - armed peasants and inflexible judges!

Once I'm done, they all stand up, calling my name, cheering me... and the praises! Their praises sound like a distant echo into the ocean! Yeah, it's great, and they're all there... Bart,Fink... Elaine... Stan... Horatio... Van Winslow... Morgan LeFlay...

No, not at all.

Yeah, alright, I kicked the Pirate God LeChuck's unholy butt two years ago. But... y'know, once there was a song that went more or less like this : "Well, I'd rather be a pirate on Scabb than the scab on a pirate!". Yet I guess that nowadays you'd be lucky even if you saw half a buccaneer's ghost around here. To tell you the truth, since LeChuck's schizophrenic ambition's been cut down for the very last time, things have got only worse.

Now I'm the last person on this dark and fetid island, and I've been here for a year so far: well, for the first time in my life I can understand how it felt for Herman Toothrot. When you've been alone for so long, well, your mind starts playing tricks on you... you see people that are not really there... you live experience which never really happened... imagination confuses you, mystifies you, tortures you... imagination... yeah, maybe it's there I'll live my last adventures... after all, Guybrush Threepwood's age has come to its end. The age of piracy itself has come to its end! Now we're in the age... of the Triad!

Certainly, if you look at it from the right point of view, being the only soul on a deserted island is not that bad. You can spend all the time you want on the beach building sand galleons, for a start. Or you can make up witty puns with the names carved in the marble gravestones. Uhm... well, my galleons look more like some big pile of seagull droppings, that's for sure. And I'd swear a gravestone insulted me once!

Still, the island is full of old abandoned ships, and if you don't care about worms, rats, foul smell and debilitating illnesses you might come down with if you eat rotten food, then of course you can always take advantage of lifelong supplies! By the way, my stomach is rumbling... I guess I'll take a stroll down to the kitchen of the Bloody Lip Bar... "Aye Aye, Captain!" I wave at captain Dread. They hanged him eight years ago on the pier of Phatt Island because he spat on the beach during the governor's mother's official visit. Wait a sec... the governor's... mother's... official visit. Yeah, I guess I got it right.

And then... "Aye, Woody!". One more time I try to take away my doubts about rodents and wood with the old carpenter. They gunned him down when he gave a particularly superstitious pirate a leg made with the wood from some second-hand coffins.

He wishes me that an old wizard may turn my flesh into an excellent wood, neither too young nor too old, so that he can bury me deep into a grave with millions of woodworms. Just as usual.

What, ghosts? No... if only I were really haunted by some ghosts! Now, that would be a really good occasion to set off looking for some rootbeer and start one of those epic duels, just like in the good old days!

No, they're nothing more than stupid, maladjusted shadows. Dull and trivial visions from my mind.



Yes, well, it was a bit disturbing at first, but after a while... I got familiar with it! I got used to it. Now, here comes Woodtick's old rope bridge... I rememeber when...

"Where do you think you're going, fancy pants?"

Great! When you think your grotesque phantasies have come to their highest oddities, that's when the most vivid vision of Largo LaGrande comes in! The same, stupid, annoying midget... he's not taller than two chicks! He's waiting for me at the end of the bridge. Really, I can't think of anything more pathetic...

"Wake up! Wake up!"

Ouch! The shadow of Largo is giving me a working over, just like the old days! Though I must say that it's the first time one of my ethereal and vaporous mental images causes me all this pain...

"Look at me! Hey!"

The shadows of my mind are getting clearer, I'm back into the real world now.

G: "Mr Winslow! It is really you?"

W: "Sir, Captain! I knew you had gone missing, but I really didn't think I could ever find you here on Scabb Island! You looked... confused... your glance was so dull and you didn't answer me... Sorry if I had to be a bit rough to make you listen to me, but... it looks like it worked!"

G: "Ouch... damn, that studded knuckle duster will be the death of me, was it really necessary?"

W:" Yes, sir... "

G:" Why did you come looking for me, Winslow?"

W: "Sir, that matter about Elaine... "

G: "You're wasting your time here, Winslow. Those times are over, gone, dead! Buried metres down into the earth! I don't want to talk about it ever again!"

W: “Murdered in broad daylight... just in front of the crowd, and now every soul in the Caribbean knows that Guybrush Threepwood, Mighty Pirate, killed his wife... and that he fled from Booty Island, he ran away, never to be seen again! I don’t know much more about this story, but I’m sure you’re innocent! Well, I’ll be blowed if this doesn’t sound fishier than LeChuck’s filthy linen cupboard... there must be something behind all this!

G: “I DON’T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT!”

W: “Fine! Then I’ll just have to tell you that... I’ve got the solution! The solution to everything!”

G: “Last time I heard you saying something like that, you organised one of those parties with limbo and tropical cocktails... honestly, I’m not in the mood for... “

W: “No, sir, no... I can bring Elaine back to life, I can fix it all... “

G: “What?... I don’t want a zombie wife!”

W: “No one’s going to give you a zombie wife, sir... have you ever heard of Chronos Grave?

G: “... I hope this isn’t just another one of your exotic dishes with the secret ingredient!”

W: “No sir... Chronos Grave isn’t a recipe... it’s a place. At first, it had a different name. It was called Lucre Island. A nauseating, clean and colourful piece of land, where the worst, infected scum on this earth would crawl... bankers, traders, tourists! That is, until two years ago, when LeChuck got there. The Pirate God LeChuck. He tore it to the ground with some of his strange voodoo weapons, and as a result... well, something apparently impossible happened... “

G: “Did the bankers become less greedy?”

W: “I’m afraid they had to, when they got disintegrated, sir. But I wasn’t talking about that. Y’know that strange swamp on the island, the so-called “Swamp of Time”? Well, that swamp started spilling over and swallowing everything up. Time down there started to become more and more distorted. Space was now deformed, and the whole area became a vortex with no logic nor sense...

G: “That sounds like a perfect description of what happens when I drink too much of those bowel crushing remedies for hangovers...

W: “Aye, I’m sure of that, sir! If only you knew some of the terrible stories people who’ve been there can tell... sometimes ships, lost at sea for years, resurface. Some others disappear without ever coming back. There are those who tell that they travelled through the years, reaching ancient pasts, or remote futures... it seems that the corsair Basilius Von Braun accidentally killed his father when he was young, vanishing into nothing while he was still holding his pulsing heart. What once was Lucre island... now is Chronos’ Grave... the immense swamp out of time, or, according to the new legend, the tomb of Chronos, the Titan... where forever he lies after an ancient conflict with the Gods... “

G: “Tita... what?”

W: “Oh, stop it with this foolish play!”

G: “What?”

W: “Ahem... I said... some jars derive from excellent clay!

G: “And... what’s the matter with that?”

W: “Oh, well... you’re making me lose the thread! Well, those who enter the mists of Chronos Grave run the risk of ending up in strange ages and places, if it were not for the fact that I’ve been doing some researches, and here you are... “

Winslow pulls something out of his clothes... it looks like a sextant... but it’s not a sextant. There ‘s more than one sextant, and they’re mounted up together. But... they have some strange quadrants... strange levers... strange needles. It looks more like a modern piece of art, rather than like a navigational instrument. Aesthetically unpleasant. Definetely too tacky. I must get one for my collection!

W: “Now behold... THE SIX SEXTANTS OF SANTA FE!!!”

G: “The name’s even tackier than the looks!”

W: “Don’t go by the looks, captain! This is the only tool we have to interpretate the mists of Chronos’ Grave, and to find a course through them, towards the times and the places we want. I built it, thanks to the thousand year old wisdom of some... friends. With this... we can fix it all! We’ll go back in time and prevent it from happening again! Things won’t go wrong another time. And you... you’ll have Elaine back! And nothing of all this will have ever happened. “



G: "What... I don't..."

W: "You have two choices ahead of you, sir. You can come with me now, and put an end to this nightmare, forever and ever. Or, you can stay here on this island 'till the end of your days, eating flies and piling up seagull droppings on the beach..."

G: "THEY'RE SAND GALLEONS!"

W: "As you wish, sir. But perhaps you should know that if you choose the second option, I'll hit you with this sextant, and I'll do it violently. I'll knock you out and take you to Chronos' Grave by force. So... what now?"

That old, stinking fatty of Van Winslow! I'd have hugged him, if only he weren't some sort of a crazy bipolar loon strangely and suspiciously attracted by Yours Truly. After what had happened on Booty Island I practically swore that I would never set out at sea again, but... could I really fix it all again? Have Elaine back? Maybe I could have avoided the birth of the Triad, and prevented the Caribbean from turning into this sort of... The mind boggles at the possibilities...

G: "Hey, Winslow! Put down that thing, right now!"

Winslow's already hovering his sextants over my head. I stop him in time. You can count on me, I tell him. He puts them away. He puts away the studded knuckle duster too! Then... hey! Wait a second... something doesn't quite fit...

## **Episode II - The point of No Return**

Winslow and I are walking towards the rotten pier where the Captain Dread's floating house was once moored, yet... something doesn't quite fit!

G: "What is it that you just said, Van Winslow?"

W: "I said that our old ship, the Shouting Seagull, sank while I was trying to keep her on course during a storm, not far from Blood Island!"

G: “What? I thought it was the Narwhal! I thought her name was “The Screaming Narwhal”!

W: “Uhm... yes, sure, the unforgettable Narwhal! How... clear and detailed my memories are! How well I remember it! Oh, those were wonderful times, when we wouldn't set sail if you didn't point the finger at the compass first, weren't they?”

G: “At the map. You would always ask me to point at the map.”

W: “Right, yes, that's what I said! Here it is, captain, look at it! Look at how beautiful and magnificent it is, the ship we'll challenge the pre-established rules of time with! Look at... the SHY CUTTLEFISH!

G: “Are you sure that tiny raft is going to hold the sea until Chronos' Grave, Winslow? There's scarcely room for both of us, and besides, it looks like is going to fall into pieces!”

W: “Oh, sorry if I didn't book you a a first class cruise, you twit!”

G: “I'm afraid I didn't understand you very well.”

W: “What? I said no word, sir! You've become rather bizarre. Did you follow the high fiber-and-iodine diet I suggested? All the same, you know all too well that these waters are no longer safe. Or maybe they're even too safe, since the Triad monitors them 24 hours a day with colossal ships, which are practically unsinkable. And besides, those ships are armed with devilries that most people find unfathomable.”

G: “... so, if we don't stand a chance of winning a fight on an average ship, why not using an absurd one? That's brilliant thinking, Winslow, there's nothing more to say!”

W: “So the only way we have to reduce the possibilities of being seen by those fanatics is to sail with extremely small ships! You're an alpha class wanted person. So... if they catch sight of us, we're done for. If they attack us, we're done for. If they take us prisoners... oh, I don't even want to think about it!”

G: “Alpha class?”

W: “That's their way to denote the most reckless, violent and disgusting survivors of the old age of piracy!”

G: "I know that somehow I should feel offended but... I can't help feeling incredibly flattered..."

W: "So hug the mast of the Cuttlefish! Let the baby feel the overflowing love of her captain!"

G: "Couldn't we just set off?"

W: "..."

G: "Now don't put on that hang-manatee look!"

W: "..."

G: "Stop it immediately, Winslow!"

W: "..."

G: "OKAY, OKAY, I HUGGED IT, ALL RIGHT?"

W: "Great, Captain! Now let's get a move on. The colossal vessel of human history won't get back on course all by herself! Now get hold of the oars! Point the finger at the compass! We're setting sail for Chronos' Grave!"

G: "Again with this "point-the-finger-at-the-compass thing"? It doesn't even make sen... hey! Curse you, Winslow! Wait!"

I try to leap from the dock while the raft is already a good two metres from the shore. I dramatically miss it. I reach it swimming and I land a blow to my assistant on the occipital region. I take my oar and we finally leave. The night waters are calm and sleepy, while a noble full moon guides a wild eyed Guybrush Threepwood and his even more wild eyed first officer Van Winslow on their odd rescuing mission. And speaking of hallucinations... they're gone! I'm feeling great! No more Dread, Bart, Fink or Hugo, with his imaginary but still despicable Lavander Oil TM! But I suppose it was all too normal, considered how long I haven't set off for any great new adventure. Take the sun away from a plant, the ocean from a fish and a daily massive dose of violence away from LeChuck, and all of them will soon start imagining talking stones and bad tempered carpenters. Or at least, I guess so. However, returning at sea is like getting a tack of icy water straight in the face. It suddenly wakes me up and digs up sensations I thought I



had forgotten. The outstanding one... damn, my stomach is emptier than the Club 41 during the “Blonde Beard-Biscuits-Plus Night”. After all it’s really difficult to attract clients with a slogan like “Have breakfast at the Club, with more cockroach grub!”.

G: “... slurp...”

W: “Come again, sir?”

G: “Nothing. I don’t think I’ve already asked you this, but... what’s in that enormous sack, Winslow?”

W: “Uhm... food supplies, captain.”

G: “Oh, great, I’m really hungry. Can I have something edible?”

W: “No, sir!”

G: “Right. MAY I have something edible?”

W: “No, sir!”

G: “Something edible?”

W: “No, sir!”

G: “Damn, Winslow, open that cursed...”

W: “Look, Captain Threepwood! We’re there!”

I see it. All of a sudden the sky has turned misty, the sea has began to stir... and there it is, at the horizon. The grave of Chronos. It’s hard to describe what I’m seeing right now. It’s like some sort of infernal tornado, ferociously torn to pieces by a thousand shocks. It’s as large as an island and it shakes the ocean below until piercing the peak of the sky itself.

G: "So... beautiful..."

W: "Thank you, sir! You're not the first who noticed that I've lost a considerable amount of weight! You know, the secret lies in constantly groping..."

G: "I was talking about Chronos'Grave."

W: "Oh, yes, the island. Provided we could call that colossal dimensional distorsion an island. Uhm... I advise you to hug the mast of the Cuttlefish..."

G: "I think you should stop it with this human-warmth-wanting-raft-thing... it's rather disturbing!"

W: "No, captain, what I mean is... you should hold on tight! We've just gone past the Point of No Return!"

G: "The Point... of No Return?"

Winslow lays down his oar and invites me to do the same. I follow his advice, and I quickly wish I'd never done it. The currents are getting more and more violent. We can no longer keep the raft on course. It's part of the plan, my right hand man assures me. His licence to plan is definitely revoked, I answer back. The Cuttlefish is picking up more and more speed, down headlong into the vortex. Now it's no longer the current which is pulling us, but an invisible force, mightier and more terrifying than a typhoon's wrath. A typhoon whose new galley bumper has just been scratched. The sky slowly fades away. In its place there's only a flash of lightnings convulsively following one another. Everything is more and more blinding. Everything shakes. We lose every landmark. It's impossible to perceive the space around us. I think the water below us disappeared. We're in a huge tempest of... nothing! I turn around. Beside me, Winslow is yelling at the sky with his hands on his hips, a challenging look on his face.

W: "IS IT THIS ALL YOU CAN DO, TITAN? IS IT THIS?"

G: "I don't think we should provoke him in this way..."

W: "THESE ANCIENT DECEASED GODS ARE ONLY COWARDS, CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD! LET THEM SMELL YOUR FEAR AND

THEY'LL TEAR YOU TO PIECES LIKE A PACK OF POODLES WITH THEIR KNUCKLE OF HAM! BUT SHOW THEM YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF THEM AND THEY'LL GO OFF WITH THEIR SACRED PROTUBERANCE BETWEEN THE LEGS! SHOUT! YELL! YELL AT THE TITAN WHAT YOU THINK OF HIM!

G: "Sacred protuberance? But what... uhm, alright... ONLY ONCE I HAVE MET SUCH A COWARD!

W: "It's not fair, you used one of the Swordmaster's insults!

The raft slows down. The light fades. Water is back again beneath the hull. An impenetrable mist suddenly wets us. But it's no normal mist, it's... it's as if strange and obliterating shadows are flowing through it! Yes, I've got a feeling... as if scores of undefinable ghosts are lightly brushing against us, observing us, with the very same careful morbidity of gravediggers measuring our dead bodies.

W: "We're in! We've crossed the barrier of Unreality and now... we're deep into the heart of the tomb!

G: "See? There's no scrape Guybrush Threepwood's corrosive and sharp tongue can't get us out of!

W: "There's no way it's because of your jabbering, so don't you play the hero of the day, you sort of bad trained macaque... WELL DONE CAPTAIN!

G: "What did you say, Winslow? Sorry, I wasn't paying attention to... what's this place? I think I see something... or someone... through the mist. And these images, these sounds... so elusive... far, incomprehensible... "

W: "They're shadows of what once was. Or of what will be. Who knows? These are the crossroads where every spirit passes, long gone or still to come, every spirit which has or will have experienced even only a single breath of life. Basically, we're surrounded by pure primordial chaos. "

G: "I didn't understand much, but I've already heard this sentence many times during the drinking tournaments of "Experimental Ipecac Beer" on Puke Island. "



W: "But the mind can set the chaos in order! Hold these!"

G: "The Strangest Sextants?"

W: "They're called 'Sextants of Santa Fe! Hold them in your hands and listen! Sailing through the mists of Chronos' Grave you can't reach every place or time, but there are some precise restrictions..."

G: "Restrictions? Like, I can travel back in time but only if I accept turning into a flaming giraffe body? Or, I can save Elaine's life, but only if I agree to a hot extramarital relationship with Ozzie Mandrill?"

W: "You're interrupting me. You're absent minded. You're shillyshallying pointlessly. When I met you on the Scabb Island bridge you were barely listening, too. And then, the painful methods I used to keep you focused turned out to work rather well..."

G: "Studded knuckle - duster. Got it. "

W: "As I was saying, as things stand now, we can reach only those places and times the person holding the sextants lived and now remembers. So, the future is unapproachable, just like those places and times we've never visited. "

G: "Van Winslow..."

W: "That said, in order to go back to a specific moment from your past, you'll just have to hold on to the sextants and remember that very moment you want to reach. The instruments will react to the mental energies of their owner and show the way to that precise moment in the space - time. "

G: "Winslow, I just don't know how to tell you, but..."

W: "Oh, by the revolting Iapetus' progeny! What is it now? One more trivial observation on flaming giraffes and I leave you again on Scabb island tossing and turning in your..."

G: "No, Winslow. You talked about memory. The point is... well, I don't remember anything about Elaine's murder! Everything is so damn strange. Confused. All I remember is... I had a splitting headache, Elaine was dead, people were after me... that was atrocious! I ran away from Booty Island and..."

W: "This doesn't matter."

G: Doesn't it? “

W: “No, it doesn't, because... what we've got to do now is... uhm...test the instrument with some... trial questions!”

G: “Oh, so we've just risked being turned upside down, shocked and drowned, and still we don't know whether the Sparkling Sextants are going to work... Great!”

W: “Sextants of Santa Fe, damn! They're called Sextants of Santa Fe! Answer me now, and, however paradoxical the expression may sound in a place like this, don't waste time! If the Titan finds out that we're trying to interfere with the Flow of Existence he might even smash us with all his might, crushing us into unconscious particles condemned to lay here forever. “

G: “Yikes!”

W: “But I must admit this is just the most pessimistic guess. He may just as well kick us out of here. Anyway, we've got to move, so focus... do you remember when you fought against the Pirate God LeChuck?”

G: “Of course I remember it! That coarse pirate vaporized my candid spiritual essence and crushed the bones from my zombie body into dust!”

W: “No reaction from the sextants. Wait a sec... Zombie? You were... dead at the time?”

G: “course I was! And you should know it, you were there pushing buttons and flirting with ambiguous merfolks all the time!”

W: “Damn... damn!”

G: “Problems? Did you repent mating with huge talking fish?”

W: “The instrument doesn't work if it tries to link with a dead man's memories!”

G: “But I'm alive!”

W: “But you were dead when you memorized those events! By the sacred beard of Hyperion's cousin, I...”

W: “Winslow, you may have found me on a desert island laughing hysterically to myself, but I must bitterly notice that you’ve really become the King of Fools lately! Of course, the situation wasn’t at all reassuring earlier, but now it’s even more embarrassing... what, did you get too stressed when you were looking for the Thousand Times Shocking Sextants?”

W: “I said they’re called... calm down, calm down... every fiber of my body is calling for a cold blooded murder, but this wouldn’t make things get better anyway... it wouldn’t make them better... now let’s breath... let’s think of happy memories... now let’s get back to our questions: so, you were dead... and who had killed you?”

G:” LeChuck!”

W: “As predictable as the cirrhosis during a long journey oversea! The instrument is moving... excellent, excellent... go on describing what happened!”

G: ” I was on Flotsam Island. I was drinking a toast to the simultaneous end of both my process and the brutal threat of a cruel French surgeon with a cold grogatini. That is, until that lout of LeChuck broke into the party and ran me through with...”

W: “Twelve degrees north, eight minutes west, time declination sixteen, two winter rotations of the anterior bow!”

G: “Elaine, Winslow! We’ve got to go and save Elaine!”

W: “Precisely, now row with me! Hurry up! They’ve found us!”

I realize that too. Those subtle spirits which first stayed still and gazed at us have now become furious and restless. It’s as if they’re shouting at us in a language that’s more ancient than the universe itself. Or maybe it’s Finnish. While we’re rowing frantically towards some unknown place, the waves beneath us grow full of hate. The sky above shines bright with the crackling dance of a million lightnings. Then, at a very precise point... we come to a grinding halt. After a few seconds some images appear on the misty clouds. At first they’re fuzzy, but they slowly become clearer and clearer, until... they’re real! There’s me! Two years ago! I’m here, on Flotsam Island and... I’m dying! Elaine screams. I’ve just been treacherously ran through by that sack of scum of LeChuck! Where did Winslow



take me? We're in the wrong age! Before I even get the chance to ask him anything, he violently snatches the sextants out of my hands and...

W: "Sweet dreams, you idiot!"

He hits me with them on the head, more and more times. Now... I don't feel any pain. I'm half asleep and I'm going through a sequence of patchy and confused images. Winslow raises the sextants and screams something. He's ordering the time to stop. Or his underpants to clean, I'm not sure about that. Darkness. I see those blinding lightnings again. Everything shakes. Elaine! A splash. A long and flowing beard. The waters are calm once again and once again I open my eyes. I come round.

There's no sign of Chronos' Grave. We're in the middle of the ocean, though I don't know where. Winslow is there, serious and still. My heart skips a beat when I see who's on his side. Now he's on the raft with us, gazing silently at the waters, the blasphemous among the blasphemouses, the abominable among the abominables, the indecorous among the indecorouses.

LeChuck... is back!

### **Episode III - LaGrande's sleep ends**

It is night in the Tri-Island area. I thought I'd carefully scraped the bottom of my personal barrel of grog losing my only true love forever, hunted down like a rat by half the Caribbean and eventually planning to end my gloomy days on a deserted island, crunching earthworms and talking to the rocks.

Never would I have imagined that the next ring of the above-mentioned, shattering chain of events would have lied in me being the main author of LeChuck's comeback among the living... LeChuck, also known as the most sadistic and unhygienic nemesis a buccaneer could ever dream of...

Or maybe I should say that I'd been... the main accomplice! That's right, I could have never carried out my undesirable mission without... Reginald Van Winslow??? I've been betrayed by a man who would have danced the whole "Prawn Lake" wearing a lovely flesh-tone tutu right on the edge of a volcano crater if I'd asked him to!

Well, as things stand now, I'd rather tell him one thing or two about his bottom and a basketful of avocados, but... I can't! No, I'm neither petrified by fear nor held back by good manners. I'm just... stuck! Try as I may, I can't move a single muscle!

Van Winslow's laughing noisily and coarsely now... and as his voice turns more and more nasal and grim, he slowly takes his own true looks again... the looks of Largo LaGrande!

LL: "The hallucinations caused by the transmutating poison I had covered the quills of my knuckle duster with should have ended right now, substituted by those annoying paralysing effects. There's nothing more to say, I'll congratulate myself later for the small alchemical masterpiece I managed to synthesize. Though much of the effects of the recipe are due to the devastating hallucinogenic properties of the superfine "Thorn Apple of Scabb!"

No... it's impossible! Largo LaGrande is... alive?! And a notoriously inelegant and lumbering savage like him... is wearing a lovely and refined red coat??? But, most of all... those yummy soup plants growing on Scabb... they caused hallucinations??? And what if this were the real explanation behind many things, such as Bart and Fink pretending the others to call them "Bart, Fink, Sven and Josèphine"?

LL:" Good morning, my sweet and golden haired princess! I'm afraid the not so sturdy Prince Charming who rescued you just a while ago may have been simply the result of your graceful and sugary imagination. But not to worry, my dear, I'm sure that if you keep on plaiting your hair, he will really come and pick you up... sooner or later. And then you will always live happily ever after... who knows, maybe you'll be together six feet under in a tight wood coffin! Ahr, ahr ahr!"

Prince Charming? How can a prince be entirely charming? He's a man after all... surely he can't be that charming! Could he have been infected by some shocking infectious illness? And... Chronos' Grave... the mists of time... were those an illusion, too? No, wait a second! That must have really happened! The Irrelevant

Sextants are still there, in that corner, throbbing with a strange energy and soaked with the annoying wet of that mist... But of course! LeChuck didn't climb up with his filthy hands from the dark abyss of the Netherworld, he just came back... from the past! From an unpleasant past, a past which had been dug out of my brains with the very same precision of a surgeon! And who did it? The man who was my first officer, or so I thought... instead, it had always been Largo LaGrande!

Yeah, while that lousy abortion was busy with the invitations for his perverted get-together, my mind, both doped by his poisons and my unhealthy consomme, led me to personally open the cosmic door to the most disgusting guest in history! A guest that now is back... neither as a ghost nor as a zombie, and not even as a zombie who accidentally fell asleep in the sun! He must have been drawn out from the times of my foul murder, a murder that he himself committed during that Esponja Grande matter... so he's... just a human? Alright, Largo's always been less clever than a box of clams with senility problems, but why has he made LeChuck come back in his weakest form?

LCK: "Yarr! By all the oblique toothed globicephals! By all the piercing gastroduodenal ulcers! By all the most inexorable and disfiguring plagues that..."

Always the same caveman. Everyone knows that globicephals do not have oblique teeth, it's mostly lagerinorynxes who have them. And I don't even want to mention how casually he's holding his cutlass... still warm and dripping blood from my bowels, which it's been drawn out of just a while ago! Or two years ago, that depends on the point of view. And now there he is, pointing his sword at... Largo's throat??? In fact, I took advantage of all this confusion and slipped behind this enormous and mysterious sack, and I'm not even sure LeChuck has noticed me so far... uhm, if only it weren't for the sharp, intense wrath I'm feeling right now for having been deceived like this! If only it weren't for the context, not exactly the most favourable to what I call "self-preservation"! Then it would be real fun to watch the clumsy and bewildered gestures of that underdeveloped monkey! Yeah, I thought I was the only one who was at a loss, but apparently the Shy Cuttlefish is now putting up someone who's even more confused than I am...

LCK: "Largo LaGrande? In the name of Lucifer's lousy toupee, what the hell be this wizardry!? I insist ya explain yerself! Or I'll have ta trust yer already poor

gastric system with ta heavy task of metabolizing a massive amount of sharp metal!”

LL: “LeChuck, LeChuck! I’ve just drawn you out of an age when you are little less than a name to soil an imaginative kid’s pants with, but... really don’t thank me so heartily! All this sweetness makes me blush! This atmosphere, so full of human warmth, is getting a little bit embarrassing!”

LCK: “Kids? Human warmth? Sweetness?”

I doubt LeChuck may ever be able to understand the concept of human warmth, especially when this is different from the vapour rising up when you drown some poor fellow deep down into the lava for vengeance, out of spite or simply because you want to take a break in the weekend.

LCK: “I... I was abou’ ta plunder the most outstandin’ voodoo booty I ever came across, right in front of that Threepwood jellyfish!!! An’ now I’m...”

LL: “Dead! As cold as pork leftovers and as dry as a stale donut. All you’re talking about already happened a long time ago! For yet another time you’ll infect your flesh with a shameful amount of voodoo, and yet another time you’ll be destroyed, and all because you’re so stubborn, that you still refuse to understand the nature and the potential of those energies you unjustly get hold of. “

LCK: “What? Understand nature and potential? ‘Tis be babbles, that’s it! Lovin’ an’ paranoid voodoo mummy - babbles! I don’t think ya worry about a kudu’s free time hobbies when ya eat a kudu donut, do ya! Neither do ya care how many invalidatin’ inner lacerations the man bakin’ them’s suffered! Ya just eat it!”

LL: “I wouldn’t say so. You really have no idea how many inhuman dysentery attacks a kudu in a bad company may cause. All the same, we weren’t discussing the antelopes’ social problems. Whatever the cause may have been, your voodoo binge has turned out to be a lot more than stodgy. You were a god, but you were destroyed. Two years ago.”

LCK: “What? Me... dead? Two years ago?”

LL: “That’s it, fried to a turn by the above mentioned jellyfish, so it seems. And since then, you never came back into this dimension. Your regenerative power somehow didn’t work properly. And besides, no relic has ever been found to celebrate a new resurrection ritual! Neither a living piece from your body, nor a fragment from your soul! By the way, you couldn’t possibly imagine how many dishonest guts merchants have marinated common human hair in disgusting soups made with cabbage, droppings and organic detritus so to create that unmistakable smell, and then pass them off as yours!”

LCK: “I really don’t understand how someone could have fallen for it!”

LL: “Neither do I! You know all too well that I can’t smell anything. In order not to go mad after that you’d returned in a perfectly good shape, I stuck some burning embers up my nose and permanently burned my olfactory receptors! However, once I’d drawn the conclusion that all I had of you was little more than an awful memory, it suddenly came to my mind that I might have moulded you from the cosmic clay of Chronos’ Grave!”

LCK: “The Clay of Chronos’ Grave? What is it, did ya study to be a potter lately? Well, mould me some elegant spittoon where I can... wait a second! I feel... something in my chest! Like... some kind of weight!”

A weight in the chest? For a moment I picture myself Largo’s clever plan miserably failing after months of artificial plots, and all because of a heart attack striking down LeChuck’s heart in the thick of it. The very same LeChuck who’s now moving his stinking beard away from his chest and is now... uhm... unbuttoning his shirt...

LCK: ” May a suppurating bubo obstruct yer lungs ‘till it chokes ye! Me chest! What... What be it that’s stuck into me chest!”

LL: “Quite differently from what you can drum into the ingenuous mind of some idiot, the past cannot be modified, not even if you’re as strong as a Titan! But if you have the right instruments with you, then you can steal from it... a copy of the individual! You can draw away from someone’s memory a mere instant, make it double and give life to it. The point is, a result that is so meaningful in terms of creation will inevitably come to the same meaningful costs! In this case, the copy will be necessarily imperfect.”



LCK: “Imperfect? Wait, I got it! Thar be this huge clock in me chest because I’ve got the terribly bad habit of pretending to constantly know what time it is!”

LL: “I’m afraid the limitations of your body are far worse than that, LeChuck! That clock can neither be stopped, nor removed. And most of all... it would be much more appropriate to call it a Necro-Clock! In fact, it won’t tell you the time, but it will count every second of the time you still have to live. That is, exactly ten days from the moment you passed through the barrier of time. Once the ten days are gone, your heart will stop. And you will die.”

Well, my supposition wasn’t so far from reality after all.

LCK: “You... ya meaningless barrel of snot! Ya scrap, good for nothing but the slaughterhouse! Ya incontrovertible and disfiguring disgrace of humanity! In the past me spirit reincarnated in the most immensely powerful shapes! I could handle the flames! Stop the time! I only needed to tell the right thing, and my enemies begged for mercy!”

Yeah, I can figure that: “Have one more cookie, I baked them myself!”.

LCK: “Me... with all that power, I could’ve fixed this devilry too... and instead, ya had me back in this disgraceful pile of flesh, even more helpless than an anchovy that’s ready for salting! I’ll...”

LL: “No, LeChuck, stop! First, I worked out many different strategies we could use to extend your life in this current shape. And we’re going to discuss them. Secondly, your comeback from that precise moment was absolutely fundamental... because that’s where the key is hidden, the key to dig out the most fabulous and precious treasures which could ever tease the dreams of men. Something I’ve restlessly looked for in the last ten years and which maybe I’ve finally...”

LCK: “Honey? Uhm... ya’ve got more or less two minutes to try to set everything right. And see that yer story’s REALLY interesting.”

LL: “Listen, when your fortress accidentally blew up, more or less ten years ago... by the way, first of all thank you for the interest you showed in my fate, even though I’d just avoided you an eternity spent putting up worms in a wood chest.”

LCK: “Ya be welcome. That Burrito Bar I raised ta yer memory in the Big Whoop days brought more problems than quids. “

LL: “A... Burrito Bar... to my memory? I’d like to make a few comments about that, but I doubt I will. As I was saying, the explosion threw me on a really distant island. I banged my head and I fell asleep for hours. Or maybe days. Full of strange visions. And you know what dreams are like... they use the strangest languages to communicate apparently easy concepts.”

LCK: “Like Finnish?”

LL: “No.”

LCK: “Go on. Yer story’s sucked up to now, which doesn’t increase your chances of survival.”

LL: “Well, I dreamt I was in this huge cave. There was a dog with me, a flying one. Looking at me with my mother’s face. And speaking with my granddad Marco’s voice. But he’s called Fuller. And I’ve got only my pants on. “

LCK: “Ya’re wasting more time. Useless details. Metal’s hard to digest...”

LL:” And then, the dog points at a tiny crack in the rock. He wants me to look through it. And guess what I see?”

LCK: “Your impending slaughter?”

LL: “What would have been a normal Caribbean landscape, if only it hadn’t been for the trees, the mountains, the ocean and even the sky! Entirely covered with gold and silver and precious stones! So, since it looks like there’s no way out of the cave, I ask the beast how I could reach all that lovely bounty. And then it opens its mouth and his whole answer is a a really odd sound...”

LCK: “That be called “barking”, Largo! Dogs sometimes do that.”

LL: “No, damn, it wasn’t barking! It sounded more like a sinister and grave music. Like the melancholic stream of the wind blowing in an immense crag. So I focus

and after a few minutes I suddenly realize they're... words! Incredibly delayed and spoken with the very same tone of a stone giant suffering from asthma. It's repeating over and over again: "SOOOORRRCEEEEREEER'S GEEAAAAR.... LOOOOOOOK FOOR THE SOOOORCEEEEREEER'S GEEAAAAAAR..." I ask him if he can be a bit clearer, and he just answers me back straight away, as plain as my granddad: "Oh, come on, look for the Sorcerer's Gear, you twit!" Guess what I found out then: it's all true!"

LCK: "Oh, hours of complicated dreamlike suggestions, and all of this just to conclude that ye're really a twit. Extraordinary!"

LL: "That's not quite right... also because this dream lasted no longer than a few minutes. In the hours left I dreamt of lying with blooming and buxom women... anyway, it doesn't matter. However, when I woke up there was this name hammering in my head and the image of boundless mountains of gold fuelling my soon-to-become-obsession. So I started combing through books and volumes, I started deciphering codes and incunabula of all sorts... "

LCK: "What? Regardless of all the risks that old motto spoke of? "He who reads and studies hard will turn to ashes in the graveyard?"

LL: "That's rubbish! We invented it ourselves, when we set on fire all the libraries in the Tri-Island area on a mere whim!"

LCK: "Oh, right. "

LL: "However, after months and months of researches, I finally found it. The Sorcerer's Gear really existed! It seems that it was the most ancient of all treasures. A precious alchemical artefact, some kind of an ancestral forge created centuries ago by a man whose memory is now long lost! A man who seems to be able to forge unlimited quantities of gold and jewels out of nothing! So, in order to understand if it was actually possible to find it or build it again, I studied the practices, the techniques and the alchemical philosophies for years. But it was in vain. "

LCK: "Predictable. The initiation to an immense and a thousand year old source of power didn't change the fact that basically, ye're still a sucker after all."

LL: "You're hurting my feelings. Also because one day I finally found what I was looking for... the regular dodecagon!"

LCK: "The "specular... gorgon... " what?"

LL: “The regular dodecagon! An essential symbol, and it’s recurring in all the texts mentioning the Gear... which led me to you, LeChuck!”

LCK: “Ta me? I don’t have a clue abou’ where gorgons go when they want ta look a’t themselves in a mirror!

LL: “... it’s just like playing poetries in front of the mud... I said DODECAGON! It’s a symbol, a bloody geometrical figure with twelve sides! At first I thought it was just a detail, but then I saw it was recurring in all the fragments concerning the Sorcerer’s Gear. I corrupted, stalked, chopped off, stole, fustigated, eavesdropped, threatened, cheated, sank and measured.... “

LCK: “Measured?”

LL: “Yes, areas, perimeters, apothems. That was the time when I still hadn’t realized it would have been much better to leave out of my research all the geometry books, both Euclidean and non. Anyway, my quest has recently brought me to Flotsam Island. Putting together all the fragments I had collected after a hanging, a decapitation and an amusing Fruit Grog Party, I had reached the conclusion that some essential information must be written in the old diary of an overweight witch who lived there. And my assumption was then confirmed when many locals assured me they had seen a strange twelve sides figure during a process, on the diary belonging to a certain “Guru Weighty”...”

LCK: “That be Voodoo Lady, ya fool!”

LL: “That’s it. Anyway, most of the folks were psychopathic louts, too cut off and drunk to be considered reliable for my thoughts. Yet they all agreed on this: LeChuck had been the only one who had read that diary. The lot before some sort of subnormal seller stole it from the courtroom and turned it into ashes during a clumsy try for escape on a boat carrying explosives. “

LCK: “Right, that one! I should have boiled, staked and thrown him in a nest of hungry rats when I had the chance. My mistake.”

LL: “Well then, that’s the reason why I drew you out from that precise period: maybe you still have some important information with you, LeChuck! Information which will allow us to reach a shamefully obscene wealth. All the most powerful kings of this planet will have to lick the floor we walk upon! Every single man will beg for rotting and dying along the lines of our army of darkness! The flames of voodoo will eternally burn on the oceans and continents which won’t bend to our

moody will. And never again will we find ourselves in front of an automatic grog dispenser without change!”

LCK: “That might sound interesting, but yer brain that be gone bad because of an indecent lifestyle never gave ya the impression that ya could... don’t know... DRAW ME BACK JUST A MOMENT LATER, SO THAT I COULD REINCARNATE IN A SLIGHTLY LESS FOOLISH FORM?”

LL: “I tried to do that, damn! I tried to pull you back in that tacky “Pirate God” form! Yet... you could be shaped back only from someone’s memories, get it? And, as far as I know, of all the people you had met, none had escaped being either crushed or turned to ashes.”

LCK: “I’ve had my good reasons for that!”

LL: “So I thought of pulling you back from Threepwood’s memory, the man who had killed you, dragging him in the Tomb of the Titan with a showy excuse and a fair dose of hallucinogens. I did what I could to call you back from the right period, but some matters came up, matters I wasn’t aware of! Not including the fact that we couldn’t stay in the mists of Chronos’ Grave for much longer, so.. I couldn’t do any better than summon you in your human form! But we’ll fix that, too, now I need to know what was written in that diary... and I need to know everything!”

LCK: “Not so quickly, Largo! The fact that I owe you me life doesn’t mean the hierarchy between me and you has changed!”

LL: “Actually that’d be three debts of life, plus twelve millions of pieces of eight and six hundred grams of nacho herb cheese.”

LCK: “That doesn’t change things! I be still the one making decisions here!”

LL: “And that’s precisely what I’m worried about.”

LCK: “What?”

LL: “Nothing. The weather seems to be getting more humid from tomorrow on...”

LCK: “Which be something nobody cares about. So, Guybrush Threepwood was with you, you said. And where is he now?”



LL: “Uhm... he’s there! Always been there, behind that sack!”

He’s turned around! He’s seen me, LeChuck’s seen me! And now he’s getting closer and closer, his ticking chest, his filthy sword and a satanic and satisfied expression on his face! Not including the fact that... I can’t even raise an eyebrow! Yes, I’m really afraid the final chapter has come!

LCK: “Wonderful day, the day you don’t only get to spread some healthy home-made justice, but you get an encore, too! Two ‘Threepwoods... with the same sabre!”

LeChuck stops. What’s this noise? Some kind of an... alarm? AAARRRGHHH, it’s literally splitting my ears! And this light... I can’t see a thing! Then, a voice...

N: “UNAUTHORIZED CRAFT SURVEYED IN THE 114-7G SECTOR! IN THE NAME OF THE INVIOABLE AND SUPREME AUTHORITY OF THE TRIAD, IDENTIFY YOURSELVES IMMEDIATELY, OTHERWISE FIRE WILL BE OPENED AGAINST YOU IN TEN SECONDS!!!”

LL: “Wait, let me show you...”

LCK: “Kiss me no longer undead butt instead! Ya identify yerselves and maybe I won’t use yer spleens ta paint the deck of me ship!!!”

LL: “Shut up, LeChuck, no!”

A devastating explosion overwhelms us and sweeps us away. Then, the dark, again.

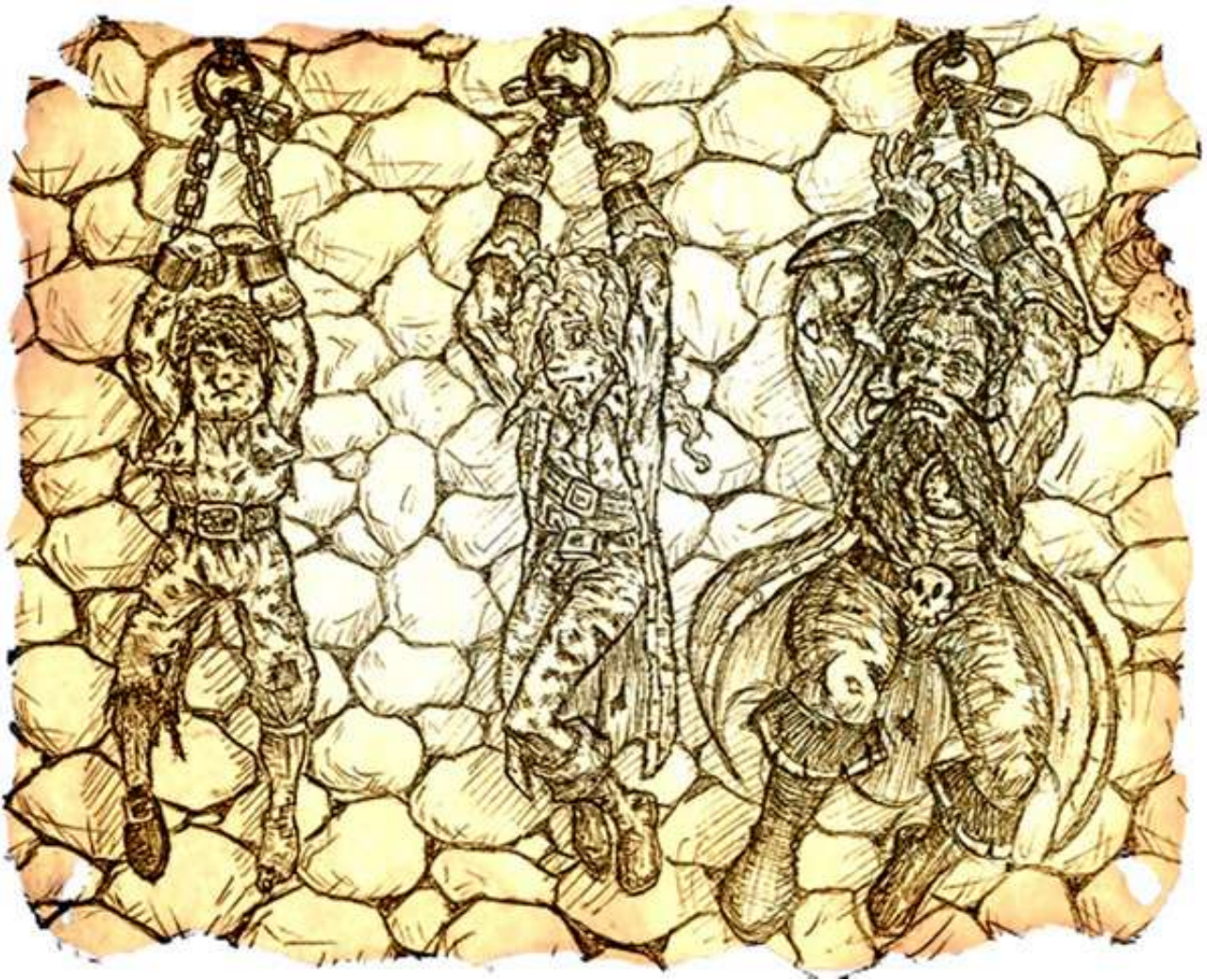
## **Episode IV - A New Age**

I open my eyes. I feel as if I’d slept with a walrus on my stomach for ages. I cough as strongly as a man who wants to get rid once and for all of liver, trachea, lungs and all those useless, aching bowels, so heavy, so complicated, so clogged and crammed. Where the hell am I? It’s a small, bare room, and it’s locked by a solid armoured door on the wall in front of me. I’d venture a steel, molybdenum and clam shell triple plate. The white stones of the wall are dimly lit by some little

lanterns and across the thick bars at the only one window in the room I can see that it's still deep in the night. Armoured doors. Bars at the window. I'll have to congratulate with the landlord. Really, those are responsible precautions, with all those crooks around, waiting for nothing but spitting on your new carpet and screwing off the chandel... wait a minute! My well proportioned pirate legs... definitely can't touch the ground! Right, the good news is that it looks like those traumatic effects caused by Largo's poison are gone! The terrifying news is... the most complex movement I can make is... dangling! My wrists are firmly chained onto the wall behind me with a hardy padlock! I'm in a prison cell! Again! Though I must admit it... this one is reasonably welcoming, and pleasantly thermoregulated. And it also has some lovely balsamic fragrances! It's got nothing to do with those humid armpit - flavoured draughts, or the well mannered beatles bending over backwards to make up your cot on Flotsam Island. But... what's this annoying ticking???

LCK: "Look, Largo, the young sack of pus be flain' about!"

LeChuck! There's LeChuck in the room with me! He's at my left, trapped and hanged like a smelly, ticking rat sausage! The old skunk's beard has been partially ripped to shreds during the explosion, and now that sort of eccentric clock is peeping out through it! The very same clock announcing how much time my nemesis has got before leaving once and for all his vale of tears and grog. Uhm... if only I could interpret the run of those frantic hands, I'd get properly ready just in time for his passing away. I'd be really punctual, dressed to kill and with a large amount of confetti, festoons and beef ice cream cups.



LL: “Oh, come on, shut up now! I’m trying to... “

At my right, held prisoner by the same chains, the most insignificant pipsqueak in all the oceans, that is, Largo LaGrande! According to his tense facial expression, he’d be trying to distinguish the voices behind the door. Or maybe finding the right concentration to ease his intestinal constipation, who knows?

I look again at LeChuck. This time he’s gazing at me with that typical expression of someone who’s never tried to find a solution for his relational problems.

LCK: “Aye, Freetwood! By this time yer heart should be already frozen and petrified, while yer stagnant blood should have already started congealing and

putrefying. But just wait for me ta open these locketts, and we'll make up for the unpleasant inconvenience... “

G: “Ha! Seeing your legendary stupidity, you couldn't even open a good speech!”

LCK:” Ooh... ya'll see! Once we're out of here I'll open YOU, maybe! I'll disembowel ya with an old rusty hook, doing me best to keep ya alive. Then, when ya'll be still wrigglin' with pain, I'll take all yer intestine out of yer swollen and infected belly metre by metre. I'll roll them carefully around a red-hot support: after that, I'll use ya as an anchor for me ship!”

G: “I could rub you out even with my arms chopped off and the feet moulded in a concrete block, while sinking in piranha infested waters. As soon as we're out of here, I'll show you the meaning of the word... “

“Nevermore. You'll never come out alive from the prison of Roca Redenciòn. Nevermore.”

G: “What? Who's there? Anyone?”

LL: “No, Threepwood! There's no jailer guarding the cell! Instead, they brought us rum and fried doughnuts for breakfast, and they also said we can leave whenever we want. We'll just have to walk on tiptoes in order not to disturb the other tenants and leave the keys in the postbox.”

G: “Someone went to a clown school here. And he was around robbing old ladies the day they taught how to be funny.”

JAILER: “The prisoners are invited to keep order, strictness and decency.”

LCK: “Hey, Largo! The jailer's jokes be funnier than yers!”

G: “I've already heard this voice!”

LCK: “It belongs to yer bearded angel of death, who's been claimin' the sacred right ta sit on a chair built with a wisely planned joint of yer bones stripped of their flesh! And it be claimin' it for ten years!”

G: "I know your voice rather well. It usually comes with that feeling of ancient slaughter your breath can recall. But you'll have to sit on the usual broomsticks you like so much. And besides, I was speaking of the jailer's voice!"

LL: "Will you shut that sewer up once and for all?!? I hear... there must be some high ranking officer visiting the prison. Maybe even the Baron Soze himself!!!"

LCK: "We been locked here by a lazy nobleman who be always dozin' off?"

LL: "Not Baron Doze! Baron Soze! The mysterious supreme commander of the organization which captured us! The man with no face, the man who turned that embarrassing "Great League in favour of the Fierce Dissent against LeChuck" into the 'Triad, the most powerful organization of the entire Caribbean. And he did it only in a few months!"

LCK: "What? League of the Dissent against me? And what the hell be that? Maybe an association of aching fanatics who, after havin' eaten those rotten antisocial antelopes, find themselves at the square to do their business together screamin' me name?"

LL: "Uhm... now you're confusing "dissent" with "dysentery". No, it was more like... an alliance between the three most powerful governors of the Three Islands, and it was meant to cross the power of the Pirate God LeChuck and his army of the undead! They provided all their men, all their ships and all their resources. Uhm, if only I could remember who the hell they were... oh, yeah! Horatio Torquemada Marley! That old man who never lost that rustic aroma of a hermit who lived for years on an island with no showers. And the second was... Lucius Phatt! Yeah, yeah, that man who's able to gorge himself on the same amount of food produced by a medium - large nation in six years! And all between the 11:00 am breakfast and the 11:05 snack! And... I think the third one was Salomon Spittle, that megalomaniac who was convinced of being "the most intelligent man in the Caribbean"!"

G: "Convinced? Salomon Spittle WAS a genius! He invented the rubber chickens with the pulley in the middle! And the custom of putting up funny small voices breathing in helium ballons! And the banana pickers! And the hangover remedies based on mixing eggs, red pepper and hair of the dog that bit you together! And I don't know how many other knick-knacks which could drive crazy a... "

LL: "Eggs and hair of the dog that bit you? If he had been really THAT clever, like you said he was, then he would have never forced people to gulp down such a junk food."



LCK: “Oooh, now that looks interesting! And did I face them then? Did I draw all of their bones out of their flesh with a spoon? Blew up their stomach? Filled their hearts with sharp needles an’ colourful drawing pins?”

LL: “I’d say not. They never managed to find you. They had lost so much time with all those bureaucratic formalities, frivolous arguments and with those “Lucius Phatt’s creative breakfasts”, that by the time their massive fleet set sail after you in the middle of splendid celebrations, Threepwood had already defeated you... six months earlier! It was a complete fiasco. And the jokes about the “Latecomor Governors ” have been the most popular among the touchy regulars of the filthiest and worst-known taverns.”

G: ” Wouldn’t “Latecomer” be more correct?”

LL: “It would, but the last one who pointed that out to those fellows is now sleeping with the fish.”

LCK: “We... we been captured by the most pathetic organization ever created?”

LL: “No, LeChuck, you don’t have the slightest idea of how much things have changed since then. Mind every word you say in front of the men of the Triad, for their organization has built up such a power that the Pirate God’s fleet is a fishing boat of old grumpy aunts compared with them. They’re fanatics, subdued to an ideal that... “

G: “What’s this ideal supposed to be? Do to the others as you wouldn’t like them to do to you, before they think of doing it? Do not throw objects out of the window? No smoking in presence of pregnant women and/or particularly prickly health fanatics?”

J: “Silence! May the Triad triumph! The supreme admiral Rodrigo Cortèz enters the cell 1138 for a visit!”

Twenty six locks. The door is slammed open onto the wall with a heavy metal-cartilaginous thud. A hideous old man comes in. He’s wearing a modest and outworn white cloak which underlines the deformity of his hunched back and leaves only a face uncovered. A face which has been horribly disfigured by scars and burns of all sorts. On the corner covering his head there’s a number: “1138”. Now that I really look at him, I’d say it’s his age, but... I’ve seen him before!

And then... a bighead, wearing a white uniform, studded with flashy medals, and a long cloak hanging from his shoulders follows him immediately. He's exuding that kind of dislike that deep inside inspires you to trip him over the edge of a high cliff. He's got a tacky hat, and he's wearing an awful moustache shaped like... what the hell is that shape? It looks like... something between... the helm of a pirogue and the kernel of an Indian walnut.

ADMIRAL: "May the Triad triumph, jailer.... twenty-six locks? I'm surprised! Until the day before yesterday our most advanced locks never went beyond the twenty fifth!"

J: "Oh, yes, that's a Twenty-Six Deluxe TM! A new, revolutionary product made by those eggheads from the Happy Technologic Island of the Triad TM. And... hold tight: there's a terribly secret rumour in the lodgings of the soldiers at the upper floors about a new model with... TWENTY-SEVEN LOCKS!"

ADM: "Twenty-seven! BY THE GREAT ARCHITECT! How rapidly technology can advance when you force the best scientists in the whole world to work for you in chains, twenty four hours a day and on a remote and desert island. Unbelievable!"

G: "Oh, so you basically improved the social life quality of many of them. But... how did you greet each other earlier? "May the Triad triumph"??? And what if there had been four of you? "Quarter the quartet?"

J: "Silence, prisoner!"

G: "And what if you'd been five? "May the pentagon repent"?"

LL: "You' re messing the denotations for general groups with those which are typically used in geometry to... "

G: "Six! Exaggerate with the hexagon!"

ADM: "Hem hem!"

G: "Ok, I don't have a clue about what comes next after the hexagon but... hey, come to think of it, why the "Triad"? Have you got three admirals? Three ships?

Three wives? Three nipples? You won't tell me it's the number of showers you take in a year!"

ADM: "Every good follower of the sacred doctrine of the Triad knows that daily ablutions are the best way to tone up... Jailer 1138! In your triple-stam-and-signature report you had assured me that the prisoners were taciturn and mild! Why are they so long-winded now?"

G: "Me? Long-winded? How appropriate, you fight like a... "

J: "They were unconscious until a few minutes ago, admiral, and it seemed that... "

ADM: "Two demerit marks on your file, jailer!"

J: "Oh, no sir, please, not two more demerit marks! The old wounds still haven't closed completely!"

G: "Oh, but of course, it's because you're still reporting to those three! Marley, Phatt and Spittle! Let me speak to Herman... Horatio... Toothrot... I mean, the one among them who's constantly blabbering about colourful trees and refuses obstinately to wear some proper trousers!"

ADM: "Reporting to... I am afraid you are off track, prisoner. Mr. Phatt's bulky carcass has been serving as high calorie and unhealthy food for worms for a year so far. And I imagine it will do as such for thousands of crawling necrophagous generations. A dose of his "Lard, Peanut Butter and Light Lettuce Fried Swill" seems to have been "mysteriously" poisoned with some unpleasant hippopotamus poison."

G: "Is there a specific hippopotamus poison? But it's barbaric! Hippopotamuses are gentle giants! Just like manatees! And those blokes form the wallet control on Zork Island. Uhm... I wonder why they're taking so long with mine... "

ADM: "And Salomon Spittle? That gruesome "accident" with an experimental incendiary gun made him the most intelligent heap of ashes in the entire Caribbean!"

G: "Marley! I want to talk with Horatio Marley!"

ADM: "I fear it will be very difficult! He has become rather silent since they found him on that morning... with his head split in two by his precious Gubernatorial Seal of Melée Island!"

G: "No..."

ADM: "On the contrary, I am afraid so. And from that merry day the black age of those shabby pirate governors has been finally locked away in the chests of progress, sealed with the solid chains of common sense and forever buried deep down into the abyss of time. The only man in charge of this organization now is the Baron Soze."

G: "No... I... I couldn't imagine that... Horatio.... Toothrot Torquemada.... yes, I mean, grandpa... I couldn't imagine he could have possibly ended up this way. And in spite of everything, I think I'll miss him."

LL: "Oh, that's even less interesting than the decoration on LeChuck's Friday underpants!"

LCK: "White with a yellowish ring, not originally included in the box."

LL: "Why didn't I stick those burning embers up my ears too?"

G: "And what is worse, all of this doesn't really explain why you call yourself "Triad"!"

ADM: "The jailer will explain it to you. Come on, jailer, reduce this brute's ignorance."

J: "But I have no idea about it!"

ADM: "JAILER!"

G: "Ok, so obviously none of you knows why you're called "The Triad"."

ADM: "Uhm... It goes without saying that I, quite differently from that lower ranking servant, am well aware of the reason why our name is "Triad". But everything shall be revealed to you... uhm... at the proper moment! Maybe when we shall decide to transform you into an inhuman soldier, in a meek bootlicker or... "

LCK: “Inhuman soldier! Ahr, ahr, ahr! Yeah, right! I bet that behind your warmonger looks ye’re just a bunch o’syssies. Sweet and lovely young girls ready ta run away shriekin’ if a single drop of blood accidentally soils their starched collar.”

ADM: “Ha! I brood over such foolishness and I laugh at it.”

LCK: “AAAAG... PTUI!”

ADM: “Argh! Argh! MY UNIFORM! JAILER, THE PRISONER HAS DROPPED SOME IMPURE FLUID ON MY NEAT AND CLEAN UNIFORM!”

J: “And what can I do?”

ADM: “You didn’t timely shield me with your body! Six more demerit marks on your file!”

J: “No, please! I’ve got only one eye left!”

G: “Move away, you familiar old man! The Phlegm Master wants to soil the Amateur Admiral too.”

ADM: “Damn... filth and dirt! Anarchy and fornication!”

G: “Fornication? What with, some mucus?”

ADM: “But what is worse... superstition! You pirates and shamans managed to infect whole centuries of cosmic plots with your unworthy decadence! But it was clear that a long time ago mankind had already began calling for a new class of enlightened minds! Chosen ones who could guide her into a new age! A new era of new men, ready to march to death under the flags of rigour, reason, science and before everything else... blind submission to a wise and inflexible DISCIPLINE!!!”

LCK: “Or maybe mankind was simply crying out for ya to wash its bottom with yer tongue, but the idle tea room chatter obstructed yer auricular canals and led ya ta a huge misunderstanding.”

ADM: “Ha! I’m mulling over such a conceit and I’m really amused. But fun is over for you now, since you actually are... our property! Speaking of which, the jailer has just delivered me your files. For goodness’ sake, don’t crumple them up in this way next time! Now... “Guybrush Threepwood”... who is it?”

G: “Present! Hey, you got the surname right! Thanks!”

ADM: “It was my duty, boy! You are an alpha class wanted person. You cooked illicit enchanted soups, put together some highly forbidden voodoo dolls, illegally raised the dead, dispensed some forbidden cursed rings, assembled some “ultimate tumults”, whatever they may be, packaged some magic cutlasses and eventually came back into this world in the form of a ghost, a zombie and an demonic dugong. Such forms are absolutely not allowed by our statute.”

G: “What? Libels! Nothing but libels! I don’t even know what a dugong is!”

ADM: “This is not relevant. Guybrush Threepwood, you have been judged to be “impure”. Therefore you shall be granted the honour to start a new life.”

G: “Impure? And... a new life, you said? That doesn’t sound so bad!”

ADM: ““Impure” is one who has infect his flesh with the foul artifices of magic. The one who chose to reclude his precious body among the constricting chains of heresy, mysticism and contamination.”

G: “You may be right, but at least with them I managed to scratch my nose without risks of shoulder blades sprains.”

ADM: “Your nose and your shoulder blades won’t be a problem anymore. Indeed, tomorrow the fiery flames of our furnaces shall finally purify your filthy corpse and your ashes shall be used to fertilize a flower which shall receive your name. In this way you shall begin your New Life, in perfect synch with the marvellous mechanisms of Nature.”

G: “Wonderful! I’ve always wanted to be a... “mighty petunia”!”

ADM: “Such a wish honours you greatly. Then we have... the prisoner LeChuck. Alpha-plus class.”

G: “Alpha-Plus? It’s not fair, I thought I was the mightiest here!”

ADM: “Mr. LeChuck, I could declare ALL of the illicit activities you perpetrated during your inconsistent life, but we do not have two weeks of time. Impure. New Life.”



LCK: “The day I’ll join the vegetable kingdom will be the day when I’ll produce the kind of carnivorous plants which will tear the flesh away from ya and from yer loved ones. I’ll see ya agonizing between me green coils, happily wallowin’ in an explosion of flesh and blood!”

ADM: “I doubt you will be accorded the authorization to do so. Now... The prisoner Largo LaGrande. Epsilon class wanted person... “

LL: “Epsilon class means that I’m very dangerous, doesn’ it?”

ADM: “It means that you are universally acknowledged to be a nobody. Nonetheless, you are a first class initiate of some kind of medieval and noxious alchemichal learning, which is not tolerated in our tolerating society. New Life.”

LL: “Uhm... you won’t catch me alive!”

G: “Now, that’s an awful catchy sentence. They’ve already caught you alive!”

LL: “Shut up, you!”

ADM: “Now, here we have our fourth prisoner. Name: Unknown. No officially acknowledged offence. He was on the raft with the other three, but he was closed into a... sack? Ha! Odd pirate customs! Besides, he’s still unconscious so he cannot confirm us anything... “

Wha... what? Fourth prisoner? Someone in the sack? The sack... of the Shy Cuttlefish! There’s... another, silent prisoner in chains with us in the room! And he’s been together with us from the start! That’s the reason Largo never let me get any closer to the food supplies... not because he deeply cared for me not to go beyond my recommended daily amount of carbohydrates, but because... there was someone inside there! But who the hell is it? I turn around, and I try to understand who’s in here apart from us three, but that large pumpkinhead of LeChuck is in my way and doesn’t let me see a thing. Not to mention that these heavy iron chains certainly do not allow the best mobility. Now Largo’s smiling. His eyes are gleaming with a light never seen before. Something’s going on through his mind. Or, more probably, he’s just been struck by some devastating cerebral embolism.

ADM: “Ugh... an individual which is so offensive to human sight can have been nothing but a victim of some dreadful ritual, curse, blasphemy or ill omen. Jailer 1138, classify the prisoner as “impure”. He will be granted the splendid gift of a New Life!”

J: “But... but... “

ADM: “What is it, jailer? Do you find that revolting hair disgusting too? Are you in favour of a pre-incineration depilatory wax?”

J: “No, admiral, the dreadful looks of our guest make me rather sick. But... I believe he’s simply very ugly.”

ADM:” Jailer, how many demerit marks have you rightly deserved in the last ten minutes?”

J: “I don’t know, but I guess it won’t be long before I earn myself the removal of three pounds of flesh at my own choice, and the new set of fondue casserole for free.”

ADM: “So... ?”

J: “Impure. New Life.”

ADM: “A wise choice! Prisoners, rejoice at your luck, for tomorrow, when the Eternal Star shall rise, your flesh shall be purified by the flames until it will turn to ash. To a white ash rich in highly oxidized substances! May the great Architect, who planned this cosmos, accept you again in his great design.”

G: “And you, please do tell me, what part of the design are you? Maybe the one traced by a great SEAGULL, when he let his divine droppings gently land on the paper while he was flying?!”

ADM: “I.... uhm.... “

J: “Yeah, and your existence is the pile of putrefied and crushed FISH it was flying to!”

G: “Wha.... what?”

ADM: “Jailer, that was some kind of an answer... to the insult?!”

G: “Yes, and it was ready, creative, remarkable and moderately elegant! You... you knew the art of the Insult Duel! And beneath those wounds... while you were speaking, even only for a moment, your expression became unmistakable!”

ADM: “It is absurd! Vile! Obscene!”

G: “What’s with LeChuck now?”

ADM: “Real gentlemen of the Triad IGNORE SUCH FOUL PROVOCATIONS FROM THE SCUM! What will you do now, jailer? Maybe you’ll draw some rusty blade out of your clothes and you’ll wave it like a feather duster, just like back in the Dark Centuries of our age? We shall discuss the details of the removal of your three pounds of flesh in the Superb Slaughterhouse™.”

J: “No! Not the Super Slaughterhouse™! I beg you.... “

G: “Beg? BUT... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? YOU WERE A REAL PIRATE! A swordsman! A warrior! What could turn you into this whining, pathetic, crawling little man who asks for nothing more but licking the boots of the first human mistake who’s so full of himself and won’t wait a second before trampling on you with all his might??? What has become of you... Captain Smirk???”

As the jailer hears this name, he slowly turns around. Then he stares at me in silence for a few seconds with his only, gloomy eye. He causes a feeling between dreadful terror and infinite mercy. When he opens his mouth his voice, already distorted from the swollen lips, sounds even more empty and mechanical than before.

J: “I am the Jailer 1138, at the service of the absolute authority of the Triad. Nothing has ever existed before the Triad.”

G: “Yeah, nothing so indecent! You... you taught me the art of the blade! And you saved my life in that annoying matter of the “Mortal Olympiad of Gardening and Tatting of the village of Kaflu”!”

J: “I am the... “

G: "And what about the "Tricuspid Plough and Lace Traycloth Challenge? You basically won hands down! And you did it even though it wasn't part of the competition requirements! What has become of your pride? Of your dignity? Of your flaming arrogance? The very same caustic spirit that led you to soil the "Frivolous Indigenous Idol of Delicate Fragrances" just because those incredibly gentle natives from Pink Island wouldn't answer back to your obscene and gratuitous offences?"

J: "I... "

G: "Those sweet natives cried for months!"

ADM: "Come on, Mr. Threepwood! This is not one of those adventure tales of the lowest quality, where you just need the right word and the hero will convince his enemies to join forces with him, all in a blaze of honey-sweet tears and languid palpitations. This Captain Stinky you are talking about was only a... "

G: "Smirk! Captain Smirk! And remember this name, for it's the name of the one who will sacrifice you to a divinity that he will freely invent on the spot and who will then carve some pulp and coarse insulting post note as your epitaph!"

ADM: "I seriously doubt it. The Triad reserves a path towards the light to those who have wisely renounced to any form of occultism and mysticism. A long, dark and scary one - way road. A road which is beset with burnings, lacerations and multiple displaced fractures, which are obviously nothing more than the inevitable and necessary price of redemption."

G: "Redemption? REDEMPTION? So you really think that he wanted redemption? A man who would sometimes commit the most disgusting wickedness just so that he could shout them in a church packed with old shivering grannies... you think he wanted REDEMPTION? You beat the living daylights out of him! You humiliated him! Disintegrated him! You took his fighting spirit, you cut it into cubes and you slowly cooked it until you got this kind of black soup that's barely good for nothing more than emptying a black well! Smirk! In the name all the most repulsive Fettuccini Brothers' shows, wake up! RISE UP! SET US FREE! SMIRK!!!"

ADM: "Uhm... now, since you seem not to grasp the concept, I would like to show you something... Jailer 1138? By reason of my almost endless powers, I grant you full "Right of Life and Death" over the prisoners. If you consider it appropriate to release them and, who knows, to leave them on a distant island with water, food supplies and some unhealthy book full of obscene pictures, then so be

it. As a consequence of such a possible merciful action, your file shall also be cleared of any demerit mark. What do you decide to do?”

G: “Ha! Cortèz, prepare yourself a good pack of rollerbandages and disinfectant, because with this decision you’ve just shot yourself in the foot like you’ve never...  
“

J: “My demerit marks cannot be worth the preservation of such a tumour in the tissue of existence. I have nothing else to add to what you have just said, Admiral. May the prisoners be burned alive tomorrow at dawn. And may the Triad triumph, from now until the end of time!”

*...Tick – Tock!*

*Nine days, twenty one hours, fourteen minutes and sixteen seconds to the end...*

It once was alive and throbbing, but black like tar in the darkest night. Then, when the Dark Lady strangled me for the first time with her smelly cloak, it started turning into the most unlikely shapes.

Fluorescent mass of ectoplasmic pulp.

Idle bunch of worms.

Burning concentrate of coal, sulphur and every sort of caustic acid. And other terrifying appearances, impossible to describe with the limited languages of the mere mortals..

That's also because if ya make a mistake with the diaeresis on the fourteenth syllable ya'll most likely get something like "scrotal tattoo". Anyway, me heart's always been there, feeding every fiber that would take part in those glorious days of grog, broken bones, rumbling bowels an' oozing brains. It's always been there, feeding those fibers on any kind of improbable nourishment.

A dimension where the old guts seem ta have been replaced with a heavy clutter of lethal gears; a dimension where the ancient, barbaric and unworthy order of things seems ta have been redefined by a bunch of unctuous spinsters who think they can undo their absolute lack of virility just by cancelling every sort of magic from the world... forever.

Well, we'll see who'll come undone at last, once LeChuck will have shown you an authentic sorcery from better days!

Right, considering the inner flexure of the pot and the roughness of the utilized metal, I may be able to direct some fluid a few tenths towards north – north – east. But if I could count on a humidity factor of 4.5, then I'd be sure that at least a part of it wouldn't cake before the impact and...

LL: "LeChuck?"

LCK: "Shut up, Largo! I drank too many watered – down cocktails at the Club 41, and now I be tryin' to work out the exact point where I should head the result of my urgent urination. I got only one shot, and I be goin' to use it well, that is, I be going to hit the admiral on that horrible moustache. Y'know, if I were able ta tense

the urogenital detrusor and ta work out the arctangent of the precise bounce angle on that pan, I'd could even produce such a squirt that..."

LL: "Oh, let it go, you get lost even when you start counting your toes. But I must agree about the unpleasantness of that moustache shaped like...what the hell is that shape???"

LCK: "It looks like something between a dental root-canal kingpin and the albumen of the egg of the South African turakoo."

LL: "Yeah, that one, plus a sprinkle of a boot that was half digested by some kind of ancient Inca divinity. Anyway, listen to me. I tell you now, while those other cretins are lost in their foolish debate about miserable, useless..."

G: "And you, please do tell me, what part of the design are you? Maybe the one traced by a great SEAGULL, when he let his divine droppings gently land on the paper while he was..."

LL: "Soon we'll be out of here."

LCK: "Yes, brown as a five wild boars casserole."

LL: "Actually, we're four."

LCK: "Don't try me patience, Largo! Remember what happened last time ya did it?"

LL: "Yes, and please let me tell you it wasn't that nice to make me clean up the mess too. Anyway, what I mean is... we're going to be free! Free to head for a mountain of gold and gems so... colossal, that some brains may blow up and fall to a million pieces even if they only try to imagine it. But... believe me when I tell you that an incredible escape awaits us, so we'd better think clearly about our next stage. So... I need to know exactly what you drew from that shabby old Voodoo Witch's diary!"

LCK: "Largo, ye're an imbecile! And ya wouldn't even make a good blabberin' and rustic magazine rack to cast aside down in the latrine of the dungeons in me fortress! How could ya ever think that I may have wanted to read ALL the pages of that diary IN DETAIL?"

LL: "Oh, Lord! Months and months of artificial manouvres and plots down the dra..."



LCK: “And most of all, how can ya believe that I could remember anything from that unpleasant reading apart from... those cryptic plans ta sabotage the course of our lives... and that odd page with some enigmatic writings and an absurd figure with twelve equal sides?”

LL: “A FIGURE WITH TWELVE SIDES OF EQUAL LENGHT? BUT... I BET IT WAS THE SAME SYMBOL I WAS TALKING ABOUT!”

LCK: “What? Weren’t ya lookin’ for a figure with sixteen grainy sides and a vertex that be half curved in the same way of an albino tortoise shell?”

LL: “I’D SAY NO! I REALLY WAS LOOKING FOR A FIGURE HAVING TWELVE SIDES OF EQUAL LENGHT!”

LCK: “Well, in that case... I guess I might have seen it... ”

LL: “Right. The time has come to know what you read in that diary... ”

## **Episode V – The Demon and the Puddle**

LCK:” Alright, ya fool! I’ll tell ya what I know, so maybe ya’ll stop hammering me nerves with yer inconclusive alchemical wanderings... well, I was hangin’ out in the forest of Flotsam Island. I’d stolen that diary, hoping ta find out more ‘bout shameful secrets and ancestral wizardry, but after a few pages I was only extremely annoyed by the style that was even heavier and more ungraceful than the author herself. I was just abou’ ta throw it down a well that was around there, when at some point... this figure ya be talkin’ about drew me attention!”

LL: “Oh, you must have picked up an unconscious bond with the glorious mysticism of the dodecagon!”

LCK: “No, it’s just that someone had scribbled this particularly vulgar drawing next ta it, and I found it very amusin’. So I could do nothing else but stop an’ focus on yer stupid dodecagon for a while. There was a name at the center. And there were three writings at the vertices, but they were now cancelled and impossible to read. They were laid like... y’know... as if they were... yes, so that they formed the beak of an Andean albatross.”

LL: “They formed a triangle.”

LCK: “That’s right.”

LL: “And what was the name at the center? THERE WAS something you could read, wasn’t it?”

LCK: “Napoleon Hellbeard.”

LL: “Napoleon... Hellbeard?!”

LCK: “Yes, but I didn’t really pay much attention to him, since the next page described very well how we’d been controlled like putrid puppets made of flesh to act in the worst comedy ever...”

LL: “Napoleon Hellbeard! Napoleon Hellbeard! But of course! The unrivalled! The monumental! The supreme! The legendary terror of the seas who would scourge these waters with his flaming voodoo fury about thirty years ago!”

LCK: “Who?”

LL: “The one who permanently chased away the Navy from the Caribbean armed only with a thread of mucus! The one who defeated Death herself in a challenge of “Slaughter, hecatombs and tender hugs” and who feasted lavishly on her tibial plateau as a sign of mockery! The one who sacrificed his whole crew in order to celebrate a gruesome ritual and to dig up the most extraordinary treasure the early pirate generation had ever craved for: the Leviathan Lord!”

LCK: “Never heard of it. But I think I would have wanted him by my side! He would have really come in handy to cool my slippers with his tongue during the sultriest summer mornings!”

LL: “Yes, and then he would have died in an explosion of pus and abscesses like any other person you’d entrusted with this task. Do not underestimate the myth of Napoleon Hellbeard! He... basically, he marked the dawn of the age of pirates! He succeeded in demonstrating the superiority of the buccaneers’ anarchy over every other pre-established social structure! Not without a fair share of crunched heads, that’s obvious. His evil power was so grand and extraordinary that...”

LCK: “Yeah, blah, blah, blah! Everything he did in his entire, miserable life, I could do it in three minutes, with my head replaced by a cocktail olive and my body accurately shaken with four parts of vermouth, three of whisky and two drops of angostura. Serve lukewarm and do not remove the floating hair.”

LL: “After hearing this, I think I’ll become a teetotaller.”

LCK: “Right, thank you for letting us know that ya never miss the opportunity to be so disgusting, that even the worst detritus of mankind thinks you’re... but... hey...”

LL: “Hellbeard found the Leviathan Lord. And what if that prodigious treasure... contained the Sorcerer’s Gear? Or maybe a fragment of it? Yes, of course... the witch, Napoleon Hellbeard and the Gear are all tangled up with this secret and dirty business, and all because of the arcane webs of Fate. That’s the reason why the only thing left to do now is... find the lost legend! From the oblivion we shall uncover the red and heinous blaze which burnt these islands in the depth of their souls! We shall find... Napoleon Hellbeard!”

LCK: “LARGO!”

LL: “Yes?”

LCK: “REEKY BEARD BE MOVIN’!”

LL: “What? My mother’s here?”

LCK: “No, ya cretin! I be talkin’ about the revolting an’ podgy ol’ man at me left!”

G: ” Ha! Cortèz, prepare yourself a good pack of rollerbandages and disinfectant, because with this decision you’ve just shot yourself in the foot like you’ve never...”

J: “My demerit marks cannot be worth the preservation of such a tumour in the tissue of existence. I have nothing else to add to what you have just said, Admiral. May the prisoners be burned alive tomorrow at dawn. And may the Triad triumph, from now until the end of time... admiral! The fourth prisoner is... swearing!”

P: ” NYAAAAAAAAAAAAARGGHH!!! BY a thousand glazed turkeys with curry! I’m half naked, chained, covered in mud, surrounded by strange wild men in a place I’ve never seen before!!! Again!”

LL: “Have breakfast at the club, with more cockroach grub!”

G: “That... that was the slogan of the Blonde Beard Biscuits – Plus!!!”

P: “That slogan was rubbish!!!”

G: “No! Captain... Blonde Beard!!!!???”

ADM: “Ha! Pirates! Always displaying crooked nicknames deriving from their obnoxious habits or their unattractive looks... ”

G: “Never take it for granted, try asking those poor cannibals on Bulky Island about “Digestible Dave”! And by the way, I’ll repeat it with the same disbelief... Captain Blonde Beard!!!!???”

P: “Yeah, I know my name! And who the hell are you??? Show yourself!!!!”

G: “I can’t move! I’m trapped, just like you! We met on Plunder Island, more or less ten years ago! I stole your baking tray, counterfeited a reservation at your restaurant, stole your precious golden tooth with sly tricks and then you... hit me on the head with a pan!”

P: “If you’d really pulled all those pranks, a pan on your head was the least you deserved!!!”

LCK: “Oh, great, Largo! You brought with ya ... a cook! That’s brilliant! The key element we needed from the start! And I don’t know how I couldn’t have thought of it myself! Lords of the Triad, it’s time ta grind yer guts and pull out yer hair in despair! We got a cook! And we won’t hesitate ta use it!”

LL: “This bursting sarcasm of yours betrays once more your inclination to go by the vile looks... but after all... one of the most ancient alchemical principles teaches us that man is never truly one but two... ”

G: “Like when a magician makes a mistake with that number of the girl cut in two?”

LL: “No. ”

LCK: “Like when two particularly brawny cannibals fight over your juicy carcass?”

LL: “No. ”

G: “Like when “Angus the Unnailer” said: “No, you fools, this axe hanged onto the wall is just ornamental. Look at how I unnail... ”

LL: “NO, DAMN IT! LET ME GET ON WITH IT! Sigh... as I was saying... in most cases these two equal and opposite parts of the human spirit fight against

each other only in the kingdom of the mind. As a consequence, they cause doubts, inner conflicts and a crippling, neurovegetative dystonia. But the most furious, perverted and sadistic part of the two may force its way through the twists and turns of the mind. It may climb up from a purely cognitive realm and even change the flesh and the skin of the body where it dwells. Perhaps... thanks to the power of a tremendous curse which flares up only by the full moon. And should this happen when the other is not aware of it or does not remember it, then it may give rise to a fight... a fight which may go on for years and years! Two beings... fighting furiously against each other to death, and without knowing that they're just... fighting against themselves!"

ADM: "Jailer, these data are not recorded in our Infinite Folder TM. Are you updating the files with what the prisoners are saying?"

J: "Uhm, no. I'm afraid I haven't got anything to write with."

ADM: "For goodness' sake, then improvise! Write with your blood!"

J: "Al... al... alright, then... I'll take that rusty awl and... AAARGGHHH!"

G: "Oh, I see what you mean. For example, I often happen to hear some voices here and there, telling me what to do, pick up or examine. The secret lies in doing everything they tell you to, without making a fuss about it."

LL: "For example, Captain Blonde Beard... what could you tell me about that monster which is always tormenting you? What could you tell me about... EL POLLO DIABLO?"

There are names which seem to stop the heartbeat of every single thing in the universe for a moment. Names which seem to echo through matter and light, causing an icy, unnatural vibration.

G: "Brr! What's this sudden cold? Anyway, that's a stupid superstition."

P: "THAT MONSTROSITY, THAT FREAK OF NATURE WHO DOES NOTHING BUT FOLLOW ME FROM AN ISLAND TO ANOTHER! HE SLAUGHTERS EVERY SOUL THAT CROSSES HIS PATH WITH HIS SUPERHUMAN MIGHT! AND MY PRECIOUS CHICKENS... EVERY TIME HE SETS THEM FREE AGAIN!!!"

G: "It's just a stupid superstition... ISN'T IT?"

P: "I'M SURE IT EXISTS, THOUGH I SEEM TO BE THE ONLY ONE WHO'S NEVER SEEN IT! AND THE ONLY ONE WHO ALWAYS MANAGED TO SURVIVE ITS RAIDS! AND THE ONLY ONE WHO WAKES UP WOUNDED, HALF NAKED AND COVERED IN MUD AFTER EVERY DAMNED FULL MOON NIGHT!"

G: "Holy skipping monkeys..."

LL: "No moon from this window, so we'll have to... LeChuck... listen to me... play along with me, ok? Now listen to everything I say and try to... psst psst..."

J: "Urghhhh... admiral... it's as if a large ice cold spider were climbing up my spine. I feel... I have a feeling of looming death. I fear that the prisoners may be plotting something dreadfully sinister and I don't think we should let them..."

ADM: "Ha! What you would not make up nowadays just to stop carving your skins with an old rusty awl! Shut up and write! They are nothing but a mass of waste from the Grand Cosmic Plan! Remainders from an age no one will regret! Above all, they are chained and caged like rough beasts from the circus! They aren't more dangerous than a bunch of salty and shelled peanuts!"

G: "Well, I tell you what: I've seen something you could do with peanuts that you couldn't possibly ima..."

LL: "So, gentlemen, If I were to ask you to look at that window, what would you answer me?"

LCK: "Uhm... I find it particularly attractive and worthy of attention too!"

G: "The window doesn't seem important."

P: "ARR! THAT'S THE CONSTELLATION OF THE COMPASS! ITS SHAPE REMINDS THE ONE OF A COMPASS!"

J: "Produced by the Triad. So may the window triumph too!"

ADM: "Don't distract yourself with such redundant and nonsensical banter and go on writing. Anyway, they're banal spheroids of plasma generating energy by thermonuclear processes of their nucleus and... oh, by the dirtiest, filthiest and foulest.... someone has... URINATED ON THE FLOOR! WHO DID IT?"

J: "I didn't do it, admiral! I swear it!"

LL: “Captain Blonde Beard.”

LCK: “The latrine cleaner Blonde Beard.”

G: “LeChuck! Look, it clearly was LeChuck! He’s even got his underpants still down! Though I can’t understand how he could have done it with those chains still...”

LL: “Threepwood is talking nonsense, admiral! The puddle is exactly under captain Blonde Beard and unless my memory’s playing tricks on me, the law of gravitation says that... a liquid can do nothing but fall plumb – line!”

LCK: “That’s right, the gestation law could never go wrong about that!”

ADM: “By the great Architect! Despite the obvious sematic inaccuracy, the two prisoners are right! THE ETERNAL LAWS WHICH MAKE THIS UNIVERSE SUCH A BLAZE OF HARMONY AND BEAUTY COULD NEVER, NEVER BE FALSE! IF THE PUDDLE IS THERE, MOST PROBABLY THE CULPRIT IS... THE AWFULLY UGLY PRISONER!!!”

G: “And these words may be related to at least three of the four people hanging in this cell. But since I guess you’re still talking about Blonde Beard, I’d like to point out that it’s not that difficult for LeChuck to direct his spurt towards... oh, you know what? Go to hell, all of you!”

ADM: “Definitely dreadful prisoner, what do you have to say in your defense?”

LL: “YARR! I’LL URINATE WHENEVER I WANT! TRY ME NOW IF YOU DARE! THE TRIAD SUCKS! I CAN’T WAIT TO BECOME A TINY BUNCH OF ORGANIC DUST!”

G: “Hey! That wasn’t Blonde Beard! That was Largo in the most atrocious exhibition as a vocal imitator that I’ve ever heard! Apart from the basic tonal and alveolar mistakes, I’d like to point out that Blonde Beard didn’t even move his lips!”

ADM: “Aesthetically absurd prisoner! I admire your audacious ventriloquial skills, but I can’t help brooding over such an flashy boastfulness! And I am most definitely upset. Therefore your wish shall be fulfilled.”



P: “WHAT? YOU’RE GOING TO LET ME LICK A HEAP OF SAWDUST A PRETTY GIRL’ S JUST WALLOVED IN?”

ADM: “Your colourful perversion of a handicraft sort will not help you preserve the integrity of your current corporeal shape! Jailer! Release the Captain from his chains! If he really can’t wait to begin his new life, his wish shall be satisfied!”

P: “I’D LIKE HER TO BE BLONDE AND WITH A VERY PROVOCA... HEY! STOP! STOP! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?”

*...Tick tock!*

*Nine days, twenty one hours, two minutes and forty – eight seconds to the end...*

While that annoying bag of hair and mud shows off his tacky repertoire of sailors’ foulness, the jailer releases him and pulls him up his shoulders as if he were a thrash bag. All of a sudden, while they’re crossing the threshold, the nonsensical blabbering of that poisoner is cut off by a violent twitch. Blonde Beard falls unconscious. Reality is now echoing with a distant, demonic clucking, intertwined with the violent beat of a tempting flamenco.

LL: “Yes! The moon! Blonde Beard finally saw the moon!”

A twitch immediately follows, and then another, another, another... more and more furious and ruthless. Blonde Beard throws up, he twitches and twists with an inhuman viciousness, while his muscles tense and swell until they become unnaturally large. The air becomes thick, heavy, oppressive, just like when Satan himself takes off his shoes after a long morning jogging.

ADM: “You see, Jailer? Unhealthy pirate diet! This is what happens when you repeatedly damage your gastric system with decades of poor grog and skewers of sewer rat.”

J: “Uhm... Admiral... I don’t think he’s suffering from digestive problems right now. It looks more like... THE RESULT OF A GRUESOME RITUAL MEANT TO SUMMON SOME FEROCIOUS CREATURE WHICH WILL DESTROY US ALL FROM THE UNDERWORLD!

ADM: “A ritual? In the middle of this fortress? What are you blabbering about? Don’t whine and go up to the Purification Hall! There must be a reason why I am the right – hand man of the Baron Soze and you can be nothing more than the sandwich leftovers between his teeth, you stupid... ”

J: “HELP ME! HE’S GETTING HEAVIER AND HEAVIER! MY VERTEBRAE ARE BREAKING!”

SNAP! THUD! BANG! CRASH!

G: “MADRE DE DIOS...”

«RRRRRRRRRRRRROOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA  
ARR!!!»

J: “ES EL POLLO DIABLO! Y el is trituratín’ mi vertebras!!!”

ADM: “POR EL GRAN ARQUITECTO! SOLDIÉRES... WHAT THE HELL AM I SAYING? SOLDIERS! ALL SOLDIERS REPORT IMMEDIATELY to me! WE HAVE A 666 CODE EMERGENCY! 666 CODE EMERGENCY!”

J: “Uuuurghhh.... 666? But that’s the “Aggressive prisoner due to terrifying acid stomach” emergency! HE STILL DOESN’T GET IT!”

An incessant, piercing alarm starts scourging the air without a break. The admiral Cortéz rummages frantically in his pockets, looking for something. And every shred of the old captain’s gross humanity has been disintegrated by that hideous voodoo mutation. Now it’s a revolting, impressive, abominable plumed obscenity that’s almost 10 feet tall. The limitless power of its evil emanations seems to distort the space around it. Through the frantical cadence of his breath you can perceive his greedy thirst for blood. Mirrored in his heinous gaze, the rancour of a renegade, lost soul, chased away because of its depravation even from the darkest circle of Hell. Uhm... give me a beak able to disembowel a stone blockhouse, and see if basically he isn’t my twi... why is now Largo trying to imitate a chicken?

LL: “Cluck – cluck! Cluck – cluck – cluuuuck! POLLO DIABLO! Listen to me! You can easily tell from the noise I’m making that I obviously am a chicken!”

G: “One can easily tell that when you keep silent too.”

LL: “See all those men dressed in white? They’re psycho slaughterers! Sadistic killers who murder poor defenseless chickens! They sting them with sharp forks for their indecent play, and after having made fun of them with coarse jokes, they butcher them all so to cook them in some immoral tartar sauce! Blow them away! All of them! And set me free!”

ADM: “Now, where did I leave those damned bicarbonate pil... NO!!!”

A stone weighing approximately a ton falling down from a fifty floor tower. The impact of two colossal galleons during the most violent storm ever broken out. A volcano blowing up powerfully after years of quiet idleness. A vigorous and brave andalusian guitar! In a punch. The admiral is flown against one of the walls of the prison cell and crashes against it with a mighty and satisfying rumble of flesh, just like some scrap paper of little account.

LL: “Yes! That’s a good chicken! Now set me free, I’m a chicken too! Break my... where are going? Come back! Hey! POLLO DIABLO!!! Where are you going? Don’t go out from that door! I’m a poor chicken held in captivity! Cluck – cluck! Cluck – cluck – cluuuuck! Squuuuuaaawk!”

G: “What the heck was that last noise? Hey, mind the waaaall... ”

Crash!

G: “That violent punch he hit that wall with... hey, that support fixing the chains onto the stone has partially collapsed! Finally my feet can touch the ground. All that dangling was really getting on my nerves... but... the chains are still locked into the rock! I’m still trapped!”

LL: “COME BACK, POLLO DIABLO! WE HAD A CLEAN AND FRATERNAL DEAL BETWEEN BIRDS!”

G: “Nope, he’s gone out the door. You know, after all your imitation of a sweet, free – range hen wasn’t that bad. Who knows, maybe one day you’ll find a handsome covering cock who will love you as you are. Every morning, after having attended to his marital duty, he’ll bring you some tasty fresh worms and you will then live happily ever after while you’ll be brooding cheeping chicks and delicious breakfasts which you’ll cook in a saucepan with some butter. All in a swirl of feathers, cuddles and a pile of droppings.”

LL: “My hypothetical future as queen of the hen-house may as well be full of smart metaphors and interesting cues, but right now I’d rather focus on the fact that... the jailer’s keys are within your feet’s reach! Why don’t you... kick them to me, over here?”

Screams, shots, alarms and that demonic clucking are now orchestrated in an infernal symphony which shakes the building down to its grounds. The demon has

started fighting against the soldiers of the Triad. From time to time I manage to hear something vaguely sensible in that incessant roar...

“NO! I AM VEGETARIANOS! I JURO, I AM VEGETARIANOS! NOOO!!!  
AY AY AY, EL BROKE MI PANCREAS!”

G: “Kick you the keys? Kick YOU the keys? After that you poisoned me, drugged me, deceived me and hit me with your Dancing and Singing Sextants? And what’s more, after that you’d been sadistically playing with that matter about Elaine all the time? Forget it! I’d rather flog myself with a cat o’ nine tails caked with infected blood until I strip off every inch of my skin! Then I’ll swallow a whole pulley and ask to be used as a...”

LCK: “Matter about Elaine?”

G: “... then I’ll take a complete set of rusty coffin nails and I’ll stick them into my eyes strongly pushing in...”

LL: “It’s nothing, really, just some pathetic married – life cliché about who would always leave the toilet seat up. Now, come on Guybrush! We’ve got a powerful enemy in common, powerful and well organized. Why shouldn’t we join forces?”

G: “... with acrobatic inertia and a fair share of monkey – keys. We won’t join forces because the last time I joined forces with your gleeful playmate I found myself with a rip in the bowels so huge that it could have been easily filled with water so to organize some pompous boat race of the America’s Cup! Now look at me while I grab your damned keys to salvation for me and me alone with a well planned swing of... the... legs... ops!”

LL: “Hey, thanks! Over there it’s perfect! LeChuck, get them with the tip of your shoe! Untie it, and then screw it back on! A bit more... Good... that’s good... put it there... alright... now see if you can pull it closer to your teeth. A bit more on the right, on the right! Raise your legs. Bend the sub-heel. No, not like that, or you’re going to break it. Less! Now turn that damned...”

LCK: “Bingo!”

“Por el primer tiempo me nourisho de pollo en toda la mi vida! El primer tiempo! AAARRGHH! Esta punzada es muy pungéntes!”

I open the lockets and I set my feet on the ground. Fire. Flames. Acid burning the flesh of my legs. There’s something wrong. That explosion on the raft... must

have smashed me more than I thought! My right leg is... swollen, bruised, aching. I can barely move it, really! But I... am LeChuck. I never indulged in whining since I came to the world and when I'll leave it for the last time, I'll do it sneering and spitting on the Reaper of the Fatal Lady.

On the other hand... that ridiculous ill fermented Threepwood mould would whine. That boastful Largo parasite would whine!

LL: "Oh, no, my lovely obsessive – compulsive buckskin jacket is all wrinkled now! Oh, no, my lovely obsessive – compulsive buckskin jacket is all... "

I be tempted to leave him here whimpering in that curiously repetitive manner, but... if I want to survive in this age I need his overblown alchemical mystical blabberings.... I work the key into his lock.

LL: "Hey! That's my eye!"

That was worth it. I REALLY work the key into his lock and I release him.

G: "Hey! Where are you going? Come back here! Release me too! Set me free! You putrid... "

LL: "Ahr ahr ahr! So long, Threepwood! I promise you that once we become the undisputed masters of the world as we know it, we'll visit the sweet petunia your carcass gave birth to. And after every stunning night of delirious binge and caustic cocktails, LeChuck will always have... a rancid and smelly watering all for you! Bon voyage! No, wait... BUENA MUERTE!"

G: "Come back! Come back! NO!!!"

*Tick tock!*

*Nine days, twenty hours, fifty -three minutes and thirty – eight seconds to the end...*

Out of the cell. Back in the cell. Out of the cell. Back in the cell. Out of the cell. Back in the cell. Using your jailer as a doormat where to clean the filth of your boots is like having them licked by all the angels from Heaven. Then we decide to leave that squawking Threepwood goose behind. Strange, I... I have some kind of an oppressive feeling. It's as if the universe itself were whispering to me that an age of legendary battles is now over. Once and for all. Yes, I'm pretty sure I'll never see Guybrush Threepwood again...

*Tick tock!*

*Nine days, twenty hours, forty – four minutes and two seconds to the end...*

We run back to our cell. I've never been good at this feeling thing. Threepwood's still there, motionless in his chains. He keeps silent. He tries to scare us with a dark and scowling look, but the result is rather pathetic. It looks more like the performing anxiety of a salmon at its first itch.

LL: "Threepwood, now you come with us! We need your help!"

G: "Get off me! I'm not coming with you! STOP! I'D RATHER END UP IN A DELICATE WEDDING BOUQUET! DON'T TOUCH MY SACRED..."

We touch them. Largo opens the locks. I grab his shins in a way that could easily lead to an inexorable gangrene. I drag him violently from his chains and I make him taste the floor. I let him deeply enjoy his sweat – and polygranular marble – fragrance. Then I drag him outside the cell, towards that endless and dark circle of hell. I'm still fascinated by the interior of that black tower, by that colossal hollow cylinder of stone, whose walls are riddled with a thousand superfine boards, mounted together so to create the most feverish and dizzy stair I've ever run. There are a thousand small windows and as many armoured doors placed at regular intervals. A delightful choir of dreadful, agonizing cries are uttered behind them.

G: "Curse you! At least we could have saved Smirk! At least him! But... hey, these steps are dangerously steep and there's no railing! Id' say that... a tiny slip, a little distraction or an accidental sneeze, and we get smashed. And this is one of those things you'd never want to say when you're being rudely dragged by a leg by a lumbering beast who dreams of nothing more than tearing you to pieces."

LCK: "Belt up, you pathetic counterfeit buccaneer, or I'll have you make the qualitative JUMP you've always wanted!"

G: "Now who's more pathetic here, the counterfeit or the one who gets blown up by the counterfeit five ti.... ouch! Ahi! Aaah! Hey! St... stop!"

LL: "Uhm... now, going by the roars coming from upstairs, El Pollo Diablo is clearly still keeping the jailers and all the soldiers busy. But we can't have much time left! We need to hurry up and go to..."

“MADRE DE DIOS! EL POLLO DIABLO REQUIERES LIBERTAD POR TODOS LOS PRISONEROS Y AHORA EL IS COMING POR MI!”

LL: “And then... I should have made some researches about this odd phenomenon which causes people around the chicken to rave sentences in a strange hispanic language! And what is this sound? Like some large, heavy castanets...”

LCK: “Listen here, Largo! Every thime Threepwood’s head bangs agant a step, it produces a different sound! All that really has some potential! I’ll have ta try coverin’ some drums with his brains! Weave some violin strings with his slack sinews! Forge whistles with his swollen glands! And then I’ll entrust all these instruments to a band of maladjusted and violent minstrels, and enjoy all those guts screeching and cracking to some baroque polyphonic melody!”

G: “The only melody you’ll see me play will be your merry funeral hy... AHI!”

LL: “Merry funeral hype? Why should someone ever feel excited about that? But LeChuck, you... are clearly limping!”

LCK: “Yeah, yeah, but that’s nothing you can’t sort out with a good drink of propylene glycol and a loud fist fight against some mocking...”

KA – BOOM! ...PLAF!

LL: “BY THE HERMETICISM OF HERMES TRISMEGISTUS! WHAT WAS THAT... THING... THAT JUST FELL DOWN?”

LCK: “Either someone’s just thrown away the leftovers from his colossal and disgusting roast turkey, or your improbable anthropomorphic devilled chicken has just lost his own fight for freedom and he’s just become.... a tasty, bloody family size meat loaf!”

G: “Oh, no! Captain Blonde Beard!”

LL: “WE’VE GOT TO GET GOING!

THE SOLDIERS WILL BE ON OUR TAIL IN THE TWINKLING OF A TRITON’S EYE! GET DOWN, LECHUCK! QUICKLY!”

G: “AHI! UHI! AAAH! OUCH! YOU’LL! PAY! FOR! THIS! TOO!”

LCK: “Here we are!”

We’re at the ground floor. I drop the legs of my personal thorn in the side after having let him linger for a while over the vague ash-and-feet-fragrance on that last step. He gets up again. Dazed and fuddled, he catches sight of that colossal door riddled with handles, dials, mechanisms and levers of all sorts. Then he turns around for a while. A sorry look on his face, he spots a small corner where thick darkness drew a veil on Blonde Beard’s massacred, gutted dead body, which now lies in a filthy puddle together with cracked bones, mangled bowels, putrid organic miasmata and... uhm... what I wouldn’t give to bite into a juicy rare steak in moments like these!

LCK: “Threepwood! Don’t ya dally with that now! After years spent as the most insignificant worm, the time has come for you to be finally useful to our cause!”

G: “... cause? What cause? My slow and painful passing away, no doubt!”

LCK: “Not at all! Ya got to help us open this incomprehensible door! Largo and I have no idea how to do it! If ya help us we’ll be able ta get away from here! We’ll be safe!”

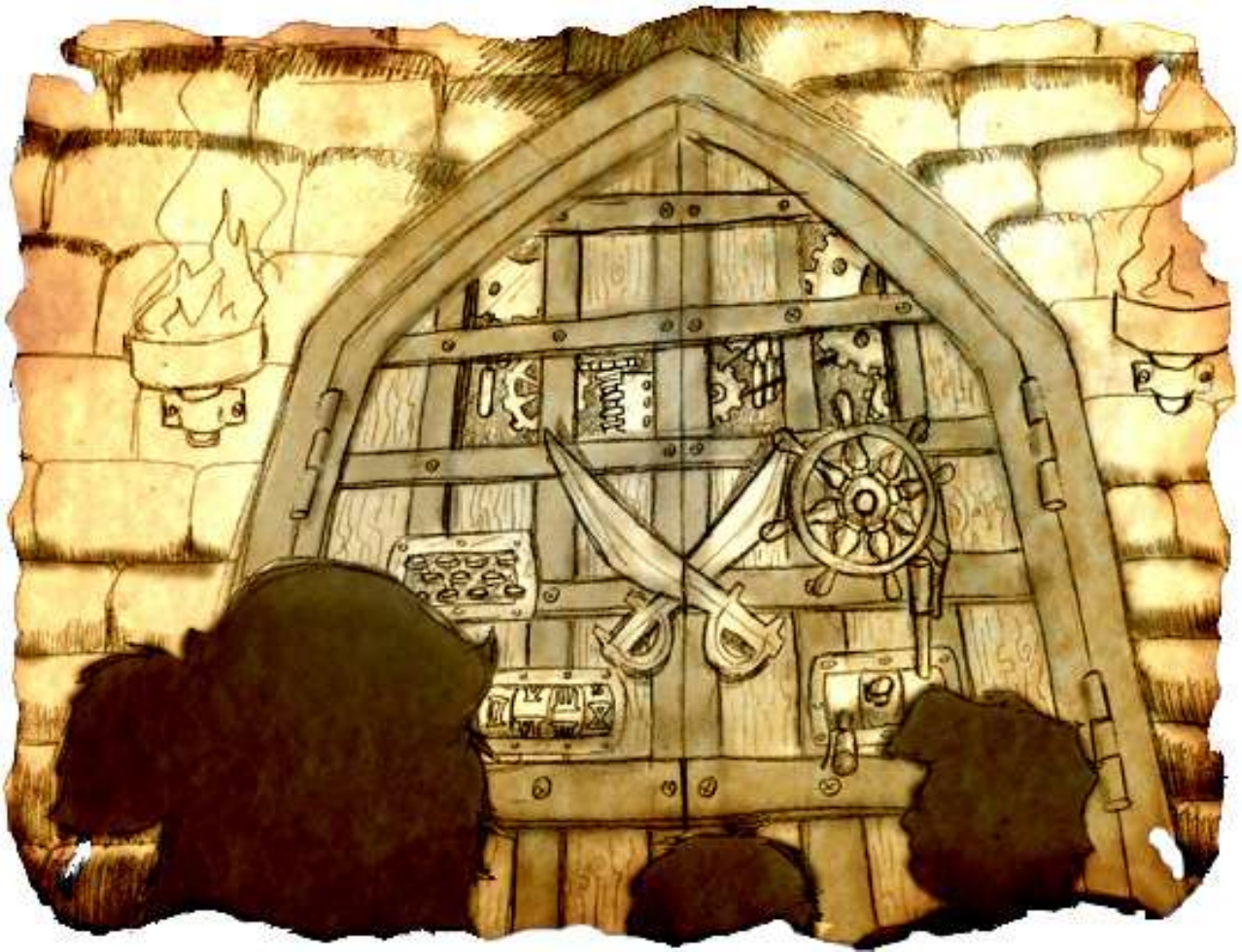
G: “Safe? Of course! Think I’m so stupid not to realize that your plan will eventually consist in you tearing out my lungs to use them like a drip mat?! But I warn you, you’ll have to throw up a good deal of bile before you can even tear a HAIR off...”

LCK: “Ohh, me sensitive colon is now trembling with fear! Come here, you! Have at it, and I’ll slit ya like a pig and have a toast with a goblet filled with yer pungent...”

“FUGITIVES FROM THE 1138 CELL! THERE ARE THREE FUGITIVES FROM THE 1138 CELL! MUSTER ALL THE SOLDIERS FOR THE EXECUTION!”

LL: “WHAT LECHUCK CLEARLY MEANT, and what I’ve been saying for some time too, is that now there’s no time for childish skirmish between us, but we absolutely need to team up to escape from the the lair of these overblown wolves! Well, this huge gate is the only thing standing in our way to liberty, but... we have no idea how to combine all these levers and handles to open it. And that’s when you come into play.”





G: “What? And why should I know the combination which opens the door?”

LL:” Well, everyone knows that you’re some kind of genius when it comes to unravelling problems!

G: “What? Unravel? Who do you think I am, some kind of a graceful lace master?”

LL:“No, I mean... you’re a jigsaw – cracker!”

G: “But I hate those antisocial society games! Months and months spent slotting together small tesserae made of paper or human cartilage, and what for? To find yourself with a picture you already had on the cover, ready – made it and all that?”

LL: “Human cartilage? But where on earth do you buy your... ANYWAY THAT’S NOT WHAT I MEANT! Come on... you’re good at solving puzzles, that’s it!”

LCK: “Yeah, use this with that! Push that gimmick, close that other oddity. Pick up captain Kate Capsize.”

G: “Pick up? Who did you take me for? I don’t have a clue about how to open this what-d’yer-call-it!”

LCK: “Come on, Guybrush! Do what ya always do! Rack yer brain or I’ll have ta loudly rack some of yer...”

G: “I told you I HAVE NO IDEA HOW TO...”

CLAK!

G: “Ehi! I didn’t do anything... you just had to push it!”

LL: ” A SMALL DOOR OPENED IN THE MIDDLE OF A HUGE ONE! THAT MUST BE THE PRIVATE SOLDIERS! LET’S GET OUT OF HERE!”

G: “Small door for private soldiers? But it doesn’t make any sen...”

” THERE THEY ARE! THEY MUST BE THE CHICKEN’S ACCOMPLICES!”

LCK: “THOSE BATTERED SOLDIERS FROM THE TRIAD ARE BACK IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING! RUN!”

Air. Wind. Freedom. The ancient smell of salt and raids, sent out from a magnificent ocean stretching out in front of us, conformed by the soft first light before sunrise.

The door opened on an immense wooden pier: there’s a colossal ship with no sails moored at the end of it.

On instinct, we all start running towards it. Or maybe I should say... Largo and Threepwood ARE running, while I... I got some serious problem! Pain. Me leg is... green, suppuratin’, broken. It throbs as if pierced by a thousand needles covered in acid. Pain. I can barely drag it. Largo and Threepwood are further and further. It be hard to be alive. But I can’t let go right now! I am...

“LOAD! AIM!”

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

I'm leaking like a ticking, bearded sieve. A bullet explodes and hits me straight in the chest! Another rips me zombie leg ta shreds. I taste the warm, salty smell of me blood risin' up my uvula. I cough. Then I collapse like an old puppet. While I lay in a dark and red puddle, me limbs start freezing. Nothing that I can't... can't... give me only a second... a second... a second...

Prison of Roca Redenciòn.

Pier leading to a... strangeoid ship. Strangeoid ship leading to freedom! Freedom leading to... what will be of me then?

Too many things have changed through these two years. What future lies ahead for a lover who's got no one else to love anymore? For an adventurer who's got nothing to explore anymore? For a pirate bound to sail grey, dead waters, with no more sparks of magic livening them up nor...

SLD1: "LET'S GUN THEM DOWN AND THROW THEIR FILTHY BODIES INTO THE FURNACE ONCE AND FOR ALL! THE SOIL OF THOSE GRACIOUS MARIGOLDS WON' T REACH ITS OPTIMAL AMOUNT OF POTASSIUM ALL BY ITSELF!"

Well, that' s still an offer, after all. But I guess I'm rather jealous of my potassium. Yeah, after tearing to pieces LeChuck, those brutes of the Triad are all busy loading up their improbable and futuristic firearm again. Still, they're... slow! Wounded! Those firearms look rather complicated to put right again! And therefore it' s clear that what we need now is a hasty and quick ESCAPE!

LL: "THEY' VE GOT SOME INFINITE - RANGE TRIMUSKETS! THE IDEA OF REACHING THE SHIP BEFORE THEY BEAT US TO A PULP IS SO RIDICULOUS THAT WE' D BETTER BITE OFF BOTH OUR JUGULARS BY OURSELVES!"

Okay, so no escape. I' ve got to find another idea. I rummage through my pockets. Some fluff. Hair. Fluff. Remains of orangutan gu... remains of orangutan guts?! Awww... that's one of those stories I' d rather forget. Now... two hooded men are coming towards me. They must be jailers, they' re dressed exactly like Captain Smirk! No, wait a sec, they' re not coming towards me, but... they' re headed for LeChuck! And now they' re moving away... gesturing in a ridiculous way? They look... scared! LeChuck's blood stain! It's spilling all over the pier and... they're afraid of it!? But of course! They think LeChuck is... an infected being! The contact with everything that's cursed! Putrefaction, decay, the contamination of the flesh. The clothes soaked with LeChuck's rustic aroma! The launderette ticket! Revolting, ancestral angst, rooted in the depth of every human soul, but which...

must come close to sheer obsession for those loonies! And who am I not to fuel the flames of their mental instability?

G: "The pure ones who make contact with impure blood shall become impure themselves, they shall be cursed in eternity... "

SLD1: "What... what is the prisoner enunciating?"

SLD2: "Soldier number one! Do not take offence at it and keep calm! Now, insert the A pin into the B cavity. Revolve the Delta screw by one - fourth pi radians, brush the Allen key, shake the magazine at a 6.5 Hertz swing frequency and finish off the impure!"

SLD4: "Bli - bli - bli - blimey!"

SLD3: "Soldier number four, do not be so coarse!"

SLD2: "Soldier number three! You' re shaking the magazine at a swing frequency that's 0.8 Hertz more than required! Now you' ll have to start all over again!"

SLD3: "Bli - bli - bli - blimey!"

SLD1: "Am I the only one believing that a weapon like this isn't really that handy in battle?"

G: "... and should they prove unworthy of the gift, their eyes shall boil, their brain shall melt as if touched by acid, their blood shall be swarming with worms and their skin shall break in a pestilential rash and... "

LL: "OH, COME ON, FLING IT AND STOP IT!"

SLD2: "THAT' S ONE OF THE FILTHY, BLOODSTAINED BUTTONS OF THAT BEARDED WIZARD! AND HE WANTS TO FLING IT AT US! HE' S GOING TO CURSE US ALL! FINISH HIM OFF! FINISH HIM OFF!"

SLD6: "TOO LATE!!! AAAAH!"

I throw the button at them. While they watch it flying into the air, an astonished look on their faces, the thought of ending up among the impures, of becoming outcasts and of being tortured overtakes them and crushes their hearts, more powerful than anything else. Some of them run away screaming into the prison. Some others throw themselves crying into the sea. Someone composes a missive to their dear mother crying for maternal consolation, to trust the waters with it. How poetic. Threat thwarted, in Guybrush Threepwood, Mighty Pirate's superb and sophisticated style! Now I can run freely to the ship again, finally free from... my worst enemy, the alchemical drawers -polisher, is following me! That' s right, Largo is just behind me, and he' s carrying his indesiderable captain on his shoulders without effort. We get on the plank leading onto the metal deck. We go below and we reach a room with no windows, but also full of incomprehensible tools and even more puzzling buttons. Largo lays LeChuck down onto the ground and then leaves. LeChuck is... dead? I get closer. I try to find out if he' s breathing. As pale as a mortuary rag. Let's see if he... oh, pappapishu!

G: "AAAARGH! LET GO, YOU SORT OF... "

LCK: "THE FACT THAT I' M SERIOUSLY INJURED DOESN' T MEAN THAT I CAN' T BREAK YER NECK LIKE A DRY TWIG!"





## PART II - TWO GROGS TO MIDNIGHT



## Episode VI - Past and future

LL: "Oh, actually I' m afraid that' s exactly what it means instead! You lost so much blood that I doubt you' d be able to wring an ant' s neck even if it were seriously affected by osteoporosis. Meanwhile, the boiler' s pressure is perfect. Oh, he's passed out... here we go again... "

G: "Urghhh... curse him... he's almost... my precious... what? Boiler? Are you getting a thermal bath ready? Jojoba and ginseng oils? Do they have a whirlpool bath too?"

LL: "I' ll have a bath the day someone sinks my ship! Have you noticed that this is a... ship with no sails?"

G: "Yes... uhm... did someone steal them?"

LL: "No, you twit! This is a... DEMON PUFF SHIP!!!"

G: "A what puff wha... ?"

LL: "Oooh, it's one of the most complex and ingenious mechanisms the human mind ever thought of. There' s a boiler: once it reaches the right temperature, it releases steam. The steam drives a turbine, and the turbine, in turn, pushes off a... "

LCK: "Speak with the pool of blood and pus, Largo, 'cause LeChuck doesn' t want to listen to ye!"

"G: "But, above all... if it's moved by steam, shouldn' t it be more correct to call it "steam engine ship?"

LL: "Ha! What a shameful absurdity! As far as I know, no one's ever defined galleons as "draft ships"! Now, out of my way, Threepwood! We' ll head for the most extraordinary place that's ever dared welcome a man' s buttocks! The greatest oasis of rum and blood which dwells among the furies of the oceans! We' ll sail towards... Tortuga!"

G: "Tortuga? Oh no, not Tortuga!"

LL: "Oh, by Solomon' s mummified corpse, what' s the matter with it? Does rum make your head spin? Does blood make you faint from time to time? Do the furies of the oceans make you seasick?"

G: "I left that place years ago! I' d just destroyed the ghost of this sack of dung and... I was chomped and swallowed by the voracity of that place! By its ravenous binge! By its indecorous corruption! I was young! Unprepared! And there I lost all my fame, inch by inch. All my fortune!"

LL: "Well, we' ll make you ask to the tarts for an estimate before you get into their bed, all right? Tortuga is the last place Napoleon was seen, so we' ll go there. You can follow our course, or you can go feed the camelias with your... with your... uhm, come to think of it, I guess you could be somehow interested in Napoleon Hellbeard too. That man is connected to... your past, no doubt!"

G: "What? How?"

LL: "Did you hear what I said earlier, when we were in the cell?"

G: "I'm a poor, helpless chicken?"

LL: "Not THAT."

G: "LeChuck, take away that key from my eye, you're piercing my cornea?"

LL: "NO! NO! I said that Hellbeard... sacrificed his whole crew to find one of the greatest treasures ever! And in that crew there were... the Threepwoods! George Threepwood and Martha Threepwood. What does this remind you of?"

G: "Wha... what??? Mom? Dad?! But... how can I know if it's true? How can I know you're not deceiving me again?"

LL: "Think... what is the reason of your ancestral call towards the sea? Isn't it maybe... the voice of your parents whispering to you from the other side of the ocean?"

G: "I don't know. I can't know it! I can hardly remember anything from my childhood! Only moments, instants, charms! Maybe it was time which removed everything. Or maybe the repeated ingestions of toxic substances. And besides... I can't believe you! Not again!"

LL: "No, well, you probably can't. But I suppose you haven't got a choice so far. And now out of the way, I got a ship to navigate, and some disfiguring wounds to cure... uhm. Let's see what we've got here. Femoral artery. Breast bone. Hideous injuries. Possibly lethal. But thanks to Paracelsus' prodigious medical doctrine, a small herb tea will be enough to heal even the most terrifying wounds... without the poor fellow feeling hardly any pain at all... "

LCK: "Oh... right... "

LL: "But I don't have that kind of herbs here with me. And there isn't any anaesthetic of the sort here on the ship. I'm afraid the operation will be excruciatingly painful. Not to mention that I'll have to use some rickety maintenance tools... besides, the leg's twice as likely not to survive the operation... "

LCK: "I can... stand it! It's enough for me to know that I'll rise again once more! And that day I'll be there, offerin' Elaine Marley an elegant jewel box made with the very same skull of tha' Threepwood as a token of eternal love. I'll just have to scratch carefully the last pieces of brain and then... "

LL: "Elaine Marley... oh, well... HOLD ON to this thought. It's very important that you do it. Uhm... okay, so where could I start ripping from... "

LCK:

"YYYYYAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRGGGGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHH!!!!!"

LL: "Look how it bleeds!"

I say no word and leave. I find a small door decorated with a rough-edged bench. I lean on it and close my eyes, worn out. All of a sudden I'm... somewhere. Booty's main square, the island of the eternal carnival. It's impossible to tell the time from the vaguely purple sky. Also because I turned to pieces my last pocket watch while I was trying to use it to pry that old but always inviting bottle of Laxa - Plum - Grog open for the nth time. I'm surrounded by dozens of indifferent and thick



faces, too engrossed in sipping drinks watered down with spit and talking about their frivolous social life, which is based on mutiny, gallows and keelhauling.

EL: "Come Guybrush, let's go!"

But there's Elaine with me, beaming more than the morning sun that warms your deck caked with blood and guts. Then, out of nowhere... someone... arrives. The sky clouds over. The earth trembles under my feet. My body chills. The stomach crackles, frying in its very same acids. My flesh screams as run through by a million rusty cutlasses. Pain, pain, pain. It's atrocious, excruciating, unbearable. If compared with it, being mangled slowly in an ocean of broken glass is a gentle thai massage. The inexorable immersion in the most flaring acid is a delicate thermal bath.

I collapse to my knees while that obscene presence chokes my wife until she's dead. In unspeakable pains I gather the last shreds of energy and I barely manage to lift my gaze. But I've just seen him now. It has neither face nor shape. It's just an enormous black shadow. It's the inevitable. It's the burning Reaper. It's the most pestilential of all the pestilences. It's the moment when you draw your last breath while you're drowning. I scream. I wriggle. I muster every physical and mental strength to wake up from this nightmare, but there's nothing I can do. Body and mind lie worn out by a black and deep exhaustion, and they're not ready to wake up yet. Many different doubts arise spontaneously. How much of all this is a memory, from a long time buried in the deepest and ice cold abysses of my mind? And how much is false and roughly brewed, a mere fruit of my imagination? But above all... what's that inhuman shadow? Who or what ripped the soul from the brightest and most delicate flower ever sprung among the spits and the muds of this continent? If this is two and this is four, then what's this? And what if the right answer were "a foot scratcher"? How much wood could a woodchuck chuck... no, wait! The mind is floating, digressing... I need to stay focused. I've got to concentrate, to try to remember. But the old scene's already gone, maybe forever. Now I'm on a huge, sad shore of black rock, falling sheer into the ocean. The sky is dark with clouds, as gloomy and as threatening as the innkeeper bringing you the bill and finding out about your empty wallet.

A wind with terrifying speech defects shouts ancient omens of misfortune and destruction in my face. Suddenly I hear some steps behind me. Curvy and warlike in her hunter uniform, an old friend of mine appears to me, back in the land of the living...

G: "Morgan! Morgan LeFlay! Can you at least explain to me what's going on here?"

All of a sudden a second, unsteady presence appears inconveniently on her side. His shabby reddish beard and his worn out pirate captain coat exude sloppiness from every fiber. I wonder briefly about how an intangible vision could brutalize my dreamy sense of smell in this way.

BOB: "YARR SON, THE DREAMS ARE MEANT TO LET YOU KNOW THAT YOU'RE ASLEEP. IF YOU UNDERSTAND THAT YOU'RE SLEEPIN' YOU'LL BE ABLE TO WAKE UP AND FINALLY ORDER ANOTHER JUG OF SOMETHIN' THAT'S TOXIC AND CORROSIVE ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU PASS OUT AGAIN! YARR!!! GUESS I'VE THROWN UP MY PANCREAS!!!"

G: "Yikes! Don't turn up here all of a sudden, throwing up in my face bizarre theories and filthy guts... but... hey, you're Booby Bob, one of the most eminent luminaries of the buccaneer community!!!"

BOB: "YARR!!! BOOBY BOB KNOWS THE MEANING OF THIS DREAM!"

G: "Great, let's hear it!"

BOB: "YARR!!! YOU'RE THE GUY DREAMIN' EVERY NIGHT OF THE DEMON PIRATE LECHUCK HUGGING A DUCK TENDERLY?"

G: "I'm afraid not, I couldn't stand it. I'm not particularly fond of that awkward animal. I've got nothing against ducks instead. Especially against their fricassee in a spicy sauce."

BOB: "YARR!!! BOOBY BOB THINKS HE'S IN THE WRONG DREAM!"

M: "OH, COME ON, I THINK WE'VE ALREADY WASTED ENOUGH TIME AROUND HERE! GO IRRITATING SOME COLOSSAL, VIOLENT AND RAVENOUS MEN-EATER SNAKE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN, AND THEN PLAY AT RESISTING TO THE INEXORABLE ATTACK OF ITS DIGESTIVE FLUIDS!"

BOB: "AHI!!! AHI!!! THE GIRL'S KICKIN' BOOBY BOB'S HOLY BUTT VIOLENTLY. BOOBY BOB LIKES IT. BUT BOOBY BOB WILL GO AWAY."

Bob fades away in a small cloud of rotten, smelly and unhealthy smoke.

G: "My, my, he was terribly annoying. But he did have that tiny bit of healthy depravation which can turn anyone into a potential, perfect company for some bizarre weekend made of exhausting binge drinking and flirting..."

M: "That... that was one of the most eminent luminaries of all pirates?"

G: "Yeah, right... after all, we're not exactly known for being particularly educated and learned. Just think of Demented Dave and Tardy Ted. Oh, and also that guy who would speak to his socks, Noncerebral Celsus."

M: "Umpf... now listen to me, you'll be glad to know that I have a message for you. It will help you understand something more about your visions."

G: "At last! Surprise me! "

M: "Here it is: "Maybe you should consider an appendectomy."."

G: "I think it's not too late to ask Booby Bob for a few explanations..."

M: "Sorry, sorry, wrong message. Damned Bob! He literally ravaged some subtle equilibria orchestrated among the astral schemes and turned upside down that precise pile I had expressly arranged for... oh, here it is. This is the right one. "Earlier on, on Booty Island, you experienced a past you do not wish to

remember. Now, on this waste land, you shall hear a future you can save, do not surrender."."

G: "What's that, some kind of a riddle? I've nevr been good at these things. But just give me some paper caked with spit and a banana swinging correctly on a ruddy metronome, and see how I can work out in a few seconds a mischief which will turn into a moron even the... "

M: "No, Guybrush, if it were a riddle, then I'd be supposed to ask you questions. Nothing more wrong than that, since I'm here... to give you answers. I'm the ambassador of higher forces which now are playing their cosmic games... such complicated games that you couldn't possibly imagine... "

G: "Something like a sack race around the pool borders?"

M: "No... "

G: "The manatee dance on a glass - bottomed boat?"

M: "NO! SHUT UP AND LISTEN TO ME! I've got OTHER very important things to tell you... "

G: "Yes?"

M: "And I'm going to tell them to you in the form of a song!"

G: "Oh, no! No! No!"

Morgan's skin wrinkles, it falls to shreds onto the rock, one piece after the other, just like the worst quality paper.

What remains is nothing more than her funereal, bare skeleton. Somewhere, from the other side of the ocean, a rough and dissonant music starts playing, as if performed by an immense orchestra of drunken sea cows. Morgan's bones start dancing in an ungraceful and disharmonic way. I feel some kind of a deja - vu...

M: "The head bone is connected to the heel bone... "

G: " What d'you mean, should I use more bath foam?"

M: " But the heel bone is not connected to the arm bone... "

G: "Or maybe it's a treasure? What should I do, help, I'm so lone... “



M: "The arm bone is connected to the shoulder blade... "

G: "Haute cuisine or devilled bones sauce on the plate?"

M: "But the shoulder blade is not connected to the breast bone... "

G: "The secret of the universe? Or my maternal uncle, that old drone?"

M: "BY RENE' ROTTINGHAM'S FLOWERED GARTER BELT, ARE ALL THESE RHYMING ANSWERS REALLY NECESSARY???"

G: "Sorry, that's just a professional bias. And by the way... does Renè Rottingham wear a flowered garter belt?"

M: " ... did you write everything I told you?"

G: "No, I didn't."

M: "What are you waiting for?"

G: "Baby, you're talking with Guybrush Threepwood, the shabbiest and mightiest pirate in the terraqueous globe. Surely it won't be a problem for me to remember this jingle about a blessed drone and a seal's groan... "

M: "Breast bone and heel bone! They're bones of the body! The first one looks like one of those stupid darts you fire at each other during the drinking contests, while the second one is shaped like a squashed shot glass! Remember the sequence. Remember it well! Anyway, it's enough for now.. If I say more... he'll perceive that my conscience is crossing the border between the worlds and... you'll

understand everything, I'm sure of that! Besides, when the time comes you'll realize that everything you need to wake us up is inside you."

G: "He? Wake up... who? Inside me? What's inside me? Do you mean something like bravery? Will? Or maybe the intestinal duct? You're not talking about the Eustachian tube?"

M: "Farewell, Guybrush! We're waiting for you... keep on looking for Napoleon Hellbeard... follow that way and you'll understand everything when it is necessary... we... we are at the end of the road... we are those who are doomed to scream forevermore... "

G: " ... goodbye, Morgan! If... you're in danger, I promise you I'll go down the bowels of the earth... oh, he' ll rue the day he was born, the man who only dared... "

I am cut by a noise that is not of this world. It is like the devastating tolling of an immense bell, together with the screams of a million damned souls. Once. Again. Morgan flees. Another tolling. The earth gives way around me. The sky vanishes. The ocean turns over. And at the end...

...

... I' m awake. A far island across the porthole! Tortuga! And apparently there's no noise coming from Largo's room! I' ve got to find Hellbeard before them! Run away from those two! And I need to do it now!

*Between water and mists, well beyond the depths,  
A stormy sea rolls over the decks  
It tries time and again, hoping to engulf  
That corrupted fortress, built on stone and skulls.  
And titanic fleets, a myriad soldiers  
No, I'm not wrong, it's the Triad's Headquarters.  
There a blindfolded man with a limping pace  
Walks in anguish into the darkest place  
The dark is heavy, the silence repressive  
But someone awaits, and his throne is impressive.*

SZ: "May the Triad triumph, Admiral Cortez!"

ADM: "May the Triad triumph, Baron Soze!"

## Episode VII - Spirits of Tortuga

SZ: "Admiral, report about the latest events!"

ADM: "Oh, things are brilliant, Baron! We have recently hunted out a deposit of mystical cat knuckles badly hidden by a miaowing joiner's workshop on

Pinchpenny Island! And we have found that unseizable shaman claiming to cure lethal septicaemia providing kind words and gentle hugs."

SZ: "Did such a shaman... actually exist?"

ADM: "Oh, yes, the everyday life of a pirate is not so generous with sweet words, therefore it often happened that pirates would flog themselves with an infected bloodstained cat - o' - nine - tails just to enjoy his services. But our tolerating order does not tolerate such foolishness, so now his mortal remains feed our greenhouses. The amulets instead have been transported to the furnaces of Blood Island, according to standard procedure. There the cloud of ignorance has been dissipated by the cool winds of our Supreme Progress."

SZ: "Right, but as far as I know there should be also some... INAUSPICIOUS NEWS, shouldn't there?"

ADM: "If it is about the escape of LaGrande, LeChuck and Threepwood from Roca Recenciòn, I can assure you that the sequence of events which happened was very little understandabl... "

SZ: "What? DID THEY ESCAPE?"

ADM: "Ehrr... uggh... aagh... didn't... DIDN'T YOU KNOW IT?"

SZ: "Of course I did know it! I was simply commenting an informative missive in triplicate which has just arrived to me. It seems that some experimental specimens of "Cerberus Poodles" escaped from our laboratories after having torn our scientists brutally apart. Would you like to see the photos? Look at this one! Look how this man's glands have been spread on the... "

ADM: "No, Baron! I don't want to loo... but... it's too dark! I can't see a thing here! You... can you see in this room?"

SZ: "My eyeglass."

ADM: "What?"

SZ: "I am wearing one of these Eternal Sun Eyeglasses™! While my guests grope in the dark I see all their mental twitches perfectly, their sweat - soaked foreheads, their faces gnawed and contracted with terror. Their hands slid SOMEWHERE FILTHY WHILE THEY THINK THEY ARE NOT BEING WATCHED!"

ADM: "I'm speechless. Afflicted. Let me lick your divine boots until they shine like old... "

SZ: "DON'T TOUCH ME WITH THOSE APPENDICES! THEY'RE FOUL!"

ADM: "Yes! Yes! You're right! Look how I'm taking this musket and see how I'm finally removing without further delay the foul pestilence I infected the... "

SZ: "Let it be. You will need them in order to compose hymns of screams glorifying our fame! To carve the simulacra of our supreme order through the rough stone of mysticism and grossness! So I suppose I could turn a blind eye on what you did. FOR ONCE. But... do tell me... how did this escape... happen?"

ADM: "The... poodles' escape?"

SZ: "THE PRISONERS' !"

ADM: "Uhm... well, I'm afraid that... a series of incredible coincidences occurred. Some information was missing in our folder... concerning a... a certain.... a certain.... well, the one who turned himself into a giant demon chicken. His name was... his name was... by the Great Architect, I have never been brilliant at recalling names... "

SZ: "Try to remember! Try!"

ADM: "Uhm, his name concerned his looks, if I remember it right. And he wore a frugal but refined CAPTAIN hat, he was covered in disgusting BLONDE hair under that layer of mud and he displayed a long and bushy BEARD... "

SZ: "Well?"

ADM: "His name must have been LONG HAIR HEADDRESS, no doubt"

SZ: "A definitely awful name to hear!"

ADM: "They are pirates, Baron! Scum without any common sense or good taste! But that is not all! For some reason an order had arrived to the jail on that day... a very precise organizational order. A bill in triplicate imposing to halve the staff and to provide it with strange experimental weapons, powerful but not very practical. In the bargain it said to transfer to the jail only the poorest among the recruits. I do not know from whom this order came, but it must have surely been a good - for - nothing with no knowledge of... "

SZ: "I gave that order."

ADM: "The best order ever to have been issued in our history."

SZ: "And I also commanded to make some files from that folder disappear. And the prisoner's name was "Captain Blondebeard". And you are the king of fools!"

ADM: "Thank you, Baron, thank you! Your qualification flatters me! Please, allow me to ask you for a specific plate with such a title, so that everyone will be able to say: "There he is! There he is, the king of fools!" whenever and wherever they see me arriving."

SZ: "It is not necessary. Your face is enough for that."

ADM: "Which fills my chest with joyful jollity. But pray allow me to ask you... what was the purpose of your order?"

SZ: "If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it, what colour is the tree?"

ADM: "I do not see how this may have anything to do with the rest of our... "

SZ: "I beg your pardon, just a leaflet about a soap which removes the stains without ruining the colour. For trees. I will have the postman flayed. As for the order favouring the escape of those three, everything has been meticulously precalculated, scrupulously concocted, fully devised! The mortal remains of that impure demon sail towards Blood Island, where they shall be accurately purified by the magma of the volcano, while those three are headed for TORTUGA... "

ADM: "What? But... it doesn't make sense! If you had wanted to purify the demon, you could have let it happen before it transformed itself and... Tortuga?"



But it's the last pirate outpost left untouched! We never managed to flush out that place of depravation, lust and flying Jolly Rogers, not even with... "

SZ: "Say "Goodbye Roger". Goodbye Roger."

ADM: "Wha... what?"

SZ: "Figuratively speaking, I was just saying goodbye to those pirate flags which will never fly again, from here to eternity. Admiral, get the Midnight ready!"

ADM: "Oh, no... you don't mean... "

SZ: "Exactly. The time has come to make the night fall upon Tortuga!"

ADM: "Baron, but... the wide view available from Tortuga... the net of pirate sentinel ships surrounding it... our previous attempts to assault it have always been foreseen well in advance and they have miserably failed!"

SZ: "We will not fail this time. One of our men is there to make sure that the operation succeeds. No one will see us. No one will fight back. No one will escape."

ADM: "But... it's madness anyway! An infinite and insane horror! We shouldn't... we can't afford to... "

SZ: "Cortez... how dare you call me a MADMAN without permission? A permission I SURELY NEVER GAVE YOU?"

ADM: "No... I... I could never... "

SZ: "Do you know what happened to the last man who called me a madman without my permission, don't you? Do you know what happened to the Subadmiral Dipkins?"

ADM: "No... actually, I have no idea. "

SZ: "Do you like those delicate female wood sages decorating the main hall?"

ADM: "Did you... did you burn him and turn him into a flower???"

SZ: "No, I was simply asking you a mere opinion about the decor. As for Dipkins, he was imposed the Glorious Self - Evisceration on the Public Square™. Dangling from a rope for days. With your chest freezing slowly. And the rats nibbling your small intestine while you are still alive. It must be unpleasant. And I imagine that the next time we will have to distribute some plentiful doses of a good antiemetic to the public watching the show. I would not want to have to imprison them all again for having dirtied the square with their copious and nauseating food regurgitation."

ADM: "I... I'll obey, Baron! May the Midnight fall upon Tortuga!"

SZ: "Right, now go. And let me sip my tea. And may the Triad always triumph."

ADM: "May the Triad triumph!"

SZ: "May the Triad triumph!"

ADM: "May the... "

SZ: "Come on, leave!"



*The admiral greets him, back from his quest  
But deep into his heart there's a pulsing unrest  
Between the waters of Tortuga, here's what we see  
Two men are rowing, from a strange prison they flee  
The sun is up from less than a few hours  
But gloomy and disturbing is its grey pallor  
LeChuck is alive, but a heavy price he paid  
Of his two legs, now one of wood is MADE.*

LL: "Well, liters of blood spilled practically everywhere. Leg amputated and replaced with a stick badly wangled from the firewood. Various hours spent wriggling and screaming while I was cutting you open and stitching you up like an old turkey to stuff. Lacerations seared with the flames in a slapdash way. Most people wouldn't have survived. It would have taken months for someone to recover completely. But you did nothing but... stand up and shout: "Filthy latrine cleaner, don't just stand there, let's go and blow up our stomach with some poison!"

LCK: "The liver. I said "blow up our liver". "

LL: "WELL THAT DOESN'T CHANGE THINGS VERY MUCH! You should have at least recharged your batteries with, I don't know, a good night's sleep!"

LCK: "Thank ya for the lovin' proposal, Mama LaGrande. But I'll rest when I'm dead!"

LL: "I would really want to believe it."

LCK: "Not to mention that I didn't

understand why we're rowin' towards the island while we had a practical and comfortable steam engine ship which we could have... "

LL: "DEMON PUFF! IT'S CALLED "DEMON PUFF SHIP!" Anyway, see those ships surrounding the coast? They're sentinel - vessels, armed with the best cannons and the best Voodoo sensors! If we had approached with a Triad ship we would have unleashed defensive procedures which would have messed up all our plans and our attempts to... "

LCK: "Umf! And what is worse... ya let GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD vanish into thin air without us managing to... "

LL: "There's nothing but ocean for miles and miles from here, LeChuck! And besides, there was a missing longboat on board! Surely it was Threepwood who stole it, in order to sail towards Tortuga. Probably to look for Napoleon Hellbeard. We'll find him! But don't be so hasty sentencing him to death!"

LCK: "Death? Oh no, no! Not before extracting the eyeballs out of his skull, just ta skin him slowly one layer after the other an'... "

LCK: "LeChuck, we wouldn't be here safe and sound without Guybrush Threepwood! That boy is some kind of a natural at extricating himself even in the most difficult situations. A sharp and penetrating intuition, on the edge of supernatural... it may... it may come in handy in the future."

LCK: "A valid speech, for those who still HAVE a future! But from what I should have understood, in abou' ten days I'll be as hardened as a frozen wooden leg an' as green as a cucumber."

LL: "What?"

LCK: "I'LL SNUFF IT!"

LL: "Oh, yes, you would... but it seems obvious that you no longer have by your side the ridiculous thug of ten years ago, too busy squandering all his wealth in seductive tarts and handing out disfiguring scars in futile bar fights. In fact, the quest for that unseizable artefact inspired a new Largo LaGrande, now a master of knowledge and skills which could make any mortal drool like an old stinky dog in front of his juicy steak!"

LCK: "How come I'm still not feeling relieved?"

LL: "Knowledge by which I concocted well three foolproof strategies able to prolong the worldly life of this imperfect shape of yours!"

LCK: "Let's hear them."

LL: "Number one: YOU WILL PASS AGAIN THROUGH THE INFERNAL GATES OF BIG WHOOP!"

LCK: "That's an awful start. The power of Big Whoop has been exhausted for more than seven years because of me sadistic and careless overexploitation."

LL: "Wha... what? Exhausted? This went against any predictable equation! How the hell did you drain one of the most extraordinary sources of power in the planet?"

LCK: "Well, I used ta leave the lights on even when I wasn't in. Oh, and I would also run full loads when the washing machine really did have only a half load of clothes! If I had maimed them right, surely two or three more unfortunates would have fitted in, but I always wanted ta start the program while... "

LL: "You connected a mystical gate as ancient as the universe itself to... some household appliances?"

LCK: "Ta those and ta dozens and dozens of other flesh burnin' and bones breakin' carousels. Y'know, that idea of producin' energy by tyin' monkeys ta gears, pulleys and servomechanisms of all sorts turned out to be a double - edged sword! No one had ever told me that monkeys die if ya don't feed them for more than ten days."

LCK: "A bit like what happens with every other living being, after all! All right, all right... uhm... the matter of Big Whoop could be a problem ONLY if I hadn't planned the strategy number two: WE'LL GO BACK TO CHRONOS GRAVE AND WE'LL SUMMON YOUR DEMONIC FORM FROM YOUR VERY

SAME MEMORIES. Crossing his power and your most recent memories you should be able to go beyond the limits of the temporal evocation."

LCK: "Oh, that seems a great idea!"

LL: "Yeah, but... I don't have those complex sextants in my pockets anymore. And without them the idea of finding your way through the chaos of the mists of time is so ridiculous that... they must have taken them from me while we were in Roca Redenciòn!"

LCK: "LARGO!!!"

LL: "Oh, no, no, no! The working of those sextants was entirely based on channeling the complex alchemical vibrations of the only one mineral of a kind in the world! A stone fallen from the sky onto the pate of Francisco DE Cava, the legendary explorer, while he was founding the city of Santa Fe without helmet!"

LCK: "YE'RE A... AND WHY SHOULD HE HAVE WORN A HELMET WHILE HE WAS FOUNDIN' A CITY?"

LL: "Who cares about that now? No one ever managed to synthesize nor find other fragments of that mineral again. Never again will we be able to make use of the power of the mists of Chronos Gravel! And the three Great Masters of Alchemy will kill me!"

LCK: "Don't worry, I'll do what I can ta avoid it. You can't kill someone who's already dead."

LL: "All we can do is resort to the THIRD strategy! We'll have to find the ancient wizard who brought you back to life for the first time in your soaked and decayed zombie corpse! That's right, by drawing the life blood from your living beard, that man celebrated what seemed like a simple voodoo ritual to me, but then... I found out something transcendent! That mysterious individual mastered a mystical discipline which was way superior to voodoo, a discipline born from ancient, forgotten cults secretly preserved by few Chosen Ones who... "

LCK: "Maimed macaque! Putrescent waste! Iguana vomit!"

LL: "What did I do now?"

LCK: "If ya weren't pathologically blinded by the craving for yer sweet oven for scones made of gold and diamonds, ya would have listened ta me earlier in the cell, when I said that the last ten years have been simply a comedy, plotted by the most Mephistophelian maneuverers that... "

LL: "I did hear you talking about puppets, but I had understood that you had joined some poor theatrical company for a while! You know, a bit of healthy art expression sometimes brightens the soul and eases the antisocial instincts... "

LCK: "THE ONLY ART I REFINED IN THESE YEARS WAS THAT OF GRATUITOUS TORTURE! AND AS SOON AS WE GET OFF THIS BADLY FURNISH'D TUB YOU'LL GET THE CHANCE TA PUT TA THE TEST ON YER OWN SKIN THE WEIGHT OF ME CLAIM! Ya know who that wizard was? I learned it reading just that stupid diary: one of the masters of puppets who'd been makin' fun of us all this time! A man, always in disguise, so that his

identity was never revealed. First a cannibal on Monkey Island, then a shaman in me fortress, then, behind me back, a weird carnival attraction under the name of Dinghy Dog TM! While the Voodoo Lady was arming Threepwood with his enchanted junk, he was in charge of watchin' me constantly and influencing me choices, so that I... always lost! And all because of this: by dyin' and risin' up over and over again, I stored so much power that I became something called "The Source"!"

LL: "The Source? But what... and why the hell did that wizard start wearing a... giant dog costume!?"

LCK: "Because the worst wolf is the one dressed as a lamb! Or, in this case, as a dancing and humming imbecile! Only later did I realize how that one had practically been his most terrifyin' shape! Thanks to his subtle manipulative arts, he managed to disguise in disgustin' dances and clumsy tacky stuff an unseemly amount of subliminal messages that... led me ta... ta do some embarrassing things! Things I don't wanna talk about!"



LL: "By Cagliostro's mephitic concoction... the voodoo wizard! I still can't believe it! We took him with us as if he were a brother! We ate from the same plate and we shared the same bed!"

LCK: "Details I had rather not have known... "

LL: "We even sublet him 50% of the fortress so that he could use it as a warehouse for his human relics! Even though... come to think of it, this was slightly suspect! Because... I agree on the usual voodoo rituals, I agree that looks count very much in a job like this and that turning up repeatedly at the door with some fresh corpses is very much like: "Ooh, wow, I'm a dark and misfit son of darkness". But... turning up every night with eight new galleons packed with dead bodies, bones and guts of all sorts? And always pretending that someone help him unload at four a.m., not without a certain arrogance?"

LCK: "Yeah, those human remains were part of a terribly sinister plan... "

LL: "That is?"

LCK: "I don't have a clue, at one point the diary... ended with "The evil and top secret plans of the unbearable fat witch and of her misfit assistants are over. Now close the diary and go to sleep". "

LL: "This... doesn't make any sense!"

LCK: "Alright, alright, I stopped readin' when I heard some rumors about a bloke in the square playing a barrel organ with his buttocks and a moray eel on his head. And after wastin' a whole lot of time scrapin' that idiot's marrow off some rocks, I had to go to court to... but what does it matter? And with this I'd say we've run out of yer BRILLIANT strategies to prolong me life. Well done, Largo! Now, as ye're here, get yerself a musket and shoot me in the chest, so that I'll save myself more parts of the pathetic show going on since you came into this world!"

LL: "You'd better calm down, LeChuck! The paths of alchemy branch off in extraordinary wide and complex ways. For example, if the Gear truly hides an unlimited energy, we might find a way to use that energy to... "

LCK: "Now we've got it! Listen to it... the thunder of fights, on and on! The aroma of vomit and unrestrained fornication! The famous tomato sauce stains spilled everywhere on the pier!"

LL: "I don't think that's tomato sauce, I think they've just cut somebody's throat there... "

LCK: "Shut that sewer up, Largo, and help me dock the ship! I'm more exhausted than dirty, and gettin' slosh'd on grog 'till I'm sick and then tramplin' on some shy, unlucky shorty is just what I need to recharge me batteries!"

LL: "And... uhm... and I... "

LCK: "I'll be the one findin' ya! In a hour. That's the time I'll give ya to work out a solution to me ticking and spiteful situation. After that, I'll release ya from any worry. Forever."

LL: "Meaning that you'll enroll me on one of those Buddhist - Mahayana - Zen Relaxation Classes?"

LCK: "MEANIN' THAT I'LL DO AWAY WITH YA ONCE AND FOR ALL!"

*Largo and LeChuck proceed with no fear  
For they still do not know that the end is near  
Meanwhile Guybrush, left alone with his troubles  
Looks for his past in a sea of puzzles  
Between buccaneers and cutthroats,  
lust and violence  
Suddenly he spots an infernal existence  
An endless shadow, a man in disguise  
Blood, death and destruction, what a dreadful demise  
He doesn't know him, but he trembles in pain  
He's seen him already, on Booty, on that day  
He's hard on my heels while I'm running away  
Until he finally reaches me in a hidden, dark way.*

G: "Anf... anf... you... you!!! Who are you? And wha... what's that sort of gloomy tribal mask? And that long dress... are you a... voodoo wizard?"

???: "So you were after me, isn't it right? You were unpredictable, but now clear is my sight. I would read every life like an open book, but my sight is shorter now, strange echoes obscure my look."

G: "Wha... what? What the hell are you saying? I... I've seen you before... "

???: "A special person altered reality. His mighty spirit changed the stability. You won't find a stock answer to my doubt. It is not you who I'm talking about."

G: "Well, I wouldn't want us to make friends. But let's consider the current events. Go on explaining, 'till I understand. Or you'll taste some... AAAAAARGHHH!!! WHAT... HAVE... YOU... BECOME... HORRIBLE... INFERNAL... GHOST... AAARGH!!!"

???: "Your stomach burns, your head is splitting. Now be quiet and still until your heart stops beating."

G: "AAAAAAAARGGGHHHH!!! IT'S... IT'S... HEEEEELLLLLLP!!!"

???: "The cosmic game, the eternal dance shall end. Into the abyss, into nothing, into oblivion see the pawns descend. And now, finally be proud of your death."

Your bones, your flesh shall find no breath. Forever and on they shall scream with no pause. Everything will be dead, and you will have been the CAUSE."

.....PAIN.....THE  
HEAD.....

...

It's morning in a desert alley of Tortuga. I'm on my back on a floor that tastes like blood, while a hundred - thousand cannonballs covered in blades blow up inside my head. But now... ninety - nine thousand... ninety - eight thousand... my head becomes lighter... I can think... my muscles... I can control my body again! What... what was that sinister ghost who...

W: "Captain Threepwood! Is it really you?"

G: "Van... Van Winslow???"

## **Episode VIII - Beyond the legend**

G: "Or... are you Largo LaGrande?"

W: "Oh, I see you too know one of the many nicknames used by all the lucky maids I would welcome beyond the fetid veils of my underwear."

G: "Vulgar and embarrassing talk. That sour aroma like the one of a young male whale dead for months. The fat stomach with the very same consistency of the bacon puddings OF the scumm bar!"

W: "Hey, be still!"

G: "... IT IS REALLY YOU THIS TIME!"

W: "CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD!"

G: "Ugghhh... don't... hug me... so... tight... need... oxygen... "

W: "I'm sorry, I'm sorry. May I at least kiss your head? Caress an ear? Cuddle a knee?"

G: "No, you can't. Anyway... hey, my voodoo aggressor... has human form again, and he's senseless! What did you do to him?"

W: "The coward has just tasted a stodgy Van Winslow's slap sandwich! If an infernal wizard attacks Guybrush Threepwood with arcane voodoo black magic, you can be sure he won't live to tell the tale!"

G: "Who? Me or the infernal wizard?"

W: "What does it matter now? Fortunately I saw you while I was looking out of the window of my caramel and caviar cake, "Daisy with the golden braid"! There, there she is, she's just leaned out of it again! Admire her splendor! Smell her sweetness! Let her grace fill you with joy!"

G: "Oh, holy jumping monkeys, there's someone here who nees a diet doctor immediately."

W: "What???"



G: "Nothing... I mean... I thought you were still together with that Anemmmmale.... Annem...yes, well, I thought you were still spending your days mating with the triton. Even though I'm still struggling to accept the thing."

W: "Oooh, THAT was a great age! This poor, old run down heart started pulsing with ecstasy like a young boy's... Y' know, a man can never say he's really happy if, once he's back home, he doesn't have some fins to grope. Some barbs to brush. Some opercula to titillate."

G: "Why did I want to introduce this topic at all costs?"

W: "But, alas, just as you can't cage a salty dog ashore, you can't trap an old Don Juan in a long lasting monogamous relationship. So, when I was caught keeping myself amused with... uhm... three tarts and a cream spray... I'm afraid I broke the pact of civil living together between men and tritons forever. So the Vaycaylians sank deep into the ocean once and for all, swearing never to come back to the surface because of the insult they had suffered."

G: "C... cream spray?"

W: "That's right. And all those "it's not as it seems" were useless."

G: "Well, fortunately now you've embarked on a new relationship and you've found your natural balance again."

W: "That's right, that's it, look at her! Enjoy the splendor of her eyes while she gazes at the ocean wriggling between the first lights of dawn... HI DARLING!!!"

D: "Hey Reggie, my baby! There are three pieces of eight missing here! Come back upstairs to pay the bill, or I'll have to send you my cousin to break all the thirty - three vertebrae with a hard steel billy. But take your time, sweetheart!"

W: "You'll have to excuse me, captain, I've got some important matters to settle, but I'll be back to you in no time at all. In the meantime try to find out more about your... HEY!"

G: " WHERE... WHERE IS HE? HE MUST HAVE RUN AWAY! He disappeared while we were speaking!"

W: "As swift and as silent as a coitus between squids."

G: "That... that's right... "

W: "And I fear that the ol' Van Winslow is short of pieces of eight to lavish on the beaming Daisy. Now, if you don't mind, how about if I proposed vanishing into darkness like... like... who was that bizarre being?"

G: "I... don't have a clue... he looked like a wizard, but... at one point he turned himself into that sinister waving mask... and that energy he gave off... screams... terror... ancestral pain brought back from the darkest circles of hell. Oh, and he talked in rhymes."

W: "Ooh, probably he was a poet. An artist. A gentle ad romantic spirit."

G: "Who was slowly making my heart and my brain boil with massive doses of terrifying dark magic. Brilliant conclusion, Winslow!"

W: "Maybe he was just a broken hearted boy. Perhaps you'd accidentally trampled on his seal pup. Check under the sole. Taste the ground nearby. If it tastes like seal, then we're close to a solution."

G: "I DIDN'T TRAMPLE ON ANY SEAL PUP! I... I'm under the impression that... I've already seen him in my nightmares and... he knew me well too! He was talking about dead bodies which would have never found peace. About screams of pain which would have echoed through the universe forever. About... the end of everything! Many sinister things happened in the last twelve years, but this time... it's not like all the others... something atrocious is crawling in the darkness like a swarm of worms craving dead flesh... Largo's return... the Tomb of the Titan... Elaine's death... the Triad... my dreams... the Sorcerer's Gear. It's as if all the threads are woven together in an awful spider web but I really can't... "

W: "Hey, that donut down there looks like it's just been thrown up. How much will it be in pieces of eight, according to the current exchange?"

G: "Van Winslow, are you listening to me?"

W: "Oh, yes, yes, sure. A swarm of bodies locked in an embrace. In the darkness. And their underwear looks like spider webs. Sounds exciting."

G: "Uhm... right, Winslow! But now it's quite late, so I've got to go. Give my love to Daisy, the tritons, the half digested donuts and... "

W: "No! Captain, wait! Where are you headed?"

G: "Napoleon Hellbeard. I'm looking for a man called Napoleon Hellbeard. I don't know why but... maybe he's got some answers. Maybe he's a way out of this labyrinth. Maybe he really knows something about my parents. Or maybe not. But what does it matter? Looking for something. Tearing down the obstacles in the middle, finding him. And then moving on to the next adventure. That's simply what I always did.

W: "That, and tasting old candles."

G: "Oh, come on, I did it only once!"

W: "Just a moment... a moment... Napoleon Hellbeard? The man who cleaned out the stables of Augia? Who killed the Nemean Lion? Who stole the golden apple from the Garden of the Hesperides?"

G: "I thought those were the twelve labours of Hercules."

W: "The one who multiplied the loaves and the fish? Who turned the water into wine?"

G: "I think it was someone else who did those things too."

W: "The man who led the storming of the tritons against the Pirate God LeChuck?"

G: "Uhm... and that one is you... "

W: "Yes, yes, as if! Anyway, I know the location of his residence. Everyone here knows the location of his residence! It's not so close, so we'll have the chance to tell each other what happened in the last two years while we walk. Come on, follow me in that small, dark, wild wood, where sinister roars come from."

G: "Sigh... great... let's go... "

W: "Well, I once happened to feel a strange gluey crust between my gums while I was wandering on Jambalaya Island looking for a bathroom... "

... ..

W: "And this was how the Avatar of the Five Oceans sank into the vermillion flames of sunset, eventually hit by the Cannon of the Seven Gods. The Hundred - and - one Machines of Atlantis were welcomed by the eternal embrace of the abyss once again, while the Gods of the crystalline empyrean came back to the dimension they had come from, greeting me warmly. In that moment everything in the nature seemed to compose an ancient and very sad melody. And... sniff... I've never seen Reginald Jr again since then... "

G: "By all the monkey snots... sniff... it's the most extraordinary, epic and moving story I've ever heard. And what is incredible is that it practically involved any island in this archipelago apart from Scabb Island!"

W: "That's right! So, after a night full of revealing dreams, I decided to visit some prostitutes on Tortuga."

G: "Urghhh... a conclusion I could have drawn myself. But how many hours have we been walking? It's dark here. The wood is getting thicker and thicker. And... brrrr... this cold is... unnatural!"

W: "Don't worry... look, Captain! We're there! Here... Napoleon Hellbeard's residence... "

G: "What... "

W: "... his ETERNAL residence... "

G: "Que... that little stone in the distance... it's a gravestone! Napoleon Hellbeard... is dead?"

LL: "Apparently for years! Welcome to Hellbeard's grave!"

G: "LARGO LAGRANDE!?"

W: "THE GUY WHO TOOK A DROP OF MY BLOOD SOME MONTHS AGO?!"

LL: "So once again does my way cross the one of the "Greatest hero of all times!"

G: "Oh, come on, I'm just a simple boy who dreamed of becoming a pirate. And a fireman. And a sculptor acrobat accountant. And a... "

LL: "I'm not talking to you, you underdeveloped gibbon, but to the shorty wearing a moustache! There's no man sailing these waters who doesn't know the titanic story of Reginald Van Winslow and of the Avatar of the Five Oceans"

W: "Apart from that tragic, secret accident with the Volume of Creation, which I rewrote the whole history of humanity with, making it an imperfect, fragile, sad and mortal progeny."

G: "Wha... what?"

W: "Nothing. We were saying... Napoleon Hellbeard!"

G: "Yes! The treasure... my past... his secrets!!!"

W: "Whatever his secret was, he dragged it with himself to the grave, Captain!"

LL: "Uhm... right... to the GRAVE... "

G: "That's incredible... such a pirate legend... buried into this wood, forgotten by light and warmth. Commemorated by a small, dirty, worn out gravestone. And with Largo LaGrande digging with a shovel into his... LARGO!"

LL: "Anf... anf... what is it?"

G: "YOU... YOU' RE VIOLATING NAPOLEON HELLBEARD'S GRAVE! BUT YOU SHOULDN' T... YOU SHOULDN' T... "

LL: "Does someone here think that violating someone else's grave it's immoral, UNLESS IT BELONGS TO MY GRANDFATHER?"

G: "SO, YOU WERE SAYING, VAN WINSLOW? The other Thursday leek and pineapple soup went past its expiration date? The bridegroom eventually went for the community of goods?"

W: "Nothing of all this, I' m pineapple intolerant and it makes my duodenum swell dangerously. Instead there's a... an inscription... on this small gravestone... "

G: "Hey, that's true! Let's see... << Even if I should find myself in hell, I will draw strength from it and return. Always. >> ... drawing strength from hell and always returning? Deja - vu!"

W: "Oh, so you're very fond of the typical dishes from low Borneo too!"

G: "No, Winslow! I' m referring to that kind of deja - vu conveying the sensation of having already seen something somewhere else... BIG WHOOP!"

W: "Bless you."

G: "... the concept behind this sentence... it describes perfectly the power giving life to LeChuck's body before he became a mortal once again!"

LL: "Hey... anf... anf... I've rolled up my bra just to shovel some soil, but don't help me, yeah? Go on peeping at the carvings on the marble and concocting rambling thoughts!"

G: "You meant "you rolled up your sleeves!""

LL: "Yeah... shirtsleeves... that's it! I feel... there's... THERE'S A COFFIN HERE!"

G: "How many times have I said this sentence while I was on the wrong side of the wood?"

LL: "Unfff... it's not nailed down so I should... arghhh... HERE IT IS! IT'S OPEN! BUT WHAT THE HELL... "

G: "Yikes!"

W: "Ohhh... a finger will do, a finger will do, and the itch is gone too. And Van Winslow's buttocks are in heaven too... BY ALL THE SEXY GILLS! A very long stair, going relentlessly through the bowels of the earth themselves!"

That's right... not a corpse riddled with worms. Nor ashes. That one wasn't a dead man's chest, but... a door! And behind it lies a stairway leading to some dark underground place! Largo, covered in mold and sweat, pulls a match out of his pocket, he lights it and starts going down. We make our way through the heaps of tomb soil and we follow him. Our steps echo grimly for many minutes among

ancient stones enshrouded in darkness. No one utters a word. The air grows thicker and thicker, more and more oppressive, until...

LL: "Another door!" CLAC!

...

The door opens. My heart skips more than one beat when I see that sight. An immense mausoleum with colossal golden walls shining among the blaze of eternal voodoo lanterns. And treasures, jewels, gems, volumes, arcane machines, paintings and statues everywhere, in memory of a legendary age, forever swallowed in the ravenous abyss of time.

LL: "It's a crypt! An immense crypt overflowing with treasures!"

G: "Look at this device... who knows which incredible wonders it may be able to do! The mind boggles at the idea!"

W: "There's a writing beneath, sir! It says "Cappuccino Machine"!"

LL: "Could it be... could one of these objects really be the Sorcerer's Gear? But I can't touch them all carelessly. It may unleash a power that could devast... HOLD STILL!"

G: "Urgh! This cappuccino tastes like mouse!"

W: "I would advise you against looking into the gears, sir! Uhm... meanwhile, could anyone turn off this thing shaped like a hypercube? It's... slowly... sucking... me... down... dimensional... portal... HELP!"

LL: "I SAID NOT TO TOUCH THIS STUFF CARELESSLY! GIVE IT HERE! Right, it's turned off. We may need... maybe, combing through these volumes we might infer something useful."

G: "Look at this one here, "Napoleon Hellbeard's diary"... "

LL: "SHOW ME!"...

May 22, Voodoo Year 998

Even if I should find myself in hell, I will draw strength from it and return. Always. This motto raised my spirits during storms and boardings, during scurvy and dysentery. No matter how hard the trials are, I will turn them to my advantage and draw strength, wealth, POWER.

I like this motto very much, so much that I had it carved on a medallion which I always carry with me. Now for example it would suggest that I should not surrender in my attempt to conquer that wonderful witch with no name. However, giving up sending her stuffed lamb hearts could be a good start. I'll try wrapping up the livers cut off from those kind tourists we robbed, impaled and disemboweled this morning.

Dear diary, I think I am finally starting to understand women.

January 3, Voodoo Year 999

I would have never said it, especially after that unpleasant event with the ox slaughtered on the table which had just been bought. Still, it looks like my beaming witch with no name is going to give me a chance! I will have to find an ancient treasure, the Leviathan Lord, buried centuries ago in the deepest part of a cave on an island shaped like a regular dodecagon. But the quest promises to be arduous. Indeed, I don't have a clue about the shape of the mirror specular gorgons look at!"

W: "Captain! There's something wrong with Mr. LaGrande. His face is turning purple and there's a copious, warm and thick substance coming from his mouth. Which tastes like chicken."

G: "Winslow, don't taste the others' dribble!"

January 4, Voodoo Year 999

Apparently the regular dodecagon is a geometric figure with eleven equal sides.

January 5, Voodoo Year 999

Apparently the sides are twelve. Score one for Napoleon Hellbeard.

October 12, Voodoo Year 999

Off to Vodun Island, the island shaped like a regular dodecagon! After months of researches I finally managed to mark out the course to that remote piece of land. It was not easy, since it is far beyond any ordinary course, in a part of the ocean which is constantly scourged by storms. But above all because every time I managed to trace its location on some ancient atlas, I could not help but shout: "GOSH, COME TO ME, LORD OF THE LEVIATHANS!", which outlawed me from all the libraries in the Tri - Island Archipelago. Not to mention the time when those words led me to summon a REAL, bloody and extremely powerful Dark Lord of the Leviathans which razed the whole citadel where I was dwelling in to the ground. Nevertheless I managed to work out the problem in advance by beheading all the librarians of this archipelago. Now I should be able to tame the waters thanks to my ship, the "Easily Sinkable", to my loyal crew captained by the faithful Second Officers George and Martha Threepwood, but above all thanks to these priceless directions which will allow me to avoid the storms: I will just have to veer eleven degrees to the west from the moment we go beyond the "Rock of the Fatal Errors". We are leaving on October 13, or, according to the pirate tradition, on the "Day when every departure ends inexorably in tragedy."

G: "My mom! My dad!"

W: "You... you... sniff... may call me 'dad' whenever you want to! And Mr. Largo will be proud to be your lovely mom."

G: "I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU TWO!"

LL. "SILENT!"

November 1, Voodoo Year 999

Apparently the degrees to veer from the Rock of the Fatal Errors were twelve. My ship fell to pieces and my crew was swallowed by the depths of the ocean in a horrible whirlpool of wood, metal, screams and flesh. The sole survivors: I, Martha Threepwood, George Threepwood and a dimwit called Immortal Ike, thus renamed because deeply convinced of being immortal, for reasons unclear to me. Now we are all clutching onto some of the floating pieces of the wreck to avoid being thrown away by the currents. From afar George yells at me something like "Hold on to it, you idiot! Hold on to it, instead of writing on that bloody diary!"

April 3, Voodoo Year 1001

Immortal Ike is dead.

We are shipwrecked on an island packed with monkeys and, as you well know, we have been endlessly hunted down by those sadistic cannibals living barricaded into their fortress - village. Rumors have it that they should want to be called "The infernals" and they are identifiable by a tattoo shaped like a torment right on their face. And I did not have the faintest idea what the exact shape of a torment was before seeing it onto their faces. Really the best concrete rendition of an abstract concept I have ever seen.

These individuals worship a sinister and arcane cult which makes them love pain, flames, self flagellation of the flesh and the practice of the "Wince". Dear diary, I would explain to you what this practice is about, but when they tried to explain it to me I threw up for a week. They are all worshippers of the "Infinite Hell", some kind of a dystopian world they strive for, where rocks ooze flesh and blood, white hot magma flows everywhere, and the screams of the faces, of the noses and of the guts of the lost souls echo evermore.

Dear diary, I simply believe many of them went through a difficult childhood.

Going back to Immortal Ike, he stole into their village to nick some of their food supplies. And he became part of the food supplies too. But I look at my medallion, I repeat our motto on and on and I do not lose heart. Now, dear diary, excuse me for a moment, because I am chained upside down on a pool full of acid while some infernals are performing a grim dance with the aim of removing my bowels using sharp spears. I will try to work something out and I will let you know... ehi! My trachea!

May 28, Voodoo Year 1004

Gosh, come to me, Lord of the Leviathans! Oh no, I've summoned it again!

May 29, Voodoo Year 1004

Gosh, come to me, Lord of the Leviathans!

Dear diary, after a bloody final clash against the dark lord of the Leviathans, I am finally sailing towards Vodun Island together with George and Martha! Indeed, we took advantage of some infernals who had walked away from their village looking for monkeys to paint the living room with, and we stole their small boat. Thanks to it we reached the isle of "Blut Insel" nearby. There I packaged a mystical "Love Bomb", thanks to which I won the hand of the young and very rich Valerian Van Salad, scion of the hotel business. Then I let her down on the altar, I set fire to the church, I stole the gigantic rubin on the engagement ring and sold it to the smugglers from "Isla de la Calavera" in exchange for this fabulous ship, the "Not so easily sinkable". Now, dear diary, you will have to excuse me, but Martha is shouting and she is asking me why I wasted months giving stuffed lamb hearts just to set off on a wearing, exhausting and extremely risky journey then, when I could have used one of my Love Bombs from the start. Ah, the twisted and elusive female logic!

June 6, Voodoo Year 1004

By Poseidon's navel!

We have been on Vodun Island for months, on this sinister island covered in ancient ruins of unknown people. Finding the only, immense cave on the island was easy: we just had to follow all the signs reading something like "This way to the only cave on the island, you fools!" in an ancient and now disappeared tribal language. Sure, it looks like there's no treasure at all, but... there is not an inch of rock that is not covered in arcane symbols, ancestral figures, primordial images. And it is not a "No spitting" like I had supposed at the beginning. George says it is about spells, curses, instruments to channel energy from the spiritual kingdoms. To cut it short, about everything you need to know about pure primeval magic. Apparently the carvings represent some sort of an endless atlas of the mystical veins running across the universe itself. And he says that if we take some time to report them on our diaries and study them we might... grasp the deepest secrets of the cosmos. Channel powers which have been dull for thousands of years through the dark plots of nature. Raid all the waters of the world like eternal and greatly powerful half - gods imposing their barbaric will on the common mortal souls. Then, not without a certain contempt, he invites me not to spit right there, when we have a whole island on hand.

June 9, Voodoo Year 1004

They found us. I don't know how, but they found us! They appeared at the horizon like a swarm of locusts ready to devour everything. Scores and scores of ships of the English Navy. And what's worse, they're from the English "Eye of the Occult". That government department formed by the greasy and fat noblemen who send Navy soldiers to die around the world while looking for spells and artefacts, so that they can dully boast about them and flaunt them during their



caviar and champagne based dinners. How come they found out about this island? And why RIGHT NOW?

There's only one truth: if secrets like those down in the cave end up in the hands of the European leaders, it's over. The nations could devise weapons with limitless power and it will be over for every free man in the world.

But... we can't fight them! They're hundreds of men, armed to the teeth, and we don't know the cave spells well enough to use them... or not... George... George is telling me that there's a spell we might use to prevent the Englishmen from reaching the cave. It's called "Egsanzyon".

It is one of the few spells we managed to decipher in these days. And it consists in... giving your life to wipe out a place?

Yes, in sacrificing yourself to exile an island in another dimension forever, in a limbo from which it will never return. But I... I don't know if I want to SACRIFICE MYSELF! Yet George and Martha have no doubts about that. They'd rather die than give such a power to the Eye of the Occult. Even though this will mean never seeing their son Guybrush again. The ritual requires exactly three people which have to place themselves at the ends of the place to wipe out. Otherwise it will not work. I keep on expressing my doubts about giving my life in such a ritual. But George reminds me of my motto and of the meaning behind it. It does not matter how deep misfortune is, we will manage to raise the power of our spirits beyond adversity. We will challenge darkness too. We will even face the infinite frost, the eternal oblivion. And we will emerge the victors. Together.

June 9, Voodoo Year 1004

Run away, fled. Like the most despicable of the chickens, the lowest of the cowards. I saw the life of my friends being sucked away by that ancient cosmic energy, and when it came to get me... I was afraid! I fled! I... didn't want to die! I'm not ready to die! I betrayed them! I'll run... run away, swimming. Away from all this horror! Now... a deafening thunder... a green blaze... the island... it's disappeared anyway!? No... it reappears. And it disappears. It reappears. Convulsively. The ritual is incomplete. What have I done? What's going on? The currents boil. The island... appears again, closer and closer. My friends! I betrayed them! The island disappears. It reappears. At a few feet from me. It wants to suck me away with it, in the other dimension forever! The waters begin to boil, while the Navy ships twist and turn in the grip of the waves without any more control. The current... overwhelms me... I... can't... can't...

1st Month, Hellbeard Year 000

My beautiful witch with no name has a lover now. A young explorer named Coronado De Cava. Young. Inexperienced. A putrescent jellyfish with neither charm nor backbone. I never understood if my friends' soul, now perpetually bound to the island, was trying to suck me away to itself or to save me from the

Navy soldiers on that day, despite my betrayal. Anyway, I am here now, the last survivor of a crossing made of unspeakable horrors, a crossing born after the name of a treasure which maybe never existed. Horrors which turned me into a dead man walking. A ghost of flesh, wandering restlessly and terrifying a world which does not even seem to belong to him. But which I will take back, bit by bit. I managed to save the diary containing the carvings of that cave, and I am slowly deciphering the contents. Weapons of unspeakable power. Ways to subdue people and turn them into slaves to my will. Exciting, enticing, limitless primordial magic. Many formulas are incomplete, others are impossible to understand. But I will work them out bit by bit. Beware, Coronado De Cava, because soon you will be six feet underwater. As swollen as a fat pig. With the crabs eating your eyes and the fish crunching your fingers. And the witch with no name will be my bride! My age begins from today. The age of the GHOST PIRATE HELLBEARD!

G: "Could... could the witch with no name possibly be the Voodoo Lady? Uhm... judging by the next pages, it seems that Hellbeard fought for years and years against Coronado to do away with his rival in love, but without ever succeeding once and for all. I envy the stoutness of their stomachs. And... look here, it doesn't seem that he ever died like LeChuck to me! Yet he was defeated many times, and every time it happened, he would decipher new carvings from his diary in order to come back more and more powerful and with new devices to plot merciless schemes with. The lot maybe just to hide from himself the regret of having abandoned his best friends on that island. Look how many incredible adventures... when he was defeated for the first time after an indigestion of rootgrog. When he put up Coronado's voodoo puppet. The construction of the Carnival of the Unfortunates. The quest for the Ultimate Outrage! The spread of the Pandemic of Hellbeard! Winslow, what do you think of it?"

W: "Well... a dead ox on the table. I think I didn't pay attention after that. You wouldn't read everything from the beginning again, would you?"

G: "... sigh... "

LL: "THE CAVE OF THE PRIMEVAL MAGIC! I'd always suspected that the Sorcerer's Gear might be related to something much more extraordinary than simple limitless wealth!"

G: "Here... there's no Sorcerer's Gear mentioned here!"

W: "And no primogeniture cave either!"

G: "THAT'S BECAUSE YOU SHOULD HAVE AT LEAST LISTENED TO THE STORY!"

LL: "Uhm, that's obvious, a rough and illiterate mind like yours can't grasp the clear symbolism behind a story like this."

G: "Curious... I was thinking of... long, sharp pins."

LL: "NO! DON'T PRICK MY BOTTOM! ENOUGH! PLEASE!"

G: "And this is music to my ears. You were saying?"

LL: "Anf... anf... I was saying... everything's deeply connected. The primeval magic is the one every other magic came from. Therefore, if one understands its entire design, one will immediately come to the ultimate solutions to all the challenges of the Alchemical Science, including the deep essence of the Gear!!! Oh... if only I think of the power Hellbeard acquired by writing out only the smallest part of that design... I'VE GOT TO FIND VODUN ISLAND! GIVE IT HERE!"

G: "Hey!"

LL: "Let's go on with the pages... rubbish... rubbish... the day Hellbeard formed an alliance with an old New Zealander businessman only to turn himself into a giant bronze statue later? Who can be so stupid to plot a scheme like... HERE IT IS!"

<<Vodun island never really disappeared from our world. The fact that I had left the ritual unfinished implies that it remained between this dimension and the limbo. Indeed, the island appears again among green blazes from time to time, just for a few seconds during sunset, in parts of the ocean which are often very far from each other. At first I thought that those movements were accidental, but then I realized that they followed a very precise pattern which I managed to work out during the years. I always keep the map with that pattern with me. Who knows, maybe one day I will be brave enough to go back there and complete what I left unfinished.>>

LL: "He kept it with himself... which means... HIS BODY! Could it have possibly been buried with his body?"

G: "What if he had simply returned there? What if he had been brave enough to go back to Vodun Island to complete his ritual?"

LL: "No... lo...look at the end! On that wall! There's a modest wooden coffin resting vertically against the wall!"

W: "The unmistakable smell of death! Yes, Hellbeard's body... must surely be in that coffin!"

G: "Awwww... the stink gets worse and worse with every step... it's unbearable... "

LL: "Hold your nose... this coffin... doesn't seem nailed down either... now I'll open it... one... two... and... "

W: "AAAAAAAARGHHH!!!"

G: "YIKES!"

HELLB: "AAAAAAAARGGHH!! THE LOO'S DOOR! CLOSE THE LOO'S DOOR!!!"

When you think of such a pirate legend, you imagine it... in a duel! Yes! Covered with the blood of his enemies, with a sword dripping brain and the metal of his

hook vibrating in unison with the beat of a heart just extracted from the chest of some unfortunate! Or you imagine it... swearing to the oceans! Yes, proclaiming one of those mighty curses of other times in front of which the waters tear themselves mercilessly and the gods of the oceans start to cry like dancers who just had spotted their own new tutus! Or... drinking! Yes! Writhing and suffocating between rivers of grog, until his own head falls miles and miles into the underground and every single offal which has in the body corrodes 'til becomes ashes! But I never imagined to meet... a poor old man sitting on his loo. Look at him... fat, hunchbacked, tired, with worn dresses and a big white beard, which stands out more near the deep coffee color of his skin. Fully intent to read one of those obscene magazines...

HELLB: "OH, FOR THE SICKENING EASE OF COSTUMES OF POSEIDON'S MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER AND EVERY SINGLE FEMALE OF HIS SHAMELESS FAMILY! STOP STARING AT ME IN THAT WAY AND CLOSE THIS DAMN LOO'S DOOR!"

## **Episode IX - Midnight**

I close the coffin door behind me and I turn to Largo and Winslow.

G: "Ok, as for curses, I'll still give him a 30/30 cum laude and academic ventral saber. Even if... uhm... I don't know him at all!"

W: "Fork, pitchfork and back door number 39. The first magazine themed domestic tortures, exotic cuisine and with those big central pages of integral nudity that so much intrigue every good..."

G: "I WAS TALKING ABOUT HELLBEARD!"

W: "Oh. Did you think you already saw him before?"

G: "Yeah... when I've heard talking about Hellbeard, I thought he was the old man I met years ago on Knuttin Atoll... the one who, after being hit by the Ultimate Insult, decided to undertake a little dignified career as a shy puppeteer. He had a similar name... Hellbeard the Unrepentant."

W: "Oh, Hellbeard is a pretty common name among pirates in the Caribbean! For a moment, I thought you were talking about that other guy, Nonsense Hellbeard."

G: "Nonsense Hellbeard?"

W: "Oh, yes, that buccaneer who always contradicted himself, everything he said or did. Until someone asked him if he shouldn't had to contradict the same fact of calling himself Nonsense. Some say that he died in that instant, loudly exploding in an uproar of paradoxical logic."

G: "Paradoxical logic?"

W: "I have no idea of what it is. But I assume it's some kind of mixture of nitroglycerin and gunpowder."

LL: "WHAT ARE YOU BLABBERING ABOUT? IT'S INCREDIBLE! NAPOLEON HELLBEARD IS STILL ALIVE! But then... what's the sense of... this grave... this mausoleum..."

W: "Maybe he retired here when he lost every reason to go forward. When he began to become old, tired and the world around him changed. Then he felt the need to escape, to quit forever with everything that vainly dances on this land of miseries. Except for everything that was still worth to be preserved: some little, sad memory of an age now lost forever."

G: "Winslow, didn't you have a mustache?"

W: "Never had it, sir!"

G: "Did you touch another one of those contraptions of Hellbeard while I turned away?"

W: "No, sir!"

G: "Winslow, you were never blonde!"

W: "Mi cabello dorado es famoso en todo el Caribe, señor!"

G: "AND YOU NEVER TALKED SPANISH IN YOUR LIFE!"

CLAC!

The door opens. Napoleon walks out. Slowly, silently, with uncertain walk and a hand insistently adjusting the linen. Then he looks at us, still silently. We all see in his eyes something new, something we didn't see while he was in the loo. The flaring up of an immortal spark. Maybe, a glimmer of his ancient charisma coming back to shine. And when he opens his lips, we all prepare ourselves to listen something solemn, magnificent, monumental. Something we'll remember until we'll have life and we can tell to our sons' sons.

HELLB: "For the sacred brothel of Hell, I have so much phlegm in my body!"

G: "BUT... MISTER HELLBEARD!!!"

HELLB: "Aaaak... PTUI!"

LL: "Hey, my boot!"

W: "DIESE VERANSTALTUNG LÄSST MICH WERWIRRT!"

G: "What kind of contraptions there are in this place?"

HELLB: "..."

G: "I think... he just fell asleep..."

LL: "WAKE UP!!!"

HELLB: "Eh? What? Where? Aye!"

G: "Aye!"

HELLB: "Aye!"

W: "Aye!"

HELLB: "Aye!"

LL: "Aye!"

W: "Aye!"

HELLB: "Aye!"

G: "Do we have to go on like this for so long?"

HELLB: "I'll show you what task you have to do."

G: "O... Okay..."

HELLB: "As I wrote to you on my previous letters, in my loo's depth, it self-created the ideal habitat for a nest of yellowish and ravenous meat-eaters cockroaches, which often climb up again numerous on the surface, in search of human meat to eat. It won't be easy to drive it out, but I notice you brought the human bait to sacrifice for the purpose."

G: "I think... there's a misunderstanding..."

HELLB: "Oh, come on, looking at the runt with the grim expression in the eyes, it's obvious nobody is going to miss him. Any questions?"

G: "We're not here to disinfest your house."

HELLB: "Oh, don't worry, his death will be painless. The days of agony that'll precedes it, on the other hand, will be sprinkled of atrocious sufferings, I fear. Other questions?"

LL: "I'M NOT HERE TO BECOME THE BREAKFAST OF A PILE OF MEN-EATING COCKROACHES! I'm here because I have to... FIND VODUN ISLAND!"

HELLB: "..."

G: "He... stopped! He understood! That name! It... awakened something in him! It re-evoked ancient sensations long forgotten!"

W: "I think he's gripped by a paresis, sir. Or he's dead."

LL: "Oh, for the sacred smoked Bacon's bacon..."

HELLB: "... Aye!"

W: "Aye!"

HELLB: "Aye!"

W: "Aye!"

HELLB: "Aye!"

G: "CAN YOU QUIT IT?"

HELLB: "What's your name?"

W: "Reginald Van Winslow, sir!"

HELLB: "Well, Mister Taumatawhipoka, can you show me the path to a good loo? In truth, I'm not very practiced on this area."

G: "He doesn't... he doesn't understand anything anymore! The ancient and legendary pirate... is really dead! Our quest ends here!"

LL: "The maps! Where are the maps!? We need the map with the course to Vodun Island! Do you remember the map with the course to Vodun Island?"



W: "What, me a relative of those two? Ah! Ah! Ah! Of course not! You must be crazy!"

G: "HE'S TALKING TO ME! It's me! I'm Guybrush Threepwood, mighty pirate. And Martha and George Threepwood... were my mighty parents."

HELLB: "For the worn pants of Efesto! Martha and George's son... after all this years! I can't believe it... ya became a real pirate! Just like yer father wished every day!"

W: "And he loves to wear pink dresses."

HELLB: "Just like his mother worn every day."

G: "Van Winslow, don't you have other lethal contraptions to inopportunately fiddle with?"

W: "Yes, actually. Here I go."

G: "My last name! Is it possible that listening to it switched on again your spark of reason?! Mister Hellbeard! What... what is written on your diary... is it all true?"

HELLB: "Yes. Never taste the wood of yer own ship."

G: "I was referring to what is written on my parents."

HELLB: "Oh! I'm afraid so, kid. Yer parents are dead. For many years, I wandered in these waters... maybe hopin' me endless battles in search of revenge, blood and gold could help me forget what I've done to them. But it didn't do anythin'. So, when me beautiful Witch With No Name mysteriously disappeared, while Coronado De Cava departed to search some kind of "Supreme Sponge for Dishes", I decided to retire here... but wait... maybe ya are... no! The Horsemen of the Apocalypse!"

G: "Are we two-wheeled vehicles pulled by some filthy quadruped?"

HELLB: "Those are the Horses with Calash."

G: "Are we tablets capable of conferring an odorous breath thanks to the action of powerful balsamic herbs?"

HELLB: "AND THOSE ARE TABLETS OF EUCALYPTUS! No! No! I'm talkin' about the last premonition whispered to me by a shaman of dark arts before I decided to abandon me pirate life: it doesn't count how far I would've fled, neither how deep I could've hidden! Some messengers of death would've come to brin' me back on Vodun Island, so that I could fulfill me destiny in a last journey! Aaaak... PTUI!"

LL: "Hey! My toupée!"

HELLB: "Sure, I don't have me maps anymore. But the course to the island is still well imprinted in me old head therefore, I imagine it could still be possible to reach it. However... are ya really the men of the prophecy? Uhm... It will be the darkness to answer."

G: "Wha... what..."

All of a sudden, the gold on the walls starts to darken. The voodoo lanterns enlightening us lose their vigor. The darkness enfolds us. Every thing starts to



creak, to resonate horrendously, as if we were surrounded by undead scraping their own coffins trying to exit. The cold becomes unbearable. Hellbeard seems bigger, while his voice assumes an infernal tone, as if now there was a chorus of demons resonating through a colossal abyss of ice instead of him.

HELLB: "SO, IT'S ALL TRUE. I SEE THE ANCIENT RUINS OF VODUN ISLAND ENGRAVED IN YER DESTINY! YA... LARGO LAGRANDE, HORSEMAN OF THE PESTILENCE!"

LL: "That terrifying epidemic of bowels-breaking creole plague I spread during my alchemic apprenticeship was all a terrible accident."

HELLB: "YA WANT TO REACH THE ISLAND BECAUSE YA HOPE THE PRIMEVAL MAGIC WILL GIVE YA THE INFINITE WEALTH YA ALWAYS DREAMED OF! BUT... THERE'S MORE... SOMEONE YA KNOW IS DYIN' AND... YA HOPE THE CAVE CAN GIVE HIM THE IMMORTALITY!"

LL: "It's more the awareness of what will wait me on the other side the day I'll snuff it than a hope."

HELLB: "Anf... anf... AND YA... REGINALD VAN WINSLOW! HORSEMAN OF THE WAR AND HERO OF THOUSANDS VENTURES! YA WOULD BENEFIT OF A PART OF THAT POWER TO... SUCCEED IN PHYSICALLY POSSESS ALL WOMEN IN THE WHOLE WORLD?!"

G: "Van Winslow!"

W: "I admit to have thought it."

HELLB: "EVEN THE ELDERS? EVEN THE FAT ONES?"

W: "Someone opens some windows here. The air was just plagued with the unbearable stench of racism and discrimination."

HELLB: "AND YA... GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD... HORSEMAN OF THE FAMINE!"

G: "Famine? Why the famine?"

HELLB: "YE'RE DEFINITELY UNDERWEIGHT!"

G: "Oh, right."

HELLB: "YER SUPERIOR INSTINCT HAS ALLOWED YOU TO... GRASP SOMETHIN'. YA DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN, BUT YA KNOW YE'LL HAVE TO FIGHT ENEMIES WAY MIGHTIER AND MORE POWERFUL THAN THE ONES YA HAD TO DEAL UNTIL NOW. ENEMIES WHO TOOK AWAY FROM YA WHAT IT WAS ABSOLUTELY MORE PRECIOUS TO YA ON THIS WORLD. ON VODUN ISLAND, YE'LL FINALLY FIND... ANSWERS! Anf... anf..."

G: "I hope... I hope it's the truth..."

HELLB: "But... wait a moment, there's... somethin' strange about ya. Somethin' imperceptible, which I can't decode. Like... a tragic, colossal mistake? But... anf... anf... lookin' so thoroughly in the shadow requires too much energy and..."

anf... how curious, accordin' to the prophecies, the Horsemen of the Apocalypse should be FOUR! Here is missin'..."

G: "D'Artagnan?"

HELLB: "No."

G: "The chakra of a thousand petals?"

HELLB: "THOSE ARE SEVEN AND THEY HAVE NOTHIN' TO DO WITH THIS! Anyway... with ya, there's should be..."

LCK: "... MAYBE DEATH?"

G: "LECHUCK!"

I turn around. LeChuck is there, on the door where we came from. With the appearance of his presence, the lights twitch convulsively for some seconds, to then come back, without never regain their original splendor. Everything macerates and stagnates in a horrible greyness for endless moments, while LeChuck, pale and ghostly, slowly approaches us. The silence tightens our skulls in a grip, while that unbearable ticking resonates dark and solitary through the walls. But... am I wrong or... he seems aged!? His grin is muffled by an unnatural tiredness. His beard shows grey shades never seen before and his voice... is terribly hoarser and darker!

LCK: "Really an interestin' tale. And imagine that, from what I could hear around here, some foolish pirate of Tortuga considers me the only true HEIR of this old whiner who has voted himself to the dark forces only to hide his own PATHETIC fragility."

HELLB: "LeChuck, right? I've heard about ya. And despite the foolish blabberin' of this island I've never considered ya me... spiritual HEIR. Ya lack of style. And drive. And of... urgh! Breath's mints!"

LCK: "The disgust is mutual! I have NOTHIN' to do with YA, old man! I have no weaknesses. I don't vainly hold meself on episodes that in some way should've pushed me to descend deeper and deeper in the chasm of blood. I was simply born with a monstrous and perverted soul, and if, one day, I'll decide to sell it to the devil, it's simply because I love the good company."

HELLB: "That's exactly what I was sayin' at yer age."

LCK: "And, at yer age, is too easy to look back and search an alibi for the iniquities made in the past. By the way... this DESIGN of the primeval magic looks like somethin' compared to every source I drew evil power from in the past is nothin' but stinky baskets of used underwear. Largo, Hellbeard comes with us! Let's fill hats, pockets and bags up with as much treasures as we can grab, while I'll take care to give a very little delighted end to the little, pathetic adventure of Guybrush Threepwood and of his stuck-up garden gnome."

LL: "Can we take the Cappuccino Machine?"

LCK: "I HATE CAPPUCCINO!"

LL: “But I like it. I tasted half cup before. It looks well made, with the right creaminess and the right percentage of coffee. You know, a good cappuccino provides the optimal percentage of antioxidants to challenge a dignified...”

LCK: “Largo... sharp and red-hot needles!”

LL: “NO! STOP! MY POOR BUTT! MERCY!”

HELLB: “Ya can take all ya want, but DO NOT touch the contraption shaped like a little brawler rhino! If ya press the upper corn and point it at someone, it emits a violent voodoo shock that can instantly reduce his bones and internal organs to pulp.”

G: “Wha... what? NO!”

LCK: “Ahr! Ahr! Ahr! Thanks for the instructions, grandpa! This means it can become a really good day!”

LeChuck takes the little statue of the brawler rhino from a table under him and points it to Van Winslow. When he presses the corn, a million of blue electric discharges explodes thunderously on my first officer, knocking him violently on the wall behind him and leaving him smoking and lifeless on the ground.

G: “MISTER WINSLOW!”

The moments seem to proceed in a sadistic slow motion while LeChuck points his weapon to me. A moment before that infernal electric discharge beats me, I watch Hellbeard. He glances at me as if to say... to say...

LL: “W... wait...”

ZZZAAAAP!!!!

## **LAST TALES OF MONKEY ISLAND THE END**

You scored 0 of 800 points

Secret missions uncovered 0/12

Last Tales of Monkey Island is a story of:  
Danilo Lapegna

Realized with the collaboration of:  
George Lucas  
Steven Spielberg  
Quentin Tarantino  
Alan Moore  
Danilo Puce

I thank the giant mugs o' Grog which gave me the inspiration to make this story.  
Furthermore, I want to heavily insult everybody that...

*Hey! I'm not dead!*

...

...

...

A strange smell of coffee pulls my uncertain ascend to the waking. I open my eyes, embracing the floor of Hellbeard's mausoleum and more dazed than when I participated to that championship of "Fast-descend-from-a-mount-inside-a-barrel-of-rum". But... I'm fine! The brawler rhino... Hellbeard... is it possible that old sea dog has deceived LeChuck? Is it possible he has made him believe that with that contraption he could eliminate us in a manner... uhm... but what is this smell of... coffee dead from decades??

W: "... mmhmmm... let me rub your caudal fin down, my beautiful big mullet..."

Van Winslow! Muttering more embarrassing sentences! Poured behind the table! I stand up. I run towards him. He's serenely floating in that gelatinous limbo between the waking and the dream. He looks fine.

G: "Van Winslow! Van Winslow! Wake up!"

W: "awww... please... five more minutes..."

G: "WE DON'T HAVE TIME, WE HAVE TO CATCH LECHUCK! THOSE TWO ESCAPED WITH HELLBEARD AND THEY WANT TO REACH

VODUN ISLAND! I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH WE SLEPT, BUT HELLBEARD HAS MADE THEM BELIEVE THAT WE WERE..."

Ding!

G: "What was that sound?"

W: "Mmmh... Do you not smell this fragrance as of awakening senses in a sunny morning of spring? Smoking cappuccino coming!"

G: "Did you start the cappuccino machine?"

W: "Yep! The one you drunk before was already ready and to prepare more it needs almost fifteen minutes... mmmmh... why don't you give me a good morning hug, Captain? It's a good omen before drinking a tasty cup of smoking cappuccino."

G: "WE WON'T HUG WHILE DRINKING CAPPUCCINO! If it was only ten minutes from when LeChuck knocked us out, it won't be difficult to reach him. Especially, considering we're dealing with a slow big donkey who limps on a piece of wood. It's important to not lose a single moment..."

I turn around. Winslow is already there, standing up, near the cappuccino machine, drinking with a slow and pleasant placidity his inappropriate breakfast.

W: "Tasty cup of smoking cappuccino..."

G: "GET AWAY FROM THERE!"

I tug my first officer violently while his cup, soaring in the air, floods everything with disgusting cappuccino. We run through the dark stairs that guided us here and we give more than one hit to the coffin's lid leading to the surface. Apparently, our bearded well of irony covered it with a layer of dirt to symbolically consecrate our departure. But it's fortunately not much, so, after some strong hits on the wood, we manage to move enough to exit. After a few seconds coughing in endless clouds of dust, the darkness and coldness of the upstairs forest welcome us back, even though...

W: "Look captain! PEGLEG'S FOOTSTEPS! And broken branches. They went that way! Following the tracks of three men like them in a thick forest like this is like sniffing tracks of sperm whale's pheromones in mating grounds for odontocetes."

G: "Mister Winslow, don't you notice something strange? The light shining through the trees has something... unsettling."

W: "Sperm whale's pheromones."

G: "Van Winslow?"

W: "Yes?"

G: "Can we go?"

W: "Of course, sir. Let's start walking in that direction, sir."

G: "Isn't that the opposite direction to the one we came from?"

W: "Yes, sir. To the shortcut to the town, sir. A few minutes and we'll reach the dirty but always fascinating town of Tortuga, sir."

G: "There's a shortcut to the town of Tortuga?"

W: "Yes, sir. Convenient and sunny, sir. And in the weekends, full of delightful white-dressed maidens who throw cherry tree's flowers' petals at your passage."

G: "And... uhm... for what reason we walked for hours through inextricable branches and sinister roars, before?"

W: "Oh, we didn't see each other for a LONG time. I thought you'd like to do some chitchat."

G: "THAT KIND OF GIANT FELINE WITH SHARP FANGS ALMOST ATE ME ALIVE!"

W: "Oh, don't judge a poor animal from his alimentary habits. Every creature of this earth needs the right nourishment to continue to give its delicate brush strokes at the wonderful nature's painting. What is it, are you alright?"

G: "Sigh... I think... I think it's time to go..."

So we clumsily run for a few minutes through the sharp branches. Then, the light. Now we're on a brick road of beautiful white rocks, stretching for a few hundred meters to the not-so-distant town of Tortuga. The light. There's something wrong with the light.

G: "Holy... skipping... MONKEYS! What... what time is it?"

W: "No virgins throwing cherry tree's petals. Sigh, it's not the weekend..."

G: "BUT NO, VAN WINSLOW!"

W: "Alright, alright, none of them is virgin from a long time. And I fear I'm the direct responsible for some of..."

G: "FOR THE ROTTEN CARCASS OF CAPTAIN BLONDEBEARD, THE SKY! LOOK AT THE SKY!"

W: "For the moustache of my uncle Romuald... enormous black clouds hover suspicious in a sky bleakly painted of unnatural purple shades!"

G: "Y... yeah! The purple sky... the purple sky... I already saw something like this! My dream! The sky is exactly like in my dream! Something ancient and repulsive is happening on Tortuga! And maybe... it's just like on Booty Island when Elaine... Elaine... QUICK! WE NEED TO GO TO THE TOWN!"

W: "E -ehi! W -wait!"

We run on the rocks, while around the ceaseless pawing of our footsteps reigns the most deafening silence ever. Heart and legs almost explode in the fervor of

that run and yet... something is still wrong. First a buzzing in the head. Then a bland numbness. I am... sleepy. I want to stop just for a minute and...

W: "Captain! Don't sleep now! Anf... anf... let's keep running... here it is... the town of Tortuga... but what..."

My head pulsates. It pulsates ceaselessly. I'm sleepy. We're in a modest pathway sprinkled with little black lanterns. Even the screams, the groans, the burps of Tortuga... there is nothing. We don't feel sounds or smells. The gloomy reverberation of that purple light dominates everything. I'm sleepy. Something terrifying is happening. There are three pirates playing that "Liar's Dice, Asphyxia and Dysentery" going viral from some years, deductible from the fact that the first grips three dice, the second a noose and the third a slice of pumpkin pie expired from sixteen years. Maybe we should ask them something but... no... they're completely still. Paralyzed by some black sorcery.

W: "Let's go! There's no time to play Liar's Dice, Asphyxia and Dysentery! Let's go this way! This way! To the pier! We have to take my ship!"

G: "The Narwhal? You still have the old good Screaming Narwhal?"

W: "More, more! YOU!"

LL: "YOU!"

LCK: "YA!"

HELLB: "Mmmfff! Mmf! Mh!"

G: "Yeah, subspecies of old overweight sea slug. Sorry for extracting yourself from the little tasty soup where you were gloating, but I'm still here, in flesh, bones and... ehm... Van Winslow!"

W: "Ahoy, mister Hellbeard!"

HELLB: "Mmmfff... mmmfff!"

LCK: "Remove that gag from him, Largo! I want to understand what he's trying to blabber this decrepit and wormy mummy."

LL: "Sir, yes, sir!"

HELLB: "Mmmfff... forgive me boy, but I couldn't protect ya."

LCK: "THE BRAWLER RHINO... YA TRICKED ME!"

G: "I appreciate the fatherly care you had to me Napoleon, but the mighty pirate here doesn't need your tricks to take care of this malevolent pachyderm with the easy trigger."

HELLB: "..."

G: "What is it? Why are you looking at me like that? A bug in an eye? Van Winslow pranked me with a royal cobra on my shoulder again?"

W: "No, sir! I swear this time I read about his poison's effect, sir!"

HELLB: "Nothin', boy... ye'll simply do what ya have to do. It will happen what it has to happen. I will no longer interfere with yer destiny."

G: "What do you mean by "it will happen what it has to happen"? What will happen? Did you see something in my future?"

HELLB: "..."

LCK: "Whatever he saw in yer future, it could've not been other than ME risin' the chalice for a better tomorrow, wallowin' in yer marrow and usin' yer shabby spleen like... like..."

LeChuck paralyzes in the middle of the sentence. He seems sleepy, but his flabby muscles are still contracted, and those "always open in front of the most disgusting horrors" eyelids are still up. And... uhm... he has just taken an expression even more stupid than before. My head weighs... tons... I think I can resist only for a few minutes.

HELLB: "Alright, who drunk me cappuccino?"

G: "A fetid half cup the mighty pirate here."

LL: "I finished the not-so-fetid half cup left by this underdeveloped floor inspector."

W: "I... sniff... I tasted only a couple of sips..."

HELLB: "Perfect, I'll tell ya what I would've already told ya if these two purulent butt's excoriation didn't tie and gagged me like an old sack. And now untie me if ya want to survive, ya idiot!"

LL: "Sir, yes, sir!"

HELLB: "Ye're more reasonable than yer obtuse captain. The island has been hit by a terrifying spell. Something that, in my old times, we called... THE SUBLIME DRUNKENNESS!"

G: "Sublime drunkenness? Sounds... fun."

HELLB: "Nothin' is farther than bein' fun, boy! It's a repugnant spell, which nauseatin' effects are comparable only to the most devastatin' intoxication from alcoholic beverages."

G: "It still sounds fun"

HELLB: "In fact yes. But in reality it's somethin' that leaves ya completely defenseless from enemy's attacks. The mind gets foggy with a black and heavy blanket, the vital functions slow down, the muscles paralyze and the face contracts itself in a horrible idiotic expression. Like his."

LCK: "..."

HELLB: "Sure, I never saw a spell like this to act on an entire island... this must mean this is undoubtedly the doin' of an authentic MASTER of black magic. In every case those few drops of coffee circulatin' in yer blood thanks to me cappuccino, with the fact we were probably in me crypt when the attack began must've slowed down the effects. While it's probable that yer friend already had his mind foggy from the fumes of... mmmh... the delicious and laceratin' liquors they serve in that tavern in the corner. Like the rest of 'Tortuga, I think. But now



we must leave the island, only this way we can flee from this tremendous curse and... aaak... PTUI!"

LL: "Ehi! My new kneepads!"

WOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOT!

G: "What was that... some kind of siren?"

LL: "Oh, no, no!!!"

G: "Thinking about it... I already heard a similar one, right before the Triad caught the Shy Cuttlefish. But this time is... different. Infinitely more... powerful, vibrant, threatening."

W: "This is the great horn of a divine destructive manatee calling for his angelic little death manatees!"

G: "Yes, it's an effective similitude."

W: "Similitude?"

LL: "No... it's impossible... the Midnight!"

G: "The Triad casts a spell to provoke a colossal drunkenness to all the pirates in Tortuga and then deafens them at midnight with a particularly annoying siren?"

W: "Oh, I heard about plans more absurd than this one."

LL: "YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THE MIDNIGHT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THESE LAUGHABLE VOODOO TRICKS! THE MIDNIGHT IS THE TRIAD'S DEFINITIVE WEAPON OF DESTRUCTION! IF AN ISLAND IS ATTACKED BY THE MIDNIGHT, THERE WILL ABSOLUTELY BE NOTHING LEFT BUT A BARE AND DESOLATE DESERT OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION! WE HAVE TO FLEE IMMEDIATELY FROM HERE, SUPPOSING WE'RE STILL IN TIME!"

HELLB: "Nothin' to do with it, ya say? The Sublime Drunkenness paralyzes and someone else can then launch the lethal attack completely undisturbed. A plan as much trivial as effective."

LL: "For how many years you didn't have news from the rest of the world, subspecies of stale legends' headmaster? The Triad using magic! Ha! We may as well talk about the old ladies LeChuck helped with their domestic chores."

HELLB: "Then start to describe me the colors of their stinky dentures, sort of unwatchable stump! The strategic meticulousness of a similar plan is so clear that is most probable this TRIAD ye're talkin' about isn't exactly what they're sayin' to be."

LL: "Big Whooper. And I'm not short! I simply have a slightly curved back."

G: "The pirates... the majority of the pirates of the Caribbean is hidden on Tortuga! We can't flee and leave everyone to die! If it's true that the Triad is going to sweep the island away, we need to fight it!"

LL: "Wha... what?"

G: "Van Winslow, come with me! We'll set sail with your ship and we'll fight them face-to-face, in the most epic battleship that has ever upset this already upset ocean! It'll be never said that a mighty pirate like Guybrush Threepwood flees from his own responsibilities away like a shy manatee who doesn't... who doesn't..."

Darkness.

...

...

...

Conscious again. A million blades are piercing my head. I can't tell what could've accelerated the painful revival of my consciousness. Maybe the distressful rolling of the hull. Maybe that intense exhalation of salt and blood. Or maybe... the sounds of those slaughter-house screams. My look gets immediately captured from Van Winslow, trying, with the expression of who's attending his own funeral, to steer the wheel of the ship I'm now on.

G: "Where... am I?"

W: "Deck... of the Screaming Narwhal III, sir. You lost consciousness while we were on the pier of Tortuga because of the Sublime Drunkenness and I had to... I had to..."

G: "Screaming Narwhal the Third???"

I turn. I look Tortuga, and that million blades piercing my skull, go violently down into my bowels. An immense, colossal hurricane of black smokes is annihilating, slaughtering, crushing the entire island. Majestic, immense, infinite like Death itself, the Midnight dances at the rhythm of the screams of agony of those lost souls. The screams of agony of that marvelous age of meat and blood, now really buried forever in the name of some foolish, perverted whim.

G: "No... no... what... what's happening... we had to... we had to stop them! Why didn't we stop them!?"

LL: "Because NOBODY here, included your heroic but not reckless first officer, wanted to do the rat's death because of your careless craze of protagonism!"

Largo! LeChuck! And Hellbeard! They're all with me on the Screaming Narwhal's deck! My insufferable nemesis still seems to be paralyzed, but if my seventh pirate sense doesn't trick me... he won't be for long.

LL: "LOOK, imbecile! Look through that black fog! Don't you see it? Fortunately, they didn't see us because we're small and we managed to shield ourselves with the Midnight's black fog, but you... can see it. The Midnight! The most towering puffy ship of the Devil ever created. A massive metal monster, big as an island and armed with the most perverted and lethal weapons the human mind ever conceived. Like the Midnight itself, a horrible poisonous and acidic tornado able to pulverize an entire island. To throw ourselves against a demon like that we could've done the end of wiggling worms in a sharp mincer!"

G: "We had... we had to TRY and... Van Winslow, why Largo and LeChuck are on our ship?"

W: "You had to come with me. Hellbeard wanted to follow you. Mister LaGrande searched Hellbeard for too long to let him slip away. LeChuck goes where mister LaGrande goes."

LCK: "The truth is we were born with a malevolent destiny engraved in our flesh, in our bowels, in our lungs..."

G: "LECHUCK!"

LCK: "...and every single breath, every single heartbeat, every single movement of ours constantly pushes us to its INEVITABLE fulfillment. In this case every piece of flesh of our bodies plotted with the dark energies hauntin' sky and land so we could find ourselves HERE, ya and I, for a last mortal duel."

G: "Well... many pirates died today, but apparently there is still a free space in the obscure abyss of the Crossroad for a ticking and arrogant imbecile."

LCK: "The Crossroad doesn't want me, 'Threepwood. It spat me out more than once. For the afterlife I'm nothin' more than an indigestible morsel, so prepare to..."

W: "Speaking about souls spat out from the Crossroad... I think there's something you need to know, mister 'Threepwood!"

G: "Winslow, this is not the time. Bring me the sharpest sword, because it's about to begin the most epic duel that will ever... hold on a moment... what's that light blue glow coming from the hold? I've already seen... something like that in the past."

W: "Well... I mentioned my second officer in my tale, right?"

G: "You told me almost nothing. Only that you had a second officer. And he died."

W: "Not exactly... I had a second officer... dead."

G: "And where's the difference?"

W: "Ehi, you! Get on the deck! I think it's time to present yourself to our new crew. Here, you see, mister 'Threepwood, my second officer may have created a few TROUBLES in the past, but I would ask you to not give any weight to the matter. On one side because he hardly accepts his condition, on the other because he's an extremely capable person, therefore... oh, here you are! Finally!"

G: “No, no... *it's impossible...* YOU!!!!?????”



*Lots of amazing LucasArts/nostalgic Monkey Island  
merchandise on:*

<https://www.redbubble.com/people/spegnilcomputer/shop>

### PART III - ESCAPE FROM THE ABYSS





Atoms. I became... atoms.

Thousands, millions, billions of infinite atoms speeding frantically and ecstatically to every known direction and dimension. I feel them all. Every single one is a pulsating eye, a vibrating eardrum, an open moaning flesh wound. Around every one of my fragments, the universe capsizes infinite times, with a rhythm of rotation that I dare attribute only to the most recondite dream of the furthest galaxy. We fuse with a kaleidoscope of never intuited colors, sounds vomited from the limbos beyond every known time, inhuman smells perceived only during those uncomfortable dinners with my stinky aunt Jacqueline. Then the entire cosmos become pitch black. Heavy, dark, I fall in an infinite abyss faster than the thought itself. While I fall, I become infinite things. I'm the chemical formula which originated the most ancient world. I'm the gear which changes death into life. The same structure of the Creation becomes as clear as daylight while... the fall suddenly stops. An arm. I have my arms again. The head. And my legs! Where... where am I? An enormous, dark cave with thousands of pathways opens in front of me. It's difficult to describe. Every wall, every stalactite, every centimeter of floor is made of levers, gears, cranks, alembics, bubbling and moving in a sinister regular rhythm. Pipes, wires and drops of black liquids intertwine in the most horrific and titanic machine ever created. If only I knew what... *sacre bleu!* A little, fat, hairy man. This could be an excellent lab rat...

GG: "Welcome, Marquis De Singe! Welcome... to the Crossroad of Science!"

## **Episode X - The fool who lived twice**

DSG: "What? Who are you?"

GG: "Let me introduce myself. I am Gorr Gòkko. The first to ever arrive here. The first scientist in the history of mankind! The one who discovered something whose name still shakes every glorious scientific dream of our species. Something I made after endless years of sacrifice and started a chain reaction of brilliant and uncontrollable PROGRESS. I am the one who discovered... THE POT!"

DSG: "The pot?"

GG: "Yeah, the pot."

DSG: "Oui but... I thought the first discovery that made real progress in the history of mankind was... well, the fire!"

GG: "Ha! Everybody knows the fire came after many centuries! There was the pot before!"

DSG: "I'd guess it wasn't particularly useful."

GG: “Well... ehm... in fact nobody was interested in that. But it became crucial when I thought of using it as a helmet to launch myself from my second great invention: THE CANNON!”

DSG: “That too is completely useless without the fire!”

INV: “USELESS 'TIL ONE DAY I THOUGHT OF ROLLING IT DOWN A HILL!”

GG: “QUIET, WHEEL INVENTOR! YOU ONLY HAD A STROKE OF LUCK!”

INV: “Neh! Neh! Neh! Neh!”

DSG: “Oui ingenious!”

GG: “Anyway, it’s an honor to have you here, Marquis! With your death you atoned for your sins committed with those horrendous experiments of organ exportation performed on semi-conscious victims for pure fun. Here you’re only the soul of a man of Science, and you will be treated as that. Every fragment of eternity spent in this place will be a new discovery that will deeply shake you. Every moment will be a revelation that will shock every fiber of your eternal existence. You will comprehend the deepest mechanisms of the ultimate truth controlling the same Universe and...”

DSG: “Oh, pour le leg amputée de mon oncle Pierre! Que absurdité!

GG: “Wha... what?”

DSG: “Ha! I’m a REAL man of Science! Why should I believe in a silly spiritual kingdom in an ethereal place beyond death? We’re only made of particles of organic matter destined to decompose itself. The soul is a stupid superstition for maladjusted charlatans and fat witches!”

GG: “But... you’re here... now and you should believe at least what...”

DSG: “It must be a stupid joke of my subconscious. Pour tous les caniches purée, I was on Flotsam Island... I was following the mischievous hand of Threepwood and... I must’ve slipped over the statue of the God of Winds! Oui! I must’ve hit my head and fell asleep in the middle of the forest and... oui... I feel something... a torpor... a weird warmth mixed with an itch... I’m finally waking up!”

GG: “You’re... you’re vanishing! It’s... it’s the first time I see something like this!”

DSG: “Oui oui, est l’ordinaire. My amazing sleeping mind created dreams weirder than this. Like the horse drinking champagne and the baboon with the funny hat. Oh oh oh, they were really funny! Say hi to them if they pass by. Adieu!”

GG: “He’s... he’s gone! Where in the devil...”

BAB: “Oook! Aaak! Eeek!”

GG: “THE FACT SOME FECES YOU CASUALLY THREW ON A STONE WALL MADE SOME PLEASANT SYMBOLS DOESN’T MEAN YOU INVENTED WRITING, BABOON WITH A FUNNY HAT!”

HOR: “Tiiiiihhhh”



GG: "AND YOU SHUT UP, HORSE DRINKING CHAMPAGNE WHO BECAME A MILLIONAIRE BY INVENTING THE SATURDAY NIGHT SHOWS!"

HOR: "Tiihh! Ihhhhh!"

GG: "What? His complete refusal to the concept of afterlife, mixed with a strange substance that was in his blood when he died, is making his soul come back to the living world?"

HOR: "Buuuurp!"

GG: "Never heard anything so silly. There must be a reason if you're just a stupid horse while I was the first to ever create a wonderful technological wonder like..."

BAB: "Cheeeeee!"

GG: "I KNOW, I KNOW, IT WAS USELESS WITHOUT THE FIRE THAT WASN'T INVENTED YET! DAMN YOU, I WILL..."

...

...

...

In less than a fragment of instant I rise up through infinite abysses. I open my eyes, still dumbfounded from the last words of those visions maybe too silly for an aristocratic mind like mine. Middle of the night. I feel... strange... empty... ethereal... gelatinous. In the dim light my hands seem blue and bright. I'll have to take the multivitaminic pills of uncle Justine, again. It's... oh, joie, extase et jouissance! My laboratory! I must've sleepwalked in here! But what... cobwebs? Dust? It seems abandoned from months! That primitive ape of LeChuck must've put fake cobwebs and threw dust everywhere to transform my laboratory into a horrible toilette... que vilain... ooooh! My Desingeographe lights up! And the generator works parfaitement! I just need to clean up...

CLAC!

...the main door??? But who...

HMK: "MARQUIS... DE SINGE! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF HOW IT FEELS TO HAVE BOTH OF YOUR LEGS REMOVED WITHOUT A REASON FROM A WIGGED, JASMINE STINKING BUTCHER?"

DSG: "Oh, monsieur Hemlock McGee, it's a pleasure to see you! I'd say that with two wooden legs you could feel more fascinant with the ladies, but I'd guess lies have short legs. Or, in this case, les jambes amputée. Oh! Oh! Oh! Clever blazoned humor! Too refined for... oh, pour tous les carcassess mourantes, put down that firearm."

HMK: “FOR OVER SIX MONTHS I’VE LOOKED FOR YOU EVERYWHERE IN THE SEVEN SEAS, AND AFTER ALL THIS TIME I’VE NEVER SUSPECTED YOU WOULD’VE BE BACK HERE! NOW, FINALLY, I’LL HAVE MY REVENGE!”

DSG: “What are you talking about? I was away from my laboratory soulement a few hours. Just enough to... DON’T SHOOT ME!”

HMK: “FIRST THING FIRST, YOU’LL REATTACH NEW LEGS! I WANT FOUR LEGS! YOUNG LEGS! LEGS SO POWERFUL THAT THEY WOULD BOUNCE ON THE FLOOR! AND THEN I’LL REMOVE YOUR LEGS! I’LL DO IT ONE PIECE AT A TIME AND I’LL USE THEM TO DECORATE THE LITTER OF MISS PRETTY...”

SBAM! KATUD! SBRAKATAM!

The door suddenly opens, and it violently breaks the delicate balance of that miserable’s wooden legs. Oh oh oh, he must’ve fainted! From the door frame it appears the nose of a dark skinned little man I already saw somewhere...



W: “May I come in? I saw a bright light and I wanted to know if you had a cup of delicious... AAAARGHH!!!”

DSG: “AAAAAARGGGHHHH!!!!”

W: “AAAAAARGGGHHH!!! THAT MAN ON THE FLOOR HAS TWO WOODEN LEGS!”

DSG: “Oui, monsieur Van Winslow.”

W: “AAARGGGHH!!!”

DSG: “AAAAAARGGGGGHHHH!!!!”

W: “THE GHOST PIRATE LECHUCK IS BACK! AND HE WEARS THE WIG OF A WONDERFUL WEALTHY WOMAN!”

DSG: “Oh, pour tous les rustres grossiers de cette boule de boue. Où??”

W: “OH NO, NOW HE’S TRYING TO CURSE ME WITH SOME ARCANÉ SINISTER LANGUAGE FORGOTTEN FROM CENTURIES! YOU WON’T HAVE ME WITHOUT A FIGHT!”

DSG: “YOU SAVED MY LIFE!”

W: “I HAVE HERE A... what?”

DSG: “Oh, that agriculteur would’ve made unspeakable things to my sacred and stinky intestines! And you stopped him!”

W: “Marquis... De Singe?”

DSG: “Oui!”

W: “But... you’re a ghost?!”

DSG: “Oh, oh, oh, que nonsense. Ghosts don’t exist!”

W: “But you’re dead.”

DSG: “Oui, dead of fear!”

W: “But you’re light blue!”

DSG: “Staying always indoor doesn’t give you a good color!”

W: “MY HAND IS GOING THROUGH YOU!”

DSG: “Oh! Oh! Oh! Stop tickling me!”

W: “Well, now I should...”

DSG: “I owe you... my life! Without you, now I would be mort! Decedè! Décomposée!”

W: “Because now you’re...”

DSG: “...happy as an enfant obèse swimming in an ocean de lard et bacon! Now I can finally go back to my experiments of... of... oh, qu’est-ce curieux! I feel like that obsessive idea to search eternal life suddenly vanished from my brilliant mind.”

W: “You’re immortal now.”

DSG: “Do you mean that the fame of my researches will be eternal?”

W: “Uhm... ergh... eeh... yes.”

DSG: “Oh, merci, que affable! In any case, no one will ever say an enfant of the De Singe family never repays such an important debt. What can I do for you?”

W: “Well... I... I needed to fill this cup.”

DSG: “But of course! What can I give you? Sugar? Coffee? Fresh bile? Seasoned pus? Paté de fois humain?”

W: "Well, actually... I needed to fill this cup with delicious HAPPINESS!"

DSG: "Ou... what?"

W: "Happiness. A cup of happiness."

DSG: "A cup of happiness?"

W: "Yes, I asked it to the glazier down the street but he only shouted some filthy allegations about the private life of my irreproachable grandmother."

DSG: "And why do you want to put... some happiness in a cup?"

W: "You see, this scroll I found in a filthy public restroom of Jambalaya Island says: <<Bring a cup of happiness where the Gulf of Melange hugs the Sea of the Western Curd and you'll reveal the horrifying secrets of... the Avatar of the Five Oceans!>>."

DSG: "What's an Avatar of the Five Oceans?"

W: "I have no idea."

DSG: "And why do you want to reveal his horrifying secrets? They could be filthy scourges of flesh and blood. Monstrous tools of death and devastation. Nightmares beyond every human depraved perversion."

W: "Ooooh, it sounds intriguing."

DSG: "Oui, oui actually it is! We could find a way to synthesize the emotion of happiness through... THE GATHERING AND THE CONDENSATION OF THE CHEMICAL SUBSTANCES MADE BY THE BRAIN IN THE MOMENTS OF PURE JOY!"

W: "Will it hurt?"

DSG: "Oh, not you for sure. Be sure mister McGee doesn't wake up while I'll take my drill and my cranial depressor. I'll need seulement une minute!"

W: "BACK TO THE ADVENTURE!"

So it starts the most bizarre et incroyable period of my life. I go well beyond repaying my debt to that strange little man smelling like a dog dead from weeks. Moved by an ancient call towards everything eternal and immense, now my new laboratory is a rocking corner of an encrusted ship, always looking to new corners of the light blue ocean. De Singe and Van Winslow. Van Winslow and De Singe. My science and his knowledge of the most insidious seas. My impressive mind and his indomitable courage. My cold rationality and his indelible tendency to woo everything barely resembling a woman. We constantly upset the seas with our Screaming Narwhal III. We dig up treasures hidden from millennia even to the dreams of man. We fight creatures evoked from horrendous limbo stagnating ravenous between nightmares and human obsessions from centuries. We explore the secrets of bright and sinister dead cities. The Cannon of the Seven Gods. The Volume of Creation. The hundred and one machines of Atlantis. The exhausting breakfasts of the Apocalypse. Stop. We go back to Tortuga because Reginald needs to visit an old uncle. I ask him the name of his uncle. He hesitates. He stumbles. He mutters his old uncle better have clean bed sheets, the right change

and a scented coconut oil he loves to rub in his parties inférieurs. I don't think I'll ask him anymore about his uncle.

After a few days Reginald comes back on the ship, accompanied by the worst bande de malfaiteurs of all times, while the entire island of Tortuga screams, dies and explodes, furiously destroyed by intriguing weapons of devastating scientific power.

Threepwood... stupid, irritating little spider who likes to scamper in my culotte! He looks at me dumbfounded, muttering silly fables of scientists rejected from the afterlife because of their unacceptable way of dressing. The ocean starts to shake furiously, as if it wants to forever clean the infection of that dead island, and while the ceaseless rocking of the waves dances with a disturbing ticking, Threepwood and LeChuck take two swords and start a ferocious duel. The Triad's massive ship goes away and disappears on the horizon and the violent clanging of metal dreary echoes through that show of endless death. Threepwood tries to insult his adversary, but at every insult LeChuck replies with the silent and rising violence of his hits. Everybody is focused on the burning ardor of that duel, without possibility of intervention due to an ancient pirate code. By the way some time ago Reginald promised me every corpse that touches the wood of this ship is legally mine. Mine! Mine! At the end of the duel I'll put the pale body of Threepwood on my cold table, I'll take my sharpest scalpel and I'll do a deep incision on his smooth... that old man! What is he doing? Oui, the others are focused on that delicious show of Threepwood slowly giving up at the violence of his adversary but he... he's fixated on the ocean with sad, empty, dreary eyes. He seems called by the caress of a thin whisper, coming from a far away place, where memory's death married the unknown infinite. He says something: he will reunite with them soon. Oh! Oh! Oh! The psycho-physical dysfunctions of the elderly are so funny! He reminds me of my grandfather Guillaume De Singe, while he was dancing with a pot on his head, he was plentifully urinating on my... c'est la fin! Red, breathless, devastated, Threepwood is cowering in a corner, dearly trying to parry what he too knows are the last slashes before his death. LeChuck stops before the last hit and shouts some disconnected sentences about the wedding he can finally celebrate after all these years. Then, when every word before now seemed to have no effect on him, something shakes him. The news of someone's death seems to take away every energy from him, all of his vitality. The ticking coming from his strange pocket watch becomes irregular. Now he staggers, breaths heavily, fills the deck of green vomit. His face becomes worryingly pale, while in a few seconds he seems to age years. He kneels down, exhausted, dying, with the purple hating eyes and the gnashing teeth of someone dead from dark horror. Finally, heavily, he falls to the ground with a miserable thud.

...

The dim rocking light of my laboratory. The cold of my operating table. No pulse. No heartbeat. Le pirate LeChuck est mort. I start with an incision to remove his strange clock which...

LL: "WHAT ARE YOU DOING?"

DSG: "I incise and remove for the love of science. C'est mort!"

LL: "He's not dead!"

DSG: Oui! Many terminal patients keep their vitality well beyond it would be physically possible if they have a goal, a mission, an obsession to reach. Having finally reached this goal... LeChuck est mort!"

LL: "It's not that easy. He was ignoring from days his precarious physical conditions, a collapse was inevitable. And he's not dead!"

DSG: "Oui oui, can you pass me the LeChuckdisemboweller?"

LL: "I TOLD YOU... is there a tool with that name?"

DSG: "Oui, every doctor has one."

LL: "Urgh... there it is... what kind of... anyway he's not dead. There is no pulse because his vital mechanism is way more complex than any other biological being. He's a copy of the real LeChuck, extracted from a mystical place where the dead swamps of the past confound themselves with the far echoes of the future. That clock is the mark inflicted to every abortion created in conflict with the same rules of the cosmos, and dominates a mechanism of sinister voodoo energies mixed with alchemical forces beyond every..."

DSG: "Oh! Oh! Oh! Sure! Where did I put my carving fork to scrape the spleen?"

LL: "I meant... someone put in his chest some scientific stuff using an elaborate scientific method."

DSG: "Uuuh! Fascinant!"

LL: "And I want you to notice that he's still breathing."

DSG: "Oh! Oh! Oh, it's true! I always forget to check if a body is still breathing before opening it!"

W: "Eh! Eh! Eh! You really are a forgetful rascal!"

LL: "WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?"

W: "I wanted to see the utopia."

DSG: "Autopsy. It's autopsy."

W: "That! Did you start already?"

LL: "NO AUDIENCE ALLOWED! GET OUT OF HERE!"

W: "Sigh... I'll go put some salt on the open wounds of captain Threepwood. Did you say it will reduce his pain, right?"

DSG: "Oh, oui oui. And if he screams, those are all screams of relief."

W: "Fantastic! I go immediately!"

LL: "Good... back to us... I'm not able to fully comprehend his vital mechanism alone, but together we could reveal its dynamics, its functioning, its alchemy. He has eight days left of progressive decomposition. Sometimes his decay will be slow,

and some other times sudden like a little while ago. In any case he will suffer atrociously. We need to extend his life! We need to do it enough to discover the secrets of Vodun Island!”

DSG: “I shouldn’t... I shouldn’t cure someone who could put at risk the lives of everyone on board. Ooh... he could kill us all during our sleep and...”

LL: “Come on... I know you’re dying to comprehend his organism’s functioning. You have to solve every scientific puzzle they put in front of you, independently of how despicable it could get to find the solution, right? Especially after what happened to... Véronique!”

DSG: “Ho- how do you know about Véronique!?”

LL: “Shall we proceed?”

DSG: “Y- yes...”

I take the necessary tools. I sharpen. I disinfect. I open my pantry of Kept-Alive™ organs. I turn on les générateurs and I warm up les alambics. While the room crackles with sinister sparks and fills itself with mephitic greenish smog, monsieur LaGrande opens a bag full of ancient and mysterious contraptions. He says he stole them from a mausoleum underground, and that they could contain useful energies, mechanisms, fluids. Meanwhile, I can clearly hear the others talking in the navigation room.

...

HELLB: “Well, now pay attention.”

W: “More salt, Captain?”

G: “Van Winslow, for crying out loud! STAY AWAY FROM ME!”

W: “But you will never recover if you don’t understand that yours are screams of relief.”

HELLB: “When I was the bloodthirsty terror of these seas, and I was talkin', sometimes some members of me crew were distracted. They were thinkin' of somethin' else. And they weren't payin' attention to me. While I was talkin'. And that was annoyin'. Do ya like leather jackets?”

W: “Oh, yes!”

HELLB: “Ya know... then it could happen the ones who weren't listenin' while I was talkin' would disappear. Mysteriously. And after a few days, as if by magic, new leather jackets would appear in me closet. Fine leather. And with smooth skeleton studs.”

G: “YIKES!”

HELLB: “But ye're lucky I don't commit terrifyin' acts like this anymore. Now I'm here to help ya accomplish yer mission, Guybrush.”

G: “Alright. But where did you get that leather tanning tool you're gripping?”

HELLB: "Don't distract yerself and follow me explanation, young Threepwood! Vodun Island, as ya know well, is trapped between this dimension and limbo. Every once in a while it suddenly reappears with the green light shot by the sunset, to disappear after a few seconds. And these apparitions follow a precise route through the sea routes of the Triangle, the Square, the Pentagon, the Circle, the Hexagon, the Parallelogram, the Octagon, the Trapezoid, the Rhombus, the Dihedron, the Ellipse, the Ovoid, the Icosahedron, the Cardioid, the Torus, the Lemniscate, the Parallelepiped, the Frustum, the Helix, the Oblate Spheroid, the Convex Region, the Elliptic Hyperboloid, the Right Circular Conic Cross-Section, and the Eccentric Cylindrical Projection."

G: "I think I lost myself at the Square. And I have a strange feeling of deja-vu. And Van Winslow is in his underwear."

W: "Refreshing."

HELLB: "Look how rusty it is this tannin' leather tool."

G: "And the Eccentric Cylindrical Projection. But... uhm... wait... and the Dodecagon? There was a route with that name, if I remember right."

HELLB: "Ah! Ah! Ah! Everybody knows that route has nothin' to do with this. Anyway, this is why many navigators view these sea routes as "Forbidden". Too many ships suddenly sunk because they crashed into the island which suddenly appears. Or because they were unable to float because of the tremendous lightnings and the tsunamis. There are many legends about the strange swirls or the storms suddenly appearin' in those places. The fantasy of some navigators caress the most indecent DEMENTIA."

G: "They should use less their fantasy and understand it's an island trapped between two dimensions disappearing and reappearing at its own will and hiding the most obscure and profane secrets ever created by the human mind."

HELLB: "EXACTLY! Anyway watch this. To access the island we must keep ourselves at a safe distance while it appears, so that we could avoid the lightnings and the tsunamis of its appearance. Let's say at sunset we should be in THIS point, which we'll call "super safe spot"."

G: "Sounds reassuring."

HELLB: "The issue is, with our speed, from the "super safe spot" we'll never reach the island on time before its disappearance. So we should be HERE, closer to the apparition, near what we'll call "super unsafe spot"."

G: "Sounds less reassuring."

HELLB: "Well, if ya put ourselves here the ship will be tear apart. And there are good possibilities we will all die, horrendously crushed by the wood of this jalopy. Or, at best, we will drown."

G: "I'm sure we can find a better solution."

HELLB: "Well, we would need a faster ship to start from the "super safe spot" and reach the island in time. Faster than any other ship on the seven seas. It should reach a speed so fast that... ya know, a good part of ya could survive easier if ya



philosophically accept the fact yer flesh will be violently tear apart from yer chest while yer lungs will fill with water and yer gums will crushed by...”

W: “The demon’s puff.”

HELLB: “What?”

W: “That engine used by the Triad. If I’m not wrong, it makes the Triad’s ships faster than any sailing boat. And this boat has one.”

G: “Really???”

W: “Yes, Captain Threepwood. It’s an incomplete prototype realized by De Singe. We never tried to use it, though. The propulsion system is almost ready, but we miss some fundamental pieces in the mechanism, because... ehm... De Singe was never able to find them.”

DSG: “OUI THEY’RE MISSING BECAUSE YOU STOLE THEM FOR YOUR STUPID SCULPTURE, REGINALD!”

HELLB: “And that hole in the wall is now talkin’.”

W: “Alright, alright, I took them. But it’s just because those days I had the curiosity to construct a model representing adequately the abstract concept of PERSPICACITY!”

DSG: “DAMNER LA MERDE, REGINALD!”

W: “YOU CAN TIE MY ARMS BUT NOT MY CREATIVITY!”

DSG: “AND MY MOTEUR HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT RUSTY FERRAILLE OF THE TRIAD! I’VE CREATED SOMETHING EVEN MORE POWERFUL AND FASTER! I’VE CREATED... THE DESINGENGINE À COMBUSTION!”

G: “That’s definitely unpronounceable. And where is that sculpture created with the pieces we so desperately need?”

W: “Well, when I finished it, it looked more like something between the concept of inadequacy and the taste of walrus fat. So, when I saw that my artistic goal wasn’t accomplished, I threw it in the ocean.”

G: “I strongly feel the need to put my hands on your throat.”

W: “The affectionate pleasantries to later, sir. Sigh... I hope my sweet Anemone found it and hugged it tightly. She loved inadequacy. And walrus fat.”

G: “And now I finally understand why she was so attracted to you.”

W: “But... look! We can proceed through this route, in a few days we’ll not only be closer to the point of the island’s apparition, but also near Skull Island! And, if I’m not wrong, there was a den of smugglers! They could’ve all the pieces we need! Sure, we could waste some time avoiding the patrol routes of the Triad, so we’ll probably be there in... eight days!”

G: “Van Winslow... are you sure the SMUGGLERS are still there? That den could’ve been discovered years ago and been replaced with a weird barrack where the last buccaneers get burned, mutilated and ripped of their flesh. We should be more cautious before...”

W: “Don’t worry about it, Captain! I’ve made terrible mistakes these years. And due to them I’ve dug up wonderful treasures in deep cold abysses and drove entire populations to a definitive and bloody extinction.”

G: “Now I’m more worried.”

W: “But if there are moments when I’m never wrong, those are the ones where I shut the misleading lies of reason and start to trust my infallible pirate instinct. And in this moment, if there's something my infallible pirate instinct is clearly shouting at me, is that the smugglers are still there, with everything we need to begin our incredible journey. And from there we’ll leave at full throttle, to those endless mysteries waiting for us beyond the green light of the sunset!”

Skull Island on the horizon. The smugglers are not here anymore and we’re doomed. I think back to the last eight days. Days of lies, deception et subterfuge. Lock in my laboratory to operate, feed, reorganize, dismantle, burn, implant, restitch with monsieur LaGrande. His knowledge is surprisingly useful. Our notions seem to complete, intertwine, boost up each others. The others still think LeChuck is dead, except for Threepwood always looking at me suspiciously, while with elaborate excuses I attribute the stench of burnt death from my experiments to Van Winslow’s underwear’s drawer. Oui, oui, we then discovered the stench REALLY came from Van Winslow’s underwear’s drawer. But Threepwood was still looking at me again, and again, muttering something like, when he was a ghost, he couldn’t touch anything. Stupid pirate liqueurs provoking inconclusive hallucinations! Anyway, I wasn’t able to justify the existence of such a similar living body, but... LeChuck will rise again! He is... ALIVE!!! We didn’t extend his life for very long, we couldn’t do better. Admitted we won’t be pulverized here and now. In front of us, beyond the obscure afternoon fog, we see the horror of an horrific silhouette. Carved in the stone of Skull Island there is no pleasant duck anymore, but the colossal statue of a man, whose arrogant and snooty smile dominates between those obscene flags with three rings arranged as a triangle. Triad’s flags! Decorating a grey and swollen silhouette, with a hat, a cape, arms on the hips and eyes fixated on the horizon. We try to change the route, but they’ve noticed us. They know we’re there. From the colossal statue, a terrible shout shakes the entire horizon.

S: “COME, ADVENTURERS! COME TO THE ISLAND WHERE EVERY DREAM BECOMES A REALITY! COME TO THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY MARTIAL MEGA STORE OF THE TRIAD IN THIS SECTOR! COME TO... STAN ISLAND!”

Done. I'm almost done.

That effeminate ghost butcher, during these nauseating days, tried to convince me LeChuck was dead at the end of our duel. In his opinion, Elaine's death's news took away his vitality and accelerated his decay, until he suddenly died. I don't believe it. It's not true. It doesn't make any sense. LeChuck is still alive, and his body is behind the door of this pestilential laboratory. I can feel it. I'm sure of it. I've tried to eavesdrop through the navigation room's hole, but it got "mysteriously" repaired. I'm alone. Van Winslow blindly trusts his second officer and he's still wandering in his underwear. Largo is cryptic, elusive, clumsy, and in his neutrality is clearly plotting something. While Hellbeard... Hellbeard is distracted and absent these days. It's like he's always absorbed in a disturbing hallucination calling him over the sea, making him unable to react or to take any decision. So I must act on my own, lock pick the laboratory's door and put an end at the nightmare LeChuck once and for all. Before he comes back. Before it's too late. Before... a shout!? I know this voice!

S: "COME, ADVENTURERS! COME TO THE ISLAND WHERE EVERY DREAM BECOMES A REALITY! COME TO THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY MARTIAL MEGA STORE OF THE TRIAD IN THIS SECTOR! COME TO... STAN ISLAND!"

## **Episode XI - The island where everything is possible**

I run on the main deck, preparing myself to the battle and I see... for all the twelve-armed vervets! Skull Island.. has been completely resculpted in a giant statue of Stan! Of THAT Stan? The same Stan who foisted to everybody self-propelled hovels and second-hand putrescent coffins? The same Stan who almost transformed me in an hanging piece of meat just to have the rights to the merchandise? The same Stan who, for thirty coins, freed those ravenous piranha poodles in the pool where his parents were peacefully swimming?

S: “COME, ADVENTURERS! DON’T BE AFRAID! IN THE MARTIAL MEGA STORE OF THE TRIAD OF STAN™ THE ONLY ENEMIES WE DON’T TOLERATE ARE HIGH PRICES! THE ONLY IDEAL WE FOLLOW IS THE LOVE FOR SALES! THE ONLY TYRANT WE WORSHIP IS THE SATISFIED CLIENT! COME, ADVENTURERS, AND DISCOVER THE INFINITE WONDER OF THE ISLAND WHERE EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE! Finally some chickens to bloody pluck! I’ll finally give away those oatmeal cookies infested with that terrifying carnivorous bacterium! And those defective fire systems which explode and burn the entire ship... TO TURN OFF THIS DAMN THING YOU HAD TO PUSH THE RED OR THE BLACK BUTTON?”

It’s definitely that Stan. We cautiously draw nearer, in the peace of that sad and dreary fog. It seems many merchants formally joined the Triad but give anything to anyone who possesses some gold. Maybe... he has the pieces we need to repair De Singe’s engine! Sure, we only have a manila envelope with three pyrite teeth and a human ear of unknown origins inside. But we’ll think something up. While we draw nearer, the bright light of a giant eye of fire suddenly explodes in the distance, only partly shut by the heavy fog. In front of that vision, my heart stops for a few seconds, crushed by a piercing anxiety. Largo says it’s just Blood Island’s volcano. The Triad uses it as a furnace to melt and purify all the voodoo objects they’ve found during their genocides. But I still see the ferocity of an infinite, burning red eye in it, waiting me inevitable and mocking. A filthy entity, anxious to throw me into the flames and the blood of a neverending hell. I’ll go back there. It’s inevitable. It’s only then... ehm. It seems we landed. I look down. Stan is waiting me impatiently in front of the close gates of his mega store. Red and sweaty, he waves his arms faster than usual, he wears a clean jacket with a long cape and a starched white hat.

S: “Ehi, you! Get off that ship like your friends did and enter in the Martial Mega Store of the Triad of Stan™! Because there is no better time to make deals than the one where the boots of obscurantism and tyranny crush with violence the face of humanity itself!”

G: “Stan?”

S: “And... uhm... always may the Tricuspid triumph!”

G: “Stan!?”

S: “Ehi ehi, look who it is, my dear old friend... Zachariah!”

G: “Guybrush.”

S: “Oh yeah, of course, it’s so good to see you here, Wolfgang! Come here! I’m offering excellent oatmeal cookies to all the clients of Stan Island! The cost of the

cookies might be added to the final price. The administration doesn't take any responsibility for the eventual lacerations caused by the aforementioned cookies."

G: "May you repeat the last part? The one you whispered?"

S: "I don't know what you're talking about, Adalbrecht."

G: "Guybrush."

W: "Nom... nom... COME HERE CAPTAIN! THEY'RE EXCELLENT!"

G: "I... I'm coming..."

S: "Cookie to you!"

DSG: "I'm not hungry today."

W: "Nom... that's what you've been saying from a year and a half to hide the fact you don't need to eat anymore."

DSG: "Oui, my hypothesis is that my aristocratic body eats during monstrous attacks of compulsive sleepwalking."

W: "And you've stopped sleeping, too."

DSG: "Sacre bleu! So I... I CAN DO THE PHOTOSYNTHESIS!"

W: "The entire choreography?"

DSG: "IT'S NOT A BALLET!"

S: "Cookie to you!"

LL: "Get this thing away from me or I'll kick your stomach up to the throat."

S: "Cookie to you!"

HELLB: "Oatmeal feeds me desire for blood."

S: "Cookie to you, Salvador!"

G: "Guybrush! My name is Guybrush! Damn it Stan, we met so many times that..."

S: "Why waste time in useless discussions, Nathanaël, when we can enter the gates of heaven and ascend in the ethereal reign of endless AFFORDABILITY!"

At the word "affordability", the golden gates on the right shoe of the giant grey statue open wide to a new world. Floors as far as the eye can see, connected by mazes of breakneck stairs. Kilometers of shelves, full of every thing ever created or discovered by mankind. And everywhere signs of sales, deals and advertisement, in a demented swirl of colored lights and obsessive military jingles.

S: "Now I want you to keep something in mind. I am not a seller. I do not sell anything. I am your guru. I am your spiritual master. Because after many, miserable years spent digging in mud and blood, here, now, I will allow you to reach pure and complete HAPPINESS!"

W: "But I like digging in mud and blood!"

S: "Indeed! Look at these! Action Figures of the great pirates of the past! Hellbeard the Unrepentant! Napoleon Hellbeard! LeChuck! Dimwit David! You can pull the little chord and his clothes become the uniform of the Tripod!"

G: "Triad."

S: "That's what I said. And, if you push the little stomach, THEY SPEAK!"

ACT: "*I am LeChuck. Let's go take a warm cup of tea, while I'll explain why it's not appropriate to desire the women married to someone else!*"

G: "Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!"

DSG: "Oui we are looking for..."

S: "You with that strange light blue transparent skin! You look like a careful and cautious individual, one of those always trying to stay alive."

G: "Actually he's dea..."

S: "So I'm sure you're interested in the EXTREMELY PATENTED FIRE SYSTEM FOR SHIPS OF STAN™. Look at this box! Look how much security pours through it! You hang it on the wall and, at the first signs of fire, a water jet automatically comes out and it extinguishes it immediately."

DSG: "It seems more petrol than water. You see, it's leaking out of it and it smells like petrol. Probably mixed with more unstable and dangerous substances. Oui if you throw this thing in the fire the result would be a devastating expl..."

S: "BUT LET'S SEE SOMETHING ELSE! You! Nice old man with the terrifying stare! You surely have some troubles at your advanced age, ain't that right?"

HELLB: "Mmhrrrrmmmm..."

S: "Just as I thought! So, why having one foot in the pit when you can be ENTIRELY in the pit? SHOVELS FOR ELDERS OF STAN™! Look this! Touch it! Sniff it! The ergonomic foil of the shovel allows you to dig very comfortable pits. The ideal to get used to the eternal rests of the eternal sleep."

HELLB: "Even this presentation feeds me desire for blood."

S: "BUT YOU!"

LL: "Oh, for the sacred brass bra of King Midas."

S: "You look worn down, decrepit, decayed. And let's not mention particularly ugly."

LL: "Calm down. The alchemical exercises taught me to keep my mind balanced. To stay calm."

S: "And that's why you certainly need a box of our REFRESHING AND REGENERATING BLUE TEA OF SMILING STAN™! Baron Soze's favorite. It could paint your tongue of blue. It could paint your entire digestive system of blue. The title is merely indicative and it could've devastating or debilitating effects."

LL: "WHAT DID YOU SAY? I DON'T WANT YOUR TRASH!"

G: "Wait, Stan! Stop! Listen to me! We're here because we need some mechanical pieces that will allow us to repair an engine and... Marquis De Singe? Which pieces do we need?"

ACT2: "*I am Guybrush Threepwood and I never pick up random objects, because they could contain pathogenic germs potentially dangerous to my health.*"

DSG: "Oh! Oh! Oh! Stupid Threepwood!"

G: "Marquis?"

DSG: "Oui?"

G: "May you put down that doll and explain to Stan which pieces we needed?"

DSG: "Oui. Bolt 24 in tempered iron."

S: "Here it is."

DSG: "Crossed star spiked wrench."

S: "To you!"

DSG: "Standard spindle with double reversed helix."

S: "Voilà."

G: "How did you already have them in your pockets?"

S: "A magician never reveals his tricks, Swetlana! Not even a magician of TRADES!"

G: "Guybrush."

S: "Yes, just as I've suspected! Here they are. I give you everything for free. Because I love you. Because we're a big family. And that's why I have your well-being in my interests. Now I hope you have MY well-being in your interests and, well, you should give me twelve thousand golden Triploons of the Triad in exchange. It's two hundred for the mechanical pieces, nine thousand and eight hundred for the cookies and two thousand for entering my Cabin of the triple perverted fantasies of the Triad of Stan™!"

W: "Ehi! It's full of flowers here! And they're touching me!"

G: "Actually we don't..."

S: "You don't want to stop your buying experience here, right? I can see it in your eyes. You're demanding and tasteful people. People wanting more and more, so that in every moment of every day they can show a gadget of the Triad of Smiling Stan™! Except for you, you clearly have different needs! Did I tell you how incredibly ugly you are? And how much can help you a REFRESHING AND REGENERATING BLUE TEA OF..."

LL: "OH, GO TO HELL!"

Largo's left punch jumps like an iron spring and hits Stan's stomach, making him collapse on the ground in a long and hilarious moo. With a tip of malicious sarcasm, Van Winslow takes the sign "Back soon" and he hangs it on the back of that hypocrite seller of souls, now with his face in a puddle of candid and bright dribble. Suddenly, all those stupid jingles stop. That kaleidoscope of various colored lights becomes blood red, and a powerful siren starts to shake the entire building.

G: "THE GATES! THE GATES ARE CLOSING! WE MUST FLEE FROM HERE!"

ACT2: *"I am Guybrush Threepwood. We exterminated all the three-headed monkeys because they're illegal voodoo abominations. So never look behind you, because there is totally no reason to ever do so."*

DSG: “Oh! Oh! Oh! He said “abominations”.”

G: “PUT DOWN THAT DOLL AND LET’S GO!”

Someone, or something, noticed our aggression. We’ll have the entire fleet of the Triad on our heels! We must flee! We manage to slip through the gates before they could close. We board the ship, while that deafening siren shakes obsessively air and land. I turn around for a moment and through the fog I notice not one, but two giant burning red eyes looking at me. Then I realize the second one is... the Sun! The sunset! We set sail and violently push De Singe in the engine room. He says he needs a few hours to repair the engine. We burn the doll he stole from Stan’s store. He says he needs a few minutes to repair the engine. We start to set sail to Vodun Island’s route. It seems the island will appear soon, not far from here. After a few minutes we put ourselves in the “super safe spot” when, suddenly, echoes of rocks and metal, as if someone just activated an infernal machine.

S: “DAMN IT, MY BOSS WILL KILL ME FOR THIS! NOW TRY TO STAY STILL OR I WON’T BE ABLE TO SINK YOUR SHIP!”

I look towards Stan Island. Stan’s giant statue’s mouth is open and... is smoking a cigar? Holy skipping monkeys, that’s a giant cannon...

KA-BOOOOOOM!!!

A fraction of a second. A golden cannonball, decorated with a giant “S” made of gems is over us. It explodes uproariously, destroying a good part of the hull. We topple in a disconcerting way. The ears buzz. Chippings, flames and ashes everywhere. Another hit like this and the ship is gone. Another hit and our journey will end forever. Then, a roar. An explosion. A giant flame comes from the bow. But this time... yes! De Singe must’ve finally turned on the dengign... the desingnenging... the ngnggiengi...

DSG: “THE DESINGENGINE À COMBUSTION, IMBECILE!”

That one. The ship becomes faster and faster. We escape the sound and the fog, flying over the sea like ancient wind Gods. We leave those sad shores behind, flying towards the endless golden lights of the ocean during the sunset. But the ship loses pieces. The main deck moans, filling itself with ferocious cracks. The masts collapse like old pipes of paper. In front of us, the air crackles with sinister green lights, while the sea starts to shake violently. A scream. I turn to the bow. Something is coming towards us. No! No! Another golden cannonball. Just a few meters from us. The infinite range of the Triad’s weapons! And Stan... Stan was



able to target our ship despite the speed and the distance! Goodbye, friends. Goodbye, adventures. Goodbye, monkeys. This will be the second most violent death I've ever...

HELLB: "GOSH, COME TO ME, LORD OF THE LEVIATHANS!"

A sad and deep cry implacably shakes the skies. In less than a moment the Sun itself darkens, while an immense wall of meat with no end emerges from the abyss. A wall that stopped the cannonball and our imminent doom. We fly closer to the center of the emerald lights, while Hellbeard waves his hand to the horizon, as to say his last goodbye to an old friend. An old friend who, after a bloody defeat suffered a long time ago, surprisingly made a blood pact and recognized him as his master. An old friend who already saved him from those same waves where Vodun vanished from the first time. A subordination slowly changing in an ancestral brotherhood. I fall. I hit my head. Fragments of images and sounds. Darkness. I open my eyes. I'm on a grey beach, full of shreds and carcasses of ancient ships. I close my eyes. I reopen them. An old, disgusting, deformed man is looking at me. A filthy man covered with scars, his chest full of pipes, levers and strange mechanisms encrusted with pus and blood. The old man takes a thread and starts to strangle me. I can't breath. Darkness. A little man in his underwear, with coffee-colored skin pushes him away from me. Darkness. I turn around. A forest, in which the inhuman smile of that bloody and decaying demon who tried to kill me hides. His right leg is made of wood... could he be... the sky! It's yellowish, funereal, full of dense and dreary electric clouds. There is a deafening silence. Time seems still. The sea is gloomy and unnaturally calm, while on a distant hill... I see someone. Someone dead from a long time. A decayed corpse is lying down, and from its worn pirate clothes comes a strange purple light. No... it can't be... if the story on Napoleon's diary is true, then that's... that's... MY DADDY! I stand up. Muscles and lungs hurt while I run towards him. THAT'S MY DADDY! He's there from decades, alone! I reach him. Daddy!



Of him, there's only a skeleton left, lying down on the sand full of strange voodoo symbols. I... know those symbols! An openable brass locket hangs from his neck. I pick it up, noticing the corpse still has some weird vibrations. On the locket, an incision: "Baby Guybrush Portrait". Oooh, daddy, you always kept me with you for all these years! Maybe I partly soothe your endless solitude! I click the locket and open it. Uhm! How curious! When I was a kid, I had curly black hair and two deep oriental brown eyes. That's an unusual discovery. Apparently I suffered a profound and devastating transformation over the years... an incision on the picture says "Love you, Guybrush Q. Threepwood". Guybrush Q. Threepwood. Guybrush Q. Threepwood. GUYBRUSH Q. THREEPWOOD? GUYBRUSH Q. THREEPWOOD! BUT... I'M GUYBRUSH U. THREEPWOOD! WITH THE "U"! BUT... BUT... THEN IN THESE DAYS... I RISKED MY LIFE IN EVERY POSSIBLE WAY FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S PARE...

HELLB: "How does it feel to finally meet yer father after all this time?"

G: "YIKES! Don't sneak up on me like that!!!"

HELLB: "How does it feel to finally meet yer father after all this time?"

G: "Ehm... eerh..."

HELLB: "WELL?"

G: "Urgh... I totally don't feel like I fell victim of another incredible case of partial homonymy."

HELLB: "WHAT?"

G: "I don't know. I didn't say anything."

HELLB: "Ya know, I remember once, a long time ago, there was a devastatin' epidemic of partial homonymy on board. Or somethin' like that. Anyway it was incurable, so I had to purify the bodies of me still alive crew with meltin' voodoo acid. Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!"

G: "Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! Exactly what I was talking about! Ah! Ah! Ah!"

HELLB: "Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah!"

G: "Where did you get that bottle of caustic and smoking liquid?"

HELLB: "Now be still, while I'll... AAARGH!"

G: "AAARGH! CAREFUL WHERE YOU THROW THAT STUFF!"

HELLB: "Yer father's body. He turned to look at me!"

G: "It looks motionless to me."

HELLB: "AAARGH!"

G: "What?"

HELLB: "He moved his hands! He moved his hands!"

G: "No Napoleon, really, he's completely still."

HELLB: "AAARGH!"

G: "Mmmmh..."

HELLB: "NOW HE'S MIMICKIN' SOMETHIN'! A BOOK'S TITLE! FIVE WORDS! "THE SENSE OF THE SLIME", OF EDOARDO MEREDITH VON HOFFMANBECKERSCHMIDT!"

G: "Now I think your hallucinations are going too far."

W: "Captain!"

G: "Van Winslow! You're... you're... not in your underwear!"

W: "Why I should've been in my underwear?"

G: "Someone... someone was strangling me and you've stopped him!"

W: "Oh yes, captain! That scoundrel of LeChuck! During these days he was in the laboratory undergoing through a deforming process to extend his life. They made something horrible to him. Something that made him a horrifying cluster of old, decontaminated and painful meat. Something that, apparently, extended his life for a few days. I've stopped him when he tried to kill you, but I couldn't stop him to escape in the forest with mister LaGrande."

G: "But they can't reach it! They don't know the pathway!"

W: "No, but in the forest there are indications in an ancient mystic language. Maybe mister LaGrande is able to understand it. If... if only I could've done something! If only there was a single clue on what the Marquis was doing, I could've stopped him in time!"

G: "Damn it Van Winslow, there were clues everywhere! Hairs of LeChuck's beard spread everywhere. De Singe and Largo always locked in the laboratory. Once

Largo said: "I'll go feed these entrails' leftovers to LeChuck", and immediately corrected himself with, in order: "I meant to the cat", "I meant to the catfish", "I meant... go to hell, all of you".

W: "Stupid rusty pirate instinct! It was always shouting I was only paranoid about LeChuck! And that same evening, it told me to inscribe my chest with broken glass, bite a big umbrella and wear an oblong finned rainbow trout on my head."

G: "I think you have some serious issues, Van Winslow."

W: "Oh oh oh, don't worry about it! These are not the right waters for the oblong finned rainbow trout."

G: "And... De Singe! That filthy, phosphorescent reject of maggoty ectoplasm! Where is he now?"

W: "On the northern beach. Sniff... the Screaming Narwhal III is gone forever. He says he can easily put together a makeshift boat with what's left of the shipwrecks!"

G: "He's a lunatic! A madman! We should collect a good amount of voodoo root beer and spray him away from the face of the ear..."

W: "I fully comprehend your disappointment but his bumpy bogeyman brain saved my life many times! And he's fundamental to escape from here. And... I think anyone could've become a blind obsessed paranoid after what happened. Anyone could've gone insane after what happened to... his Véronique."

G: "Véronique?"

W: "His loving pet monkey, sir. They were always skipping together in the royal gardens of King Louis. She was always nestled near his legs, as if she wanted to soothe him after the long days spent on the dusty and heavy volumes. They really loved each other."

G: "And then what happened?"

W: "One day the monkey had a little skin irritation on her paw and he cut her in a thousand pieces with his scalpel."

G: "This doesn't explain in any way why he's a schizophrenic with a broken mind."

W: "Aye. It doesn't, now that I think about it. But he likes to think otherwise."

G: "I don't know what... wait... wait! Where's Hellbeard?"

W: "Oh, he's probably taking a walk complaining about the new generations parking their galleons in the second row. You know how elders are. Let him amuse himself. Let him graze in the parks."

G: "WHAT PARKS? WE NEED HIM TO REACH THE CAVE! WE MUST FIND HIM!"

W: "Isn't that him running to the northern beach?"

G: "NAPOLEON!"

I run towards him. I stop him by putting my hand on his shoulder. He seems distracted, emptied, lost again.

HELLB: "The ritual is still active... George... George said... to go to the northern beach... where I..."

G: "The cave! Napoleon, we must reach the cave!"

HELLB: "The cave... right, the cave!!! Ya know, Threepwood... our journey together ends there. Ya will comprehend anythin' there. Come, ya two. I'll guide ya to the Cave With No Name."

Napoleon doesn't say anything more and enters the forest. We follow him in that green and deep arboreal cloak, ancient custodian of civilization delivered to the silence of memory from millennia. Our journey is filled with ruins, spears, masks and idols pulverized from a long time. And signs with an inscription in an ancient language, saying "For the only cave of the island go this way, imbeciles!". Orphan. I'm orphan once again. I picked up only pieces of a prank puzzle. Once again my past is only microscopic shreds of color, badly hung to a speck of dust floating in the infinite void. It's highly probable that cave has no answers for me. Maybe it's all wrong. Maybe Napoleon should've brought Guybrush Q. here, and not me. At least I'll stop LeChuck from acquiring some new power. There it is. The opening of the Cave With No Name. A massive mouth in the mountain, emanating weird demonic echoes and stinking miasmas. Van Winslow turns on a match and we enter, shocked by the show of those immense stone walls, rising overbearing to reach a veil of sovereign darkness. After a few minutes into the cave, we notice decorations on the walls. The more we go in, the more the walls are covered in carvings, symbols, depictions. They seem formulas, rituals, dances, descriptions of strange energy forms. I don't understand anything. Then, I notice something.

G: "Van Winslow, light this!"

W: "Van Winslow lights this."

G: "Napoleon?"

HELLB: "Yes?"

G: "What is this dodecagonal rock mounted in the wall? It's weird. It's different from all the other rocks in this cave. It emanates a strange golden light. And it's smooth. It seems carved. Maybe I should..."

HELLB: "NO!"

G: "What?"

HELLB: "Ya must not touch that rock!"

G: "Why must I not touch this rock?"

HELLB: "There's a terrible curse on that rock. As soon as ya touch it, every single nerve of yer body will start to burn and crumple, while yer intestines will explode in a monstrous uproar of infected putrescence and cockroaches' grubs."

G: "Wow! Lost a member of your crew like this?"

HELLB: "No."

G: "It is written somewhere below? Near those hieroglyphs looking like a camel with six humps riding the ninth moon of Saturn with a snobbish expression?"

HELLB: "NO! She warned me from this danger before I started me journey to search the Leviathan Lord! Me loving Witch With No Name!"

G: "And no one of you ever touched..."

HELLB: "If I think about that Coronado De Cava! If I think about that filthy mass of everythin' dirtiest, most corrupted and turbid, touched her and loved her times and times again..."

G: "Urgh! Slow down! I meant... no one of you ever touched THE ROCK."

HELLB: "Of course not."

G: "Van Winslow, are you thinking what I'm thinking?"

W: "Of course, Captain! That Witch With No Name, obviously the same who plotted an obscure plot against you and LeChuck, for some reason didn't want to let Hellbeard or his crew touch this rock. Undoubtedly because it hides some terrible secret. Something she didn't want to unveil."

G: "Uhm... yes... that's exactly what I was thinking about. I totally wasn't thinking about putting a banana in front of this rock so that LeChuck, attracted by the food, could touch it and explode."

W: "Of course not. I never had any doubts about your deductive skills, sir!"

A rock. Truth or death. The grave or the answers I'm waiting from years. What to do? Touch it or not? What could I do to know what...

G: "Van Winslow!"

W: "Yes?"

G: "The one you expressed before was the result of REASONING. But what would you say with your INSTINCT? What whispers the good old PIRATE INSTINCT OF VAN WINSLOW?"

W: "Well... if I think about it..."

G: "NO! Don't think! Give me an immediate answer! Just spit it out!"

W: "You shouldn't touch something so dangerous. Someone could be hurt!"

G: "I'M TOUCHING IT!"

*I put my hand on the dodecagonal rock. Nothing happens. Wait. The golden light is brighter and brighter. The rock starts to emit excruciating electric golden discharges wrapping my entire body. I scream. But nobody hears me anymore. I'm alone, absorbed in an endless emptiness and I can only scream in pain. Why? What is happening to me?*

I'm Guybrush Threepwood. No, I am not. I'm inside a cave on Vodun Island, lost island full of ancient millenary ruins. No, this is not true. I am not in a cave and the ruins... there are no ruins, but magnificent buildings made by civilizations in the peak of their lives. The island is that one, but... the name is wrong. I'm in my solitary hut of the sadly extinct village of Vodun, on Dodekagon Island. Yes, Dodekagon Island! This was its name thousands of years ago! What am I saying? This is the name of the island... NOW! First lights of the sunrise, twisted by the last, greenish smokes of a failed experiment. Sleeping on the floor there's my dog, Füller. I am Nor Treblig, shaman and last inhabitant of this village, and this is the four thousand two hundred twenty first day of the Great Dodecagonal War.

## **Episode XII - Fatal error!**

There's someone outside my door.

MA: "Nor, open! Nor, open! Nor, open! Nor, open! Nor, open! Nor, open!"



NOR: "OH COME ON, COME IN! IT'S ALREADY OPEN!"

My hut's door opens. It's Mambo, a little funny man from an adjoining village. He's fat, dark skinned, with strange sideburns and he has the habit to wander around wearing as little cloth as possible. To make matters worse, he always had a sinister and unmotivated admiration towards me.

MA: "I brought you the severed heads you've asked me, Nor! They're fresh. Just taken from the field of the last battle. Where can I put them?"

NOR: "I've never asked you severed heads. You know these things creep me out. Don't show them to me and bring them away."

MA: "LOOK HERE! LOOK AT THIS ONE HOW FRESH IT IS! IT SEEMS THE EYES OF THIS MAN ARE STILL LOOKING AT YOU!"

NOR: "AARGH! MAMBO! PUT IT AWAY!"

MA: "Sigh... alright... I'll see if my village's cook wants some..."

NOR: "Field of the last battle? Was there another battle?"

MA: "Yes, Nor. Yesterday, before the sunset. Three of the twelve villages battled in the southern forest. Three hundred warriors. No survivors."

NOR: "Which villages battled?"

MA: "I think the Alchems, worshippers of the "Serpent with twelve heads brawling to decide which one should bite their tail". Then the Jakolokoloff, who believe the Universe is the dream of a restless tapeworm sleeping on the other side of the starry sky. And then... the Thesaurus! The ones who calculate your level of divinity from how many synonyms you can say of a single word in thirty seconds."

NOR: "That's horrible! Terrible! Awful!"

MA: "If you were a Thesaurus you would now had the divine right to cut me into pieces and bring my leftovers on a date. Remember I'm allergic to tofu."





NOR: “Twelve villages, twelve cults, twelve kinds of mystical knowledge and twelve years of ferocious slaughters. To what? To impose to the others point of views they’ll never accept? To ignore the truth that beyond our different perspectives we are all made with the same, capricious meat and animated with the same stupid spiritual breath?”

MA: “I think you’re right, Nor! I’ve made carnal union with women from all villages, and I didn’t notice any difference between them.”

NOR: “Union... yes... union! What would happen if I demonstrate that EVERYBODY is right? That our cultures are complementary? That the spiritual knowledge of the twelve villages are slices of a single, immense superior truth?”

MA: “Except the Maumivumiuvù of course, who impose to their women on weekdays to emasculate, impale and burn everyone they ever wooed.”

NOR: “What would happen if I demonstrate the existence OF THE GREAT UNIFIED MYSTICISM? FOR THE GREAT DODECAGON! Maybe... I could BRING BACK THE PEACE ON THE ISLAND!!!”

MA: “Yeah, I was very lucky to be there during the Great Spree of the Septic Eye. And that I had great doses of eyewash with me.”

NOR: “Were you listening, Mambo?”

MA: “Sure, Nor. Demonstrate the persistence of a displeased organism. Fresh head?”

NOR: “Didn’t you need to go, Mambo? Didn’t you say this is the time for one of the “Promiscuous Walks of Mambo”?”

MA: “It’s always the time for one of the “Promiscuous Walks of Mambo”. Take care, Nor! And take care, Füller.”

F: “WOOF!”

MA: “WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY ABOUT MY UNCLE?”

NOR: “MAMBO, GET OUT OF HERE!”



That same night I consult the spirits of the Crossroad, the fugacious entities of the spiritual kingdom. I try to interpret their will with the stars, the cards, the birds’ flight, the crippled cheetah’s stumble, the encrusted bottom of Mambo’s laxative herbal teas and the message seems cryptic and somehow unambiguous: “DO WHATEVER YOU WANT, JUST LEAVE US ALONE.”. I don’t sleep for many nights. The brain starts to explode, under the pulsations of endless revelations. Then, I exit my hut. As if guided by an ancient delirium, I go towards the Cave With No Name in the center of the island and I start to carve on its stone walls. As profound connoisseur of the twelve cults of Dodekagon Island I begin to combine, intersect, rework.



And for years my hand, guided by mysterious forces, paints on long hallways and never ending tunnels tracing new rituals, elaborating new formulas, setting up new doctrines. But I'm not alone. Sadly.

MA: "What's this, Nor? A duck?"

NOR: "No, Mambo. It's a little fragment of a comparative formula at a vibrational level of the concept of what binds mind, body and soul of our twelve cults."

MA: "And what's this, Nor? A duck?"

NOR: "No, Mambo. It's the representation of a concept so complex that if you try to comprehend it, all your internal organs would bust out of your ears from the effort."

MA: "And what's this, Nor? A duck?"

NOR: "MAMBO, WHY DO YOU SEE DUCKS EVERYWHE... yeah, that IS a duck. But an ancient and mysterious duck. It..."

MA: "I'm bored, Nor!"

NOR: "Go play with Füller."

MA: "Füller says he would rather choke by swallowing an elephant's tusk."

NOR: "Füller doesn't talk, Mambo! I think you have some serious issues of..."

MA: "LOOK, NOR! ANOTHER BALD GUY COMES TO READ YOUR STORY OF DUCKS!"

NOR: "For the great Dodecagon I'll..."

MA: "Hello!"

GUY: "The divinity in me takes a knee to the divinity in you, young warrior."

MA: "I'm not a warrior. My name is Mambo. I pick up heads from the battlefields and sell them to the best offerer."

GUY: "Thank you for removing a little shred of ignorance from my foolish soul. Now, let me look at the Great Design."

MA: "Why are you dressed in that unwatchable way?"

GUY: "Ehm... this is the ancient and respectful ritual dress of the monks of where I came from. Something only the purest and most virtuous between us can have the honor to wea..."

MA: "It's really awful. And why there are so many strangers coming to see this trash?"

GUY: "Even... even between the mystics of far away lands it has spread the news of the Great Design. Many of them, contemplating it, were shocked by intense revelations. By epiphanies so profound, so revolutionary, so penetrating, that in a few ages they profoundly changed the culture itself of their lands."

MA: "Sometimes this design cures my constipation. Especially if it's accompanied by a good Mambo's laxative herbal tea."

GUY: "This partial relief of your sufferings can only relieve mine too. Now the divinity in me would like that the divinity in you, if it's not too much trouble, WOULD GET THE HELL OUT OF MY WAY!"

MA: "Ehi, ehi, alright! How rude! BUT THERE'S ANOTHER ONE! HELLO!"

AMB: "Good age of the reptile to you, Inferior Mind. I am an ambassador from the village of the Alchems. I'm seeking the Great Master Nor Treblig."

MA: "Nor Treblig? Ah! Ah! Ah! I can't believe someone could've such a ridiculous name."

NOR: "MAMBO! Good... age of the reptile to you. That's me! T... t... tell me."

AMB: "Our chief needs your help, Great Master. Urgently. If you would kindly follow me..."

NOR: "What? Follow you? I... can't go away from here... the Great Design needs to be completed, defined, integrated, perfected!"

MA: "If you were a Thesaurus you would now had the divine right to kiss us and make us your personal slaves, Nor!"

AMB: "Make the Inferior Mind shut up. Now."

NOR: "Mambo! Füller told me you put more weight in your body lately."

MA: "THAT IMPUDENT MUTT! I'LL TELL HIM ONE OR TWO WORDS!"

AMB: "Listen, Great Master: Wode, the daughter of our Great Chief Athanor, is dead, tragically beaten by a serpent this morning. We know in your Great Design there are unspeakable secrets hidden within, and between them the key itself to access the realm of the dead. Our Great Chief Athanor asks if you could use that key to bring Wode back to life."

NOR: "It would be... stupid and reckless to access the realm of the dead with the design still incomplete. Too many pieces still unclear. Too many mysteries still unsolved. If someone would evoke similar energies... they could set off on this land... THINGS we mortals cannot intend or manage."

AMB: "My chief is preparing new weapons, Master! Something the Dodecagonal War never saw before. Spheres able to ignite devastating fires. Gasses capable of taking away the vital breath from the human body instantly. Artefacts that can alter the cognitive lines of the women and push them to say, at every request of wooing, "I prefer to be just friends"."

NOR: "But... you've created horrors capable of extinguish entire villages in a short period of time! And the inflammable spheres and the poisonous gasses are terrible, too!"

AMB: "Exactly. And if you won't help us, we'll test everything on the Enkyetid's village."

MA: "The worshippers of the "Great Anxiety"? The ones who make everything possible to feed their phobias and seek the definitive illumination in what they call the "Incoercible Attack of Panic"?"

NOR: "Here again, Mambo?"

MA: "Füller gave me an excellent diet. He was pretty convincing."

AMB: "For once the Inferior Mind is right. If the Great Master Nor Treblig refuses to help us, we'll use our weapons to destroy those insignificant and superstitious beings. For what I know, your village of Vodun was attacked and

destroyed while you were wandering to pick up strange herbs for your concoctions, and you don't want to have another mass massacre on your conscience. We'll give you some time to think about it, Master! Three days from now. At the fourth day for the Enkyetids will be the beginning of a slow and unrelenting AGONY!"

MA: "If there's a positive side in all of this I will be able to bring you lots of fresh heads, Nor! Right, Nor? Ehi, Nor? What are you doing, Nor? Ahi! Argh! Stop! NOT THE ROCKS!"

There are many anecdotes about the Alchems, on how much their perverted maniacal obsession explodes every time they find themselves in front of notions they can't get a grip on. Once the most cheerful and docile of them burned the forests of twelve islands because a scroll he was reading flew on a branch too high. Maybe I could not come back to the cave ever again. But besides my work, my intuitions and my memory need to be preserved. So I work for two days on my "Memory Stone". I carve a dodecagonal shape on one of the Cave With No Name's walls. I make it indestructible with an ancient ritual created the other day and I impress my memories, my knowledge, my story in it. The next days are almost unsustainable. I hardly get used again to the sunlight and the scorching heat, while I pick up shreds of metal and bones of little animals for the Alchems. I'm always supervised by their guards. And the Alchems have an ancient tradition that forces the guards to never talk to their prisoners. Silence! Precious, priceless, pampering silence...

G: "So Sir, as you said, you're creating a tool able to vomit unlimited amounts of gold, silver and gems."

NOR: "I NEVER SAID ANYTHING LIKE THAT!"

Unfortunately, ANOTHER ancient tradition forces the guards to be chosen between the ones with the less possible mental skills, making them unable to understand their traditions. And every sentence more complex than "pie".

G: "Let's give a name to your tool, shall we?"

NOR: "No."

G: "We'll call it "Nourishment with sentiment". Do you like it?"

NOR: "No."

G: "Or "Horse"! "Horse" is an incredible name, don't you agree? Or, listen to this: "Sorcerer's Gear". The gear of the sorcerer. It creates gems! Mountains of gems. I love to put them in my nose. Then I sneeze and my head explodes."

NOR: "THIS TOOL DOESN'T CREATE GEMS. And call it as you want, but let me work."

G: "Did you ever taste a living viper?"

NOR: "I -I don't think I've ever felt the need to do it."

G: "The need to do what?"

NOR: "To taste a living viper. You've just said..."

G: "Taste a living viper? Why should you think of tasting such a dangerous animal? I did it once. I almost died."

NOR: "PIE!"

G: "..."

NOR: "..."

G: "... so, as you said, you're creating a tool able to vomit unlimited amounts of gold, silver and gems. Let's give it a name. We'll call it "Aftershave of the Day After Tomorrow"."

NOR: "... for the great Dodecagon..."

A few days of dialogues exhausting enough to make me miss the disturbing presence of Mambo, and the tool is complete. It's a tiny cubic box with a lever, in which I adequately put a mechanism of bones and pieces of metal well oiled with a mixture of fluids and herbs. "Sorcerer's Gear". That guard was dumber than a puddle of equine snot, but it's not a bad name. I bring it during a deep night in the dark and crowded center of the village of the Alchems, with my trusted Füller. Everything between those huts with their complex and bombastic architecture shakes with an astonished and agonizing expectation. Athanor wishes me a Good Age of the Reptile and adds that complex "Triple bowed somersault with semi-contused vertebrae" they do only to the most important personalities and that probably killed more victims than the war itself. Someone celebrates noisily the definitive defeat of death, just to be immediately brought back home because after midnight you can't do all that noise. At the center of the village I finally see the excavated body of Wode, well dressed and lying down on the floor between strange stinking candles. That's... the young Voodoo Lady! That's the young Voodoo La... who's the young Voodoo Lady? I don't know anyone by that name. I turn the lever many times. A spring makes the bones and metal hit each other, and from the box starts a sinister and sharp music, resonating solitary for a few minutes between the longing and distressed breaths. Füller runs away. I'll find him later. The music stops. Nothing. Nothing happens. The crowd starts a disgusting shout. Someone wants me dead, deceased, defunct, extinct, slaughtered. If I were a Thesaurus I would now had the divine right to pee... something's happening to Wode's body. It's full of unspeakable spasms, while the flesh slowly recovers vigor and vitality. The spasms stop. Wode opens her eyes wide and raises her head, and sits down with a mechanical and unnatural movement. Her face is pale, funereal, without expression. The crowd is shocked. Then, I hear something monstrous. Like a horrible wave inexorably coming. Something is about to overwhelm the entire village. While everybody is focused on the girl I instinctively drop the Gear and run in the forest. I've made a terrible mistake. I didn't bring back the spirit of

the girl, but something else! From the village I hear an uproar, like a terrifying swirl of blood, screams and broken bones. Something is slaughtering everybody! I must flee. Go back to the cave. Understand what happened! But that something is now following me! It wants me! I turn and find myself paralyzed. Snakes! Thousands of snakes twisted to form a single, spine-chilling entity. I'm doomed. They've reached me! I...

TUM!-TUM!-TUM!-TUM!

Suddenly from my left I see Mambo and Füller. Füller looks at me and wags his tail happy, while Mambo is playing a big, heavy drum hanging from his neck. The snakes hesitate, slow down, they seem disoriented.

NOR: "MAMBO!"

MA: "THE SNAKES ARE SENSIBLE TO SOUNDS LIKE DRUM'S. BUT IT WON'T WORK FOR LONG! RUN, NOR! I'LL TRY TO CONFOUND THEIR SENSE OF ORIENTATION AND DIVERT THEM ELSEWHERE! GO TO THE CAVE, SAVE YOURSELF AND THINK SOMETHING UP!"

NOR: "HOW DID YOU... KNOW ABOUT ALL THIS?"

MA: "Füller explained me everything. We're lucky he found me in time."

NOR: "But how... how..."

MA: "RUN! Put an end to all this! And complete your story of ducks. Sniff... it's really a beautiful story."

Incredible terror and sadness hurt my chest while, with Füller, I run to the cave knowing I will never see Mambo ever again. I look the Great Design with my eyes now used to the most obscure darkness. Something finally fills an empty space, something unknown that tormented me for years. An entity born before the eternity under the sign of endless destruction. Something always lived in the dim light with the soft larvae of all the most horrifying human nightmares. Something that is probably influencing from ever the events of this island and now found the right occasion to rise in this world. But... wait... there are two unknowns. Equal and opposite. That wasn't the only entity sleeping from millennia. There is another. A being completely opposite to the one evoked. Maybe a potential ally. I could even find its exact location... but the island resonates of atrocious screams. The snakes are devouring everyone, village after village, and they'll soon be here. Mambo's drum doesn't sound from a while. There could be another way to stop them: another carillon identical to the other, but with a reversed music, that could bring the entity back to sleep forever. But there's no time for that too. I must find another way to stop it. I look on the wall... that ritual... the Egsanzyon!

*Egsanzyon. The ritual of the three people who sacrifice their own life to banish a place in a limbo with no return forever.*

*The first gives to the second a part of the head  
The second gives to the third a part of the thread  
The third gives a liquid of its body to the first  
And let go of your spirits, on this place they'll rest  
To its extremes you'll go, everybody on the road  
And trace on the floor the symbol of the Crossroad  
Turn off the lights, it's the end of the way  
Banish this place, give your lives away*

But I'm alone. Then I look at the Memory Stone. I could make a variation of the spell. If I would pour all my vital and spiritual energy in the Memory Stone... it would create a monstrous conflict of energies! I would pour an immense wave of pure oblivion on the entire island! Instead of dying to banish it from this world... I would banish it from the memory of mankind! Every wayfarer who had mystical intuitions looking the Great Design will preserve them, but will forget where they came from. The malicious entity itself, bonding itself to a human brain will forget its own identity and its own power. This place will still be too full of energies to come near and, seeing the horrors of what it has done, it would flee from here, and it will wander the world lost and immortal. I too, maybe, will forget my own identity in the afterlife. But the effects of oblivion on Dodekagon Island can't be eternal. They will last a few millennia and then, slowly, the existence of the island itself and confused fragments of what happened will come back to the memory of mankind. Maybe under the form of dreams, vibrations, intuitions, deliriums. Navigators, writers, philosophers, thugs will start to talk about the dodecagonal island and the Sorcerer's Gear like ancient legends, or visions under the effect of devastating psychotropic substances. And it... it'll come back too. It will slowly recover awareness of its own power. It will slowly remember what it was while sleeping in the earth and will hug again its mission of endless destruction. I trace the symbol of the Crossroad on the floor. They're coming. I caress Füller's head and pour the last part of my memories in the dodecagonal stone. Either by reawakening the other entity or by creating the Reverse Gear, when the fog of the memories will disperse, someone will come here and by touching this stone he will have the ingredients to banish that horror in the limbo it came from, hoping... he will succeed before it. The snakes are here. I raise the intensity of the flow, I pour all my spiritual breath into the stone. I pray to preserve a spark of my memory so that on the other side I can work to keep the energies of the realm of the dead to never go back in the realm of the living. So that I could become the guardian itself of the Crossroad. So that I could find you again, little friend! Turn off the lights, it's the end of the way. I banish you from memory, I'll give my life away.



...  
...  
...

G: "AAAARGH! SNAKES! SNAKES EVERYWHERE! THEY'RE IN MY NOSE!"

W: "What did I tell you, Mister Hellbeard? He's still alive. And what's this on the wall, a duck?"

G: "MAMBO?"

W: "Not now, sir! Maybe later."

G: "No, no! I've... had the most terrible hallucination ever. There were snakes... and sorcerers. And a great war. The Reverse Gear. And... the Voodoo Lady."

W: "He's raving. We should cure him with a pack of burning acid. Do you still have some, Mister Hellbeard?"

HELLB: "Sure, let me find it..."

G: "It wasn't an hallucination! It was all real! Napoleon... your Witch With No Name sent you to find the Leviathan Lord because... you needed to die from the beginning."

HELLB: "Don't be absurd, Threepwood! She sent me to find a treasure to prove her me extraordinary abilities! Me boundless value! Me incredible power!"

G: "You were sent here to banish forever this island by sacrificing your life with the Egsanzyon! Because nobody would ever discover the truth about her. You were only one of the many sacrificial victims of her perverted game. And you're alive only because... of a mistake."

HELLB: "NO! THAT'S NOT TRUE! NOT AFTER EVERYTHIN' I'VE DONE FOR HER! NOT AFTER ALL THOSE GIFTS! FLOWERS PICKED UP DIRECTLY FROM THE SHORES OF THE RIVER STYX! DARK CHOCOLATES PREPARED IN THE VOLCANIC FORGES OF THE GOD HEPHAESTUS! I WOULD HER GIVE HER THE SUN ITSELF IF I WOULDN'T BURNED ALL MY MEN IN THE ATTEMPT TO PICK IT UP! AND THEN... AND THE... THE OBJECT THAT REPRESENTED ME ETERNAL PROMISE OF LOVE! THE..."

LL: "STOP RIGHT THERE!"

G: "Largo! Where... where did you get that gun?"

LL: "There were many interesting things in the shipwrecks of the western beach. Now... you must go away from here!"

G: "What?"

LL: "I've recently discovered some horrifying truths. Something I would've never wanted to know about my Sorcerer's Gear. But it doesn't matter anymore. LeChuck and I will earn infinite power and richness anyway, and we'll do it by

interpreting the designs of the cave. But you need to choose now: go away alive or stay here dead.”

G: “The Gear? You touched the dodecagonal stone, too!”

LL: “YOU TOUCHED THE DODECAGONAL STONE, TOO?”

HELLB: “I gave her the most magnificent object ever created by the human mind... this!”

G: “Napoleon, now it’s not the ti... this? What do you mean by “this”? Did you give her something that was on this wall?”

HELLB: “Yeah! Somethin’ I’ve constructed followin’ a project of the Great Design of primeval magic. This project in front of ya. I’ve called it... Hell Bell.”

LL: “Wha... what? I read it’s made of three elements... source... resonator... amplifier. Source? The Source! LeChuck read on the Voodoo Witch’s diary... that he himself should’ve become the Source of something! WHAT IS THIS HELL BELL?”

HELLB: “Oooh, an artefact of divine simplicity and power. The result of an ancestral and prohibited magic, irreproducible with the weak mystical cults born in the last centuries. Three objects that combined together would’ve set off somethin’ devastatin’ on the Tri-Island Area. First thin’ first, a spark of black magic as the Source. Then a little bell obtained by meltin’ a measly Voodoo amulet, to alter the frequencies of the Source by resonatin’. And then, a little shell made with the bones of recent deceased creatures to amplify the generated frequencies. It was delightful. Very tasteful. A very fancy ornament.”

LL: “What was its use?”

HELLB: “It doesn’t matter anymore. Me time has come. It was all a joke and I...”

LL: “WHAT WAS ITS USE?”

HELLB: “Urgh... if everythin’ would’ve respected specific construction geometries, and once constructed the bell would’ve resonated ten times, it would’ve ever created frequencies in dystonia with the essence of reality itself. Probably the entire Tri-Island Area would’ve completely disappear from time, space and memory. Like it never existed.”

G: “And you gave an object like that to someone... as a pledge of love?”

HELLB: “And what else could I’ve used it as, a weapon? That thin’ is dangerous!”

Largo and I look at the project and we shake, obscenely frozen by a truth far more unbearable than we could ever imagined.

LL: “Instead of a spark of Black Magic... the unlimited and condensed power of a Pirate God.”

G: “Instead of a measly Voodoo amulet... the fusion of all the enchanted objects in the Tri-Island Area, like the ones collected by the Triad.”

LL: “Instead of a little shell made with a few bones... the skeletons of thousands and thousands of fresh bodies, like the ones collected by the Wizard for years.

Years of machinations... to construct a gigantic version of the Hell Bell. A massive Voodoo artefact with the power to destroy the entire Creation. Forever!”

G: “What? No! Wait! Why the Voodoo Lady should’ve created something like that? Even she, despite her ambiguous and suspicious way of doing things, wanted to... I don’t know... respect the Balance. And preserve some dynamics of the life, the Universe and everything else! And you can’t build such a thing without anyone noticing. There MUST BE some other meaning in all of this! Something is missing! And the Triad... they hate magic! It’s an aberration for them! They...”

LL: “We’re doomed. Those bells could be ready from a long time. They could resonate in any minute and delete everything forever. We don’t have... STOP RIGHT THERE!”

G: “Oh, not again...”

LL: “You must go away from here! The designs on these walls... could allow us to survive the annihilation. We must make them ours as soon as possible. Ours and nobody else’s! GO AWAY IMMEDIATELY!”

G: “Wait! Didn’t you see it before? The Triad’s forges on Blood Island are still working. Even if what you’ve said it’s true, they probably need more time. We just need to...”

From the deep darkness of the cave the echoes of a horrible voice resonates. Well, more than a voice, it’s the dark and sapless rasping of a terminal patient trying to whisper his last words.

LCK: “... Largooooo...”

LL: “LeChuck?”

LCK: “... me... heart! Ya told me... it would’ve worked! That... I would’ve survived for more than ten days... me heart!!!”

Largo runs in the darkness, while the light of Van Winslow’s match starts to extinguish and die. The island shakes in a nauseating manner. Something’s happening. Did the bells of the End really start to resonate? No, it’s something more... Hellbeard! Where is Hellbeard? No!

W: “WE MUST GET OUT OF HERE, SIR!”

We run through those endless hallways, and we exit the cave. In a few minute we reach the northern beach, where De Singe is fiddling with some strange tools. Far away from there, Hellbeard is tracing a symbol in the sand. How did he get there so quickly? I don’t know but what matters now... is that I should’ve never told him the truth. When he heard it he fully abandoned himself to his demons! He went to complete the sacrificial ritual!

G: "Van Winslow! We must stop Hellbeard! We must stop him from sacrificing himself for no..."

W: "It's too late, sir. Hellbeard made a choice and his ritual is almost complete. We need... MARQUIS! WE NEED TO ESCAPE FROM THIS ISLAND! IMMEDIATELY!"

DSG: "Oui oui how much haste! Can't you give me half an hour?"

G: "WE CAN'T WASTE A SINGLE MINUTE! IN A FEW SECONDS THIS LAND WILL BE BANISH FROM OUR DIMENSION! WE'LL BE FOREVER TRAPPED IN A LIMBO WITH NO RETURN!"

DSG: "Oh! Oh! Oh! Imaginative pirate legends. Let me work, Threepwood!"

G: "Urgh... I meant... the SCIENCE says it's necessary to abandon this island as soon as possible. The sextants are disturbed. The compasses are worried. Even the jovilabe seems a little pale."

DSG: "Quoi? You didn't make any sense."

G: "Véronique!"

DSG: "Ooooh, my little, sweet Véronique and the little, sweet thousands of pieces you could be dismantled! But... look at these! With so many, wonderful shipwrecks I was undecided on what to build, so I made TWO delightful little boats, with oars and sails. The "De Singe Pretty Mermaid" excels in speed and the unsinkable "De Singe Hefty Manatee" excels in resistance. But if you give me ten minutes I will calculate which one we should take for this voyage..."

W: "The Pretty Mermaid! We take the Pretty Mermaid, Captain!"

G: "Wait... I see a third boat, there."

DSG: "Oh, yes, there's that one too. The "De Singe Sashimi". It's not very fast, nor very resistant. But it's edible. Are you interested in that?"

G: "No! No! The fast one! We take the fast one!"

We board on the... ehm... De Singe Pretty Mermaid and start to row with all our might in that obscenely calm sea. I turn to the shores of Vodun for the last time. I see Hellbeard, dying and suffering, while an ancient energy takes his vitality away. He sees me and tries to raise a hand, as if he wants to say me: "Don't worry about me. Even if I would find meself in Hell, it will give me strength, and I'll come back. Always.". Something squeezes my heart, as I realize this time it won't be like always. Away, away from this island! After a few minutes everything starts to flash with blinding emerald lights, while the sea recovers colors and the horizon widens. The wind starts to blow again, and the noise of the ocean starts to fill the deafening silence. We're back in our world! But I have a bad feeling. And for infinite, endless minutes, we continue to row, adding the strength of our suffering muscles to the wind's finally coming back. Even more terrible lights behind us. An uproar, like millions of tons of dynamite exploded. I turn. A gigantic tsunami as tall as three times Stan Island is coming towards us. We... we...

*DSG: “DAMNER LA MERDE WE SHOULD’VE TAKEN THE DE SINGE HEFTY MANATEE”*

Deep night. The sky thickens with gloomy and threatening clouds. The waves ruffle, agitated by an unnatural fury. The wind becomes violent, but it still inebriates you with that fine smell of salty anchovies and adventure. I hold the oars and I look to my first officer, visibly nervous. Our little boat starts to fluctuate in a nauseating way, but the hardened stomach of two sea dogs like us can't possibly...

W: “BLLEEAAAAAAAAAUUUUURGH HH!”

G: "COME ON, WALLY!"

W: "I'M SORRY, MISTER WOOD. FORGIVE ME, MISTER WOOD. IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN, I SWEAR!"

G: “WAS IT REALLY NECESSARY TO EAT FLAN OF LIVER AND OYSTERS BEFORE?”

W: “BUT IT’S THE BREAKFAST FOR THE REAL CARTOGRAPHERS! DON’T TAKE IT BEFORE THE JOURNEY MEANS, ACCORDING TO OUR TRADITION, TO RISK TO LOSE THE ROUTE AND... BLEEAAAUUURGH!”

G: "Oh, my goodness."

W: “Anf... anf... look! Look at the map! He -here we are...”

G: "That one at the horizon is... THE one! The island where I'll face the last one of the Three Trials..."

W: "It IS the one, mister Wood. That's Mêlée Island, the forgotten island. The home of the legendary pirate LeChuck... and of his sad golden bride!"

## Episode XIII - Dudley Jones' Locker

My name is Guybrush Threepwood, and when I'll defeat LeChuck with the insult sword fight... LeChuck the repugnant, LeChuck the obscene, LeChuck the unapproachable... I'll finally be a real pirate! And he's Wally. The blind, little cartographer with the red hair. The one who helped me reunite the four map pieces for Mêlée Island. He's a pathological, scaremonger and ceaseless destroyer of every good purpose and every good hope. However, after the excellent results of our last adventures, I'm sure he partly recovered his optimism and his desire to see things in a diff...

W: "WE'RE GONNA BE RIPPED TO SHREDS, BEHEADED, BURNED AND THREW TO THE MANATEE PIRANHAS!!!"

G: "And this is the last time I choose a cartographer to be my first officer."

W: "B -but it's LeChuck! The most chilling, malefic and bloody of pirate legends!"

G: "Ha! Every legend doesn't have more than a feeble bottom of truth."

W: "They say he lives from hundreds of years!"

G: "So he must be nothing more than an elderly."

W: "They say he can burn you down with a single touch of his beard!"

G: "And we're going to face him after his morning shave."

W: "BUAAAAHH!!! WE ARE LIKE POOR BEASTS GOING TO AN INFECTIOUS AND RUSTY SLAUGHTERHOUSE!"

G: "Why didn't I let you rot in that prison?"

W: "And his bride... hi -his bride..."

G: "Then you have to explain me what brought you to gratuitously burn... what? What else there is to know about his bride?"

For a moment everything freezes. The sea, the sky, the clouds. Time itself stops. While everything resounds of a deafening silence, a strange shadow fills Wally's face.

W: "The evil thickening on Mêlée is much more terrifying than this! Don't forget the bride's identity! But above all... remember her mother."

G: "W -what did you say? The bride's mother?"

A whistle. The wind's noise. The sea's noise. Time starts again. The shadow dissipates from Wally's face. Mêlée is closer, now. But w -what...

W: "Me? Nothing, mister Wood! Death, pestilence and destruction, mister Wood! Nothing awaits us more than these, mister Wood!"

G: "I must be tired, Wally! This matter about the three trials was really exhausting and..."

W: "Yeah, probably you're tired, mister Wood. My uncle Dudenice was always tired, too, mister Wood. Then we found out he was sick and he died in a horrible way, mister Wood."

G: "Thanks for the encouragement, Wally. Really, I..."

W: "AAAAARGHHH!!!! LOOK! IT'S HERE! THE GHOST SENTINEL OF MÊLÉE!"

A dark and spectral shape suddenly appears near our boat. Entirely covered with a long black cape, it holds a heavy scythe, sharp in a very little reassuring way.



S: *“A shining, blonde and golden head. Rolls in the abyss, I see it dead. The other is bright red. In LeChuck’s room, it’ll be a light over the bed.”*

G: “TAKE THE CHEST, WALLY! THE CHEST!”

W: “I’M GONNA PEE MYSELF! AND I STILL HAVE BITTERSWEET MYRRH IN MY STOMACH AND...”

G: “SHUT UP AND OPEN IT!!!”

A few seconds before the scythe’s edge could reach Wally’s neck, the little cartographer opens the chest. A perturbing golden light invests the ghost sentinel, who paralyzes itself. Now it’s looking at the wonderful show with the ecstasy and greed of someone lost from centuries in the icy fog, by now, slowly remembering what means the joy to retrieve a lost treasure.



S: "*W -what is this?*"

G: "Big Whoop's chest."

S: "*Big Whoop? T -THAT BIG WHOOP?*"

G: "Exactly. The biggest pirate treasure of all times. Hidden from the legendary Napoleon Hellbeard in the bloody bowels of Monkey Island, and found thanks to the indications of his revived desiccated head."

W: "That head ate my left eye."

G: "I was trying to forget that detail, Wally."

S: "*That light... they say Big Whoop is more than simple gold. They say... it is a portal to a new world!*"

G: "It is. Its chest is bottomless, and brings you in a world of infinite richness. It's yours now, you know? Come inside, and you'll be completely free from LeChuck's slavery. Forever."

The sentinel enters in the chest with a long and dark howl. Then, the chest closes itself and dashes off in the sea, locking forever its infinite treasures in the frozen heart of the abyss.

G: "Sigh... the fruit of my first trial. Lost, forever!"

W: "Symbol and metaphor of the infinite vanity of our efforts on this land."

G: "We're still alive, though."

W: "Yeah. It was granted to us the possibility to continue to assist to interminable shows of horror and suffering."

G: "Now, if you stay still, I should be able to tie an end of that rope to your neck, and the other to the handle of the sinking trunk, so that it can..."

W: "You've had a narrow escape. Twice. Against the greatest power of this archipelago. Doesn't it seem odd?"

G: "Wha -what are you talking about?"

A strange fog obscures my mind. For a moment, I feel like I'm immersed in the moans of the nothing without end, while Wally's eye becomes sadder and more sinister.

G: "Of course, I escaped twice! During the first trial, I've managed to get out alive from the infernal caves thanks to the indications of Napoleon's head. And, during the second trial, I've managed to destroy the steam powered mega-robots of that Australian entrepreneur, by sabotaging their main controls. Why odd? And what power are you talking about?"

W: "I -I'm not talking about THOSE two times, b -but of..."

For an almost imperceptible moment, Wally's face contracts in an expression of pure terror. Then, he falls on the ground gasping. He vomits again. What were we talking about? Nothing important. I think the only way to completely clean this boat is to sink it. The island is drawing nearer. Mêlée Island. An enormous rock dead from centuries. Our boat lands in the darkness of that black and remote beach, while we get our last bag and we start to walk towards the road leading to LeChuck's mansion. We climb a little pathway through the forest, to arrive in the center of a gloomy and dilapidated village. Rotten boards. Destroyed windows. A clock still from ever. Sharps and blades everywhere. The wind whistling through the windows of the abandoned houses seems to harmonize our dirge and... n -no! Wait... this is a REAL dirge!

W: "M -Mister Wood?"

G: "Relax, Wally. Everything's fine. It's the souls killed by LeChuck. Destined to roam on the island for eternity. But they can't manifest themselves on the physical realm and..."

I raise my head. Floating in the air, infecting an already dead sky, infinite, luminescent spirals of stings from which hung thousands and thousands of slaughtered and hanged bodies. Everything becomes even darker. The air becomes suffocating. Everything around us gets corrupted with the unsustainable stench of colossal mountains of corpses, while the dark song of those putrid shadows comes closer...

G: "Wally?"

W: "..."

G: "Paralyzed with fear, right?"

W: "Y -yes..."

G: "Wally! Remember what that Galeb told us! The cursed souls of LeChuck, unlike the Sentinel, can't take physical form! Fear is their only weapon! Overcome your fears! T -try to... try to recall happy memories."

W: "M -my life was a long and horrible nightmare, mister Wood!"

G: "Ehm... your parents!"

W: "They both called me <<my little accident>>"

G: "First day of cartography school."

W: "The bullies punched me to steal my lunch money. Then they gave it back at the end of the day and reported me to the principal for extortion."

G: "Urgh... first love?"

W: "Give me lit dynamite so that I can swallow it and end it all."

G: "Gratuitously burning everything and everyone."

W: “AHAHAHAHAHAHAH! THEY DESERVED IT! THEM! THE PRINCIPAL! MY PARENTS! THE LUNCH MONEY! THAT GIRL WHO REJECTED ME AND...”

G: “Ehm... you’re moving again... and I think I’ll never contradict you ever again about anything, could it be relevant, irrelevant or partly...”

W: “LET’S FLEE FROM HERE!”

We pass through the village and we run towards a long and impervious climb of stones, followed by the obscene words of thousands of miserable and hollow souls, singing without pause about the atrocious ways we’ll use to leave this life. Then, we arrive at LeChuck’s fortress. A colossal, crooked castle of stones breaking clouds and logic. Wally and I manage to push the stone gate and we enter the main hall. The sharp stench of wood, rotten from centuries. The lights of weird candles with a mocking face change of intensity in a frantic and sinister manner, while the furniture changes shapes every time we blink. Stairs become windows, which become horrible doors to limbo out of time. Senseless bookshelves intertwine, overlap, become coffins and then thousands of inane, horrifying mazes of wood and nails. Silence, deafening silence. The room has no sense and no end, hugging multiple dimensions and touching places well beyond the extreme limit of the horizon. Then...

LCK: “YA MUST NOT TOUCH ME GIRL!”

While a glacial echo utters these words, space twists itself even more, devoured by a black core of pure evil gurgling in the center of the hall. The hall loses every lifeblood and it fills with cracks. Every unreal thing inside it becomes grey and ashen, like it was burned millions of years ago. Then, the core at its center takes shape. Legs. Arms. A long beard made of thousands of venomous snakes. And two eyes crying tears of red-hot blood.

LCK: “YA MUST NOT TOUCH ME GIRL!”

I turn to my left. Wally is no more. Instead, a grave dominated by a horrible tombstone, covered by ancient demonic symbols. I don’t know their meaning, but by instinct they seem like symbols of mockery. Something is mocking Wally, because he’s dead, and his soul will suffer all the terrible tortures those souls of LeChuck were talking about without any peace. The black magic of this being is infinitely more powerful than I could ever imagined. LeChuck the repugnant. LeChuck the obscene. LeChuck the unacceptable. I’m terrorized, but I still manage to move. I run towards the bag I brought from the boat. I open it and take its content.

LCK: “YA MUST NOT TOUCH ME GIRL!”

G: “Second trial, LeChuck! Thievery! Steal a mysterious idol from Ozzie Mandrill’s mansion... the idol that will allow me to defeat you once and for all... the idol called... THE ULTIMATE INSULT!”

I grip on that ridiculous monkey idol and I wish to hit LeChuck. This is enough to make a colossal blue electric discharge hit him. One, two, thousands of electric discharges tear his black and incomprehensible body. LeChuck screams, writhes, struggles, while the space around us collapses and suffers with him.

*The name of the golden bride!*

LCK: “NOOOOOOO!!! ME GIRL!!! M -ME... ME. BRIDE... ME WONDERFUL GOLDEN BRIDE”

*The name of the golden bride! Pay attention to the name of the golden bride!*

LeChuck is no more than a little, malevolent distortion in the center of the hall. He’s collapsing on himself, between unspeakable pains. Behind him, increasingly clearer and well defined, I can see a door, from which it comes a gorgeous golden glare. If -if I open it and take away the cursed ring from the golden bride, she’ll come back to life! T -this story will end, and I... I’ll win. B -but a doubt is gripping my brain. The golden bride. The name of the golden bride. What is the name of the golden bride? And why is it so important? Before he vanishes forever, I must ask him a last question...

G: “LeChuck... what is the name of the golden bride?”

LCK: “Anf... anf... AARGH... W -Wode!”

G: “W -What???”

LCK: “Wode of Athanor. Her name is Wode of Athanor. AND YA MUST NOT EVER AGAIN... AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARGHHHH!!”

The repugnant. The obscene. The unapproachable. Vanished. Forever.

Something is wrong.

G: “No! That’s not her name!”

W: “What do you mean, Guybrush? What do you mean with “that’s not her name”?”

The air is still screaming and twisting around us in a nauseating way. I turn, and Wally is there again. He's coming towards me. His grave is gone. His only eye is barred, dominating the most horrible, pale and hollow smile I've ever seen.

G: "Elaine Marley. The name of the golden bride is Elaine Marley."

W: "Why Elaine Marley?"

G: "I -I don't know... It's the name of the golden bride. You told me to pay attention to the name of the golden bride."

W: "Perfect, Guybrush! Keep going! Keep talking! He's losing all his power!"

G: "W -who? Who's losing his power?"

W: "KEEP REMEMBERING, GUYBRUSH!"

G: "E -Elaine is her real name! She became golden because of me. I gave her the cursed ring, a long time ago! B -but now Elaine... Elaine is dead!"

W: "Remember well, Guybrush... Elaine... is dead?"

G: "I -I saw her on Booty Island... That wizard cursed her... she fell on the ground..."

W: "Then?"

G: "I was confused... I... the wizard... **TOOK HER! THE WIZARD KIDNAPPED HER! I... I FORGOT IT!**"

Pieces of memory are waking up. Facts without any connection suddenly reveal a terrifying truth. I've twice had a narrow escape against the greatest power of this archipelago without getting a scar. I've escaped the Triad twice. I thought Elaine to be dead, so that I could go crazy and exit the scenes. Kidnapped by the wizard who's controlling the Triad with the Voodoo Lady... right before the Triad itself was born. Right before his mysterious and charismatic leader could put together that colossal and unnatural military power.

*And then he came, Soze. Nobody knew who he was, nor where he came from. Someone dare say that because of his depravity he was drove away even from the lowest circle of Hell...*

The headquarter of the Triad is Mêleé Island. What a coincidence! And the name... the name of her mother! I've heard it only once in my life... almost forgotten... and I've never paid any attention to it... idiot! I was an idiot...

G: "Elaine's adoptive mother... before she married with Horatio... her name was Soze. Kathryn Martha Soze. Elaine... used the last name of the grandmother who grew up with. Elaine... is Baron Soze!"

Everything freezes. Wally smiles, horrible and happy, while he becomes thinner. He's a corpse now: pale, ghostly and transparent. He falls on the ground on his knees, while his legs and his arms are cut and pierced from dozens of threads. I

look around. Now I'm... on the stage of a gigantic theater? Endless rows of seats baroquely decorated extend over the horizon, while everything floats in a dark and heavy blue. Above me, those metallic spirals again, full of slaughtered and hanged pirates. I blink. Now the pirates are all seating in the stands. Thunder of claps. They're -they're clapping me? Someone throws me some roses. Glass bottles full of spit. Pieces of bowels of weird beasts. I'll take them as a sign of appraisal. They seem happy, enthusiastic. They stand up. The thunder of claps becomes deafening. It suddenly appears, in front of me, an old, shy and baleful ghost. Beard, mustache, long and ragged clothes, he holds a puppeteer's tool and half of his face is covered with a dreary mask.

G: "W -who are you?"

DUD: "M -me? Nobody. I -I was just passing by..."

G: "Are all these people seating and clapping... puppets?"

...

P1: "Bravo! Bis!"

P2: "Yarr! Free one, free all!"

P3: "BODY OF A SHAPELESS PILOT WHALE!"

P4: "Buuuurp!"

P5: "...and I'll cut your throat and I'll cut your fingers and I'll cut your ears and I'll cut your arms and..."

P6: "Buuuurp!"

P7: "Yarrrrr!"

P8: "COOOOOAARGGGGHHH!"

G: "Those.. are REAL PIRATE GHOSTS! But they're strange... stiff... sad... pierced by dozens of threads, like puppets. And you, with that tool in the hand... seems to be their puppeteer!"

DUD: "I -I don't know what you're talking about."

G: "Why controlling the souls of dead pirates like that? Why imprison them in a ghost theater and make them relive their horrifying and nonsensical hallucinations?"

DUD: "BECAUSE I FEEL ALO... ops!"

G: "A -ha!"

DUD: "Sigh... I -I fear I can't pretend anymore! My name is Jones. Dudley Jones! Since time immemorial I wander the abyss of the oceans, stealing the souls of those who are about to drown from their jump to the Spirit Realm. I make live to the last one arrived the adventure he always desired to live. And when he comes to his happy ending, and he reaches the high peak of his happiness and gratification... his subconscious chooses to be bound forever with the reality of my locker. His body definitely dies, while his spirit becomes one of the eternal slaves in my theater of the abyss. One of the infinite extras... of the dream of the next drowning person!"

G: "And w -what happened to me? Elaine..."

W: "Sadly, that story is true, mister Brush! But thanks to it... you defeated Dudley Jones the only way he could be defeated!"

G: "W -Wally?"

DUD: "Wally B. Feed. Drowned four years and eleven months ago with the entire crew of Bloodnose dancing... ehm... the "manatee dance on a glass-bottomed boat."

G: "I can't believe someone really made such a thing."

W: "IT WAS NECESSARY! WE WERE CELEBRATING THE CONQUEST OF OUR FIRST PLUNDER!"

DUD: "Three wooden coins and a dead chicken. After four years at sea."

W: "IT SYMBOLIZED AN IMPORTANT GOAL ANYWAY! A -anyway... the only thing that could break the illusion of the last arrived was... an epiphany! An intuition that could reverberate like a thunderbolt through the fog of the hallucination, and it could give him a reason to go back to the real life... before that fake happy ending, which could have locked him forever in the abyss!"

G: "Wha -what? And how did you know about Elaine? And the Triad? And the escape from Roca Redención?"

W: "To create the perfect adventure, Dudley Jones rummages in the mind of the last arrived, mister Brush! And this power also represents his worst weakness, because it allows to all the spirits in the locker to notice glimpses of their past. This way they can prepare, in those short moments where they manage to slip from Jones' control, occasional clues leading to the epiphany itself. You know, mister Brush... you are the first who managed to put together all the clues! The first to comprehend the illusion behind the locker! The first to generate a new reason to go back to reality, and to finally free all the souls of those who arrived before him! <<Free one, free all>>"

P2: "Yarr! Free one, free all!"

DUD: "The first? If -if I may, that's not exact."

W: "Wha -what?"

DUD: "It's not that difficult to get out of here. I lost souls repeatedly, during the centuries. I -I can't manage to hold them for too long. I've manage with ease with the last twelve thousand pirates because if -if I may, you are essentially a b -bunch of idiots!"

P2: "Yarr! Free one, free all!"

P3: "Grog!"

P4: "I think I just swallowed an umbrella. Arrrr!!!"

W: "Ergh..."

G: "T -twelve thousand pirates?"

W: "Yes, mister Brush! Some, like me, maintained their original appearance in the illusion. Others deeply changed their appearance, and their role was choose simply based on..."

LCK: "YOU MUST NOT TOUCH MY GIRL!"

W: "... ehm... their endless hate towards you!"

G: "L -LeChuck?"

I turn. Behind me, leaning on the wooden wall of the decadent theater, a big wooden shapeless puppet. It has a pirate hat and a ridiculous fabric beard. Nothing vaguely resembling that horrifying shadow of pure evil I've met before... wait... it's shaking! It takes shape. It's changing! Clothes. Features. A body. A helmet. A thin, long and delirious face. Mustache. No!

C: "YOU MUST NOT TOUCH MY GIRL!"

G: "Coronado de Cava!"

C: "YOU STOLE MY GIRL, MALDITO ASQUEROSO!!! MY WONDERFUL WITCH WITH HER FAT AND FLOURISHING HIPS!"

G: "Please. No."

DUD: "Coronado de Cava. Drowned one year and one month ago trying to... ehm... g -get a sinking sock back."

C: "IT WAS EL SACRED SOCK DE HADES! A GRAND ARTIFACT WITH EXTRAORDINARY VODOO POWERS! I WOULD'VE TAKEN IT BACK TO MY WONDERFUL WITCH WITH THE THICK CALF... AND SHE WOULD'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH ME AGAIN!"

G: "Despite my ears are trying to reject anything about that calf, there are some rumors about your beloved..."

C: "I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR ADVENTURES FULL OF LUXURY AND DEPRAVITY, THREEPWOOD!"

G: "And I think I don't feel very well."

C: "BUT NOW... I FOUND SOMETHING EVEN MORE PRECIOUS!!!"

DUD: "E -ehi! W -what are you looking at?"

C: "EL TUJO TOOL DE PUPPETEER, DUDLEY JONES! AN OBJECT ABLE TO CONTROL AND ALTER THE PERCEPTION OF THOUSANDS OF DEAD SOULS! IF I'LL BRING HER A TALISMAN OF SUCH POWER... SHE WILL NEVER LEAVE ME EVER AGAIN!!! AND WE'LL LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER, EXPLORING THE ABYSS OF EVERY OCEAN FROM THE STINKING STOMACH OF MY MASSIVE MANATEE!"

DUD: "S -stay away! You're free now! Get out of here and don't bother m... L -LET ME GO!"

Coronado violently attacks Dudley Jones, trying to rip out his puppeteer's tool from his hands. Meanwhile, those thousands of souls who were clapping me shrink in a scary, shapeless, screaming swirl that rises and... wait... it's coming towards me! NO! MY STOMACH... AAAAAAAAARGHHHH!!!!



P2: "Yarr! Free one, free all!"

...

...

...

I open my eyes. A peaceful night sky covered with millions of stars. The noise of the backwash. I vomit salty mud. Oxygen in. My chest hurts. Painful, burning water out. Oxygen in. Alive! I'm alive! But why am I covered with sand? It's dry! And what's this... AAAAARGH!!!

W: "MARQUIS! MARQUIS DE SINGE! HE'S AWAKE! YOUR BRILLIANT MEDICAL STRATEGY WORKED!"

DSG: "You can't be serious."

G: "VAN WINSLOW! GET ME OUT OF HERE! WHERE IN THE DEVIL DID YOU PUT ME?"

DSG: "You CAN'T BE serious!"

W: "We're on Scabb Island's shore, sir! Vodun Island disappeared a few meters from this deserted island's shore and..."

G: "AND WHY AM I SIX METERS DEEP IN THIS HOLE?"

W: "Oh, you were on the bottom of the ocean. I pulled you up but you weren't breathing anymore, sir! I thought you drowned! I tried to revive you, but the Marquis De Singe stopped me, and he told me it would've been more efficient, from a therapeutic point of view, to bury you under six meters of sand."

DSG: "Oui, Scabb's sand has an... uhm... elevated scientific power!"

G: "THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE! THE MARQUIS SIMPLY TRIED TO ELIMINATE ME!"

W: "You can't be sure about it, sir! Because now you're alive and fine, sir! But we can't be totally sure about this. Shovelful of sand, sir?"

G: "GET ME OUT OF HERE IMMEDIATELY!"

I don't feel good. Van Winslow hands me a rope. Dudley Jones. I shake some sand off of me. Wally's tombstone, covered by ancient demonic symbols. I take the rope and climb slowly. My head hurts. The sad golden bride. I'm out. A little bonfire is lit on Scabb's shore, like many years ago. Baron Soze. Elaine is Baron Soze! That bloody butcher bogeyman of De Singe wanted to bury me... my stomach...

W: "SIR!"

G: "Coff! Coff! BLEEEEEEEEEEEEEAAAAAAAURGH!!!"

Endless minutes, during which I vomit a blue and screaming swirl. I sweat. I scream. I try to shut my mouth, but it's useless! De Singe runs away. The swirl rises in the sky, where it becomes a massive, mephitic, noisy cloud. The cloud beats, yells, shrinks, until it slowly divides into the original souls of the pirates. I faint.

I slowly reopen my eyes. Distant lights. Stenches of shoddy tavern. Flavors of sweaty old clothes. Duels. Brawls. Slashes and...

W: "Hello, mister Brush!"

G: "WALLY!"

I get up, worn and sore. The shore is bright, crowded. Drinks, songs and brawls. Vomiting, gambling and slaughters for irrelevant reasons. Chaos. Confusion. Filth. Swearing. These are the ghosts from Dudley Jones' locker, and... they're back! The pirates are back!

W: "I -I never was a good pirate, but after all the time spent as a puppet in that locker... I know it's finally the time of the pirate Bloodnose!"

G: "S -sigh... even they can touch material objects..."

W: "WILL YOU LISTEN TO ME, MISTER BRUSH?"

G: "Y -yes, Wally! Tell me, Wally!"

W: "I talked to every pirate captain fled from the locker, mister Brush!"

G: "And I deduce from the ghost steps on your behind they found new and creative ways to kick you in the butt."

W: "U -urgh... yes. But only at first! Then I used the right arguments and they listened to me!"

P: "YARRRR!!! THE GROG! THE TRIAD DESTROYED ALL OUR GROG!"

W: "The twelve thousands souls of the locker will set sail against the Triad, mister Brush! We'll build a galleon so big and so powerful that their massive metal monsters will fade. We'll arm ourselves with rickety bombs that will pulverize their technological horrors! And we'll conquer their headquarters on Mêlée Island before they even notice what hit them! We are a lot, and we'll manage to do it before the Hell Bell's chimes. We can do it, mister Brush! Especially if our leader is... the man who freed us all from the locker!"

G: "W -what? M -me? B -but..."

W: "The thirty adventurers of Bloodnose's crew are under your command, mister Brush!"

BB: "Blackbeard and his seven Blabbering Sharks are with Guybrush Threepwood!"

ALJ: "The hundred Complaining Elderly of Ancient Long John will follow Guybrush Threepwood!"

M: “Manuel McManus and his twelve filibusters with the Unwatchable Hairs are with you, mister...”

G: “Alright, alright, I accept everyone! And I appoint Captain Wally B. Feed. He’s your leader, now. See you later!”

W: “Wha -what? Mister Brush! Where are you going? THEY WILL TEAR ME APART, THEY WILL SWALLOW ME AND SPIT ME OUT MORE AND MORE TIMES AND...”

I’m a miserable, lonely pirate, and I don’t think I could be a great pirate captain, anyway. Every time I tried to be the captain of a crew of more than two people, it ended up in an uncomfortable and noisy mutiny. In a cocktail party, once! But they didn’t give me anything. It -it was a mutiny in that case, too! Grrr... damn Kaflu-Quinoa cousins and their delicious Bubo Daiquiris. B -but W -Wally had become such a good pirate, and I’m sure he will manage admirably! I run away from the shore and think back to the last events. I was deceived from years from a witch I trusted. The entire reality was next to collapse. The woman of my life lost her mind, and she was now the leader of a sinister, malicious, bloody, crazy war machine. But I won’t worry about that. Not now. Not tonight! I must assist to the most beautiful show of the world, for the last time! I run towards Scabb’s Itchy Hill. I reach it and climb it. I climb it ‘til I reach the top. From here I can hear it, sweetly brought from the whisper of the night breeze. The most beautiful show of the world!

*I’d rather be a pirate on Scabb...  
...than a scab on a pirate...*

An ancient pirate song, it rings out rebel and joyful on the entire island. It’s Scabb’s voice itself, it talks about itself and of those lost epic freedom and anarchy. Tomorrow, everything may end, forever. But now, more than ever, it comes back to my mind that are not three, or five, or even seven trials that will make you a pirate. It’s not stealing a stupid idol or dig a cotton T-Shirt out. You become a real pirate when your spirit becomes so untamable that you’ll gratuitously mock even the most horrifying horrors of the unknowable! And then there you are, only a step from the endless darkness... and you sing! You laugh! You lose yourself without any decency in a mug o’ grog, in the winning streak of the dice or in... Van Winslow?

V: “Good evening, sir!”

G: “Is -is that a ghost lady?”

V: “How can I explain, sir?”

G: “BUT IT’S SUCH A DISGUSTING...”

*...and if you'll listen to me gab,  
I'll tell you why I admire it.  
Oh, people aren't too friendly,  
and the weather's not the best.  
We were resurrected very hardly,  
and the Crazy Baron's quite a pest.  
But the thing I like about Scabb  
is what it hasn't got:  
No mayor or police force  
and no jail in which to rot.  
...*

## PART IV - THE END OF EVERYTHING



From that disturbing night spent eating salty mud and repulsive ooze, I keep dreaming without any pause and reliving the horrors of that bizarre locker. Every time the illusion starts in a different way. I must pass three trials, then five trials, then a hundred and nine and a half trials. My first officer is Meathook, then Hugo the perfume-seller, then Booby Bob. Reality changes spastically and morbidly. Now my first officer is a guy terrorized by monkeys because they think he's a banana. Five pirate barbers, six buccaneers assayers of crafted glues and nine filibusters testers of dentures. But every time it ends in the same way. Either in Danjer Cove's bay or in the Partly Health Fanatic Tavern of Tortuga, in the Expectorant Waterfalls of Spittle Island or during the Tournaments of Dead Skin of Kakapo Cay, it always ends with him: LeChuck the repugnant! LeChuck the obscene! LeChuck the unappro...

*The head bone's connected to the heel bone,  
but the heel bone's not connected to the arm bone,  
the arm bone's connected to the shoulder blade,  
but the shoulder blade's not connected to the breastbone.*

I reopen my eyes, with the brain pierced by the nails of a restless and exhausting drowsiness. My nostrils are once again attacked by chemical smells of strange herbal teas, halfway between thrush withered from millennia and the armpits of a creature born from the most perverted Thursday's fantasies of Van Winslow. I'm pressed between these wooden walls from days, with the delightful comfort of that cubic box in my pockets piercing my kidneys. It's dark, here. Suffocating, but... I'm not moving! I finally reached my destination and...

KA-BOOM!

I'm free from here, a festive and demolishing uproar. Terrorized screams. A ceaseless and horrible siren starts to poison the air. Everything is going as planned! I wait a few minutes and then I give a powerful punch on the lid of the chest. Thirteen seconds of rest to blow on my burning and suffering metacarpus, and I see the sky again only with the next really powerful punch. I exit, light blue, stinky and entirely covered with the caustic "refreshing and regenerating blue tea of Smiling Stan" dust. Baron Soze's favorite!

Mêlée Island, headquarter of the Triad. I'm in front of Marley's Mansion! I'm finally back home!



## Episode XIV - The last gift of Big Whoop

A sultry and deathly afternoon. Here I'm so high up that I can see all the new Mêleé Island! Surrounded by a great white wall, now it's a squalid and perversely reordered fortress. Everywhere cannons, look-out towers and machines I do not comprehend. I smile, looking at that grain of sand that will jam the perversion of their perfect machine. That unknown already causing unprecedented panic in their methodical and boring lives. In the distant fog of that horizon, stands out the magnificent silhouette of "Napoleon". The last, massive pirate galleon, dominated by the most magnificent Jolly Roger and commandeered by the improbable captains Reginald Van Winslow and Wally B. Feed! And of course, with them, the army of Dudley Jones' lock...

*YOUR LUNGS ARE FULL OF WATER. YOUR HEART IS STOPPING.  
YOUR BRAIN IS DYING.*

Those strange voices again. Strange thoughts. I feel heavy, but I try to ignore it. No look-outs here, they all ran to defend the main wall. Everything is going as planned. I must reach Elaine. I must talk to her! I must try to sober her! A little push to the mansion's door and I'm inside. It's dark, here. Cold! I walk for minutes in the coldness, while everything becomes smaller, farther and silent. I try to grope something that could give me some light but... suddenly, I feel someone's presence. I can't see anything, but I feel it there. Then in the darkness a horrible voice resounds, distorted in a metallic and inhuman way.

SZ: "GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD."

G: "Wha... what? Who's there?"

SZ: "YOUR GHOST ASSAULT WAS PREDICTED, EXCEPT SOME MINOR DETAILS."

G: "B -Baron Soze?"

SZ: "..."

G: "E -Elaine?"

Her voice changes completely. It rises of intensity and its tone becomes infinitely darker, almost deathly.

SZ: "YOU... HAVE NO... PERMISSION... TO PRONOUNCE... THAT NAME!!!"

G: "B -but what are you doing? W -why all this? I -I..."

SZ: "GO OUT AND LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOUR GHOST ARMY, GUYBRUSH!"

My breath stops for a few moments. I run to the entrance and go outside. My heart explodes. The Napoleon is a terrifying inferno of red and ferocious flames. Excruciating screams. Everywhere, from the northern beach to the eastern lookout tower, from the defaced town square to the iron pier, thousands of soldiers of the Triad spray a strange yellowish liquid on the ghosts on land, to sadistically watch them melt in deformed and screaming puddles. I see them all die! The twelve lethal Artisans of the Pepper of Greenbeard! The hundred Skipping Idiots of Musket Moe! The three Obscene Gentlemen of Hubbub The Kidd and... Wally! I see him from here! While he's melting in a shapeless and gelatinous mass, I read on his eye the shame and sadness of a suffered failure. The anger deeply burns my chest and...

<<THERE'S ANOTHER ONE! MAY THE TRIAD TRIUMPH!>>

A big, awry, clumsy soldier reaches me. That big imbecile tries to kill me with that same yellowish liquid melting everyone else, but... it has no effect! N-no... my stomach hurts! Pain and...

...stop!

A -apparently I'm fine! W -wait! This smell... is similar to voodoo root beer, only... infinitely more caustic and repulsive! The refreshing and regenerating blue tea of Smiling Stan! I was still covered in that caustic and repulsive light blue dust and the big idiot... thought I was a ghost!

<<FOR THE GREAT ARCHITECT! I... BROUGHT HIM BACK TO LIFE!  
>>

I take advantage of his obtuse confusion, I grab the cubic box from my pocket and I put him to sleep with a precise hit on his bald and demented head. I run inside the mansion again. I feel a familiar presence sneaking behind me. I turn. There's no one there. Too dark here. I'm in front of Elaine again.

SZ: "IPER COMPRESSED SYNTHETIC VODOO ROOT BEER BOWS, GUYBRUSH! THE FINAL RESULT IS SIMILAR TO THE TRADITIONAL GHOST-DISSOLVING VODOO ROOT BEER... BUT CURIOUSLY SLOWER AND MORE PAINFUL FOR THE HIT SOULS!"

G: "Grrrrrrr..."

SZ: "SOMETHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT, GUYBRUSH?"

G: "S -something to complain about? SOMETHING TO COMPLAIN ABOUT? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? WHAT IS THIS SENSELESS MADNESS? THE CARIBBEAN WERE FILTHY! THEY WERE INDECOROUS! THEY WERE



TENDENTIALLY DANGEROUS AND UNLIVABLE! BUT THEY WERE THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY AND UNPREDICTABLE PLACE IN WHICH A FREE MAN COULD EVER DESIRE TO LIVE! AND THEN... YOU DESTROYED TORTUGA! AND KILLED THOUSANDS OF HEALTHY AND PERVERTED FILIBUSTERS! AND BETWEEN THEM... WALLY! AND VAN WINSLOW! YOU ACCEPTED SOME DEFACING BRAINWASH AND..."

SZ: "FROM WHICH PULPIT YOU COME HERE ASKING ME WHY I DID IT?"

G: "W -what?"

SZ: "IT WAS ALL YOUR FAULT! AND YOU PERFECTLY KNOW IT!"

G: "M -my fault? Why? What have I done that is so repulsive? WHAT COULD JUSTIFY A SIMILAR..."

The dark and dreary silence the room was filled with is pulverized by the most catastrophic and horrifying uproar I've ever heard. The floor underneath me shakes in a merciless manner for a few seconds. I lose my balance. I fall and taste the salty stone of that black and endless floor. The Baron's voice changes its tone again. Now it's dreary, wheezy, terrifyingly macabre.

SZ: "WHAT WAS THAT? WHAT DID YOU DO, GUYBRUSH?"

G: "W -what? I thought it was one of your mega-ultra-scientific terrifying weapons and..."

SZ: "WHAT DID YOU DO, GUYBRUSH? WHY WASN'T THAT PREDICTED? WHY WASN'T THIS PREDICTED?"

I run outside again, away from that resonating, obsessive and metallic deliriums. Other two terrifying uproars, like a thousand stars exploding in unison in the center of the brain. I lose my balance again, but just for a moment. I look Mêleé's white wall, now horribly devastated and destroyed. The air smells of mephitic and sinister voodoo smog. In those green miasmas, I can see the Midnight, the massive war ship which destroyed Tortuga. It's smoking, devastated and slashed from side to side. I look towards a distant point in the horizon, where the fog fuses with the most indecipherable illusions. A black and immense fleet appeared. Now I understand everything! The repugnant. The obscene. The unapproachable. He's back! Him, with his devices full of black magic and his cruel horde of undead skeletons...

... the Demon Pirate LeChuck is back!

*ERROR: unable to upload the file Guybrush.dat*

Cave of Nor Treblig, Vodun Island. While my blood starts to boil, my flesh tears apart and disposes itself. I feel the blades and the metals inserted in my body hurting my nerves. My heart stops, ripping the chest already swollen and infected. I... I... can only whisper a...

LCK: "... Largooooo..."

LL: "LeChuck?"

LCK: "... me... heart! Ya told me... it would've worked! That... I would've survived for more than ten days... me heart!!!"

I collapse on the floor. Thousands of tiny larvae scamper in my throat, while the stomach seems to be kicked from the inside by the most sadistic demons of hell. A strange noise. A whistle. The crackle of a machinery starting in the center of my chest. The pain vanishes. I'm... I'm fine!? No, I'm not fine! The floor itself seems to turn upside down. Everything loses intensity and color! I raise my head. A familiar hand.

LL: "Come with me, if you want to live!"

LCK: "YA SORT OF LUMP OF PUTRESCENT BILE SPAT TIMES AND TIMES AGAIN!"

LL: "COME ON, THE ISLAND IS VANISHING FROM THE REAL WORLD! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!"

LCK: "N -no! Its power! Its knowledge! Its treasures!"

LL: "THEY'RE LOST FOREVER! LET'S GO!"

I can't allow myself to disappear from this plain of existence again. I need to save my life, even if my body is just a bloody shell of blades, gears and putrid gelatinous meat. I get up and run away with Largo, spitting insects, rust and lumps of multiple kinds all the way. We're outside, now! The air is heavy and burning. We flee to the northern beach. While the sea ruffles with repulsive silhouettes, crazy clouds fly through the sky with the speed of a thousands tornadoes. Reality flashes with sinister green lights and collapses under the screams of that Napoleon Hellbeard, knees down on arcane voodoo symbols and devoured by a cruel and wonderful energy. From here I can see Threepwood's boat, departed a few minutes ago. Napoleon sees us and, with his last sparks of life, tries to warn them with a gesture about us. Threepwood replies with a goodbye. The same old miserable and useless imbecile! We board a little resistant boat and row away from that emerald inferno. Then, after a few minutes, a terrorizing explosion. I turn and see a colossal tsunami, as if just regurgitated from the most perverted and furious sea divinities. The impact is devastating, but the boat rides the wave with grace and agility, bringing us in a distant and unknown spot of the sea. I look the side of the boat and read: "De Singe Hefty Manatee".

LCK: "LARGO!"

LL: "W -what? D -don't shout! I'm right here!"

LCK: "WHAT HAPPENED TO ME BEFORE, IN THE CAVE?"

LL: "Oh, the ghostly marquis Fancy-Pants and I implanted a prodigious alchemical system of partial regeneration in your chest. Once expired the limit of your temporary life dated by Chronos Grave, the auxiliary energetic support was able to recover a part of your conventional biological functions and..."

LCK: "TALK IN A WAY I CAN UNDERSTAND!"

LL: "Before you doom. 10 days life! Now you few days more life."

LCK: "AND NOW WHY ARE YA 'TALKIN' LIKE 'THOSE NATIVES OF MYSTIC ISLAND TO WHOM I'VE EXPORTED THE LEFT SIDE OF THE BRAIN FOR FUN?"

LL: "S -sigh..."

LCK: "WE... WE COULD'VE STAYED ON THE ISLAND! LEARN ALL THAT PRIMEVAL MAGIC AND THEN USE IT... TO ESCAPE!"

LL: "Ha! There is no force, either from the sky, the land or the realm of the spirits, able to even only COMMUNICATE to the limbo from this dimension! Whoever is confined on a land which suffered the Egsanzyon, stays on that land forever! Imagine the limbo is situated on a plain alchemically..."

LCK: "Shut up! SHUT UP! This story... was all a constant and devastatin' tumble into the abyss, Largo! Ya promised me strategies to extend me earthly existence and they were all atrocious failures! Now, the only knowledge able to regenerate me body is gone forever, inside an inaccessible limbo and ya say I only have a few days to..."

LL: "No, not everything is gone!"

LCK: "What?"

Largo raises up the sleeves of his rickety dress and shows his arms. They're full of blood and symbols even I cannot comprehend.

LL: "Pins! I had nothing else to write with, so I had to incise my arms with pins stolen from De Singe's Laboratory. While you were distracted looking at that painting that looked like a duck."

LCK: "THE DEVASTATIN' DUCK-DEMON SPIES US FROM THE STONE WALL, WAITIN' TO SNATCH US ALL IN THE SLEEP!"

LL: "Y -yeah..."

LCK: "But ya... at the mere idea of a pin goin' through yer skin start to sweat and scream like a hysteric narwhal! And ya rip yer clothes, and once ya started to play in a compulsive way with those disturbin' doll house of "Philanthropic Filibuster Phillip" and..."

LL: "I thought we agreed to forget the story about "Philanthropic Filibuster Phillip". Anyway... the torture was worth it! Now I can fix everything! Sinister and obscure forces are focusing on M  lee Island, but it will be... the Demon Pirate LeChuck to fight them! In flesh, bones, sulfur and voodoo..."

LCK: "What? And how?"

LL: "Rest now, LeChuck! Your body is dying, it consumes an incredible amount of energy to maintain itself alive and it needs some rest! But you don't have to be trapped in that shell for long!"

LCK: "THE PIRATE LECHUCK DOESN'T NEED ANY RES..."

I dive in the leaden ocean of the dark and heavy sleep. It's tight and oppressive here. I have no body anymore, I'm just an agonizing and screaming jelly, inside a glass bottle looking mercilessly at a purple and inhuman sky. Underneath me, endless corpses crawl and scream on a black rock aground on the most distant spot of the ocean. They try in vain to flee from a deformed and filthy demon armed with blades and thousand others sinister tools, ripping them and implanting in them tendons, bones and other creatures fished from the center of hell. For hours, and hours, I can only scream, bewildered and aching, through that glass, looking at those obscene and revolting scenes. A dream like many others. And that wasn't even a nightmare! I wake up, with the mouth full of blood and the head devoured by thousands of infections. Smell of humid jungle. And lousy monkeys. I'm in a wide clearing sprinkled with tropical trees. The sky is hot and clear, while that cretin of Largo is closely looking at some strange cables implanted in my chest. My arms are tightly tied at an uncomfortable tree, and I've just noticed the cables ends in a deep and familiar pit a few centimeters from me.

LCK: "Th -that pit. I know that pit!"

LL: "Yes, LeChuck!"

LCK: "It's where we buried Charleston Alleston, that cellmate we've ignited because he was disturbin' us with those inopportune ballets and..."

LL: "NO! It's the pit made by the Escape of a robot incubated in the heart of this island. A... monkey-esque robot that blew you up while you were possessed by the Ultimate Insult to then disappear. Welcome back... on Monkey Island!"

LCK: "Monkey Island? What are we doin' here?"

LL: "We... will ignite again the spark of Big Whoop's power!"

LCK: "What? Ye're an idiot, Largo, I won't have enough earthly resurrections to repeat it again! Big Whoop is extinguished from years! And I've tried many times to recreate it without succeedin'!"

LL: "You've tried only twice. And when you've noticed throwing random human corpses in a pit and spit on them wasn't working, you shouted "I'M TIRED OF THIS STUPID BIG WHOOP" and started your search for the portals of the Crossroad."

LCK: "That's all true!"

LL: "LeChuck, this island had an endless labyrinth of infernal caves for miles and miles, but now... there is nothing anymore! Just dirt! Black, wet and stinky dirt!"

LCK: "And here's a sentence we could all hear in yer presence."

LL: "LeChuck... that labyrinth of magma and blood isn't there anymore because Big Whoop is more than a simple source of power! Big Whoop was always ALIVE! AND IT CHANGES CONTINUOUSLY!"

LCK: "Perfect, and with this we've just inaugurated the world tournament of idiocy! First prize to the pile of dirt Largo LaGrande!"

LL: "It is so! I've understood it slowly, picking up clues from Napoleon Hellbeard's diary and Nor Treblig's memories! There is... SOMETHING under Monkey Island! Something sleeping, dreaming and changing constantly! It picked up the thoughts of the humans living on this island... and it took their appearances! It slowly became a labyrinth of burning blood feeding of the Infernals' obsessions, the first natives who lived here for decades. Then it came Napoleon Hellbeard! Him and his stupid motto that saw hell itself as an occasion of regeneration and acquisition of new powers. Napoleon's dream was picked up from the heart of this land and during the years, between the labyrinth itself, it birthed the spark of the portal to immortality! This power fed of the legends imagined by the cannibals who later lived on the island itself and..."

LCK: "Stop, Largo! So if now I imagine ya in a strikin' dress of a spanish noble lady, yer dress should suddenly change in cloth covered of fine elaborate laces? Which would be more masculine than what ye're wearin' now?"

LL: "S -sigh... it's not like this! The only thing changing is... that SOMETHING sleeping under Monkey Island! Or... everything directly connected to it, like you, now, thanks to the inscriptions of Treblig's cave. And then, because the mutation could start... it needs that on Monkey Island there are enough people sharing the same, suggestive and pounding vision! Like the one that can born from a dream, an obsession or... FEAR!"

A terrifying and familiar siren shakes the skies of Monkey Island. Largo's ugly face shrinks in a mocking and surly smile, one of those that make you understand everything's alright. Or that there is a terrible alimentary intoxication in process.

LL: "The Triad, LeChuck! I left signs everywhere on our journey and, thanks to some alchemical tricks, I've sent to every outpost from Roca Redención to Suelo Salvación the same message: <<The sordid Demon Pirate LeChuck is on Monkey Island, and he's waiting you there to slaughterr everyone!>>."

LCK: "SlaughtRter?"

LL: "E -ehm... I've noticed the mistake after I've sent it. BUT WHAT DOES IT MATTER NOW? As predicted, they've sent a massive army of soldiers to fight

you... and purify you! And I'm convinced the semantic inadequacy made them... ehm... more motivated!"

LCK: "Oh, and they'll pee themselves when they'll see a dyin' old man tied to a tree... and his runt assistant, infected with a chronic and deathly dementia since he was a baby!"

LL: "It will be enough for the demon to be real... in their minds! And... you were born on Chronos Grave, LeChuck! You're made of a primordial cosmic clay resonating in unison with the human thought! You're ready for nature to mutate, through the flow of the power of Big Whoop, way faster and more radically than any other mass of matter on this plain of existence! Wait me here!"

LCK: "E -ehi! Did ya just call me <<Mass of matt...>>"

While I try to reconstruct the meaning of Largo's obtuse monologue, suddenly, my mind becomes... clearer! It expands in a thousand and more directions, it transcends every dimension and... I am... every grain of the northern beach! I rest from centuries with the wet rocks of the filthy Lake Excrescence, and I breath in unison with every single leaf of the black jungle. I'm the monkey's stench coming from years from the distant pit and the clumsy tumble of the Impatient Macaque about to peel his banana's seeds before they give any fruits. I'm connected to the island! No... I am the island! I see three silver smoking ships of the Triad pour into the ocean boats full of dozens and dozens of idiots smelling of lilies. Then I collapse back. Back of billions of years. Once there was no land here, no sky, no ocean. Once...

*Once there was just the only, the indivisible, the immortal. Once there was only the Reign of the Eternal Seas...*

A frenetic net of primordial screams slowly takes form in my mind, slowly changing in comprehensible concepts and... I see Largo! That little, dazed and besotted toilet cleaner panting miserably and running away from me in an unknown spot of the jungle. What in the hell does he have in the hand?

*There was a reality so monolithic and perfect that it became conscious of its own mortal boredom. So, from the Eternal they were born those two, the entities in eternal conflict: the unapproachable Serpent Goddess and the clumsy but clever Monkey God.*

While those targets of meat of the Triad land on the beach, I begin to feel their fears. Voices. Legends! Stories that a long time ago, when they were pirates, they told to each others from tavern to tavern in terror! LeChuck is taller than six meters and can stop your heart with his look! LeChuck will make you eat your own intestines while he asks himself with scientific curiosity where they will be digested. LeChuck will give you the most intriguing thriller book of all times, and

then he will extract your eyes with a burning pincer before you can read who the murderer is. A whistle. A light shock goes through my veins and nerves. I shake. The nausea vanishes. My muscles seem to recover firmness and vigor... but my body doesn't show any external changes! I'm still a pale and dying elder! Never trust the brilliant schemes of Largo again and...

*Eternity itself was ripping off between the fights of the two Titans. The eternal oceans were burning, while the crystalline empyrean was turning upside down and becoming blood red. Then, learning to master strange concepts that if created by mortal mind they could provoke its immediate implosion, the unapproachable Serpent Goddess hit the clumsy but clever Monkey God to death. But the Monkey God, before dying, fought back, creating the most unsettling, the most unprecedented, the most violent weapon ever created... THE INSULT!*

A little pot. Largo turns it on and mixes strange herbs, starting to produce an intense and stinking smog. Just a few minutes, and the entire island is covered with a suffocating and obscure fog. There's no more light on the island, only those sinister legends starting to ferociously devour the hearts of those soldiers. LeChuck is a master of voodoo! LeChuck can wait you in the darkness for all your life, and rip you off in your weakest and most vulnerable moment. He sits at the table of your most terrible nightmares, devours everything you love most and stands up without paying the bill or leaving a tip. The energy rises of intensity. The pain of my chest is calming down, more and more! I feel their terror feeding me! But it's not enough!

*The Monkey God's Insult was so disgusting, so clever and so irreverent that it trapped the Serpent Goddess inside a microscopic fragment of Eternity. Then, inside that fragment, the events stopped happening simultaneously. Time was born! And the light, the stars, the planets covered by oceans and bizarre creatures. The frenetic and insane reality of that universe born from the crystallization of a single, eternal insult... became the prison of the Serpent Goddess!*

A match left lit on a tree trunk. Then, another. And another. The entire jungle of Monkey Island crackles with the rising of high and devastating flames! The darkest anxiety crackles in the hearts of the Triad's soldiers, walking terrorized in the red and lethal jungle. LeChuck possesses horrifying powers! He will melt your body in horrible pus and he will make a fat and screaming soap out of you! Then he will wrap you and leave you for eternity on the locker of his infernal bathroom to scream, while he endlessly brags about his lack of hygiene! My arm was covered with filthy wounds before. Now the skin is smooth, healthy, regenerated! My spine straightens, and my hoarse and agonizing voice becomes hefty and powerful as it once was! And I... I... HAVE BOTH OF MY LEGS AGAIN!



*But during the millennia, that unpredictable universe was changing. But in its endless flow, even the unapproachable Serpent Goddess could've found a way to free herself. So the clumsy but clever Monkey God entered that bubble of reality and went on an island near the one the Goddess would wake up in. However he was dying and he didn't have the force or the energy to fight her again anymore. So, with his last spark, he decided to create the most intelligent, brilliant and ingenious creature ever: the monkey!*

Largo puts a wet cloth on his mouth and runs again through the jungle. He reaches the cliff of the Distant Pit and takes out of his pocket a skinless and worn out skull. The skull shakes and screams, trying to spit and bite the hand of my negligent right-hand man.

*The Monkey God engraved in his creature his same natural talent for indecorous, coarse insults. Then, he inserted in their mind... a precise SCHEME of his body, and he fell asleep in Monkey Island.*

*He would've continuously read in their thoughts, extracting from their minds the instructions and the energies with which slowly recreate a material form of his own. When his new body would've been completed, he would be born again in this world, and he would've destroyed his unapproachable enemy!*

LL: "You weren't part of the original plan, but how could I leave you there, to poorly stumble in the attempt of freeing yourself from the tangled lianas of the jungle?"

MR: "I WASN'T STUMBLING! I was... uhm... doing... well... some regenerating physical exercises!"

LL: "I clearly heard you scream to all the monkeys around: "FREE ME FROM HERE AND BECOME THE CRUEL EXECUTOR OF MY PLAN TO SINK THE PLANET"!"

MR: "YOU LIAR! I DON'T NEED YOUR HANDS OF SOFT AND ROTTEN MEAT TO FREE MYSELF FROM SOME TANGLED LIANAS! I AM MURRAY! THE TERRIFYING DEMONIC SKULL! I'VE PASSED YEARS IN THE ABYSS TO PLOT WITH THE MOST OBSCURE SUB-OCEANIC FORCES, AND NOW YOUR PLANET WILL BE SUBMERGED FROM CONTROVERSIAL... E -EHI! LET ME GO!"



LL: "I work for an organization called Triad. They've ordered me to do what I'm about to do! Got it? Triad, and what they do is... ehm... capricious annoyances to demonic skulls! Remember its name! TRIAD!"

MR: "EH? YOU WORK FOR AN ORGANIZATION WITH AN IDIOTIC NAME! NOW LET ME GO, TAKE A STRONG BUCKET AND FILL IT WITH WATER, SO THAT I CAN SLOWLY START TO... LET ME GO! E - EHI!"

*But misfortune wanted that humans came on the island, grotesque and perverted version of his perfect creatures. The intensity of their bizarre obsessions interfered with the monkey's thoughts and heavily disturbed the dreams of the Sleeping God. And so he mistakenly read the minds of some cannibals, extracting their miserable dystopia and becoming a labyrinth of deformed faces and burning blood. And the more powerful were their emotions, the faster he was changing, growing and steadying the flesh walls of new, boiling and grotesque hallways.*



LCK: "Largo... somethin's wrong!"

LL: "What? What's wrong?"

LCK: "I'm losin' energies... me chest burns... I'm... suffocatin'..."

LL: "It's impossible!"

LCK: "C -come here, Largo... I -I think a cable in me chest is slackin'... c -come here to check... I beg ya..."

LL: "Damn it, it's impossible! Let me see what..."

LCK: "Ya know, I think I've understood how this story of the Monkey God works..."

LL: "Wha -what are you doing?"

I let the infernal frenzy of that extraordinary energy guide me. A kneeling on the stomach and Largo flies down in the pit. You saved my life times and times again. You've studied the most inscrutable schemes and perfected the most horrifying spells for me. You've received disfiguring scars, challenged your worst fears and lost years and years of your life in the name of your loyalty to me. Now you will die near the heart of the entity, and nothing will be more powerful, nothing will be more painful, nothing will be more evocative than the horrible thought of your assassin during the last moments of your life. Goodbye, Largo LaGrande! I taste your last morsels of immense hate and I feel my muscles grow again, under the influence of the power of a God! I break with ease those strings tying my arms and I sink in the most recondite secrets of the elements around me. Now I have three, five or seven hearts, and they pulse a thousand times per second, influenced by the most ecstatic craze. In less than a little fragment of an instant I'm between the jungle's flames and I order them to burn a first, consistent portion of the Triad's men. The entire island is bitten by sadistic and ferocious flames, while I feed myself of the screams of those pieces of meat and the acre stench of the burnt blood coming from that immense barbecue. Then, I go to the southern beach, where those obscene metal ships are berthed. Odd! I moved... slower than before? Bah, I should be able to explode them with no problems in a single... I stop. Those delirious monkey screams are crowding my head again. Once again, they take shape and change into clear and comprehensible concepts.

*... the ancestral bond between us finally becomes conscious union...*

*... but limited is my influence on the Laws of Time...*

*... and I can't nullify the Curse of Chronos Grave...*

Despite my demonic regeneration, my body loses energy. Like a mug of sweet, corrosive, caustic battery acid with a little crack on the bottom. Soon my powers will run out, I'll become human again and I'll age rapidly, to decompose and die. And the more I'll use these powers, the faster my body will run out. But... what kind of miserable and painful cheat! I WANT BACK MY... the mind expands

again. Now I'm admiring a complex and tangled net of conceptual connections between the Triad, Monkey Island, the Voodoo Lady, me, and that bony sack of manure of Threepwood. In a single instant I comprehend centuries of conspiracies, deceptions, and plots interweave with the flesh and blood of thousands of corpses! Then... I smell the dusty stench of their souls and I hear the snap of their miserable bones! They're miles and miles away, berthed in the distant Sea of the Floating Shipwrecks... I feel them! My demonic troops! They felt the explosion of my Voodoo again and now they're coming back to me! We'll reorganize ourselves! We'll arm ourselves! Then, we'll destroy Mêle Island and...

*... the Serpent Goddess fears the reunification of the two parts long separated from each other...*  
*... the reunification will put the Serpent Goddess to sleep forever...*

Reunification? Yes... and reunification will be!

It... will be mine once again! It, brutally ripped off from me to become a trivial tool in the clumsy and fat hands of the Voodoo Lady! My trapped and screaming essence! I feel it, calling me through the fog of this endless ocean! Trapped from years in a bottle of cheap voodoo glass, but inevitably destined to reunite with me! And then I will be an eternal and immortal divinity again. And, put to sleep the Serpent Goddess, the empire of the God Pirate LeChuck will rise again, surrounded by endless oceans of bones and ashes, dominated by a burning sky of acid, and securely built on the devoured and rotten corpses of whom won't kneel down to my New, horrifying Age and...

... wait!

On one of those ships there's... someone I know! Someone who after the recent events became... the right-hand man of the Admiral Cortèz himself? If I cannot trust my powers for long... this will be very useful! Ahr! Ahr! Ahr!

Exterior of Marley's Mansion. Beyond Mêlée's white and devastated wall, the fumes and clashes of a furious battleship explode. The umpteenth, titanic deflagration deeply shakes my intestines, while in my odd stumbling I suddenly notice something peeking out the pocket of the big idiot I've knocked out. I pick it up. It's a Providential and Polyvalent Ultra Functional Machinery of the Triad™, as the writing on the side of that twisted and inexplicable tool obnoxiously recites. What I notice however, between what it looks like a peeler for shaggy mustaches, and a probably highly inflammable micro-extinguisher for underwear, is a little stone emitting a weak and feeble light. I go back into the mansion trying to use it to light my way. Useful as a well constructed argument during a conflict of opinions against LeChuck. I draw it near the wall, so that I can try to catch a glimpse of something... a -ha!

*The head bone's connected to the heel bone,  
but the heel bone's not connected to the arm bone,  
the arm bone's connected to the shoulder blade,  
but the shoulder blade's not connected to the breastbone.*

I shake my head. While that insufferable song still pounds in my head accompanied by strange images of cloudy and deep abyss, I find it! A light switch! I turn it on. A whistle, and those halls are slowly flooded with a clear and bright light. The Mansion I knew is dead from a long time. Endless archways, horribly deformed columns, crying female statues, strange carvings of funeral scenes: every thing is a mono maniacal monument to the tawdry fanaticism of the Triad and to the endless obsession of power of Baron Soze. Every thing is baroque, inlaid, exaggerated, multiplied to insult the eye and...

I see him from here. In a distant hall, sitting on his terrifying and uncomfortable iron throne. An old man.

N -no!

A -an old man? W -where's Elaine?

I walk closer to him with slow and unsteady steps, while my chest is pierced by his infernal and spirited look. Tiny, deformed, disfigured, older than it's humanly imaginable. He's covered by a tawdry, white and elegant uniform. No hair. A monocle on his left eye. One hand is clearly made of iron, and he talks from a little metallic box put in front of his white long beard by microscopic silver cables.

G: "W -what? W -where is Elaine?"

SZ: “Y -you... have the courage to...”

He stops for a moment. His eyes close, full of nostalgia and sadness.

SZ: “Elaine is where she’s always been in the last two years, Guybrush. She rests here, in peace, under the protection of the Triad.”

The chest is pierced by thousands of frozen stalactites, while I notice four columns with stone demons in the four corners of the room, converging and culminating in a strange, pulsating coffin over our heads. This is not a mansion, but... a massive and horrifying crypt! I am... in Elaine Marley’s crypt!

SZ: “And I... was always here, to guard her. To protect her. After all... this is what every father would do with her daughter!”

G: “Ho -Horatio? Horatio Torquemada Marley?”





## Episode XV - The Seal of Madness

G: “No! The pirates... the locker’s pirates told me that Baron Soze was Elaine... and... and... you should be dead!”

While I realize that the pirates of Dudley Jones’ locker connected the fragments of my memory in a completely rickety and deceiving way, the Baron’s voice becomes more violent and furious. His metallic tone resonates through the stones of that horrifying grave, mercilessly paralyzing all my muscles.

SZ: “YOU TALK ABOUT THOSE PATHETIC PIRATE PHANTOMS WHO TRIED TO ASSAULT MY INEXPUGNABLE FORTRESS, RIGHT? BUT AT



THE END THE DAY PREVAILS OVER THE NIGHT, GUYBRUSH! THE ORDER OVER THE CHAOS! RATIONALITY OVER IMPULSIVITY! LOOK! WE FINALLY DISINFESTED THE WORLD FROM THE LAST GANG OF THAT SCUMM, ETERNALLY ATTRACTED BY THAT CHILDISH DREAM OF THE SAVAGE AND FREE MAN!"

G: "B -but y -you were a pirate too, Horatio! And then... I liked that childish dream! And... and I liked the call to unknown oceans and..."

SZ: "YOU LIKED IT? YOU EVEN HAVE THE EFFRONTERY TO SAY YOU LIKED ALL THAT? LOOK ABOVE YOU! THERE'S THE RESULT OF YOUR EXTRAORDINARY DREAM!"

G: "E -Elaine..."

SZ: "ELAINE... IS DEAD! YOU KILLED HER FOR FUTILE REASONS! YOU KILLED MY CHILD! MY... FRAGILE AND PRECIOUS CHILD!"

G: "N -no! I tried to..."

SZ: "TO DO WHAT? THE ONLY ONE WHO THOUGHT ABOUT HER THESE YEARS WAS HER GRANDPA! WHO WAS HERE, TO PROTECT HER! WHO SAILED THROUGH STORMS, DEAD CALMS, AND SOFT LEVIATHAN'S FLESH, TO TORTURE THOSE EGGHEADS OF THE INNOVATION ISLAND UNTIL THEY INVENTED A FREEZING COFFIN TO KEEP HER IN! WHO STUMBLED IN THE DELIRIOUS TUNNELS OF OBLIVION ON BLACK BONE BAY, TO HELP THOSE TWO WIZARDS IN BUILDING THAT MONSTROUS TOWER OF CORPSES! WHO..."

G: "W -what are you talking about? Y -you mean... the Hell Bell?"

SZ: "THE TOWER OF CORPSES, GUYBRUSH! AN ARTEFACT OF HUMAN BONES, SO TALL IT COULD RIP THE BOWELS OF THE STARS! THE ONLY TALISMAN THAT CAN REGENERATE THE FLESH, BONES AND ORGANS OF A CORPSE COMPLETELY AND WITHOUT BIZARRE VODOO SIDE EFFECTS! WHAT DID YOU THINK THE TRIAD WORKED FOR IN THE LAST TWO YEARS?"

G: "What? You thought the Hell Bell could bring Elaine back? B -but... it's not true! They've deceived you, Horatio! That artefact is a device! A voodoo bomb with the immense power to delete everything! The sky! And the earth! And the monkeys, and all the grog and..."

SZ: "TSÉ! TYPICAL OF YOU IRRECOVERABLE CRIMINALS! ADDICTED BY THE UNSUSTAINABLE BURDEN OF YOUR CRUELTY TO THE POINT OF OBSTRUCTING WHO TRIES TO FIX IT! BUT THERE IS NO WAY TO OBSTRUCT THE COMPLETION OF WHAT WAS STARTED, GUYBRUSH! THE CARIBBEAN WILL ECHO WITH THE TEN INFINITE CHIMES! ELAINE WILL LIVE AGAIN!"

G: "N -no! Horatio, it will never work! You must believe me! And then... I thought the Triad hated magic! A -all that story of purification, forges and field flowers with your name and..."

SZ: "DEMAGOGIC IDIOCIES! NECESSARY, IF YOU WANT TO UNITE MANY MEN UNDER A FLAG THAT COULD JUSTIFY MANY DEATHS IN THE OBSESSIVE AND FRENETIC SEARCH OF MANY AMULETS! AND YOU... THE MIDNIGHT SHOULD'VE RIPPED THE FLESH OFF OF YOUR BONES, GUYBRUSH! AND YOU SHOULD'VE ENDED IN THE TOWER TO PAY FOR YOUR SINS! YOU KILLED HER, GUYBRUSH! YOU KILLED HER, GUYBRUSH! YOU KILLED HER! YOU KILLED HER, GUYBRUSH!"

Booty Island. Purple and suffocating skies. Past and memory are getting horribly twisted in my head. Black and endless islands. Taste of blood. Frozen chills assail me, while the knees convulsively shake. I... killed her! Ripped her into pieces and then skinned. Poisoned, she collapsed on the floor, with a green and swollen face. The earth is chewing my legs. It was ME. Slaughtered, in a thousand pieces, impossible to recompose! Thousand of people are trying to rip my head off with their fingernails. I was there, and n -no! I k... I k...

LCK: "Put on his knees by a person who can't even control his own bowel movements! In a single image, the synthesis of yer value as a pirate, Threepwood!"  
SZ: "LeChuck!"

A crack in my visions. I come back to reality. My thin legs recover strength and vigor. The gross Demon LeChuck is by my side, showing a glacial smile, piercing snake eyes, a green, dreary glowing beard and... w -what? No! He's human! He's simply human!

LCK: "Baron Herman Horatio Torquemada Toothrot Marley Soze! Allow me to skip the presentations and let ya notice how much those monologues about exterminatin' the entire age of piracy probably came... too early! Ahr! Ahr! Ahr!"

SZ: "THE WITCH... PREDICTED THE ARRIVAL OF THE GHOSTS... BUT NOT YOURS... WHY?"

LCK: "Wait! I'm thinkin' about a question of fundamental importance. Ya know... yer new name is clearly... too twisted. Unpronounceable. Aurally unpleasant. So I think, from now on, I'll simply call ya <<Toilet Lickin' Baron>>! Or <<Old devastated gorilla brain>>! Like the monkey inside me head loves to call ya!"

G: "T -there's a monkey inside your head?"

LCK: "FORGET THIS PART!"

G: "O -okay!"

SZ: "STAY AWAY FROM MY CHILD! YOU BOTH STAY AWAY! B -BOTH OF YOU! Y -YOU'VE... DESTROYED HER LIFE!"

LCK: "HIM? Guybrush Threepwood... DESTROYED Elaine Marley's life? Ahr! Ahr! Ahr! I see despite everythin' ya didn't lose yer sense of humor, me elderly and dazed adversary!"

G: "What? S -so... I didn't kill Elaine? I -I didn't do it?"

LCK: "Ya? Ya couldn't even be able to kill boredom, puny and vile worm! Elaine's heart... was stopped on Booty Island, two years ago, at ten o'clock, from a brutal shock of voodoo energy! Shock poured directly into her heart from the SAME, filthy wizard who later presented himself to ya with a... horrifyin' and NECESSARY solution to bring her back, Horatio!"

SZ: "IT -IT'S NOT TRUE!"

LCK: "Oh, yes it's true! And in order that Guybrush Threepwood, one of the few that could've reconnected the threads of his plan, could disappear, that wizard himself contrived a SIMPLE and TERRIFYIN' voodoo strategy: paralyze and confound the entire population of Booty Island with a spell called "Sublime Drunkenness", and put the hands of that enchanted and filthy imbecile on the wonderful and already dead throat of his wife."

G: "W -what?"

LCK: "Oooh, yer memories are irreparably confused by the hangover of that spell, right, Threepwood? But I'm convinced ya still remember the echoes of those DELIGHTFUL screams of dismay! At the end of the spell, when the "Island of the Eternal Carnival" woke up and saw the scene, everybody started pretendin' the head of the DESPICABLE buccaneer who committed such a HORRIBLE crime! Oh, and I doubt from that moment on someone still called that repulsive spit of land with that PATHETIC nickname! Ahr! Ahr! Ahr!"

SZ: "NO! NO! NO! I WON'T BE TRAPPED AGAIN IN YOUR UNBECOMING TANGLE OF DEMONIC LIES, LECHUCK! GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD IS..."

LCK: "... in the most ignoble and dirtiest trap ever. Just like ya, Horatio! Yer fury was calculated. Yer obsession for power predicted. The reawakenin' of the seal... foresaw! Baron Soze is none other than a character whose birth was studied on some encrusted and stinkin' voodoo TABLE! A furious, powerful and perfect executor... for a rantin' scheme of destruction of reality!"

SZ: "No!"

G: "Seal? Which seal?"

LCK: "YE'RE JUST A PAWN, HORATIO! A PUPPET! A MISERABLE MEAT PUPPET INSIDE A GAME YA ONLY BELIEVED YA COULD CONTROL! And yer granddaughter... won't come back... ever again!"

SZ: "AARGGH!!! NOOOOO!!! NOOOOO!!! NOOOOOO!!! YOU'RE LYING, LECHUCK!!! I..."

The baron shakes, wiggles and twists in a horrible way on his cold and hard throne. There's nothing in him of the irritable Neo-Cartesian-Zen lightness of Herman Toothrot anymore, neither of the strong and soft affection of Horatio Torquemada Marley. What is left is... the look of a man lost from a long time in a dark, cold and endless labyrinth. Now he's putting his hand inside his vest, searching for something. Then, he extracts a little, dark and familiar object.

LCK: "And there it is, as predicted! What do ya have if ya combine a bronze hat with a silver monkey head and a golden man, Guybrush?"

G: "A -an Ultimate Insult?"

LCK: "I knew ya would've given me this answer, ya stagnant puddle of mephitic ooze! No, the right answer is: a horrible ornament. Ya have a horrible ornament."

G: "Okay. And we're here discussing of furniture of bad taste because..."

SZ: "ANF... ANF... BECAUSE, LIKE YOU SHOULD'VE LEARNED DURING YOUR CHILDISH "ADVENTURE" BETWEEN LUCRE AND JAMBALAYA ISLAND, THE CORE OF THE POWER OF EVERY ULTIMATE INSULT IS IN THE GUBERNATORIAL SEAL OF MÊLÉE ISLAND!"

G: "What?"

LCK: "The gubernatorial seal of Mêlée Island! The fourth, but fundamental component of every Ultimate Insult! A primordial battery of voodoo energy with the ability to control, manipulate and influence the human mind! If only I knew it back then, I..."

G: "B -but they're just gubernatorial seals! For which insane reason would someone mutate some crude bureaucratic tools in powerful talismans?"

SZ: "THIS DOESN'T MATT..."

LCK: "Ya were appointed by the ex-governor Augustus De Waat to pick up a chest of them from the woodchuck of Scabb Island and ya tripped, droppin' them in a puddle of wasted ooze! Then, to make them presentable again, ya gave them to that launderer, but he was deaf like a bell. So, instead of washin' them, he brought them with obtuse belief to the local shaman, who ended up enchantin' and cursin' them with... at least fifty, experimental, maleficent and devastatin' spells! The bizarre misunderstandin'... that would change the face itself of the Caribbeans forever! Ahr! Ahr! Ahr!"

G: "W -what? No! Stop right there! I brought one of those seals myself, and it didn't have any kind of secret power!"

LCK: "The seal, if it's not connected to other vehicles, stays apparently sleepy. But in reality it works in the shadows, slowly, during the years, rummagin' in the darkest and marshiest abyss of yer mind."

*And it waits, it waits that your fear suffocates you, that your anger stabs you, that your pain burns you.*

*Because only then every certainty, every support, every claim for compensation collapses, and that soft and weak flesh at the core of your spirit remains naked and skinned, ready to be devoured. And with it all your sanity, all your logic, all your structure. But the seal is magnanimous. The seal is generous. In exchange for what it devours, it gives you access to its power. A power over others minds! Who, after all, knows them better than it? Suddenly your words become... convincing! Your speeches... persuasive! Your opinions... shared! And you only have to hope that with your mind now infected from the most horrifying madness... you can make good use of all those brilliant gifts. Of course, this never happens. Never.*

SZ: "M -MADNESS? NONSENSE... ALL... NONSENSE!"

LCK: "Oh, search yer feelings. Ya know it to be true, Horatio! When the spark of voodoo was infused into them, in spite of themselves the seals chose the man with the most determined, the most resolute and strongest spirit around them, to bind themselves to him and feed from him until the end of his mortal life and... ehi! 'Talkin' about DEATH... I fear I need to reclaim the possession of me wife's body when this sad story will end!"

SZ: "I ORDER YOU TO STAY AWAY FROM HER!"

LCK: "I don't take any ORDERS from a corpse who needed to draw from the miasmas of a cursed seal the necessary charisma to become the Governor of the Tri-Island Area! A person so... PATHETIC who believed he could escape from his own demons hidin' in that bizarre and unrecognizable second identity... of Herman Toothrot!"

SZ: "THAT WAS AN ACCIDENT, LECHUCK! EVERYBODY KNOWS I BECAME HERMAN TOOTHROT WHILE I WAS WANDERING IN THE GREASY "PROHIBITED DREAMS HUT" ON KEELHAUL ATOLL! I CASUALLY FELL IN A BATHTUB OF CAUSTIC PUERTO RICAN RUM, AND WHEN I WOKE UP I WAS ON MONKEY ISLAND WITH A BAD..."

G: "No... that's not true!"

SZ: "WHAT?"

G: "N -now that I think about it... he told a different version of this story every time! Once he became Herman Toothrot after a hit on the head! Then he was bitten by a clumsy strange snake! And then again a tasting of unsanitary boquerones en vinagre and..."

LCK: "Excuses! Delirious excuses, with which justify the slow and inexorable fragmentin' of his two separate identities. But the truth is that Horatio, probably pushed by the unconscious idea the "Secret of Monkey Island" could've shut up the horrible demons the seal incubated in his brain, one day decided to go on that stinky deserted island, and he sheltered himself in the identity of "Herman"."

*The madness of the seal, however, kept piercing his brain, slowly, inexorably.  
So, after a few days spent believing in a peaceful solitary life on a distant island, he remembered his own gubernatorial duties and departed to Mêleé, where he would've been Horatio Torquemada again.  
And he began to go back and forth between the two islands. Constantly. Alone or with the most rickety and repulsive crews of this archipelago. Torn in two by the scampering cockroaches of that tormenting schizophrenia, which was whispering to him to always be in the wrong place with the wrong clothes.  
Without rest. Without ever closing an eye. For endless years.*

SZ: "W -WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? N -NO! NONE OF THIS IS TRUE!"

LCK: "What's happenin', Horatio? Which fact ya can hardly accept the most? 'The one in which ya acquired yer gubernatorial powers by crushin', slaughterin' and exterminatin' completely what was characterizin' ya as a human? Or are ya disturbed by the truth that in front of ya there is... yer savior?"

SZ: "SAVIOR? WHAT ARE YOU BLABBERING ABOUT, LECHUCK?"

LCK: "Ooooh, if ya remember well ya were pushed by the Yers 'Truly master of torture and voodoo in a horrifyin' whirlpool durin' a race. That shock gave ya exactly what ya unconsciously wanted: an amnesia shuttin' the voices in yer brain up and makin' ya... the pant-less PLACID hermit ya always wanted to be! A person whose mind free from all worries could finally put the seal... to sleep forever!"

G: "Wait... I brought Horatio back on Mêleé Island! I reawakened that part of his memory and..."

LCK: "... and ya prepared everythin' it was needed for the birth of Baron Soze, subspecies of disfigured voodoo shellfish! At Elaine's death, his PATERNAL, fragile heart of grandpa was devoured by the bites of the most terrifyin' and horrifyin' pain. Thanks to this sufferin', the bond between him and the last seal... reawakened at its maximum power! That unknown charisma he acquired became a conscious capacity of mind control, but at the same time every wound of his mind was definitely ripped off, makin' him the old, lacerated, mad and dark man in front of us. What is, at the end, the 'Triad if not the definitive triumph of all that was the most devastated, the most rancorous, the most obsessive of what was left in his brain? The definitive triumph of his THIRD PERSONALITY?"

G: "So all that story about the "Great League in favour of the Fierce Dysentery against LeChuck" was... it was YOU that..."

SZ: "DISSENT! IT WAS THE "GREAT LEAGUE IN FAVOUR OF THE FIERCE DISSENT AGAINST LECHUCK"! AND THEN... THREE PERSONALITIES? UNMOTIVATED MADNESS? LACERATED MIND? FABLES! FANTASIES! FALSITIES EXPRESSLY CREATED TO DELEGITIMIZE AND DESTABILIZE ME! THE TRUTH IS THAT T -THIS

SEAL... REGENERATED ME! CURED ME! IT FIXED EVERYTHING! AND I... LET YOU FREE TO BE PITILESS WITH YOUR FILTHY LIES ABOUT ME... ONLY BECAUSE I NEEDED THE NECESSARY TIME TO RECHARGE IT AT MAXIMUM POWER!"

While I keep having the impression of a silent and ineffable presence behind me sneaking away from that disgraceful show, Horatio suddenly stands up, in a horrible snapping of bones, cables and metal. His trembling doesn't stop, the breath becomes quicker and heavier and the look becomes a purple earthquake of tears and blood. The seal in his hands now reverberates of a yellowish and horrible light.

SZ: "DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHAT IS LIKE TO LOSE THE MOST PRECIOUS AND IMPORTANT THING YOU HAVE ON THIS PLANET?"

G: "Yes, Horatio... believe me... I do..."

SZ: "DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA OF WHAT IS LIKE WHEN YOUR BODY IS REDUCED TO A GIANT OPEN WOUND, BUT IT MUST NECESSARILY LIVE? AND THEN YOUR KIDNEYS, YOUR HEART, YOUR LIVER, ARE THREW AWAY AT THE BOTTOM OF A WELL OF ORGANIC WASTES WHILE YOUR CHEST IS FILLED WITH SHARP MECHANISMS THAT BURNS, CLOGS AND MUST BE CONSTANTLY REPAIRED?"

LCK: "Oh, I think I have a vague idea of the last part ye've just..."

SZ: "YOU TWO ARE GUILTY! GUILTY! GUILTY OF DESTROYING MINE AND ELAINE'S EXISTENCE! GUILTY OF THROWING ME TO MOAN IN THIS SHELL OF MEAT AND METAL! GUILTY OF FORCING ME TO EXTERMINATE THOUSAND AND THOUSAND OF LIVES TO REPAIR YOUR THOUGHTLESS MISTAKES! THE VERDICT OF THE TRIAD CAN BE ONLY ONE: EXTINCTION! DISINTEGRATION! BIOLOGICAL END OF YOUR EXISTENCE!"

I can't feel my muscles anymore, only a burning contraction of endless cramps and spasms. My heart starts to run wild in a feverish and convulsive delirium. The sword hanging on that wall. I must get that perturbing blade! Yes! Now! Immediately! Sink it where LeChuck's nerves are intertwined with his flesh! Yes! I must finally slaughter him! Cut him to pieces! Tear him apart! Gasps of unsustainable pain! Disembowel him! Phenomenal, beautiful, superb! Butcher him! Drain his blood! So wonderful! Rip him off! Mangle him! And then crush his stinking and decomposed...

SZ: "DO YOU SEE THOSE TWO SWORDS HANGING ON THE WALL? NOW EACH ONE OF YOU WILL TAKE HIS WEAPON! THEN, YOU

WILL DUEL WITH THE FURY OF A THOUSAND TORNADOS! AND YOU WON'T EVER STOP! AND I'LL STAY HERE, ENJOYING THE SHOW WHILE YOUR BONES WILL CRACK, AND YOU'LL SLOWLY BECOME TWO BLOODY AND LIVID MASSES OF LIVING MEAT AND..."

New, creative ways to export his fingers and tuck them in his eyeballs and extract them, soft and bloody and while the fingers are still inside to shake the horizon of... stop! An incessant and frenetic pawing of steps, right behind me. The bites of that furious cloud of homicidal rage suddenly vanish. I slowly recover control of my aching and torn muscles. I turn. That funereal hall was filled with white imbeciles of the Triad, entering in two ordered rows. From the middle, halting and sore, arrives that showy and arrogant admiral we met on Roca Redención, accompanied by...

ADM: "For the Great Architect, Jailer 1138! Your words were sincere! But... eh! Where in the hell did you go?"

SMR: "S -sigh! Here! I'm in front of you!"

Th -that is... the Jailer 1138 from Roca Redención! The poor, fleshless and consumed version of what it once was Captain Smirk! But now he's... more robust? More vigorous? His muscles look strong and powerful again, his back is more straight and athletic, while the scars on his face are less swollen and disfiguring. LeChuck's face... is more suffering and yellow than before, and shrinks in a glacial smile again, the ones you would expect from someone who's about to bring you away on his wagon of thorns to the eternally occupied bathroom of hell.

ADM: "So our Beloved Baron in reality is "Horatio Torquemada Marley", and he's contaminating the Infinite Honor of these halls from months through the impassable, illegitimate use of one of those aberrant "Over National Meals" of Mêle Island!"

SZ: "W -what? Why are you here? Who called you?"

SMR: "E -ehm... "Gubernatorial Seals", Admiral! Crude bureaucratic tools, apparently enchanted after a tragic and illogical mistake and..."

SZ: "YOU... LISTENED TO ALL THAT?"

LCK: "Ya worried about carefully pourin' the concept at the base of your INSANE despotism deeply into the minds of all yer subjects, Baron! Now let's see if yer seal is powerful enough to completely rewrite at the same time the minds... of ALL those madmen!"

SZ: "N -No! YOU MUST..."



ADM: "You've deplorably violated our Triple Statute, Baron Soze! This means... HALL OF PARTICIPATION! NEW LIFE! GET HIM!"

SMR: "It's... Hall of Purification! A -anyway... GET HIM!"

SZ: "NO! I AM YOUR LEADER! ALL OF Y -YOU... MUST OBEY ME! I N - NEED TO PROTECT MY CHILD! E -ELAINE!"

It's an infernal chaos of metals clanging against each others, sweat and drops of fresh blood. Between the soldiers still loyal to Cortèz and the ones controlled by the Baron's seal, that hall explodes in the most violent of internal of feuds. While with the corner of my eye I see the wizened Baron dragged away, screaming, from his throne, I try to get away from swirls of punches in the diaphragm, and slashes in the shinbones, and nudges on the teeth, and...

LCK: "Ya, map! Come with me!"

LeChuck grabs me by the neck of the jacket and, with the force of a stinking, bearded and unpleasant bull, he drags me away from the melee, to drop me in front of a little, calm door beside the empty Baron's throne.

LCK: "Stay there, Threepwood! I'll go get the key!"

My execrable nemesis makes his way again in that crowd, cracking with joy jaws, vertebrae and kneecaps to everyone in his way. I raise my look. Seeing that horrible and solitary coffin dominating us I feel like I was crushed at the bottom of a glacial and dense ocean. Then, a few seconds later, I see reappear LeChuck bringing on his shoulder, as if it was a mephitic bag of trash, the shallow Shadow Soldier 1138.

LCK: "Terribly DESOLATED the personal lackey of the Admiral Cortèz can't assist his abominable superior in battle, but I remember ya once again that, by spying Baron Soze, ya just accomplished the FIRST part of the task for which I've decided to spare yer useless life on Monkey Island."

G: "W -what? N -now you're the personal right-hand man of Cortèz, Smirk? Say, with the set of pots won with the notes of demerit did they give a free hierarchic push? Did you remove the leftovers of a sandwich stuck in his respiratory tract with a "maneuver of Threepwood"? Did you spend enough hours crouched and nestled near his stinking boots?"

SMR: "Ehi! There are still three hundred, twentytwo hours and eight minutes left of that for..."

G: "Eeeew!"

SMR: "I -I meant... the act of defending the Supreme Admiral of the Triad from the mortal hits of the Demonic Chicken on Roca Redención was enough."

G: "You never defended the Admiral from the mortal hits of el Pollo Diablo! You've... just... tried to hold el Pollo on your arms like an affectionate nanny, until his devastating weight mercilessly crushed you on the floor of your cell!"

SMR: "Oh, yes! But from that unpleasant accident, the Admiral tends to slightly confound words, thoughts, memories and..."

ADM: "COME ON, SOLDIERS! AND EXAGGERATE WITH THE HEXAGON!"

LCK: "Aarrgh! That blockhead of a bird should've hit with more force!"

G: "B -but the Triad is all a lie, Smirk! B -be a real pirate again! Stop being a slavish lackey and recover the verve you had when you loosened the bolts of the ladder from which ruinously stumbled Limping Liam! Just Liam before! And how to forget that inscription on that tombstone? <<I just wanted to make a few jokes on food disorders, and I didn't think Smirk would've really shot me in the...>>"

LCK: "Oh, for all the yellowish maggots infestin' me sacred..."

SMR: "I -I... can't go back anymore, Guybrush! The Illuminated Order of things endorsed by the Triad must be preserved, with or without the fictitious guide of the Baron... urgh!"

LeChuck bangs with rustic violence the body of the soldier on the floor, not without an elegant, refined artistic taste in musically appreciating the thud. Beyond the insufferable wall of derogatory arrogance of my archenemy, however, I see something. Eyes more rotten and hollow. Voice slightly more hoarse and delicate. Unstable and shaky movements, and he's... dying! LeChuck is dying again!

LCK: "Now shut yer stupid trap, Jailer Snork, eleven-three-nine-six, or whatever THE HELL they call ya when they need a couple of clean and hot underwear, and use yer illuminate knowledge to OPEN THIS DAMN DOOR!"

And Smirk starts to push invisible panels and manipulate hidden levers. Then, the door opens and... you know, they say the first action you instinctively do after a moment of strong confusion is highly explanatory of your own true nature. Someone immediately searches in his pockets trying to find some useful objects to solve the puzzle he finds in front of him. Someone looks around very carefully, to find some bottles of filthy booze to lose himself in. And then there's LeChuck who, after a curse that could cause a fulminant cerebral hemorrhage to whoever hears it, pushes Smirk with a bloody shove. The last image I'll preserve of that old filibuster is of him stumbling backwards to the delirium of that human hurricane, while he prepares himself to the inane battle with his hand on the holster of his blade, and he looks at me with that sarcastic expression I didn't think he would've ever showed again, as if he wants to vaguely whisper me that not everything that characterized him was lost forever.

LCK: "GO INSIDE, YA!"

The second, scorbutic shove of LeChuck was deliciously reserved to me. In an instant I find myself millions of miles away from that chaos and completely nauseated by the vertigo of that senseless place. An arcane ocean of infinite nothingness. Enormous, terrifying, impalpable. I try to grip on something in that dreadful daze of the senses, looking at the only things that seem to have a consistency: gigantic, grotesque arches of stones and bones. They're everywhere around me. Deformed, horrifying, each one profoundly different from the others, they seem to lead to other halls of eternal nothingness and... a clac. I turn. Behind me, the door which led us here isn't there anymore. Just the very little brotherly smile of the last person you would want near you in a scenery like this.

LCK: "Only a place can be this dark, empty and cold. Right, Guybrush?"

G: "Right. And this inevitably leads me to ask myself two questions: how were you able to let me enter your candid brain, and through what clever schemes I can try to escape it."

LCK: "Oooh, poignant and irreverent as always, Threepwood! Even if in yer heart ya already know to be back... in the realm of the dead!"

G: "So I gather you came here to anticipate the inevitable, LeChuck! You know, everybody would notice you don't look very well, and it's more than clear that you're..."

An instant. A cloud of rotten and acrid human stench. The violent and mortal strength of LeChuck's hands closing on my throat.

LCK: "THAT OF INEXORABLY DECOMPOSIN' IS A DESTINY RESERVED TO NOBODIES LIKE YA AND HORATIO TORQUEMADA, THREEPWOOD! I... I... AM DESTINED TO LIVE FOREVER! WHEN THE SUN WILL BE EXTINGUISHED AND THE OCEANS WILL BE FROZEN, I WOULD STILL BE HERE, REIGNIN' ON THE MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL KINGDOMS TOGETHER WITH ME DEMONIC BRIDE ELAINE MARLEY! AND WHEN THOSE SAME KINGDOMS WILL BE CONSUMED UNTIL BECOMIN' SPECKS OF COSMIC DUST, I WILL KEEP TO..."

The grip on my throat loosens. I fill my lungs of fresh, filthy, restorative funereal air again. LeChuck retreats. The tone of his voice suddenly becomes clearer and lucid.

LCK: "... if... if there is somethin' I learned is that ya INTREPID heroes of the last minute are so tightly bound to yer principles to be reluctant to collaborate

even in front of the most horrifyin' threats. So let me tell ya the same thin' I told to that grovelin' worm of Smaurg!"

G: "Anf... anf... it's Smirk! And... thanks, but I don't have time for a romantic "mambo of the hooded manatee" now! Anf... anf..."

LCK: "Always jokin'! Even near the end. Because the world is about to end, right Guybrush? And if ya don't collaborate with me, it will happen... in a few minutes!"

G: "W -what?"

LCK: "Accordin' to the original plans, the Hell Bell should've been completed in FORTYEIGHT years!"

G: "F -fortyeight years?"

LCK: "So the monkey said..."

*After defeating the God Pirate LeChuck, Elaine Marley and Guybrush Threepwood would've lived the rest of their existence until the end of their mortal days. Between romantic plunders, loving boardings and intriguing adventures all around the archipelagos of this continent from Anguilla to Trinidad.*

*And then, only then, the tenth chime would've come...*

*Only after Guybrush Threepwood would've closed his eyes...*

*... for the last time, tired and old, near the Greenhouse of Morgue...*

G: "Monkey? Greenhouse of what? And w -what sense does it have all this?"

LCK: "Who knows? Maybe, some sort of PERVERTED form of respect of the Voodoo Lady towards the pirate she collaborated many times with. Then... somethin' happened! A prophecy resonated in the ether, and it was picked up by the same, repulsive witch who manipulated us for all these years: <<the reunification of the two parts long separated from each other will put the Serpent Goddess to sleep forever.>>"

G: "Two parts... of what?"

LCK: "The imminent reunification between me body and the melted essence of the "God Pirate LeChuck", imbecile! The Voodoo Lady didn't know what it was about, but she was able to comprehend WHEN the event she was fearin' could've happened. From then on, she made everythin' possible to accelerate the construction so that everythin' could be completed before the "reunification". So, she planned the TRAGIC series of events leadin' to the birth of the Triad. Sure, the work to do was a lot and... the first chime will arrive in a few minutes! The world... will end soon, Threepwood! And ye're the only one able to generate the event that will stop it!"

G: "W -what? And ho -how?"

LCK: "The Crossroad is infinitely wider and immense than ya can ever imagine. And these are... spiritual pathways stolen by an ancient sorcery from the realm of the dead! Ethereal hallways partly disconnected from the Crossroad and used to quickly connect various places of the physical world! But ya... ya have some sort

of map! I'm sure ya can reconstruct the same pathway the Baron was usin' to move from Mêlée... to the otherwise unreachable island of BLACK BONE BAY! The Hell Bell's Island! The Island of... the Voodoo Lady!"

I observe those horrifying arches put between us and the absolute nothingness. Some are so huge that are an insult and an irritation to sight itself. Some others are so tiny that you can pass through them only by wiggling like a worm. Some are refined piles of bizarre scribbles, and they seem carved by the eccentric and elaborate work of men dead in ancient and forgotten ages. Some others look like inconclusive and slapdashed puzzles of trash cleverly piled, but what they all have in common is... the figure of a bone! The key keeping together those arches is always the same: the great, stone figure of a human bone! Then I catch a horrible truth, one of those you wish you'd never solve! That night, after the escape from Roca Redención, I dreamt the spirit of Morgan telling me about a sequence of bones to memorize, because... Morgan is there, on the other side. Her dead body was threw in the Hell Bell to scream, and she gave me this sequence because she wants me to... free her!

LCK: "So ya don't have any map... but ya know a sequence of arches, which will lead us to Black Bone Bay, right? I want to know it!"

G: "W -what? I -I..."

LCK: "The last, weak sparks of a great power slowly extinguishin' itself, Guybrush. But I can still use it to see vague images of what comes up the soft surface of yer brain. Don't think to decieve me with one of yer MISERABLE tricks!"

G: "I... I don't want you to reunite with your divine part, LeChuck!"

LCK: "Oh, of course ya don't! But I'm sure ya prefer it to the idea of this universe bein' obliterated like a... AAAAARGH!"

Refreshing and regenerating blue tea of Smiling Stan. Baron Soze's favorite! My pockets were still full of it, despite the not refreshing shower of root beer. Keep out of reach of children. The components could be toxic and caustic instead of refreshing and regenerating. Don't throw in the eyes to avoid disfiguring burns to the cornea. Throw in the eyes to provoke disfiguring burns to the cornea. And if your victim can superficially read your thought, do it impulsively and without thinking about it.

LCK: "A -AAAARGH! YA WILL HAVE A DEATH WORSE THAN ONE OF YER PATHETIC PIRATE PHANTOMS, 'THREEPWOOD! AAAARGH!!! I WILL CRUSH YA IN A SCREAMIN' PUDDLE OF MEAT FOR THE FUN OF TRAMPLIN' YA MORE AND MORE TIMES AND..."

Away, away from that muddle of demonic deliriums. I've had enough of disturbed windbags thinking they can manipulate the rest of the world with their ranting plans, and their extravagant prophecies, and their pathological obsessions of power, and...

<<I -I CAN STILL FEEL YA, YA KNOW? I FEEL THE SMELL OF YER COWARDY! THE FEAR OF YER TERRORIZED BOWELS! THE SLOW FREEZIN' OF YER HEART FULL OF THE DARKEST PANIC! I -I'M COMIN' TO GET YA, GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD!>>

Afternoon in a hot, suffocating and hallucinating maze in the heart of the realm of the dead and my only way of escape is... a dance! A dreadful dreamlike dance, whispered to me by the restless spirit of a dead friend, waiting from years to be freed by the most inhuman and horrifying voodoo prison ever. And as if it wasn't enough, I just gave myself the almost impossible mission of clean away from the merciless tablets of destiny an event carefully planned from decades and decades, refusing the lowest alliance of a stinking and bearded wounded beast, who now, probably, doesn't desire anything but scrape my lungs from my chest with his own filthy fingernails.

<<DEATH IS COMIN' TO GET YA, GUYBRUSH! THE DARKNESS IS SETTIN'! THE SONG IS ENDIN'!>>

I hope it was just an expression and he didn't get the insane idea to start to sing a horrible voodoo jingle. Despite the devastated and dying appearance, LeChuck's nerves still crackle of horrible sparks of dark and strange powers. And soon he will recover his sight so... I must lose him as quick as possible! Gnngh! Endless shakes from the stomach. Strange instants in which I fall between images of inexistent realities to immediately wake up again. Coronado De Cava. Rotten shipwrecks encrusted with algae and clams. Wally. Dark and dreadful depths. Dudley Jones. I don't know what's happening to me, but... I must flee from here!

<<OOOH... YE'RE THERE! I CAN FEEL YA! YA WILL BURN BETWEEN THOSE FILTHY REGURGITATIONS OF FLAMES AND BLOOD OF THE ARCHIPELAGO IN WHICH I'LL SPREAD YER BOWELS, THREEPWOOD!>>

I -I must not focus on those peculiar sensations, and not on the exaggerated deliriums of that sadistic imbecile and... dum-da-dum! How did Morgan's song go? The feel bone... the mean bone...

*The head bone's connected to the heel bone,  
but the heel bone's not connected to the arm bone,  
the arm bone's connected to the shoulder blade,  
but the shoulder blade's not connected to the breastbone.*

Yes! That's it! So I must search first... the arch with the skull key! After a few seconds, I find it: distant, metallic, sharp, distressing. I hardly reach it, to pass through it wiggling on one side and being careful those colossal protruding nails don't export away the fundamental parts of my pirate bowels. I'm sucked towards the emptiness of a new hall, maybe wider than the previous one and delimited by darker and more horrifying arches. Now... ha -hi -hea -heel! While I try to

remember which form has the heel, I see that barbaric monkey sneer, bloody rip his arm off and pass through the head arch right after me.

<<ANF... ANF... 'THINKIN' ABOUT IT... I COULD TRY TO EXTRACT THE COMBINATION... FROM THE DANK HEMS OF YER BRAIN SPLIT IN TWO DISTINCT HALVES! COME HERE AND GIVE ME YER HEAD, 'THREEPWOOD! OH, AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT YER DESTINY, BECAUSE ONCE 'THIS WILL BE OVER I'LL WANDER WITH HER CHEERFULLY DRINKIN' TO YER PAINFUL MEMORY! AHR! AHR! AHR! ARGH! COFF! COFF!>>

A shot's glass! The heel bone has the form of a shot's glass! Mindful of those endless shots of burning poison I shove down my throat during evenings not more pleasant than this one, I see the Heel Arch: long, narrow, deep like an endless hallway. I reach it panting and I go through it for endless minutes, while those stone walls full of sculptures of terrifying and rude faces shrink on me. The passage to the next hall is more traumatic and endless, like a jump in an abyss deep millions of miles. The light weakens. The horrible arches of this zone seem to wiggle and hardly breath in the dim light. But I must cross them in the right order... *dam-dum-dam-bone, should I use more bath foam? But the heel bone's not connected to the arm bone.* Arm! The Arm Arch is there: a shining, colossal, wonderful monument in white stone, that really feels out of place in the funereal atmosphere of this horrific space.

<<YA CAN'T ESCAPE FROM ME LIKE YA CAN'T ESCAPE FROM THE LAST BREATH WAITIN' FOR YA DURIN' THE VILEST DISEASE THAT WILL DEVOUR YER BODY! I AM THE DARK SIDE THAT BOILS OF HATE AND FRUSTRATION WHILE YER LIFE COLLAPSES PIECE AFTER PIECE! I... AM... INEVITABLE!>>

E -enough! The echoes of the endless complainings of LeChuck resonate through the stone walls of the arch from which I just came, resulting even more powerful, upsetting and irritating than usual, but... wait! A detail apparently insignificant! Something I didn't really pay attention to before, but now it's piercing my brain like a scream of Van Winslow when he noticed in the barrel of grog there was only sawdust left. Sigh... embarrassing, gross, eternally inadequate Van Winslow! And Wally! And... and Grandpa Marley! And Elaine! I've... lost everyone! I'm... completely alone! That disconnected, irritating and wonderful crew who sustained me during the endless vicissitudes of my unlikely adventures... ended on the last depth, forever! I... can't ever be... no! T -there's no time to think about the terrifying events of the last days! I -I must proceed, with that strong and implacable spirit always characterizing Guybrush Threepwood, m -mighty,



indefatigable and now shocked pirate! Away from here, to the so coveted exit from this atrocious nightmare! B -but... the song! This last line from Morgan's song is... different from the others!

*The head bone's connected to the heel bone...*

*... but the heel bone's not connected to the arm bone.*

... NOT connected to the arm bone!

W -what does that "not" should mean? M -maybe... I must do something else before passing through the Arm Arch? A gesture? A ritual? Some new, bizarre steps of a monkey-esque dance? Maybe it doesn't mean anything? But... that wonderful light! That unusual and offensive architectural perfection! Is it... maybe a coincidence that EXACTLY the Arm Arch is so different from all the others? And if the bones of the song are NOT connected to the previous ones... do they correspond to directions I should NOT take? What if it's an arch leading to a dead end of the realm of the dead? What if it leads to zones where I should confine...

<<I'M COMIN'... DAMN... NARROW... PASSAGE...>>

Two fat and clumsy arms come out the exit of the Heel Arch, in the attempt to help the rest of the body to wiggle through that narrow and suffocating portal. Before LeChuck could completely come out... I must try to trust the good old Guybrush Threepwood instinct and...

<<YA... YA COMIN' NEAR ME, 'THREEPWOOD? OOH, I FEEL YA! I FEEL YER COWARD... A -HA! GOT YA! LET'S SEE... IF I CAN REALLY...>>

I let those hands too filthy even for the realm of the dead grab my head. LeChuck's fingers feel my skullcap with morbid violence, as if he wants to physically extract the so coveted combination. I must think of the TWO bones of the song not connected to the previous ones!

*... but the heel bone's not connected to the arm bone...*

*... not connected to the breastbone.*

Not connected to the arm bone! ... not connected to the breastbone! Arm Arch and Breastbone Arch! Arm Arch and Breastbone Arch! Arm Arch and Breastbone Arch! Arm Arch and... tingling... my head... explodes...

<<SO YA NEED TO PASS THROUGH THE ARM ARCH FROM THE OUTDOOR, EH? I FINALLY... NO! WAIT! BREASTBONE! ARM ARCH

AND BREASTBONE! AHR! AHR! AHR! YE'RE DOOMED, THREEPWOOD! I WILL RIP THE SOUL OUT OF YER BODY AND I'LL TRAP IT, STILL SCREAMIN' AND IN PAIN, IN THE FILTHIEST LOO OF TORTUGA! AND THEN I...>>

With a sudden tug I wriggle away from the asphyxiating grasp of that talkative beast and, dearly hoping in having grasped the right intuition, I frantically try to reach the arch corresponding to the right direction: the Shoulder Blade Arch. The bone with the form of a pulsating and swollen heart. I see it, horribly deformed and crackling of weird voodoo electric discharges, and then I call to every remaining excerpt of bravery to pass through it. I lurch on a filiform stone axis dominating an endless abyss of turbid, paradoxical and smoking pus. I admire their perseverance while, with voices coming from my cloudy past, they invite me to a boring eternal peace on that depth of melted meat and thousands of other horrors. I go through senseless and monstrous stairs, losing every sense of what was up, down and every usual direction the average pirate knows. I undo and decompose myself going through tunnels tighter than a coiffed hair, and in which the horizon of time widens beyond the conceivable infinite. Then, for me it starts the most delirious, unnatural, painful sequence of movements I could ever made. I have no bones anymore, and yet I feel them breaking in a thousand pieces. I have no muscles anymore, and yet I feel them stretch themselves in a lavish of piercing sensations. The tongue inflates and explodes. The bowels burn and reduces to ashes. I shake, I break, I twist, I slaughter myself. I -I did everything wrong! I scream, while I get launched like a human cannonball without a helmet and... end. I stop. I have a body again. Meager, emaciated, not well proportioned, but I have it. Around me there's space again and what I breath is air again. W -what kind of... I'm sure that, if Grandpa Marley didn't go crazy because of the seal, just going more than once through that senseless and terrible absurdity would've made him lose the light of reason anyway! I see nothing, but fingering the floor beneath me, I can clearly feel it take the shape of... normal, common, sensible stone stairs. I climb them, rejoicing for a few instants to be in a place without LeChuck and with logic again, but when I mercilessly crash on a little wooden door at the end of the stairs it comes back to my mind I have absolutely no idea on what's waiting for me out there, and what other bizarre horrors I'll have to beat to accomplish the insane purpose of stopping the ten chimes of that delirious bell of doom. I push upwards, with extreme caution, that creaking wooden board, when...

...

... my stomach, still recovering from the crazy crossing, starts to twist again at the sight of... not of that immense and barren fortress of black rocks dominating a screaming and restless ocean. Not of that grotesque and red sky, in which thick

clouds steal every shape and color from that place. Not of that colossal and pointed tower of human bones which really seems to rip, horrifying and triumphant, the bowels of that dying firmament. B -Baron Soze... Baron Soze was right?

ELA: "Guybrush! W -where... where am I?"

G: "E -Elaine?"

## **Episode XVI - Hell**

Elaine is there. Wonderful. Calm. With two eyes shining of the same reflections of those ancient and lost times of cirrhosis, accidental amputations and adventures. While the most unsustainable joy and the most burning horror play tug of war in my already shaken bowels, I run towards her and tighten her in a clumsy hug, one of those that could asphyxiate even the strongest of manatees.



G: "N -nrghh. Brrpll. Frllmmm. Elaine..."

ELA: "Ouff... Guybrush?"

G: "Grblll. Sorry... hard... formulate... logic... sentences... I..."

ELA: "Guybrush, are... y -you crying?"

G: "N -no... I... was helping... Van Winslow... kitchen... refreshing flan of onions and kudu... sniff... wonderful... sniff... seeing you again..."

ELA: "What? What were you doing? I can't understand you. How am I here? And what's a Van Winslow?"

G: "Oh, I'll explain everything, don't worry. Now just try to... what did you just say?"

ELA: "I was saying... I can't understand you! And... I don't know what's this... Van Winslow you were trying to talk about."

G: "It doesn't matter! Now try to... no! Wait a minute! What do you mean? Van Winslow! Flotsam Island! The story of la Esponja Grande! Wandering around in his underwear in the town center! Food partly predigested! Detention for obscene acts in official gubernatorial ceremonies! D -damn it... you seem confuse... what did they do to your memory?"

ELA: "I -I don't know... I was on Mêle Island... I was delivering those electoral flyers and..."

G: "Electoral flyers? What electoral flyers?"

ELA: "I... y -yes! Now I remember... Charles L. Charles is LeChuck, Guybrush! And we must stop him from becoming Mêle Island's new governor!"

No. It's not about her memory. No. Not... HER! I paralyze for an instant, completely shocked by a nauseating hypothesis. Then, the nausea of that thought comes up my chest, inflates my esophagus, tortures my throat. I hear it: faint, imperceptible, implacable. The disgusting confirmation. A sound I would've never, ever wanted to hear.

*Tic-tac! Tic-tac! Tic-tac!*

<<GUY... BRUSH...>>

Elaine suddenly becomes pale and shocked. She releases a faint groan and crouches on the ground, aging of hundreds of years in a few seconds. The eyes become swollen and wrinkled. Her... smooth skin becomes yellow and crinkled. The body consumes, becoming horribly meager and emaciated in a few seconds. Elaine heavily and miserably falls on my feet, revealing under her dress a horrible detail I probably pretended to ignore... the silhouette of a CLOCK mounted in her chest!

<<WITHOUT THE SIX SEXTANTS OF SANTA FE, IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO EXTRACT FROM CHRONOS GRAVE A COPY WHO CAN LIVE FOR MORE THAN A FEW HOURS. NEW FACT: LEARNED. HAPPY ENDING FOR BARON SOZE'S STORY: CANCELED!>>

I ignore that voice for a few seconds, still oppressed by the treachery stabs of that horrendous vision. The capture on Roca Redención. The death of Blondebeard Diablo. The end of Tortuga. The misunderstanding about my parents. The horrible dissolution of my ghost army. Grandpa Marley's madness. You know, I was proud of being able to maintain alive and burning, despite all those hateful events, a spark of Guybrush Threepwood. Of that unfortunate Guybrush, who looked at every event always offering in exchange to Fate itself a cup full of caustic and poignant sarcasm. Of that Guybrush who was well aware that, building

some extravagant contraption and putting it in the right place, he would've solved every puzzle, complex or mediocre, and saved the Caribbean. B -but I think that spark just... died! And when the lights turn off, the ogres holed up in the most distant niches are finally free to come out and devour your soul. An angry and profound scream directly comes out from my stomach.

G: "TE VOY A DEJAR EL CORAZÓN!"

<<W -WHAT?>>

I don't know why I said something like that, and even that horrible, imperturbable masked wizard seems surprised. M -maybe... I'm just going crazy! Falling down a deep abyss miles and miles away from that light warmth of lucidity and reason. I dash with all my energies towards that vile, abominable and hateful being! The same who contributed to miserably pulverize Tortuga! The same who... MADE ME WATCH ELAINE DIE! TWICE! I hit him with a shove that, for how ramshackle and weak it was, it's quick enough to surprise him. At the impact his mask flies on the ground, revealing a hollow hazelnut-colored face, butchered by horrible incisions in its flesh hugging themselves and outlining a precise figure. But w -what the hell is that figure? B -but of course... that... is pain! Torment! The pure and simple representation of... torture!

G: "Y -you... are a member of the Infernals? The... the first natives who lived on Monkey Island! Those sadistic cannibals Napoleon Hellbeard was talking about in his diary!"

To my statement, that horrible face inflates for a second in a dumbfounded and worried expression. Then, instantly recovering his usual and stolid calm, picks his own mask up from that black and dusty floor and covers again that massacred mass of meat he has as a face. I try to say something, but the truth is the being just served to my soul a devastating cocktail of dark dismay, urticant anxiety and endless horror. And now the simple act of constructing thoughts seems to be as hard as swallowing a barrel of burning nails.

G: "D -did someone accidentally tramped on your baby seal? N -no, because a good, old friend said some r -relational troubles could derive from..."

<<DISREGARDING THE BABY SEAL MATTER, I WOULD SAY YOUR KNOWLEDGE GOES BEYOND MY MOST INCREDIBLE EXPECTATIONS! VERY WELL, GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD! I AM THE LAST INFERNAL! THE LAST GUARDIAN OF THAT GREAT DREAM BURIED FOR TOO LONG UNDER THE DARK BOWELS OF THE

EARTH. THE LAST BASTION OF THAT UTOPIA OF DARK FLAMES AND ENDLESS TORMENT WAITING FOR US AT THE END OF EVERYTHING!>>

G: "Y -you mean..."

<<EXACTLY, GUYBRUSH! THE SERPENT GODDESS CARED VERY MUCH ABOUT OUR MASTERPIECE! THE SERPENT GODDESS GAVE ME INSTRUCTIONS TO BUILD THE BELL OF SOULS! AND WHEN EXISTENCE WILL DECONSTRUCT TO THE SOUND OF THOSE SCREAMING SOULS... ONLY THAT WILL REMAIN...>>

G: "The Infinite Hell!"

So that was the end goal of everything! To create the Infinite Hell Hellbeard was talking about in his diary! To project the entire existence in a dimension of eternal pain, dreadful tortures and... n -no! Maybe it's just an irrational and perverted spark of trust I still have towards my unpleasant former ally talking, b -but... cheap flames, pain, screams and truculence? It just seems like a load of foolishness! My always stunning sixth pirate sense keeps constantly whispering me this inhuman and repulsive individual is just another pawn to sacrifice in the colossal and perverted chess game of the Voodoo Lady! Just like it happened to me, LeChuck and Horatio! Before I could even try to formulate another sentence, I get hit by an invisible and violent force piercing me in a million pieces, to then throw me face down on that black, sour and dusty floor.

<<My voodoo blood boils, waiting from millennia the jump to the Infinite Hell! I'm not allowed to lose further fragments of this remaining and universal agony because of you! I will be on top of that tower, beside my Goddess, while everything dies...

*... life, shall be, to the deathly land,  
write to us, I order, a new end.  
His three souls, in his body trapped,  
with blades and violence will be snatched.  
Let there be for his story, under my imposition,  
a new epilogue, and of eternal damnation.>>*

There's no fiber in my body that wasn't disintegrated by that hit. B -but what is he talking about? Damnation? Epilogue? T -three souls? I try to stand up despite the treacherous and accomplice opposition of my semi-broken bones and of my burning bowels. I'm not having a great success, but I just need to...

unnnnghhhhhh... now I see the wizard's long garment slowly walking away to that horrible tower, while the entire universe once again explodes on my back, nullifying in a devastating crash those few centimeters I was able to conquer. I -I think I broke something. I hardly raise my head, obtaining unspeakable pain through the entire vertebral column. Is... that... a ghost? No... five! Six! Dozens of... no! A hundred, maybe a thousand. Millions of ghosts? Everywhere, lost and cursed souls in their repulsive cloak now cover the dark island of Black Bone Bay. If -if the specters in Dudley Jones' theater maintained still intact the appearance of their own mortal bodies, these are dark, grotesque, deformed! Covered with wounds and buboes and monstrosities and strange, horrible demonic amulets. They look at me with dark pupil-less eyes, anxious to drag me with them in the horrors of that perverted under-hell which just spat them out! They're closing in around me, beastly longing for my head, without giving me any possible escape and... they have something wrong! They suddenly stop their silence groaning sinister and bestial barks. The strand of their glacial ghost gasps almost makes me faint. Then, suddenly, I notice they're looking at the hand of one of them smoking and boiling. I try to take advantage of that instant of confusion and to collect in my tendons every remaining spark of force to drag myself away from that convulsive and demonic chaos. The wizard, in the distance, murmurs something, while an invisible and fast blade horribly cracks the floor a few centimeters from my head. Terror numbs my pain for a few instants. I take advantage of that to spring on my feet with a not very agile jump... and I see her! M -Morgan! The spirit of Morgan LeFlay! Between the icy convulsions of inhuman and chilling shivers, I realize... those cursed souls, probably, are just... an echo of pure pain and infinite fear! Those are the spiritual remains of all those miserable and tortured corpses used to build the Hell Bell's tower. Cursed to remain here, defending it until the end of everything! M -Morgan's dead face is twisted in a horrible demonic smile, while it's clear that, from her red and infernal look, she has no memory or drive from her own mortal life! An instant. Her spectral Sword of Dragotta goes through my heart. G... game over...

...

...

...

No!

Morgan extracts her sword from my chest, but... she only has the hilt in her hand, boiling, smoking and slowly fading. I touch my heart. It's shaken, shocked, unstable, but still alive and kicking! On my skin... no wounds! M -my jacket... is



wet... because it's still full of... that accursed Synthetic Root Beer sprayed by that lobotomized big idiot of the Triad! Maybe I can... yes! I take off my jacket and, while my shoulders desperately scream in semi-unknown languages, I start to shake it in the air in a clumsy and frantic way. I notice those filthy phantoms, at the contact of the thread or the last drops of beer, scream, smoke and shake in pain. I begin to ponder two solutions. First: I could walk on the entire island waving that dress like a delirious imbecile, hoping there's enough fluid left in its fibers to dissolve dozens of thousands of souls. Then, hope that dress itself hides some sort of secret devastating power that could put to sleep that powerful wizard and his...

Second solution.

I wave that dress like a delirious imbecile but I go back, limping miserably to the door which led me in this inferno. I barely manage to scratch superficially three or four of those putrid cursed souls, reach the so coveted door and close it behind me. Surrounded again by that endless darkness preceding that horrible hell. No LeChuck here, with his always original and creative ways to traumatize my dreams for years. Sign that probably my trick of the disconnected arches worked. Now I must come up with some strategic escape and... the ghosts... are not following me? M -maybe... the ghosts can't go through these tunnels? M -maybe they would instantly be sucked in the realm of the dead! Or m -maybe... their souls are tightly bound to Black Bone Bay! Whatever it is, I must absolutely find an elaborated way to...

...

... on the other side of the door, I hear a sound that is not from this world. It's like a devastating chime from a massive bell, mixed with the screams of a thousand cursed souls. It's... it's certainly... a chime of the Hell Bell! W -which one is it? M -maybe the tenth? N -no... it seems not... I -I'm still here! But I must hurry in finding a solution for... wait! Morgan, at the end of that delirious dream I made on the ship to Tortuga, said something else! Something like: "everything you need to wake us up is in you". In you... in you! I search in my pockets. I find it! I get it! I take it out and look at it in a sophisticated combination of pride and disgust! The... Providential and Polyvalent Ultra Functional Machinery of the Triad™!!! In between all these inappropriate multifunctional gadgets, I'm sure there's the one that will allow me to destroy the evil, save the world and all that! L -let's see... not this! Neither this! Is this a corkscrew? T -this one with the odd red button... I can't even explain why, but... I viscerally feel it's the right one! I try to push it and...

CLIK!

The Polyvalent Machinery starts to vibrate and shine. It's scorching! I drop it. It's burning. It becomes a pile of grey and irritating ashes, stinking of an acrid and unpleasant smell. End of the Polyvalent Machinery. Worst idea ever! The smell of burning corpses and petroleum of that contraption penetrates in the fibers on my lungs, provoking a violent attack of the most burning cough ever. W -what kind of semi-cheap material did they use to build it? Then, while I was bursting out those warlike spasms, the second best intuition I've ever had. Morgan, in my dream... didn't say: "is in you", but "is INSIDE you". My stomach keeps shaking and twisting. The strange achings when I was sprayed with root beer outside Marley's Mansion! The impulsive sentences pronounced in unknown languages. And those strange, convulsive, hammering hallucinations! I always thought they were the result of some sort of disfiguring brain damage earned after my adventure in the locker, but... what if it's something different? The wizard said, inside me, there are "three souls". Maybe... maybe... I still have some fragments of that locker inside me! Maybe...

G: "COFF! COFF! AARGH! COME ON... GET OUT OF HERE!"

I gratuitously increase the pain between my organs by giving to myself a violent punch. S -smart idea, Threepwood. All I needed for... something is coming up, more and more. I try, with epic grace, to pour on the floor all my personal... AAARGH!

What I regurgitate is a tiny and bright light blue cloud wiggling in the air in a rough and nervous manner. I think I hear the thin echoes of vulgar and coarse curses. And while I keep looking at it, the cloud slowly expands, thickens and takes the shape of... the bruised specters of Coronado De Cava and Dudley Jones still fighting for the puppeteer's tool of Jones!? Coronado turns towards me.

C: "THREEPWOOD! WHEN I'LL FINISH WITH ESTO CABRÓN, I..."

But that moment of distraction reveals itself fatal for that old dissociated explorer, knocked out by Dudley Jones with a strong hit of his spectral tool.

G: "D -Dudley Jones?"

DUD: "W -who? W -where? I -I don't know what you're talking about!"

G: "STOP PRETENDING! I PERFECTLY KNOW WHO YOU ARE! WE MET A FEW DAYS AGO!"

DUD: "Oh!"

G: "YOU... YOU'VE TRIED TO TRAP ME IN YOUR LOCKER! AND... AND YOU SPENT THE LAST FEW DAYS... FIGHTING IN MY STOMACH WITH THAT IMBECILE!?"

DUD: "Oh, you're the one who dreamt that fizzy story of the bubo of the irritating underwear before drowning!"

G: "N -no!"

DUD: "Can I see the bubo again?"

G: "NO! THAT'S NOT ME! I was the one who didn't drown because I was able to break the illusion of the Three Trials. Remember? The Australian robots? Gratuitous fresh eyes? The rough cartographer with serious issues of ambience adjustments?"

DUD: "NOW I REMEMBER! An intriguing story was yours! Substantial! Structurally plausible! And how to forget that perturbing matter of the "Curare's Chancellery"!"

G: "Neither that is my story."

DUD: "O -oh..."

G: "But... w -why did you end up in my stomach?"

DUD: "Oh, we were accidentally overwhelmed by the river of souls escaping from the locker, but then we decided to keep fighting in there for the possession of my tool! And then... why we should've ended up elsewhere, human? Everybody knows the soul resides in the stomach!"

G: "What?"

DUD: "Sure! When you have a stomach ache, it's because they've just set your soul on fire!"

G: "O -ok..."

DUD: "And... s -so... is this the external reality? I remember it... different! Hotter! Brighter! B -but of course! That pile of ashes on the ground... must be your Sun! It finally completely burned, leaving you moan in the obscure bite of darkness!"

G: "W -well... we're in a cave..."

DUD: "Alright, alright, it's time for Dudley Jones to start all over! W -will you give me your soul so that I can make it into one of my phantom puppets?"

G: "What?"

DUD: "Oh, don't be worried. I am the most brilliant puppeteer of souls who ever practiced from Martinica to Guadalupa Bay, you know? I guarantee you an eternity of slavery in realistic and sophisticated illusions, way more captivating than this bizarre reality where the sky seems to have become of stone for some extravagant..."

G: "Do your powers... work even outside the ocean?"

DUD: "MY POWERS WORK EVERYWHERE, INSIGNIFICANT HUMAN!"

G: "S -so you could even... take control of hundreds of thousands of enraged cursed souls right outside this door dreadfully barking and waiting to get my..."

DUD: "I CAN DO ANYTHING, INSIGNIFICANT HUMAN!"

G: "B -but it's an extraordinary thing!"

DUD: "However, what you're asking me is well beyond my abilities!"

G: "Ehi!"

DUD: "The souls need to CHOOSE, at least subconsciously, to embrace my reality, otherwise I can't control them! Though... A HUNDRED THOUSAND SOULS! Think of the shows I could orchestrate! I -I could even put on stage the comedy I'm dreaming to realize from ever... THE MOST INSIPID CABBAGE SOUP OF THE WORLD III!!!"

G: "Sure!"

DUD: "A hundred thousand strong chefs are doing a test to enter in the worldwide famous school of Chef Conchito. He rejects them all because of their disastrous "Flimsy Vychissoise"™ and they, in response, butcher him with their bare hands!"

G: "I DON'T CARE! SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN AND..."

My heart goes crazy. My blood starts to circulate in my body furiously and fast, as if it wants to desperately flee from its own obsolete labyrinth of veins. I -I hear it! The second chime! Something in the air changes, collapses, falls apart. Every smell, every sound, every color starts to become more distant, thinner and evanescent. I don't know how, but... I'm sure reality... is slowly dying!

G: "WE MUST MOVE, DUDLEY! TRY TO DO SOMETHING! THOSE SOULS ARE GUARDING A..."

DUD: "I'm inside your mind."

G: "Excuse me? Could you knock next time? I care about my... GOSH!"

DUD: "I see, I see every echo of your past! Why are talking with a dog?"

G: "Can you go slightly further on?"

DUD: "Now you have a monkey in your pocket, and you're using it to... oh, my..."

G: "Further on?"

DUD: "NOW YOU'RE GREASING THAT POOR STUFFED PLATYPUS!"

G: "FURTHER ON!"

DUD: "I get it. Problematic relationship with other animal species. AND WHO'S THAT OLD HORRIBLE PUPPETEER COMING OUT OF YOUR STOMACH?"

G: "F -further back?"

DUD: "I see. I understand everything. I'll wash away from this net of cursed souls the dark sorcery that enslaved them to the will of the Last Infernal. And I'll do it... by involving them in the most magnificent and extraordinary illusion I've ever fabricated, Threepwood!"

G: "Sounds... comforting?"

DUD: "Illusion in which your fleshless soul will be my main protagonist!"

G: "That sounds less comforting."

DUD: "I'll take advantage of your sentimental bond with that... Morgan LeFlay! She will be the Master Mind! The mind that will construct the narrative and visual

structure of the entire dream! So, I'll throw your spirit directly in her illusion and, just like in my Theater of the Abyss, you must generate... an epiphany! A flash of self-awareness that will make her realize she's in a fictitious reality!"

G: "There is still that matter about ripping my soul out the body I still don't..."

DUD: "Oh, obviously I'll do it only after you sign one of these... regular Contracts of Employment for Single Dream™!"

G: "P -perfect..."

DUD: "When you'll generate the right epiphany... the flash of self-awareness will break the curse! The disfiguring fracture will spread through the cruel net of cursed souls... and through it I'll finally send my threads! So those souls... will be MINE! ALL MINE FOR THE LAST SHOW! Just one last show, and then... I'll let them free to descend through the silver abyss leading to the Spiritual Kingdom! And I'll... descend with them!"

The funereal boom of the third chime. Every thing mutates in a pale and twisted shadow of itself. Space seems to collapse and shrink, while the air becomes darker and suffocating.

G: "There's no more time, Jones! So... to recap... Hi, Morgan! You're in a dream. The end. Right? Let's go or..."

DUD: "It's not that simple!"

G: "... just as I feared."

DUD: "My locker has... a discreet temper! Proud to its spectral marrow! If it sees someone try to explicitly reveal to others it's all an illusion, your soul could be deprived of every hold to reality and end up to wander forever in an abyss of abstract, eternal and unconceivable nothingness."

G: "This story gets worse every passing minute."

DUD: "Not if you pay attention to what I'll tell you! Be subtle! Clever! Elusive! The human minds are contradictory and fragile! Every dream is inevitably sprinkled with anomalies, inconsistencies and contradictions. Remark these elements! Find the NONSENSSES! Reveal the deceptions! And let Morgan comprehend on her own where she is!"

G: "Perfect! Nonsenses! Obscure. Substantially impracticable. But I don't seem to have a choice! The Contract of Employment™! Give me the Contract of Employment™! W -where do I need to sign?"

DUD: "N -no! Not there! There! Alright! Excellent!"

G: "O -ok! Done! Wait! What are these tiny and unreadable clauses?"

DUD: "Oh, yeah, the rule of the goal of the master mind! Ah, ah, ah! Minutiae!"

G: "What is the goal of the master mind?"

DUD: "In her dream, LeFlay will be in search of something, just like you were searching the malevolent golden bride! If she gets it before you reveal the deception it'll be over, she will forever accept the sorcery and your soul will be

destroyed and diluted with hers in the dark power of the Last Infernal's mind. Otherwise, you will come back to your body and everything will be fine."

G: "FINE? FINE!? 'THIS STORY SOUNDS MORE AND MORE LIKE A GIGANTIC SWINDLE FOR MY SOUL AND..."

DUD: "LET THE SHOW BEGIN!"

G: "STOP! WAIT A MOMENT!"

The door to Black Bone Bay suddenly opens, revealing that those monstrous souls were there waiting, motionless and impassible. Morgan is there, in front of everyone else, in trembling expectation of the end of the world. Dudley raises his puppeteer's tool that starts to shine of a golden and blinding light. From his hand come out thousands and thousands of shining threads that madly go through my body and cut my arms and legs. I feel the threads melting with my nerves and my veins, while I see Morgan's specter suffering my same fate. Too late to go back. Those threads drag me down, down, down. Horribly digested in the black bowels of an ocean of lead. Further down, wherever the indecipherable obliterates every breath. Further down, in those glacial cores where the flesh becomes bruised and soft before coagulating and... w -who the hell did I just trust?

When the scope of the evil becomes uncontrollable and unrestrainable, it's urgent to redefine your own strategy of survival and start to consider even the idea to sell your soul to the darkest and vilest of demons. But when the darkest and vilest of demons is a spitting and bearded imbecile who devastates every tolerable threshold of distaste and you decided, for this reason, to send him wander in a dark and inscrutable labyrinth of the realm of the dead, let's try with an ancient and unstable God of the Abyss, obsessed by the idea of transforming every lost soul he's accidentally able to capture in an enslaved puppet with which he could set up his bizarre shows. And there I am, shaking, confused, screaming. Ripped out from my body and dragged in an endless and tentacular abyss, where flashes with the strength of a thousand Suns dance to the sound of a melody of alien and elusive whispers. If I'll allow Morgan to reach her unknown main goal of the dream, I'm doomed. If I'll be able to make her comprehend she's in a dream, I'll free everybody. If I'll be too explicit in revealing her the illusion, I'm doomed again. Maybe I should've ended up in the flames with the "Napoleon"'s crew. Then, something happens. The cerulean and hot hues of the high noon's sky clears a silent village comforted by the multi-colored cloak of a thousand floral species. A very lively child is scolded again by her big brother Bartholomew. If she doesn't stop to put larvae of cetonia in the Thursday soup of her uncle Mansfield, LeChuck will take her in her sleep. If she doesn't stop to rip off her eclectic uncle Mansfield's refined paintings with a sword, LeChuck will steal her soul and he'll tie it up on his sailing ship of the damned. If she smashes once more the chiseled ceramics of her sensible uncle Mansfield with a chisel, LeChuck will take her to hell to eat her hated Anchovies In Sauce. Some days pass. Uncle Mansfield enters in their home. She can finally stop to waste time in cissy hobbies like cooking, painting or sculpting, and set sails again! From the distant and tattler suburbs of Tortuga echoes a rumor: the pirate LeChuck was defeated once and for all! And a guy called Galahad Sherwood did it.

<<N -no... Threepwood! It seems his name is Guybrush Threepwood! And nobody knows how he did it! Someone says he killed him by giving him an

indigestion of root beer and someone else narrates he made his brain explode by trying to teach him how to write! Someone rumors he strangled him with a voodoo boa python, and someone else tells he beat a... but who cares? Today we celebrate the happy event with a double portion of Thursday soup! Ooooh, sniff the beautif... ehi, is this a cetonia?>>

LeChuck couldn't steal her soul or make her eat disgusting foods anymore! He couldn't take her to hell to burn in oceans of ice or freeze in mountains of fire anymore. If Bartholomew, who was too stupid to remember the difference between hot and cold or to change the name of the boogeyman who needed to stop her, would've warned her to not burn the petunias in their garden, she would've set on fire the flowerbeds of the entire village. If he would've ordered her to not smudge the white walls of their house with voodoo chicken's blood, she would've butchered birds on the white bricks of every wall of that silent village. Burned the dummy of her childhood's last scarecrow, the fire of that fearless and rebel spirit was free to burst out, deformed and amplified mirror of that wonderful legend of Guybrush Threepwood. She heard when he escaped Big Whoop on a shabby bumper car. She sighed when she heard about the glorious victory at insult sword fighting against captain Rottingham, scourge of a little sea, and maybe of two lakes nearby. She fell in love when she heard about the incredible victory at Monkey Kombat, despite the fact she had no idea what it was. Wait! The plot thickens! She fell in love... with who?

<<IMBECILE! BRAAAAK!>>

A strange, impertinent parrot voice insults my person. But there's nobody here. I see Morgan stealing the Sword of Dragotta from her scorbutic mentor while he was in the bathroom to pee. I see her smuggling mugs of Battery Acid for her uncle Mansfield, fallen in an abyss of obscure addictions after abandoning his probably adored hobbies for a life at sea. And then wandering the waters of this continent, mercilessly cutting heads from Cabo Saint Lucas to Zanzibar, until that day, on Flotsam Island, during the trial against Guybrush Threepwood... everything accelerates! Every vision becomes a quick and imperceptible fragment of colors, sounds or other violent and elusive sensations. I'm crushed by that kaleidoscope of deliriums, until...

...

...

A distant island, immersed in the cold hug of huge rocks, embracing it to hide and protect its content from prying eyes. A dark, endless library, with heavy, harmonic



and twisted furniture. A little funny and red man shakes and squirms from inside a circle, morbidly observed by three hooded men. He calls them the "Three Great Masters of Alchemy". They call him "Salomon". Ho -how does Morgan fit in this story? The little man keeps talking. From the rustic smell of his stale sweat I can feel his incredible terror. He says he noticed clear echoes of a forgotten island, of a Reptile Goddess freed from the bowels of earth, of thousands of trapped souls somewhere in the ocean and of an impending end of existence. They reply with eloquent and heavy speeches about the fact there are no gods except the Only One, the future can't be predicted because our Free Will will make it perpetually shift, and they call him "Booby". He replies with vulgar innuendos on the professional nature of their mothers from various generations and goes away, promising again to himself that he would've found a way to communicate with those souls. Then, I see him smile, reassure himself, because in any case he carefully put a copy of his book containing his studies in every single library of the Tri-Island Area. Even if nobody would've listened to him, sooner or later somebody would've put their hands on one of those books, and then...

<<Who reads and apprehends, in ashes ends!>>

Two shadows. A familiar bearded silhouette and his not very impressive right-hand man burn down the last library of the Tri-Island Area to then skip pleased of their work and go, shouting, to women in the new brothel on CopaCabana Cay. My nerves pinch and my muscles wince, while the air around me changes again in a violent and nauseating way. W -where am I now? A gloomy night in the most distant center of the ocean. Gloomy and... dense of a sinister and unnatural cold! I stagger in a disgusting way on a familiar ship. But this is... I am on... the good old Screaming Narwhal! And I don't talk about the Narwhal fifth or twelfth, but of the first Screaming Narwhal I conquered years ago on Flotsam Island! Sure, its planks are dusty and rotten, while the sails are mercilessly greased and disfigured, but its ungraceful shape and its rustic smell of Rancid Cabbage are definitely unequivocal! But my arms... my arms are covered with weird wounds! I knew it! In this reality I kept eating those weird nipples vegetables and... n -no... these are not wounds! I finger my face! I -I'm... old!? I have at least... fortysix years! And what the hell am I wearing? I'm covered with a large and heavy blue dress, while my loosen long and silver hair adorn my pirate captain's shoulder pads. My left hand! I... HA -HAVE AN HOOK INSTEAD OF MY LEFT HAND! AGAIN! Touched for a few instants by all this piratesque grace and elegance, with the other hand I try to search my pockets, overflowing with multiple incomprehensible contraptions. From what kind of peculiar adventure I'm coming? And w -why am I all alone? What...

W: "AYE!"

G: "AAARGH! HELL IS FULL AGAIN, AND ONCE AGAIN LECHUCK'S UNDEADS ARE ROAMING THE EARTH!"  
W: "OH NO, THAT IS TERRIFYING!"  
G: "BUT... YOU ARE REGINALD VAN WINSLOW!"  
W: "OH NO, THAT IS TERRIFYING!"  
G: "BUT... BUT... YOU ARE A ZOMBIE!"

## Episode XVII - Obsession

W: "OH NO, THAT IS TERRIF... ehi! We agreed on the term "Organic non-breathing entity", sir!"  
G: "B -but how is it possible? And when did it happen?"  
W: "You forgot once again, sir? Ah! Ah! Ah! But of course, you are old! Old people always forget things! But I'm your loyal and decomposed support in your old age, therefore I shall help you refresh your worn out memory."  
G: "Yes."  
W: "Morgue killed me! Don't you remember? Just right after we solved that perennial matter of the Apocalypse of the Duck God!"  
G: "Duck God? And... who is Morgue?"  
W: "Then the mermaids asked my body to devour it, as their conjugal tradition asks. And instead of putting me in the Machinery of Vaycaylian Caramelization they accidentally put me in the Resuscitator of Dead 'Threads. From then on I stagger on the thin thread between life and death, and I eat only mermaid's brains! Ah! Ah! Ah!"  
G: "WHO IS MORGUE, VAN WINSLOW?"  
W: "AAARGH! THERE'S THE ANSWER, CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD!"  
G: "WHO? WHAT? WHERE?"  
W: "MORGUE THE SCOURGE! ON BOARD OF HER <<QUEEN OF SWORDS>>!"

In the distance I see materialize a little and horrible ship, with a sharpen and edgy appearance. The ship hovers a few meters above the howling of the waves, while weird whirlpools and distressing electric discharges accompany its speed towards us. Then... an intuition! The refined disposition of the barrels on the bow deck. The crowns of dead flowers dreadfully decorating the main mast. The figurehead shaped like... me?

G: "Is that demonic ship... commanded by Morgan LeFlay?"  
W: "Oooh, nobody called her that way in decades, sir! Maybe since that day back on Flotsam Island when, possessed by an undefined piraticide instinct, she surprised LeChuck and killed him! Coff! Coff! More larvae!"

G: "W -what? That's not how it went! LeChuck killed Morgan in De Singe's laboratory and not..."

<<IMBECILE! BRAAAAK!>>

Simply the second most devastating sensation you could ever vaguely imagine. It's like two disfigurement in space and time just bursted out from the opposite poles of the Universe and exploded in my chest! 'T -the locker has a really bad attitude! Never explicitly remember it that its reality is fictitious or it could destroy everything. I -I'll try to be more cautious, next time! Fortunately, after a few seconds spent in the absolute nothingness, I see that bizarre reality reconstruct around me again. However the air is darker and heavier. Some decorations on my ship are more horrifying and grotesque, and even the Zombie Pirate Van Winslow's hat is more distasteful than before.

W: "QUICK! HELP ME WITH THOSE CROOKED HAWSERS, CAPTAIN! WE MUST NOT ALLOW MORGUE TO REACH US!"

G: "W -why are we fleeing from her? What... what happened to her?"

W: "You... don't remember? Ah! Ah! Ah! But of course, you are old! Old people always forget things! So, I am Reginald Van Winslow, and I was born in a peculiar..."

G: "I REMEMBER WHO YOU ARE! SIMPLY TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO MORGAN!"

W: "We said goodbye to her with warm affection when we saw her set sails on the horizon searching for what we accidentally called "LeChuck's treasure", but... we slowly discovered it wasn't a chest of gems and gold at all! The horror, captain Threepwood! The horror! OH, AND THE MANUAL OF PUERTO RICAN CUISINE! GIVE ME THE MANUAL OF PUERTO RICAN CUISINE IMMEDIATELY!"

G: "W -what kind of navigation maneuver you'll do with that?"

W: "THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN! Oooh... pique verde boricua con el sancocho caliente... I adored it before that unpleasant matter of the mermaid's brains, you know? That and a good pint of ink."

G: "THROW AWAY THAT BOOK AND KEEP EXPLAINING! What kind of horror? Something like the feeling of porcelain slowly rubbed on your face? Bureaucratic electoral matters on Mêleé Island? Extracting the filthy zombie underwear from LeChuck while he's picking up a coin?"

W: "Way worse than all that, sir!"

*Nobody knew what was LeChuck's treasure. Until Morgan put her hands on it.*

*In a crumbling and abandoned fortress, beyond the stormy limits of the line of Guadalupe, endless diaries, scrolls and incunabula. And every single one of them contained reports of voyages and plunders, curses and swears, studies on immortality and black magic.*

*Morgan read those diaries and suddenly something snapped inside her. An arcane and obscene spark bursted out. Something that would've corrupted her forever.*

*She began to feel something new. An EMPATHY towards the demon who scared her in her darkest childhood's nightmares. Someone who, just like her, was cursed to never see her own love returned.*

*It slowly grew inside her something repulsive... foul... horrible... the will to take... LeChuck's legacy! To repeat his legend! To become... the new terror of the Tri-Island Area!*

G: "Wait! So even Morgan fell deeply in love with someone? And with who?"

D: "BWAAAK! IMBECILE!"

I turn. On my left shoulder there is an old, grey and disturbing parrot. His look is fixated on the horizon, while half of his face is covered with a disturbing mask of white skin.

W: "Good, Dudley! Good! THREE DEGREES RIGHT RUDDER! POSSIBLY AFTER REMOVING IT FROM THE BATHROOM ORNAMENTS AND PUTTING IT BACK IN ITS OWN PIN!"

G: "Du... Dudley?"

W: "Oh, yes, Dudley, your beloved parrot! Sigh... my flimsy bathroom ornament..."

G: "Oh, sure, my... parrot!"

W: "He's not particularly talkative, if I'm allowed to say it. He tends to express himself only to lauch insults and predict death, destruction and misfortune. Dudley wants a cracker?"

D: "THE SALTING OF THOSE CRACKERS WILL INEXORABLY BLOCK YOUR CORONARIES UNTIL THEY'LL DRAG YOU IN THEIR TASTY AND CRISPY HELL!"

G: "T -that's nice."

W: "THERE CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD, LOOK! 'THE GREENHOUSE OF MORGUE!"

G: "The greenhouse? We'll do some botany, Van Winslow? Gardening for beginners? Weird crossbreeds between carnivorous voodoo plants?"

W: "Ah! Ah! Ah! 'That would be fun, sir! But no, the greenhouse of Morgue is the source of her devastating power! And after losing the last stock of voodoo root beer during that improper matter of the Tornado of the Fashionable Courtesans, only by destroy it we should finally make Morgue disappear forever and..."

G: "... but that's Blood Island!"

*LeFlay, now possessed by something ancient and horrible, started, just like her filthy, bearded and spiritual mentor, to mature the unhealthy belief that immortality was the only way to conquer the objects of her inhuman desires.*

*So she experimented on many unfortunate victims the dreadful death-defeating rituals reported by LeChuck in his diaries.*

*Until she found one that really worked: the... New Life!*

*Extracted from the bad-written scrolls of a little sect LeChuck mercilessly slaughtered during a brawl for futile reasons, it consisted in spreading on a volcanic and fertile soil the seeds of rare and ancient flowers, to then immolate your own body in the magma of the volcano.*

*When the seeds would've fed from that volcanic soil, and the flowers would've finally blossomed, a powerful spirit overflowing with pure mojo fluid would've taken shape from the fumes of their pale and ancient aromas.*

*So it was born, in a sad evening of autumn, daughter of earth, bitterness and forgotten aromas, Morgue, the Scourge of the Caribbeans!*

W: "Mmmh... fertile soil!"

G: "Me... old... at the Greenhouse of Morgue! It -it reminds me of something! Stop, Van Winslow! So this... this is my last adventure! The one in which I would've... died?! Plus, that's ALSO Blood Island. That makes the greenhouse a place where linger... TWO prophecies about my death!"

W: "Ah! Ah! Ah! Yes, yes, the famous prophecy about Guybrush Threepwood's death!

But don't listen to every prediction rumored by every drunk guy we meet, sir! Imagine that everybody told me I would've been killed by a ghost pirate hunter and came back as a zombie."

G: "Comforting."

W: "Exactly, sir! Relax with the soothing sound of my voice and... DO SOMETHING! SHE'S REACHING US!"

The next fifteen minutes are uselessly spent trying to collect every tiny spark of aerodynamic force allowed to us by the gods of wind to reach the Greenhouse before that monstrosity could reach us. However, the gods of wind were busy in sadistically sinking a galleon of dopey tourists on the course to Plunder Island, that day. So, after a few minutes, the rusted spurs of the Queen of Swords pierce the gentle stomach of the Narwhal, just a mile before reaching the shores of the island. After a few seconds spent looking at each other dumbfounded, those distressing electric discharges start to light up and scream in an angry and trembling way, finally taking the shape of the silhouette of Morgue, the Hateful Scourge of the Caribbeans, in her grotesque but refined pirate dress.

Her huge hat dominates a look even more obscure and angry than the one I saw on Black Bone Bay, while the most unrecognizable pieces of her victims composed the decomposed and mephitic ornament of her grotesque pirate dress.

With a jump, Morgue is on the rotten deck of the Narwhal, and wields her spectral sword in a very little reassuring way. We're lucky ghosts can't touch material objects...

W: "AAAAAARGH!"

A whistle. Zombie Van Winslow's head is not on his cut throat anymore, but it rolls to my feet, releasing behind itself a little line of greenish and boiling liquid. Sooner or later I need to resign myself to the fact that, when I died on Flotsam Island, I probably chose the only spell that couldn't give the correct corporeal consistency to bring my spirit back in the real world. Morgue is now looking at me, she comes closer and...



W: "FIGHT HER, MISTER THREEPWOOD!"

G: "HOW? HOW CAN I DO IT?"

W: "IN YOUR POCKET'S THERE'S SURELY A..."

Morgue crushes and breaks the lousy head of Zombie Van Winslow before he could've given me his last probably not precious advice. I pick up every single piece of those unknown contraptions from my pockets and I start to throw them to defend myself from the implacable slashes of Morgue, waiting for that clever idea that will allow me to solve everything. If there is one.

D: "GOAL OF THE MASTER MIND: STOP YOU FROM DESTROYING HER GREENHOUSE. EVEN BY RIPPING YOU APART, IF NECESSARY! IF THE GOAL IS REACHED YOUR SOUL IS LOST!"

G: "Thanks, Dudley! I really needed the comforting warmth of your optimism and..."

M: "T -THERE'S THE RUMOR, IN THE SEA OF THE GREAT GUILDS, THAT TO MAKE BURST OUT THE SPARK OF DESIRE IN A LOVED PERSON YA JUST NEED TO SLOWLY SKIN HIM AND LET HIM MARINATE FOR A FEW DAYS IN THE SWAMP OF THE FIVE OCEANS. D -DO YA THINK I SHOULD TRY IT, SOONER OR LATER, GUYBRUSH?"

G: "I can't help you, but I think you'd reach more results and less, improper bloodsheds if you simply reveal to this mysterious person your ravenous desires and search a less maladjusted way to relate with..."

M: "AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARGH!"

G: "No! No! Let's try to find a reasonable solution for the both of... URGH!"

An impact stuns the both of us for a few seconds. Our ships, dragged by the currents, shipwreck on the sharp rocks around the shores of Blood Island. I jump furious. The impact on that hard and sandy floor is lacerating, but relatively sustainable. Morgan follows me. The fight between the hits of her sword and my fragile and bizarre inventory goes on maybe for hours, between the intoxicant aromas of that island, now endless bed of sad funereal flowers. To her slashes I respond with statues of strange six-headed ducks, souvenir of who knows which adventure I never lived. I defend myself with the yellowish pages of books I never read. And I would've never read. And we keep fighting, climbing through pathways sprinkled with weird pink and screaming bulbs and streets pierced by thousands of rhomboidal corollas with beef aroma. Higher and higher, in total silence, further away from that chilling desolation, towards the scorching slopes of the still alive Mount Acidophilous. After a few minutes spent confronting our bizarre swordsman abilities, we're on an ancient stone catwalk on the red bed of hot lava. My pockets are lighter and lighter. I'm running out of objects to defend myself with, and the possibility of my bones of falling in the lava, making the dream end in the worst possible way, is really concrete.

G: "E -ehi! I liked that carpenter's cup!"

M: "STOP 'THROWIN' AT ME EVERYTHING YA HAVE IN YER POCKETS AND GIVE ME YER CHEST! M -MAYBE BY EXTRACTIN' YER HEART AND PIERCIN' IT WITH THOSE BLOSSOMIN' PINS I'VE STOLEN FROM EL MIDOLLO, Y -YE'LL FINALLY LEARN TO RETURN ME LOVE!"



G: "And now you're projecting your love for this unknown and unreachable person you still wondering about on me. This is called "transfert" in some branches of the psychoanalytical piracy, and..."

M: "AAAAAAARGH!!! I WILL DINE WITH YER BRAIN!"

D: "BRAAK! HER IDOL! MORGAN FELL IN LOVE WITH HER IDOL!"

G: "W -what? B -but this means that..."

M: "..."

G: "... Morgan LeFlay fell in love with LeChuck!"

D: "I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! BWAAAK!"

G: "N -no! Don't come closer or I'll throw on you this necklace of human eyeballs that can make someone invisible to ghos... ts..."

D: "..."

M: "..."

G: "..."

ZZAAAAP!

Those slimy and dank eyeballs now decorate my neck in a very distasteful way. On the other side of the invisibility wall the world appears obscure, distant and dark. While the gloomy boiling of Blood Island's lava harmonically dances with the distant and candid rustle of the backwash, I can't look away from the wicked and disturbing silhouette of Morgue who, after spending a few seconds searching for me with her look, starts to sob with gloomy and deep laments.

M: "I... I... JUST WANTED... JUST WANTED..."

G: "Yes yes, that story about extracting my brain, marinating me in exotic swamps and all the rest, but I don't think I can allow you to go all the way with it. Unless you give me a good reason."

M: "W -WHERE ARE YA? C -COME HERE AND LET'S FIGHT LIKE REAL MEN."

G: "I should fight like a real man or YOU... oh, this reminds me of the old times!"

M: "A -ALL I REMEMBER OF THE "OLD TIMES" IS HOW I'VE USELESSLY T -TRIED TO GET FROM YA AT LEAST A PIECE OF THE ATTENTION I DESERVED IN THE LAST YEARS! I'VE... OVERTURNED THE CURRENTS OF EVERY OCEAN, SO THAT THE SILHOUETTES OF FIVE HUNDRED SUNKEN ISLANDS COULD TAKE THE SHAPE OF YER NAME ON THE MOST DISTANT CLOAK OF THE DEPTHS! I -I'VE WANDERED THE WORLD, BURNED EVERY SINGLE BOOK THAT WASN'T TELLIN' YER EPIC ADVENTURES, SO THAT HUMAN HISTORY COULD PRESERVE THE MEMORY OF THE ONLY MAN WORTH REMEMBERIN'! I -I'VE DARKENED THE SUN ITSELF, SO THAT I COULD CARVE YER IMAGE ON THE TITANIC MOUNTAINS OF

ETERNAL ICE BUT YA... ELAINE! ONLY AND ALWAYS ELAINE! W - WHAT DID SHE EVER DO FOR YA? S -SHE WOULD'VE NEVER REALIZED ALL THAT I..."

G: " W -what? B -but this would mean that..."

D: "BRAAK! ANOTHER PEARL OF IMBECILITY COMING!"

G: "... Morgan fell in love with... ME!?"

D: "I ALMOST CAN'T BELIEVE IT! BRAAAK!"

From beyond the ocean, for an instant, I seem to hear the echo of something... what the hell are these? They seem... hands clapping. But after a few seconds that inaudible sound is devoured again by the ceaseless boiling of the volcano.

M: "T -THE VOICE... TOO MUCH NOISE... I CAN'T UNDERSTAND... FROM WHERE IT COMES... YER VOICE?"

G: "I'm here!"

Staggering on the edge above the chasm of the volcano, I take off the necklace of human eyeballs in a derogatory way, and I give it to the scorching froth of the melted rocks. Morgue turns towards me and she paralyzes herself, incredulous. Meanwhile, despite the lava is a few meters from us, the temperature suddenly becomes colder, and the light slowly starts to fade away. I raise my head. From the most distant borders of the horizon, an absurd shadow of endless nothingness starts to devour the sky, the earth and the ocean. Are we both falling.. in the subconscious of the Last Infernal!?

D: "OH NO! BRAAAAK!"

G: "I've been doubly stupid for not understanding what you were proving towards my person. And triply stupid for not understanding how much you were... relevant to me!"

M: "I... I... d -don't want... EVER AGAIN... to be... ALONE!"

G: "And you will never be ever again! I've just now comprehended you don't deserve all this assiduous torment. That's why I'll... throw myself in the volcano! My immortal specter will come out from the aroma of the Greenhouse's flowers, like yours did, and we'll live together. F -forever!"

D: "NEW GOAL OF THE MASTER MIND: GUYBRUSH IN THE VOLCANO! IN PROCESS! WE'RE DOOMED! I FLY AWAY!"

G: "STOP, DUDLEY!"

D: "BWAAAAAAAAAAAAAAK! MY CAUDAL FEATHERS!"

M: "Y -ya w -would really do this for me?"

G: "S -sure... I'm tired of breathing, drooling, listening to the annoying beats of my cardiac muscle and of all those sticky habits of living in a sweaty body of meat... HOWEVER!"

M: "However... WHAT?"

G: "Look, Morgue! Three steps. Just three steps, and I'll be there, happily... ehm... agonizing in the fiery heart of the volcano."

M: "AND WHAT ARE YA WAITIN' FOR?"

G: "I'll submit you three questions first! Three simple questions! And for every answer you'll give me, I'll do a step!"

M: "Three questions? THREE QUESTIONS? NOW GIVE ME A SINGLE REASON ON WHY I SHOULD STAY HERE TO INDULGE YER OBTUSE TRICKS INSTEAD OF COMIN' CLOSER AND THROW YA MESELF WITH A SIMPLE LITTLE PUSH!"

G: "You will answer my questions because otherwise... I'll throw THIS in the pit!"

M: "A BUTTON?"

G: "E -ehm! To an unskilled eye it may seem like an elegant pirate button, but in reality is... a... ergh... well carved fragment of nacho cheese iperconcentrated!"

M: "NACHO... CHEESE?"

G: "Exactly, Morgan! Years ago I've made the mistake to give to the boiling stomach of Mount Acidophilus a tiny fragment of this same dairy product, to discover just a few seconds after its devastating food intolerance that would lead it to... violently and implacably erupt every time it comes to contact with similar products. And you know a violent eruption of Mount Acidophilus would destroy the Greenhouse forever, right?"

M: "IT'S... IT'S JUST A BUTTON!"

G: "Let's see. Button in the fire?"

M: "A -ask, Guybrush. I'll... grrr... listen!"

G: "Well, Morgan. To better comprehend the woman who will be your... ehm... spectral life partner, it's absolutely necessary to acquire more knowledge about her past, don't you think? And this is why I want to know... what did your uncle Mansfield tell you when LeChuck was defeated by me?"

M: "HO -HOW DO YA KNOW ME UNCLE MANSFIELD?"

G: "Ehm... he was my... classmate at the Association for Anonymous Drinker of Battery Acid! I -I mean... of that caustic nectar of the burning gods! Slurp!"

M: "I -I... don't remember well! He -he said there were... weird legends on how ye've destroyed him!"

G: "Like what?"

M: "They talked about... a voodoo boa python... or an indigestion of root beer... or that ya made his head explode or..."

G: "Made his head explode... how?"

M: "Teachin' him somethin'... how to write, I think!"

Here I was, in all of my glory, just one step from revealing the nonsense that will allow us to get out of here.

G: "So there was a rumor about LeChuck unable to write. So, how could he have written all the diaries of his Treasure?"

M: "THAT WAS JUST A RUMOR, LIKE MANY OTHERS BACK THEN! AND EVEN IF IT WAS TRUE, HE COULD'VE MADE SOMEONE ELSE WRITE THOSE DIARIES WHILE HE WAS DICTATING!"

G: "And this is an excellent answer."

D: "BWAAAK! IMBECILE! WHAT WAS THAT, AN ATTEMPT TO FIND A NONSENSE?"

M: "MAKE A STEP!"

G: "W -well... step forward. U -urgh! It's hot here!"

M: "Second question, Guybrush! SECOND QUESTION!"

I seem, for a fragment of an instant, to see sneak behind Morgan a red and sweaty silhouette. A nauseating smell fills my nostrils. A dreamlike inspiration suddenly lightens my sleepy mind.

G: "S -so Morgan: c -can you tell me who is Booby Bob?"

M: "How do ya know... BOOBY BOB?"

G: "A -ha! Answering a question with another question! Twice in a row! Really rude, even for a spartan spiritual scourge like yourself!"

M: "He's a fat buccaneer with a red beard and the smart look of a marinated trout. He says strange and disconnected sentences and... I always meet him, in me dreams! Sometimes, he s -says he tries to communicate in the night with some... Spirits of the Tower, but he was trapped there when he was burned! He -he even taught me a song I sang and danced... in a dream with ya!"

G: "*The head bone's connected to the heel bone, but the heel bone's not connected to the arm bone.*"

M: "Ho -how do ya know it? HOW DO YA KNOW THAT SONG?"

The air starts to crack with the thin poison of doubt. Ferocious and unnatural lightnings start to burst out from the ocean to furiously fight against that wave of absolute nothingness, to stem and subdue it forever. The island beneath us, meanwhile, winces and changes shapes and dimensions in a sinister and crazy way. However, Morgan imperturbably stays locked in the sad film of her funereal reality, and she doesn't seem to even notice the absurd chaos of the dream.

G: "I know it because it wasn't a dream. Not for you, at least! Wake up, Morgan! Come back to reality and realize of how..."

M: "SECOND STEP!"

G: "What?"

M: "YA MUST DO ANOTHER STEP, GUYBRUSH! YA AND I... HAVE A DEAL!"

G: "U -urgh... alright! That didn't work. A -ah! The air here burns my lungs!"

M: "LAST... QUESTION!"

G: "P -perfect! In -in a sane marriage, the one from the covers of the "Sickening Buccaneer", it becomes necessary to deepen the emotional triggers of your partner. You know, to be sure the agreement would be optimal on medium-long terms and the relationship won't end in the physical elimination. About this, it's necessary to ask you: WHY DID YOU KILL LECHUCK?"

M: "I... I..."

G: "Morgan LeFlay doesn't kill anybody if she's not paid for it. Or if she doesn't have a score to settle. So why did you kill him?"

M: "Because otherwise... he would've..."

G: "What? What was LeChuck about to do?"

M: "LeChuck... he..."

G: "That was just a trivial excuse to not let him kill you. You know he would've killed you, because... that's what really happened, right, Morgan?"

There is no sky anymore. Instead, an endless screaming whirlpool boiling with fragments of memories, illusions and regrets. I feel the endless pain emanated by the twisted and devoured images and perceptions. It's Morgan's mind, who, with rage and fury, slowly takes conscience of how she was tricked, humiliated and slaughtered in the last years. I see the Voodoo Lady's promise, to let her go back to the real world as a pirate ghost hunter in exchange of her collaboration. Then, her heart, her conscience, her dreams diluted in the endless darkness of a soul forever cursed, while her bones stay indissolubly bound to the obscure ground of Black Bone Bay. Morgan's ghost is now cold and trembling, while her expression is the spectral embodiment of pure terror. Meanwhile, instead of Blood Island, there is just a colossal, twisted, deformed volcano, adorned with a cloak of hellish, gigantic flowers emanating an acrid and suffocating smell. The air around us beats of horrendous and more and more cryptic echoes of that decomposing illusion. I still don't know if I'll wake up between the thin bones of my pirate body, or between the screaming corpses of the Hell Bell, but... I'm not comforted by the fact that my good, old parrot once perched on my shoulder, he's not there anymore!

M: "N -no! I died in the volcano and..."

G: "You've created that ridiculous ritual of resurrection because... I knew Morgan LeFlay very well, and she wanted to be the leader of her own destiny, in both life and death! So, the idea of being accidentally killed in a duel was the most ferocious, heavy and unsustainable that could torment her... right?"

M: "I... WASN'T KILLED!"

G: "And I imagine you've dreamt of becoming LeChuck's heir thanks to his inexistent "Treasure", because you needed a way to... hide to yourself the sensation of horror, hate and disgust you've felt from being deprived of your body!"

M: "N -NO! I SAW THAT TREASURE AND..."

G: "And what is the pure hatred of Morgue... if not the reincarnation of the burning bitterness towards the wizards who humiliated and tricked you? If not the manifestation of the consciousness of being transformed in an empty rancorous ghost, forced to defend forever a dreadful voodoo artefact?"

M: "S -SIGH... I... I..."

Thank you, instalments of the "Psychoanalytical Pirate"! Next time that cross-eyed man with the weird accent comes knock to my door I... wait! Something's changing! The rainbow-colored flowers of the Greenhouse are dying and becoming grey and coarse paper, then dust flying away. The pit of the volcano slowly turns down every light and temperature, becoming a pot of cold and dark rocks. And while the sky stops to beat and twist, absorbing me in a dead cloak of endless emptiness, I realize Morgan is not there anymore.

G: "Dudley?"

...

G: "Morgan?"

...

G: "Hello?"

...

G: "Anybody?"

Dead. Everything is dead and deserted. As if I was abandoned from millions of years. Maybe... I failed my mission! Maybe... this is what you feel when your soul ends up in the tower of damnation. No hell of screams, analcoholic grog and endless pain. Only the coldness of an anonymous eternity, emptied of every color, every beat and every meanin...

<<WHAT ARE YOU DOING, STILL HERE?>>

G: "ARGH! Dudley Jones!"

DUD: "Where the hell were you, Threepwood?"

G: "WHAT DO YOU MEAN? YOU SENT ME HERE!"

DUD: "And you didn't make the Jump of the Sea Lion of the Great Plains?"

G: "The Jump of the Sea Lion... of the Great Plains?"

DUD: "Oh, I fear I forgot to teach you the only way to get out of an ended dream! You risked to stay trapped in the locker forever! Again! Ah! Ah! Ah!"

G: "Ah... ah... ah... w -what happened to Morgan?"

DUD: "Your instinct is as brilliant as crystal and as sharp as iron, Threepwood! By letting her believe to be just one step from reaching her goal, you reinforced the

walls of the illusion and incredibly increased the probability of your questions not making the entire reality collapse. How did you reach that conclusion?"

G: "The probability of the what?"

DUD: "But let's not waste more time. The show is about to begin! "The Most Insipid Cabbage Soup Of The World III"! GO WITH THE JUMP OF THE SEA LION OF THE GREAT PLAINS!"

The solid silhouette of a boot on my back kicks me away from that delirium, going through the trembling barriers of time and mind, until I suddenly realize my body... my REAL body was kicked with the same energy. I stumble towards the door to Black Bone Bay, I open it with the boom of a disfiguring craniate, and I find myself young, lucid and alive, in front of that very little luxuriant landscape. All the souls from the tower of corpses are now connected, through an endless net of shining and sharp threads, to Dudley Jones' hand, who's hovering and sneering a few meters above the ground. While a silver and wider chasm is starting to crack the ground at the center of the island, I see every single ghost of Black Bone Bay extract in some creative way a piece from the body of the Last Infernal to then bring it down with him, in that distant abyss leading to the realm of the dead. I see ghostly and rancorous blades skinning it to the meat, rusty hooks extracting his eyes, and strong punches crushing his bones to dust. And the most horrifying thing in all of this is that, during the obscene ceremony, the wizard is just... laughing! He laughs, in an haunting, coarse and noisy way, until the last fragment of his still attached lung allows him to have a voice! Maybe, in suffering that horrifying torture, that damned soul finally reached his personal and twisted Eden.

G: "Urgh! Bloody screenplay! I doubt I'll ask for a bis!"

DUD: "Eh? I didn't even start to prepare the first act! They did everything on their own!"

G: "W -what?"

M: "Guybrush!"

The thin and evanescent ghost of Morgan floats a few centimeters from me, covering that dreadful scene to my view with a warm and serene smile.

M: "You did it! You freed us all!"

G: "Did you ever have any doubts? When your soul gets trapped in a repulsive mass of decomposed corpses, you just need to call Guybrush Threepwood, mighty ghostbuster and... and... I -I'm sorry, Morgan!"

M: "You're sorry... for what?"

G: "I couldn't save you, two years ago, on Flotsam Island. And I never understood what you... well... yeah... what you felt for..."

M: "Oh, well. I'll move forward. Someway. As always."

BOB: "YARR! ARRRR! ARRRR AAAAAARGH! COFF! COFF! BLAAARGH!"

Once again, a cloud of rotten and unhealthy smoke appears beside Morgan. Once again, the cloud thickens in a fat and sweaty silhouette, uttering strange noises and incredibly busy offending the sense of smell in very original ways.

G: "THAT SMELL! But you are... BOOBY BOB! No... wait... you were young... shaved... a little less stinky... but I saw... your past, too! But the three Masters of Alchemy called you... "Salomon"!"

BOB: "BECAUSE SALOMON IS MY NAME, EMPTY HEAD! SALOMON SPITTLE, EX-GOVERNOR OF SPITTLE ISLAND! BOOBY BOB IS A RIDICULOUS NICKNAME THOSE SON OF AN ALCHEMIC COURTESAN GAVE ME! AAARGGH! AAAAAARGH!"

In that overlapping of obscene noises, I understand. Booby Bob: the "most eminent luminary of the pirate community", and Salomon Spittle: the "most intelligent man of the Caribbean". I knew the second one only by fame, but I would've never imagined they were the same person.

BOB: "I WAS ABLE TO CREATE A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE SOULS OF THE TOWER AND THIS WORLD! BUT WHEN THOSE IMBECILES OF THE TRIAD KILLED ME BY SABOTAGING MY INCENDIARY CANNON, I GOT TRAPPED BETWEEN THE TOWER AND A THIN ETHER MADE OF DREAMS, THOUGHTS AND PRIMEVAL ILLUSIONS."

G: "Why the song? Why all those puzzles? Why not tell me in a clear and limpid way what I needed to do, and..."

BOB: "OH, I LOVE THOSE SONGS! AND YOU CAN CONNECT WITH THE TOWER ONLY UNDER A GREAT DAZE! SO I DIED WHILE I WAS COMPLETELY DRUNK! YARRR ARR AAAAAARRRRR!!! EHI, THAT PURPLE GUY OVER THERE IS LOSING SOME PIECES!"

G: "I get it... and anyway I can only thank you! Your precious advices allowed me to confine LeChuck in the labyrinth of the other world and..."

BOB: "LECHUCK? I AAAARGH ARGGGHH UEERRRHHHG."

G: "Try to say it slowly and calmly."

BOB: "I DIDN'T GIVE YOU ANY ADVICE TO CONFINE LECHUCK SOMEWHERE!"

G: "What? But... what... what about the matter of the bones of the song with the "Not"? The Arm Arch and Breastbone Arch?"

BOB: "Oh, that was an advice on which portals to avoid! The ones you needed to NOT go through for any reason! You didn't send anyone there, did you?"



G: "What? And... why did you need to tell me which portals... to avoid? Wasn't... wasn't telling me the right directions enough?"

BOB: "IT SEEMED THE MOST LOGICAL THING TO DO!"

M: "He died while he was drunk."

BOB: "Yarr! Arrr! Arrr! NOW MY SOUL WILL BE DRUNK FOREVER! UUUUUUUUAAAAAAAAAARGH!"

G: "Ergh... and where did those portals lead? Where did I send LeChuck?"

DUD: "Oh, well, of Chef Conchito there are only a few splinters and a couple of red crusts. THE END OF THE LAST ACT! EVERYONE'S FREE!"

An ancient and beating energy starts to burst out from that silver chasm, sucking all the souls still on Black Bone Bay. I see Morgan disappear in it with a serene look, free from the inner boulder of not being able to make her loved one understand her sentiment, and conscious of the fact that, thanks to me, she finally lived that life of spiritual sea scourge she always dreamt of. I see Bo... Salomon disappear in it, while he keeps spitting weird offals and wandering incomprehensible verses. I see disappear in it the dazed looks, the stinking rags and the shabby tools of a thousand and more pirates, trapped for too long in the endless horrors of that perverted hell. Then, in that crazy and screaming whirlpool of ghostly gel, I notice something. Two tender and sweet looks, which memory I thought lost forever.

G: "Mom? Dad?"

My mother. My father. THE REAL ONES. W -what are they doing here? I must try to say hello to them. To talk to them for the last time. I run towards the whirlpool of the Realm of the Dead, but the last events transformed my body in a worn out carcass of painful pangs, so, after a few difficult steps, the earth closes, leaving me on that hellish and silent island, alone with some crusts and the horrible disfigured body of Elaine. Of the... copy of Elaine. M -my parents! My REAL parents! E -even they were in the tow...

W: "Sir!"

G: "AAAAAARGH!"

W: "SIR!"

G: "VAN WINSLOW!"

W: "CAPTAIN THREEWOOD!"

G: "BUT YOU'RE ALIVE! AND WITH... four undead warriors of LeChuck!"

W: "OH NO, THAT IS TERRIFYING! Ah, you mean THESE four?"

G: "W -well, yeah..."

W: "Oh, we are the "Irreverent Squadron of Death and Cabaret of Van Winslow!"

G: "Cabaret?"

W: "Oh, yes, I dived into the ocean before the Napoleon could explode, to then meet these four nice guys. I charmed them with the primeval charisma of Van Winslow, and we fought together to this place. When this battle will end we'll need to find another job, right?"

G: "So you'll do cabaret."

W: "Yes, sir! And stop worrying about De Singe. He's fine."

G: "I DON'T CARE ABOUT DE SINGE!"

W: "The old fogey was sprayed with that yellowish liquid of the Triad and melted, but after a few minutes he came back shouting "ALL OF THIS EST ABSURDE". Ah! Ah! Ah! Imagine, he spoke in french!"

G: "P -peculiar."

W: "Exactly, sir! Talking about us, our names are based on the four elements. He's Norbert, warrior of the air."

N: "My name is Robert. And I'm not a warrior. My job is to repair stoves and sophisticated systems of..."

W: "We'll talk about this later. Then we have Jonathan, the warrior of the bog."

J: "Yes! I was a refined british gentleman who loved to drink tea and sigh in front of the queen's painting. Then, one day, LeChuck startled the..."

W: "Yeah, yeah, a tearjerking story that one. Franz, the other warrior of the bog."

F: "ME IS LECHUCK! ME RIP OFF YAR NOSE AND MAKE TASTY GERMAN SOUP WITH IT!"

W: "Ah! Ah! Ah! He's a real master of imitations! And finally Ezechiel, warrior of the dialectical-logical rethoric."

E: "..."

W: "Oh, that boy philosophizes too much. He reached the conclusion that without lungs or vocal cords he can't talk, so he stopped doing it!"

E: "..."

G: "Those are not the names of the four elements! And how did you reach me here?"

W: "Oh, while we set sail to Vodun Island, you told me so many times about that song of the bones that I memorized it. And Ezechiel is a genius! He was able to reconstrcut the right route from the song! Ezechiel, explain him how you did it!"

E: "..."

W: "Ingenious, right? Especially after that matter of the six-armed monkey and the unhealthy... u -urgh."

G: "VAN WINSLOW!"

Van Winslow falls on his knees, holding is redden belly and spitting blood. I just now notice his pale and emaciated cheeks, and his contracted and suffering face.

W: "T -the battle of Mêleé is not going very well, sir! T -they injured me. Seriously, I fear. And the undead warriors of LeChuck weren't fully able to completely overwhelm the Triad. I -I... I..."

From the top of the tower I've considered dead, another chime of the bell of death. Things around us start to become thinner and more monstrous. It's still active! Even without the guardians' souls... the Hell Bell's tower is still active! A - and I must reach the top!

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*And it came.*

*The last scream of the bell of death. The last, bizarre form of that stinking space widened for too long on a boring and inconclusive time.*

*The collapse of every perception. The disintegration of every dimension. Warmth pervading everything, disappearing and becoming infinite ice. Air becoming emptiness, crushing in an eternal nothingness, disappearing forever.*

*Every moment overlaps with the others and becomes simultaneity, simultaneously becoming eternity, eternally reverting to what it always was and what it will always be forever.*

*Beyond the misleading walls of that insult now finally consumed forever, I'm one with the eternal backwash and the endless light.*

*The Reign of the Eternal Seas.*

*I'm finally going back home.*

## Episode XVIII - The last duel

... Guybrush Threepwood! His irritating image itches to the center of the brain, burns like a dance on scorching laminates, deafens like a ceaseless and tawdry sound of voodoo drums. I see him. He's climbing up. Step by step. Through the endless steps of bones, with his four undead mates. Beyond the spaces twisted by black magic and the thousands, obscene traps concocted by the Infernal Master. I see them overcome the seven Golems of Sad Skin thanks to the awkward display of british humour by one of them, laughing until the extinction of their last vital spark. I see them conquer the Tortures of ice and fire thanks to another one of those corpses properly adjusting the rusty valves of the central air conditioning. Now they're lost, completely disoriented, dumbfounded, while they wander the epta-cubic hallways and tunnels in the Labyrinth of the Eight Dimensions™! However I see one of them, a certain Franz, performing an imitation of the Compass of the Nine Dimensions™ so convincing that allowed them to do the jump to the sixteenth Hyperbolic Angle of Exit. I see the whispers of death released by the horrible Sibilant Tombstones succumbing in front of the unassailable dialectical-logical rethoric of one of the... wait! Behind them. A nostalgic, evanescent and... terribly sad presence. Someone able enough to sneakily trace their route and repeat exactly the same pathway! Every single one of my cells now burns in the sharpest and most urticant storm of agony, evoking to the tower of souls forces and energies coming from the most unsustainable and repulsive abyss of the Underworld. The spectral illusions now become deformed and monstrous. The inflated and rotted spaces become eternal, endless, inaccessible. And yet... they're... able to keep going!? They challenge the disgusting poisons with improvised antidotes, the traps by applying lateral solutions, the impassable spaces by contriving rickety routes. With ignorance, they overcome the disfiguring tactical amputations of the Halls of Murdering Chesses. With shamelessness, they overcome the endless agonies of the easily Irritable Inquisitors. With nonchalance, they overcome the Black Pits of larvae, cockroaches and...

G: "Uurgh... ptui! For the sacred dreadlocks of captain Dread, crew! You are the second... no... you're really the BEST pirate crew I've ever had to deal with! A tactical perfection never reached in the past! I think I could really overcome every obstacle with you. What do you think, Ezechiël?"

E: "..."

G: "I too feel a brotherly love towards you. But allow me to say it's not very gentle this... what is this suffocating air? W -where are we? C -could you take this thing off from my eyes?"

...

My crew doesn't reply. I ungracefully clean myself with my right sleeve from the spot of muddy and blackish blood of the last Irritable Inquisitor, exploded from rage just a few, improper centimeters from my nose after a flimsy insult about the abacinations made with non regulatory needles. I cough once again with violent spasms, spitting the second-to-last remains of larvae from the Black Pit. It wasn't one of the significant silences à la Ezechiel, one of those that could describe you in a few seconds a civilization from its first evolutive steps to its tawdry decline. The Squadron of Death and Cabaret of Van Winslow... is not there anymore.

G: "Oh, no. Not another mutiny. Not again!"

VL: "The last spark of LeChuck's mojo has become extinct, and with it, the last glimmer of dark consciousness animating their bones. They will once again go to the Sea of the Floating Shipwrecks to wait for him. But this time... it will be forever."

G: "Wha -what? N -no. You can't be..."

VL: "What's the matter, Guybrush?"

I'm under the endless emptiness of that titanic bell, which remaining echoes still vibrate between the poisonous ampoules, horrible dolls and twisted and slimy idols of that red and mephitic voodoo hall. Sitting on a deformed throne of disgusting and indecipherable material, I meet again who once was the Voodoo Lady. My stomach freezes for a few seconds, as if my soul was trying to reject that vision. Now almost a shapeless mass of meat, she's older than a human body can ever endure before completely decompose. And yet in her epileptic breathing, in her dying beat, I feel a rhythmic, slippery, deeply unpleasant movement, like the one of a pile of big blind boas at the ravenous search of a good morning meal.

G: "S -stay back... I have some Ipecac in my pockets and I'm not afraid to use it..."

VL: "You know very well I can't move from here, Guybrush. What can ever make you delirious like that? Maybe my appearance... frightens you?"

G: "Frighten? And w -why? I -I don't notice anything particularly unusual. I mean, the care of your appearance was never your fortè, and you always had that devastating problem in the management of your metabolism that never..."

VL: "Elaine... the Baron... the Triad... the Infernal Master... I never wanted any of this..."

G: "I... I still can't believe YOU were really the one who started all this terrifying and inconsiderate chain of events! Not after all the times you helped me! The premonitions on Méléé! And all that incredible voodoo on Scabb! The pure ring of Blood Island... and everything else!"

VL: "You can see for yourself how all the horror of the last years made my human flesh suffer on layers you can't even conceive, Guybrush. I've tried to give to

anyone a happy ending at the best of my abilities. I've respected the balance and the rules of this universe. I've played my cards with sincere love towards everyone who lived in it. Until... until I could!"

G: "You've respected the balance of reality... before completely destroy it?"

VL: "Destroy it? How much I wish you could discern, Guybrush Threepwood. Look at LeChuck... he really wanted to DESTROY reality! Burning the oceans, reddening the skies with the blood of the mortals and thousands other, childish ways to show his IRRECOVERABLE inadequacy."

G: "Oh, sure, this is completely DIFFERENT, right?"

VL: "There is no destruction in my aim. I've dreamt, you know? And listened, through those disturbing millennia spent sleeping under the earth."

G: "Or maybe you only listened too much to the nightmares by indigestion of cosmic kudu."

VL: "And you... you would go crazy in less than the tiniest imaginable fragment of a second if you've just tried to START to conceive the things I saw birth, decompose and die over the millennia, Guybrush."

G: "Oh, and I notice you didn't do any better."

VL: "But you know what remained constant through the ages? Voodoo!"

G: "Voodoo?"

VL: "Yes, Guybrush! The rebirth of cults of black magic. The reformation of the arcane arts. Nightmares, intuitions, horrible revelations on how to manipulate nature to its definitive alteration. Reality, constantly moaning, was generating the same instruments so that someone could EXTEND it to its reunion to the infinite."

G: "Moaning? I don't think I fully get it, but if you heard the objects around you groan during the night I think your problem is more serious than..."

VL: "Stop it with the foolish play. I'm sure you know what I mean. Everything in the universe, Guybrush. Every thing is the constant, irrefutable proof this harrowed illusion in which you live is constantly REBELLING against its incompleteness. That this mutilated and ill form of eternity is only screaming from the core of its bowels... to revert to what it always was. And I, fundamental part of what it was, have suffered with it in unimaginable ways. Torn off like the rest of creation. Tortured from the slippery conscience to be born in an eternity... that was ripped away from me forever!"

G: "E -ehi! Wait! The reality in which I live could certainly be harrowed! It could be incomplete, mephitic, and there could be no way to spend a weekend without ending up in the worst encrusted nook of some tavern tasting those typical floor boards still full of the taste of various corporeal fluids! B -but this is MY reality! It's... the reality of Horatio! And of Morgan! And of Van Winslow! Before YOU decided to crumple and throw us away for your pleasure, as if we were bad-carved puppets of a disturbed puppeteer!"

VL: "Let it go. I don't ask you to accept it. I just ask you... to let go. To comprehend that questions of this magnitude should be rightly asked only by who... has the adequate perspective to do it."

G: "You know, I... maybe not able to have the ADEQUATE PERSPECTIVE to take this matter in my hands. But I was already living my... personal eternity! Maybe it wasn't long like all those uncomfortable centuries you weirdo superior beings are used to, but... it had a name! And a wonderful face! Her name was Elaine Marley, governor of the lands from Mêlée to Plunder, passing through the now dead carnivals of Booty. And yes, you ripped her away from me. That's why... I can't allow you to keep going with this madness anymore!"

...

Threepwood is distraught, visibly desperate, panting. Then, a click. He extracts something from his pocket. A little, cubic, insignificant object. The click of a little lever. Metals starts to click on little bones, clicking on little tendons of animals. Those sounds acquire a structure, a shape. They become regular, harmonic, beautiful. They become music. Sweet, sad, almost unreal. That mechanism releases a symphony of crystal, smelling of archaic and distant aromas. A lukewarm and pleasant fog, suddenly thickens in the center of my brain. Something I didn't feel in almost... how long? I -I...

G: "That's right. This is the SORCERER'S GEAR, my delirious and not anymore trusted Lady of Voodoo. Its scheme remained imprinted in my head after I touched... a CERTAIN dodecagonal stone on Vodun Island..."

*Stars, oceans and arcane lands. Legs, hearts, skulls and hands. Vibration of every element, come here to my nourishment...*

G: "Or at least, an equal and opposed version. Reproduced by the maladjusted Marquis De Singe himself under my instructions on Scabb! E -ehi are you muttering something?"

*... and haunt the air, every blob. Strips of meat, every chip, every stone...*

G: "Well it doesn't matter, the musical power of this instrument will send you back to sleep forever in your disgraceful... ehi, how can you play that thing if there is no rope to..."

*... until every thing a voice emanates. And in the bell the clang RESONATES.*

G: "... HOLY SKIPPING MONKEYS!"

I'm able to dissipate the fog at the last moment, right before my eyes could close. The chime generated by my voodoo explodes right over the trembling silhouette of Guybrush Threepwood, collapsing on himself like a little puppet of broken and dead bones. The contraption ruinously slips away from his hands, and rolls down, through the endless stairs leading to the inferior floors of the tower. The young pirate clumsily tries to slip through the hatch from where he came to catch his weapon. But the truth is that he will never catch it. Ever again.

...

That last echo of the bell opens an empty, devastating abyss, as if its sound went through every single, soft offal of my body to make it explode from the inside. I lose grip on the Gear and collapse on the ground destroyed, confused, lost forever, while the red and mocking walls of that hall seem to horribly slip around me, like a million snakes ready to embrace me in their last, grinding hug. W -which chime was that? Is -is the world still here? I don't have time to reply to myself that suddenly, like many other times in the past, something emerges in my still stunned and sore pirate brain. An intuition. The vision of a sad and peculiar ghost picking up something from the ground. I connect the facts. I know perfectly well what to say.

G: "Unghhh... from all of this I must deduce... that NOTHING in this universe interested you at all? That every thing was only a tool to aquire the dark art that could allow you to abandon it forever?"

VL: "In front of the eyes of who contemplated the eternity everything that remained stuck in this material universe is nothing other than... the memory... of a twisted and deformed copy... of an ancient and distant shadow..."

G: "And what do you say about... CORONADO DE CAVA?"

I see the Voodoo Lady's expression, already perplexed and suffering, frowning in a tangle of empty and aching wrinkles.

VL: "Everything... living in this material universe is nothing other than... the memory... of a twisted and deformed copy... of an ancient and distant shadow..."

G: "And we already heard this. Coronado! What do you say about Coronado?"

VL: "Nothing. He... didn't matter... to me..."

G: "..."

VL: "And now... the end of everything... reality must DIE... so that it could reunite with the ETERNITY!"

...



...

TLOOOOON!

...

...

*And it came.*

*The last scream of the bell of death.*

...

*Every moment overlaps with the others and becomes simultaneity, simultaneously becoming eternity, eternally reverting to what it always was and what it will always be forever.*

*Beyond the misleading walls of that insult now finally consumed forever, I'm one with the eternal backwash and the endless light.*

*The Reign of the Eternal Seas.*

*I'm finally going back home.*

...

...

...

TLOOOOON!

TLOOOOON!

TLOOOOON!

*Error: empty memory*

...  
...  
...

In the twinkling of that wonderful and sad music, I see the distraught and thin ghost of Coronado still embracing the Sorcerer's Gear, picked up a few moments ago in the inferior floors of the tower. He sneakily followed us to reach his enormous lover. He heard everything. And he activated the mechanism of the carillon. That destroyed and frowned face, was finally serene. Those eyes twisted by madness were finally close, peaceful and relaxed. The two parts long separated from each other... the two parts of the prophecy... were reunited. And the Voodoo Lady... was sleeping forever.

C: "What... what were you become? And I... w -what did I do?"

G: "You did what was right. And it wasn't simple. I imagine we needed all the strength and temper... of an old, mighty explorer."

C: "Did... did she feel pain?"

G: "Who knows the PAIN a being like that really felt in those centuries of solitude? No... you simply relieved her from her pain. Her restless consciousness is extinct forever. And I'm sure that before falling asleep she dreamt of... going back home."

C: "She... really never loved me?"

G: "Didn't you hear her last words before closing her eyes?"

*<<... Ah! Ah! Ah! Ah! You know... I've already failed... when you freed the souls of the tower. And if destiny wanted this to be the conclusion... I at least wanted it by YOUR hands, Coronado...>>*

G: "Who knows... when she said you didn't matter to her... maybe she already realized her plan failed. So, the only thing she had left was to push you to do what you did. Lead her hand in hand... to her last sleep."

C: "You say?"

G: "Sure, if she loved you, she obviously loved you like an immortal serpent goddess could love a human being! That probably means... like a human could love a hamster! Or maybe a flea! Or another insignificant creature with the improper proportions to..."

C: "TE VOY A DEJAR EL CORAZÓN!"

G: "NO! I MEANT... SHE LOVED YOU VERY MUCH! JUST LIKE A HUMAN LOVES ANOTHER HUMAN! ANOTHER VERY BEAUTIFUL HUMAN! STOP!"

C: "That's better! But all these horrors... these endless piles of bones... this voodoo... must end... must be washed away..."

I almost don't pay attention to Coronado's words, while I notice something, for the first time. 'Tiny, metallic echoes of curses, swears and rants. 'Thin and distant blasphemies resonating in the glass walls of a little bottle. With a not very agile jump I grab a tiny knob on the backside of the clapper of that now powerless bell. It opens, creaking, a little metallic window, and my blood freezes. I found it. The... the source!

<<YAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRRRRRRRRRR>>

An agonizing and screaming jelly. The soft and cursed soul of the God Pirate LeChuck. Inside a little bottle of voodoo glass, all the spiritual corrupted essence of decades and decades of immolations, ritual slaughters and other unpleasant and bloody vexations made to the irritating gods of black magic. It has no eyes, but I see it scan me with anatomical morbidity, to decide which parts of my body dissect first. Angry like the darkest hurricane, frustrated by all those years of captivity, it seems impotent inside that bizarre bottle. And yet, I can't leave it there, risking it could get out and corrupt the entire tower, or the oceans, or some new rotten and withered body. I pick it up. I'll find a way to extinguish it. Yes. I'll find a smart, sane, possibly without-ulterior-motives shaman who could make it disappear forever from this world. I'm sure that... I turn. Coronado is blowing into a bizarre and elaborate instrument that makes no sound. For a second the disconcert attacks me, believing the madness devoured him once and for all, when suddenly the horizon is shaken by the sound of a powerful, solitary and nostalgic voice.

C: "Here he is..."

G: "This... is the manatee!?"

C: "That's right, hombre! Get out de aquí! I'll reach you in a moment."

I don't let him repeat himself and I abandon that unnameable place forever, morbidly gripping the LeChuck-in-a-box™. I descend those endless and whirling stairs, through a tower now... silent, sad, normal! All those pits full of nightmares, those boiling whirlpools of dead and repulsive things, those twisted and deformed spaces, all vanished, to leave behind just white, sad and dusty walls of bones. Obviously repainted of red blood and bowels by the fantasy of my liquid worst enemy, who at every single step works out a new, creative way to reinvent the voodoo sufferings on my living flesh. I finally exit filling my lungs of air not completely plagued with the gasses of decomposing corpses and I look up, noticing the red and grotesque sky polished itself with a soft sapphire shade. Those dark and electric clouds are dissipating, and the fury of the oceans... the fury of the oceans is worse than before!?

G: "MANATEEE!!!"

The waves a few meters from the black cliffs of Black Bone Bay inflate, scream, explode, to then open and let emerge in a deafening clang the titanic silhouette of an old, maladjusted friend who tried to devour me and my ship years ago. First, the salty shower of that annoying backwash. Then, a gigantic, lukewarm hurricane of manatee breath runs over me, making me desire to run back as quickly as possible on the tower of decomposing corpses. Finally, the wet and tender tongue of that mammal, licking me with ancient nostalgia of that good old times of internal disfigured ears, giant larvae and coarse contests of pirate faces.

G: "No! Good, giant manatee! I won't go back there! Stop, giant manatee! NO!"

C: "You'd like it, right? Sorry, but the seats in the cabin are already reserved. First class, one way!"

I turn. Coronado just crossed the threshold of the Tower of Horrors bringing on his shoulder the inflated and bulky body of his sleeping bride. He proceeds with ease to the cliff and he puts it getly on the ground, just a few centimeters from the mephitic emanations of that hungry puppy.

G: "Ho -how were you able to bring such a load on your shoulder?"

C: "Ehi! Don't be offensive towards the lady! And it was a matter of levers anyway. Ooooh, this me recuerda of the old times!"

G: "U -uuuugh..."

Coronado seems to ignore the honesty of my inevitable moan of disgust, scans an horizon polished with maybe the first rays of warmth after centuries and stops for a moment. Then, he talks to his gross friend in the same marine idiom. The giant manatee seems to nod, scourging the cliff of Black Bone Bay and my already wet pirate jacket with a wave even more violent and ungraceful than before. Then, the old explorer turns towards me with an expression I've never seen before on that face eternally consumed by alienation and solitude. No... it's... another face! Now he seems fresh, happy, rejuvenated of decades again, and he's showing off the same aspect he must had in the age of gold and blood when he was fighting against Napoleon Hellbeard.

C: "We ce saludamos aquí, Guybrush Threepwood. My bride and I will sail... pardon... MANATEE to our last destination. To the place where we can finally stay together forever. Arch your caudal fins and prepare yourself to the journey, my good old sea cow, porque we'll go to... CORONADIA! Oh, don't be offended every time I call you that. Don't be prickly now!"

G: "Coronadia? It -it exists?"

C: "Who knows? Maybe it's an ancient atoll of thousands wonders still to discover. Or a land beyond the oceans of time, where... an old friend is waiting from ever for our last duel. The first rule of a good, mighty explorer is that there always are places, islands and treasures which secrets must not be revealed to anyone. Adios para siempre, hombre! Y buena suerte!"

Sudden darkness. A quick movement of the manatee. His gigantic and moist nose dives ravenous in the edge of the cliff, missing me for a few, precious centimeters. Then, when he raises his head in a blaze of gross and sticky drool, Coronado and his very little charming companion are not there anymore. Now he looks at me, for a few seconds, with an expression between the desire of having me in his stinking stomach again and the gratitude of helping him overcome his insurmountable relational problems with the female mammals. Finally, the idea of doing again a pathway through slimy and stinking streets abandons us, he shows me his stocky and mammoth back and goes away intoning a long, melancholic and musical howl. Maybe a goodbye. I stop and look at him go away, between the golden waves, beyond the horizon, to Coronadia, to that maybe inexistent mysterious land from where, in their grotesque and disturbing dream of love, Coronado and his love will never come back.



Ehm.

The manatee is coming back. Long, melancholic, musical howl. This time with those typical shades of complain of unwanted annoyance. He stops once again on the edge of the cliff of Black Bone Bay. Salty and unwanted wave. Manatee breath. He opens the mouth. Coronado is in an unstable balance on the tip of the wet and trembling tongue.

C: "OH, I FORGOT! VERY SOON THIS YOUNG DON JUAN, HIS LADY AND THEIR NUMEROUS FAMILY OF LITTLE MANATEES WILL REUNITE TO PROVOKE AN INCREDIBLY DEVASTATING WAVE SO THAT THIS ISLAND AND ITS OBSCENE CONSTRUCTION WILL BE WASHED AWAY FOREVER EVEN FROM THE MAPS OF THE MOST TALENTED ESPLORADOR DE ESTA TIERRA. Uhm... not that there ever existed more talented than ME! IN ANY CASE, I SUGGEST YOU TO LEAVE IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ADIOS!"

G: "WHAT? BUT I DON'T HAVE A BOAT, NEITHER A RAFT, OR A..."

W: "Oooh, it's so romantic!"

G: "VAN WINSLOW!"

W: "Aye aye!"

G: "AYE AYE? BUT... BUT... I THOUGHT YOU WERE SERIOUSLY INJURED!"

W: "Oh yeah, I made a strange dream you know, Captain Threepwood? There was my wonderful Anemone gently picking me up from the cliff, plunging me in her ambiguous kingdom, and putting my body in this sophisticate and ancient machinery, to save my greased but fascinating skin. Then in the warmth of the drowsiness I passionately kissed her and she screamed in Ancient Vaycaylian something like "OH, POUR TOUS LES GLISSANTES LANGUES D'UN MILLIER D'ESCARGOTS, DON'T TRY IT EVER AGAIN AND STAY STILL WHILE I TRY TO RESTITCH YOUR WOUND!"

G: "That seems french. And I think it was De Singe."

W: "Who knows, sir? Then I woke up and mysteriously beside me there was De Singe with stitches, flaming torches and other incomprehensible contraptions, muttering something about disfiguring wounds, and the use of the tongue during his professional duties that..."

G: "MY HYPOTESIS SEEMS TO STILL BE THE MOST PROBABLE!"

I notice something with the tail of my pirate eye. The manatee... is not there anymore. Then the sky resonates with one, two, ten long and powerful howls. The horizon, before calm and shining, now starts to become twisted and disproportionate. The water in the distance inflates, rises, becomes enormous and monstrous, and it arrives to implacably tickle the highest peak of that now wet and bubbling firmament.

W: "Ooooh. Tsunami by manatee family. It's so romantic!"

G: "QUICK, VAN WINSLOW! THE DOOR! THE DOOR WHERE WE CAME FROM!"

While behind our backs looms the uproar of the entire ocean ready to crush on our heads, Van Winslow and I run towards the wooden door which led us here, to finally leave Black Bone Bay behind us forever. We open it, weak and creaking, we dive inside it, and we fall through the last sparks of physical and sane reality, before the great abyss. I embrace with very little tender solidity the bottle containing my liquid and mumbling colleague, knowing very well that if it crashes a devastation beyond every possible solution would be released on the weak and corrupted Caribbean. We roll in the heart of nothing, dazed and sore, but at least still able to breath without needing to swallow titanic and unpleasant amounts of salty water. In that pressing delirium of senses and directions I lose my grip on the bottle, ready to see the demonic end come out from a million sharp shards, but after a few seconds I see the providential and soft belly of Van Winslow cushion its fall. Mine! Again. Somewhere to base my feet on. I difficultly stand up. Darkness. Vertigo. Endless emptiness. I can only imagine with my fervent filibuster fantasy those stormy and implacable waters finally washing away all that voodoo horror, giving to the tortured corpses of those unfortunates the peace of the noblest burial. Now, considering that the fury of the elements should've subsided we can easily turn around and go back outside where we can calmly study a solution to... nothing. The door from where we entered vanished. Stupid deathly senseless hell and... wait! Wait a moment!

G: "E -ehi! There were dozens and dozens of arches here before! All those conglomerations of bizarre scribbles! And the inconclusive and slapdashed puzzles of trash cleverly piled. Now they're only... five!?"

W: "Conglowhat? Oh, yes, I wanted to talk about this anyway, sir. I fear those mysterious tunnels... are collapsing!"

G: "What?"

W: "Well, yes. I had an unpleasant quarrel with the Marquis a few moments ago about this. He was of the idea that while he was coming here he had the impression the tunnels were shrinking around him. I explained that probably the demonic force that created them vanished, causing the inevitable and progressive collapse of those cursed hallways."

G: "S -sounds logical. A -and he?"

W: "Well, he justified it with tiredness and went away shouting "AGAIN WITH THESE STUPID SUPERSTITIONS!? MON DIEU, REGINALD, NOW I'LL GO THERE FOR A NICE WALK AND I'LL SHOW YOU EVERYTHING IS GOING TRES BIEN!"

G: "And he never came back."

W: "Aye, and he never came back."

And the Marquis too took his obscure and suffocating way to home, too obtusely rational to be able to comprehend the senseless existence of something going beyond a reality barbarically calculated and measured. And uhm, about MEASURES, the five arches around me are... slightly smaller than before!? They're clearly shrinking, moaning and creaking for the agony in a disgusting way! At least two, no... three... FOUR are definitely impassable, unless you want to leave on the other side all these limbs, this fat, this flesh that could complicate things. The only portal still smiling to me with diabolical complicity is white, architecturally refined, shining with an alive and horrible light. I recognize it. A few moments ago it was gigantic, now barely passable, but I recognize it. The arch where I sent LeChuck.

G: "The Arm Arch..."

W: "You'll fantasize about the keystones of those ancient voodoo arches later, captain! QUICK! LET'S GO THROUGH IT!"

Suddenly, everything freezes. A deep and shaking feeling starts to twist my bowels. A premonition, like the certainty that something horrifying is about to happen. A tug. Winslow launches me out of my anxiety and drags me with all his rustic strength to our only potential exit. During the race I feel LeChuck's essence vibrating, boiling and resonating of an ancient and terrifying ecstasy! M -maybe I should not bring it with us! M -maybe I should throw it away! Leave it here agonizing forever in an endless nothingness? N -no! This is the Crossroad! Maybe a borderline and distant zone, but still a dimension in which LeChuck knows very well how to get out from. If I leave it here... he'll come back! Yes, he'll come back once again in a darker and more terrifying form than before and there will be no way for me to escape his disgusting tortures. We go through that soft and trembling space and we land in another hall full of piles of crackling and moaning bones. A couple of them vanishes in front of me, closing forever on who knows what avoidable places and releasing a last mephitic and coarse breath. I look around me once again. And once again the only possible solution is clear, evident, horrible. The Arch which keystone's form reminds me of one of those stupid darts we pirates throw... THREW.. sigh... for fun on our private parts during those wonderful, devastating, legendary drinking contests. The BREASTBONE Arch. Seductive, symmetrical, scaring in its representation of the only walkable and reassuring way. The Arm Arch and the Breastbone Arch. The route which, in Salomon's opinion, we should've never taken for any reason. LeChuck's essence now beats, rejoices, becomes monstrous and schizoid. It has no eyes but it scans the entrance of the mocking tunnel, as if it knows SOMETHING wonderful and demonic is waiting on the other side. N -no! After too much time spent in a tiny



prison of glass it must simply be befuddled, and now it's just clearly raving at the idea of going out in the material world! The Voodoo Lady was clear, after all. If the Squadron of Death and Cabaret of Van Winslow extinguished its conscience it's because the mojo of LeChuck's... copy created by Chronos Grave vanished, died, disappeared forever! Winslow hears his squadron mentioned and untimely starts to complain, asking me why I let go a demonic crew gifted of so much artistic potential. But I can't allow myself to pay many attention to his broken theatrical dreams because even the Breastbone Arch is starting to collapse, creak, moan, shrink just enough to let a body not too big pass through. The route to never take for any reason. Or the eternal exile in this dark and empty dimension. I decide, in classical Mighty Pirate style, to not let me frighten by the bizarre omens of Booby Bob and I jump, followed by my loyal and complaining Reginald Van Winslow. The Breastbone Arch almost seems to want to suffocate and grind us with it, while we go through its last, horrible moments of life. But we make it. Air. Space. That deathly silence fills with the dark and deep gurgle of something. We just came back somewhere, in the lukewarm hug of the physical, real world. But it's completely dark. We blindly make way through bones, rotten planks and other dusty and disgusting things pulverizing with our touch. We proceed through a straight line, while at every step the darkness becomes more torrid and suffocating. Then, after keeping tasting cobwebs, coffin's chippings and decades old weird corpses, we see something. A red and living light, peeking through a distant, gigantic doorway at the end of our path. I mercilessly sweat in that now scorching tunnel and I proceed to its end. I push with force that strong strange metal door and the first thing I see shine in that red and blinding ray coming through it a writing carved on the rests of a now sad and destroyed statue. "Good soup is food". Then, the lights of a giant and terrifying... eye of fire! Always... pay attention... to omens. And I can't say why, but one in particular now comes back to my mind:

*"Blood Island will be the place... where you will die..."*

SZ: "Heee! Heee! Heee! After the first, big rat... here are the other two sewer rats coming out the Great Path of the Bell. This must be my LUCKY DAY!"

I freeze only for a few instants when I hear that laugh heard many years ago from the annoying but innocent Herman, while the metallic steams immediately bring my personal flesh to medium cooking. In front of me, infinite pathways of melted stone dominated by incomprehensible metallic machinery tear what it once was Blood Island, now forge and smithery of all the worst techno-bizarre horrors of the Triad. I'm in a scorching place lapped by endless pathways of fire, probably where it once was the cemetery of the island, accompanied by the spirited eyes of Baron Soze and a group of his white minions doing.. something! And I need only

a few seconds to notice the pile of trash they're compulsively rummaging is... LeChuck's body!

SZ: "Soldiers? SOLDIERS! FIRE! Exterminate this OBNOXIOUS pirate trash once and for all! Oh, and as soon as the recycled material from the Admiral's body is ready from the Recycling Trifurnace 412-b, IMMEDIATELY schedule a cleaning round at the bell's path. The tombstones must've REGURGITATED again!"

The soldiers stop doing... whatever horrifying thing they were doing and suddenly turn around, gripping their tawdry trimuskets from the holster. They extract them, ready to make me explode in a million of bloody pirate splinters. Maybe my instinct made a horrible and dark choice. But the bottle is not in my hands anymore. I see it ruinously fall on the ground. Millions of shards. A voice resonates inebriated, powerful, chilling.

<<BUAHUAHAUAUHAUHAUHAHAHAHAHAHRRRRR!!!!>>

And steams of decomposing corpses, sulfur, screams of thousands of buried spirits and insults of every mumbling language rise. And horrifying nightmares, and a tornado of sharp blades. The God Pirate LeChuck... is... is...

<<HONEY! I'M BACK!!! AHR! AHR! AHR!!!>>

Shots. Explosions. The soldiers of the Triad are visibly terrorized and frantically try to shoot every bullet they have on that shining, incomprehensible cloud of pure chaos. Horatio smiles and shouts something about Big Whoop. Or monkeys. And races. The uproar rises, it becomes unsustainable. All the valley's lava resonates with a mix of ancient drums, obscene curses and coarse demonic laughs. The final revenge of every single voodoo demon on those men who tried to desecrate, stomp, exterminate them forever. So every bullet is vain. Every word lost. In a second, between lovey dovey cries and screams of terror, those miserable blockheads end up flayed where it's most painful, cut where the most vital sap slides, grinded where they try to defend themselves the most. The last one standing is Horatio. That green and putrescent cloud embrace him to finish him, while the ex-grandpa Marley inserts a hand in the internal pocket of his jacket, as to pick up something. I instinctively jump towards him, but Van Winslow grabs my arm and begs me to flee. We try to make way through those gutters of flames and melted stone, and floating metals and... the last scream. A voice I know very well. G -Grandpa Marley... is not there anymore. But there's no time for farewells. We must keep running! To the beach, to the sea, in the hope of finding some boat to save ourselves with. Before it could happen... the clouds! They're shaking,

vibrating, as if they have the convulsions of an unhealthy and disfiguring fever. That restless and overclouded sky rumbles of sinister and horrible sounds, like colossal creaking gears. Chimes, like a thousand rusted pendulums exploding to wake you up in the middle of the night. Ropes, tensed to the infinite. I turn. An unspecified spot in the fog beyond the horizon starts to shine and crackle. Then that distant gap between the oceans starts to vomit lightnings, tornados, hurricanes and strange screaming shadows getting absorbed in the fraction of a second from... something that is exactly where we came from. Silence.

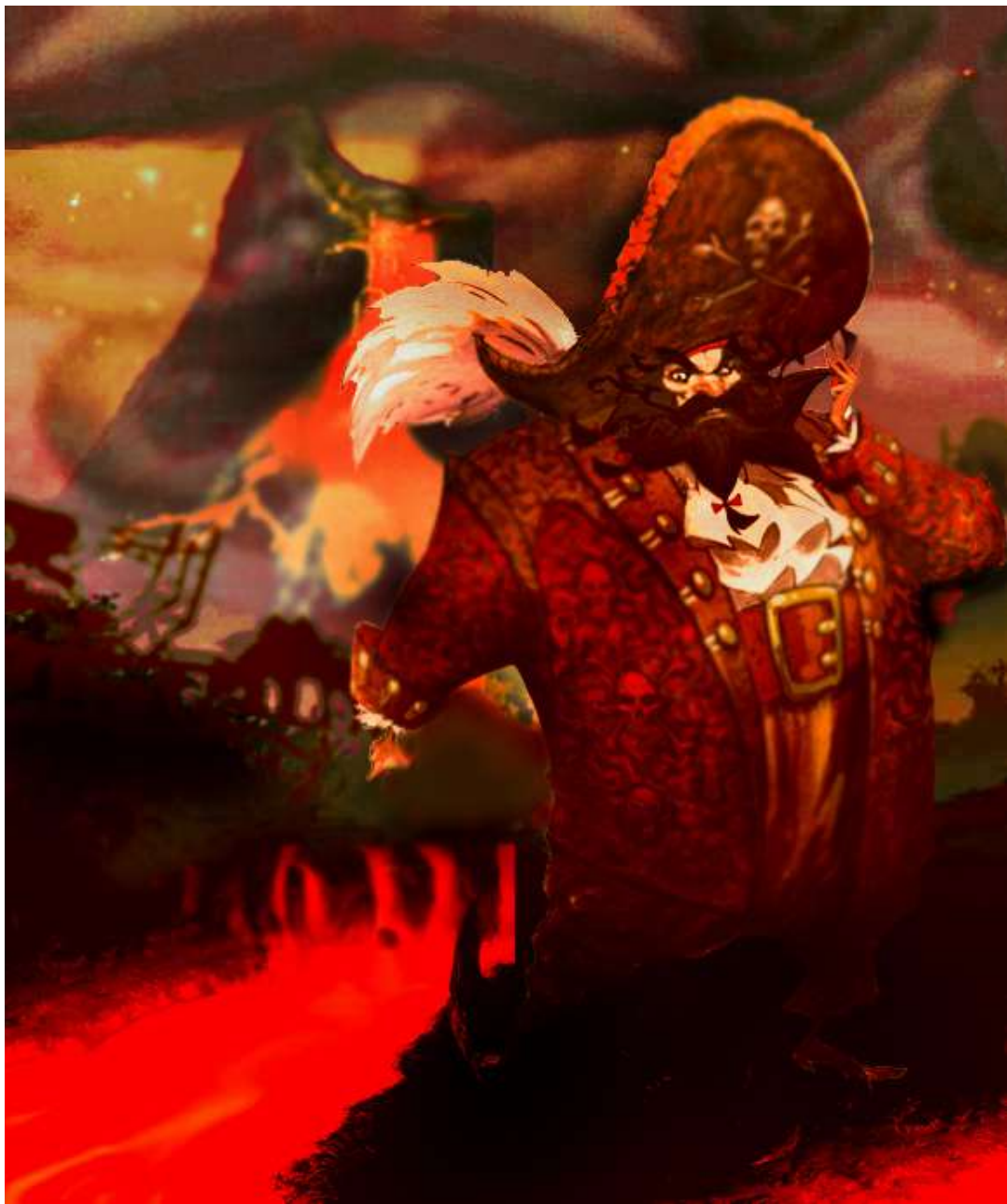
G: "W -what was that? Is -is it over?"

W: "I don't know, captain, but I think it would be better if you point with the finger on the map to the most distant zone possible from all this hell and..."

LCK: "Booo!"

G: "YIKES!!!"

LeChuck is in front of us, blocking the little passageway of stone and metal leading to the sea. The reverberations of the rivers of lava of Blood Island reflect themselves in his swollen and gloomy eyes, while his face contracts in a dreary and horrifying smile. F -from how long he was there? And... is he a simple human again?



LCK: "Ya can't even imagine the GRATITUDE I feel towards ya for freein' me from that voodoo bottle, Guybrush! Even if I IGNORE which bizarre instinct could push ya to take SUCH a choice beyond the PURE AND SIMPLE SELF-DESTRUCTION! Ahr! Ahr! Ahr!"

G: "I... don't know what pushed me to let go the bottle. B -but the truth is that I was tricking myself, LeChuck. I was telling myself to let you rot in the Crossroad. Or to bring you to some wizard that could finally extinguish you forever. B -but... the truth is that I couldn't postpone the inevitable. There is almost no magic anymore except YOURS. And every thing I would've tried to do, you... would've escaped! You would've possessed this or some other corpse. And you would've been back. S -so this time I need to PERSONALLY take care of KICKING your

now not VAPOROUS voodoo ass to make sure you could NOT EXIST IN EVERY KNOWN DIMENSION ANYMORE!"

LCK: "Oooh, Guybrush! What is this childish... hostility? Ya know, the events of the last days cleared me mind. Made me... a different pirate. Just like ya, I saw that world of treasures, revelry and romantic mornin' slaughters I really like extinguish. Everythin' I adored to plunder, corrupt and vituperate... vanished forever, devoured by an obsession too mad even for a mind devastated by the vices like mine. And all of this inevitably led me to mature the idea the only valid thin' to realize now is to... COMPLETELY REWRITE IT!"

G: "Re -rewrite it?"

LCK: "Oh, yes. HOWEVER... it's a power I've just aquired, somethin' I'm still not fully master of. SO I THINK I'LL DO SOME EXERCISE BY RECOMBININ' THE OFF-KEY NOTES OF YER ENTIRE EXISTENCE IN A SOPHISTICATED SYMPHONY OF HORRIFYIN' AGONIES, GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD!!!"

And so in that silence tortured only by the gurgling of the lava, my bearded enemy starts to shake, change, deform. Again horrifying sounds of mechanisms and metal resonate, and gears going crazy. The pupils burn. The swollen muscles become big and disproportioned. The skin becomes silver, while it starts to be traveled by discharges of grey and horrible lightnings. And in the sound of a twisted and metallic chime, the quadrant of a big, ticking clock appears in the center of his chest.

LCK: "Yeah, it seems... the REPARATION of me dead copy went perfectly well... ooh! And once restored its vital functions it was easy enough to... REAWAKE its cursed connection with Chronos Grave and ENTIRELY ABSORB THE POWER OF THE TIME STREAMS! Yeah... sinistrate yer sundials and upset yer hourglasses! It's the time for the TIME GOD LECHUCK!"

G: "T -time god? I -I just needed a g -god to speak to in c -case I want to know the e -exact hour. V -Van Winslow t -tends to repeatedly drink t -the sand of the hourglasses and... and..."

LCK: "Oooh, stop to poetically pretend all this ARROGANT COCKINESS, Guybrush. I know ye've... suffered in the last days, right? The poor, little Guybrush Threepwood went through a sequence of events so DEVASTATIN' that his lowest brain is just ONE STEP from becomin' crazier than the one of the good old Horatio Torquemada Marley. Well, ya know what? The last days... WERE NO MORE THAN A SUGARY WALK ON THE BEACH DURIN' THE SUNSET COMPARED TO WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN! BUHAUAHAHAUAHAUAHAUAHAHAHAHAHAHRRR!!!"

I don't see anything anymore. The air suddenly becomes dense, salty and bluish, while my head becomes oddly and horribly light. Then, something. A tight and suffocating noose around my neck, while its other extremity is tied to a tawdry idol a few meters from me. I feel a strange, annoying itch in different areas of my body, I look down and see dozens of fish, crabs and other little animals gnawing my hands, legs and nose to the bone. Then, I realize the chilling truth. I'm... floating, stiff and frozen on a backdrop sprinkled with blades of every kind, while the color of my hands is greenish and gloomy. I realize I can't move a single muscle because... I'm dead!

LCK: "TA-DAAA!"

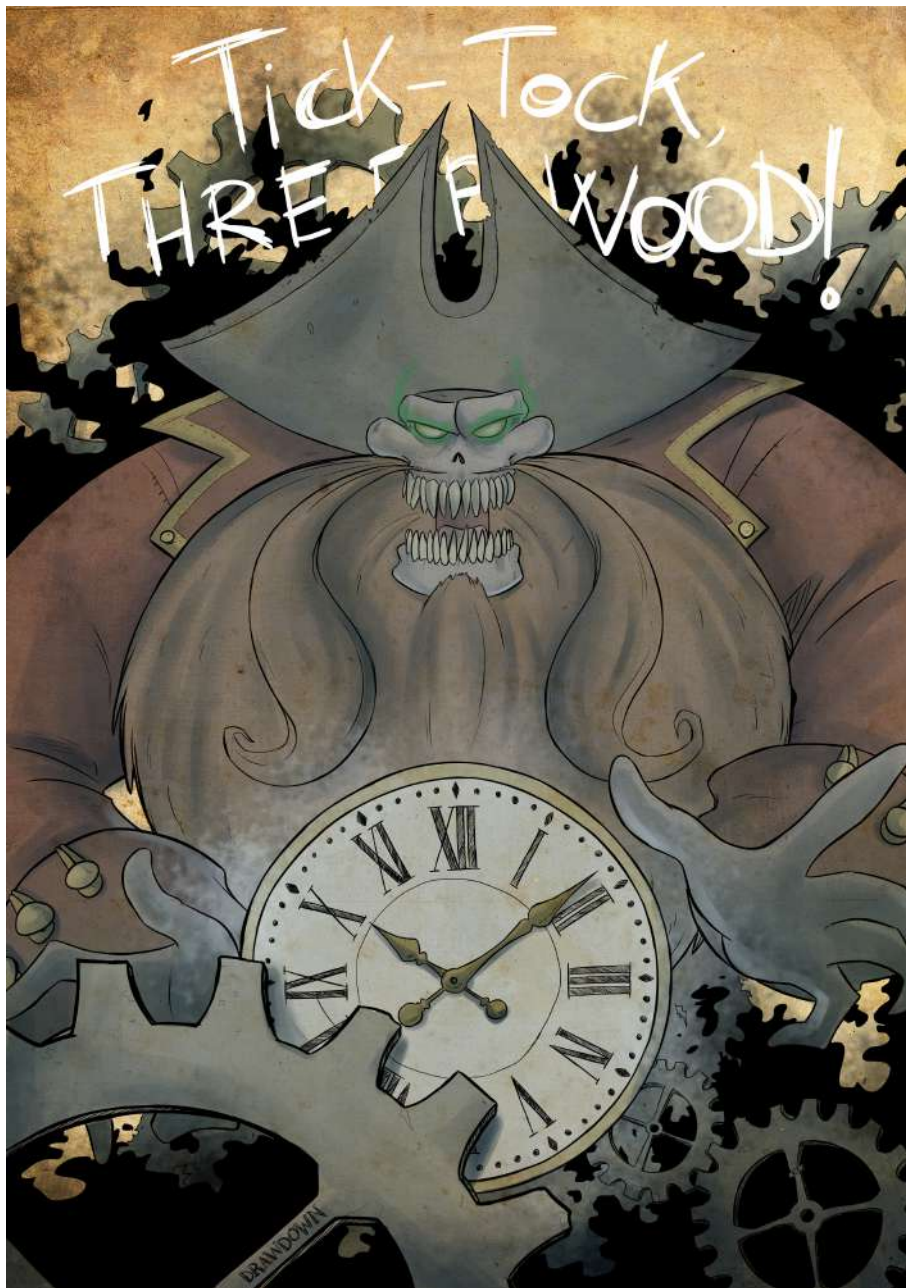
LeChuck suddenly appears in front of me. The blades once around me are not stuck in the sand anymore, but they're suddenly in his hands. He scans them, analyzes them, like a butcher searching for the perfect instrument with which dissect his next carrion. Then, he starts to whistle and make them float in circle in an ungraceful and chilling juggler exhibition!

LCK: "Hop! Hop! Look here! IT'S SO simple! When ya see it from ANOTHER slant ya realize the time flow is all here! Ya pull a time rope here, capsize a sequence of events there, and all reality CHANGES FOREVER! Oh, in this case I added a few pounds to the Idol of Many Hands ya were tied to years ago. Ya can't take it up after I drop ya from the pier of Mêlée Island. Ya DROWN! AHR! AHR! AHR!"

There are no words in the human language able to describe my terror, while my very little virtuous enemy takes the aim and throws an axe towards me, missing me for the pure, insane fun of torturing me and letting it get stuck in a wooden pole behind me. He suddenly jumps in front of my swollen and decomposed corpse, and he scans me with a slightly irritated expression.

LCK: "Mh? Uhm... rippin' ya to pieces with blades? Slowly lookin' ya bein' devoured by the fish? Good beginnin'. But TRIVIAL! Seein' the shameful amount of power I can use I think I can do better. Wait a second! I HAVE AN IDEA!!!"





The clock on LeChuck's chest goes crazy in a quiver of tickings, chimes and hands convulsively dancing. The land around me opens, collapses, devours me. The sky becomes black, rotten and smells of candies and strange sewage. I'm enchained to... a red little wagon disfigured by showy demonic writings. Blinding lights. Dazed by tawdry and repulsive circus jingles. I'm stuck on... the top of a ruined and rusty rail of a rollercoaster so tall that the world beneath me appears as a microscopic anthill. Then I try to look better at it and I notice it's populated by thousands and thousands of people with a dumb and happy expression, while they do kilometric queues to be slaughtered by sharp and screaming ferris wheels, and starve of hunger and thirst in hallways of terror with dead ends, and buy inedible foods from smiling cannibal clowns serving kebabs of human legs and... LeChuck!

LCK: "ISN'T THIS FUN, GUYBRUSH? DOWN WE GOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!"

The Time God LeChuck is sitting right next to me, with a drunk and mad face, while the vehicle we're sitting in slightly inclines itself forward horribly creaking. Then it starts to fall along its rails, and it takes speed, more and more. The dizziness is so devastating that my bowels seem to take advantage of my screams of terror to climb over my stomach and escape once and for all. The wagon becomes scorching, and the wind is so sharp that the skin on my face starts to unwrap. I -I can't do anything...

LCK: "Oh, this... is what would've happened if I'd fed the enslaved monkeys and didn't let Big Whoop's power extinguish. Ya... would've still been trapped there after years, and the park would've become so popular... that it would've covered like a pestilence THE ENTIRE PLANET! AHR! AHR! AHR!"

LeChuck's laughs become grotesque echoes resonating through the sky. There is no one sitting next to me anymore. The braking a few meters to the ground is so devastating that eyes, tongue and brain seem to fuse together in a single, soft and nauseating mush. And then... the dive in the lake of magma at its end is slow and inexorable. I can't do anything but keep screaming, while my flesh, my bones melt and burn alive centimeter by centimeter. And the last thing I see before the magma reaches over what's left of my nose is LeChuck walking happy and bloated to the edge of that scorching pool with a big zombie teddy bear and two rotten sticks of cotton candy on which strange and disgusting insects flutter.

LCK: "Look here what I won, Guybrush! Five thousands points at the Gut-The-Yokel™! Right there in the corner, behind the stand of the rats-ice-creams! What? Don't do that face! What is this funeral?"

End of the ride. I'm just a pile of aching, burning and scorching bones, while LeChuck flies right beside me, puts a hand on my shoulder and takes a snooty pose while one of the zombie photographers of the amusement park arrives to immortalize our racy moment together. So he takes my hand, to drag me still alive and fleshless to some other carousel of horror.

LCK: "Ahr! Ahr! Ahr! Ya know, Guybrush, just now I comprehend why in the past durin' our duels I started to mumble, waste time, commit enough mistakes to allow ya to defeat me at the last second! Because inside me I FELT I would've been able to come back with a power so exorbitant that I could fix all those me mistakes, one by one! And do ya want to leave the insane fun in..."



Suddenly, he stops. His expression changes, becoming doubtful and perplexed.

LCK: "Mh? Wait. Let's try somethin' else."

And the hands of the clock on his chest once again go crazy, while the wind of time screams and the reality around me rips itself again. However my skin doesn't recompose. My flesh doesn't heal. My bones are still naked and aching, but... but... there's something different now. They're extremely sensible and consumed, besides being fit in each other in a bizarre, twisted and even more excruciating way than before. I'm in a reddish and horrible hall, which walls of blood and stone are covered by dozens and dozens of nauseating ampoules, unwatchable sculptures and alarming voodoo scribbles. On the other side, a colossal creaking wooden gate suddenly throws open, revealing once again the silhouette of the Time God LeChuck, now walking towards me with satiated and satisfied arrogance.

LCK: "FINALLY! After a long day spent at sea to hang, boil corpses and spread bowels along the decks of the enemies' ships there's nothin' better than A NICE EVENIN' SPENT TO PLAN THE SLAUGHTERS OF TOMORROW ON ME LUXURIOUS SCREAMIN' THRONE! How are ya today, Guybrush? Did that beautiful zombie chandelier in the livin' room start to return yer attention? Ye're always the same, old furniturizer! Ahr! Ahr! Ahr!"

A chair! I -I'm an horrible aching chair! I see the repulsive divine lower back of my satisfied enemy getting closer to me, and at the contact with it every single one of my bones tends, creaks and starts to scream in an unimaginable agony.

LCK: "Yeah, in this reality the mechanism of torture to which I've chained ya in me fortress years ago worked in a... SLIGHTLY different way. A few centimeters less in the thickness of the rope that triggered everythin' and... YA END UP IN THE ACID BEFORE BEIN' ABLE TO CONTRIVE A WAY OUT!"

G: "AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAARRRGGGHHH!!!"

LCK: "Oooh, there is nothin' better than the right musical accompaniment while ya work. Maybe I should call Zombie Musician Largo. Ya know, the sound of those rustic bagpipes cut in his lungs goes DIVINELY with yer..."

Between the vague glimmers of consciousness I'm able to grip here and there in that endless torture, I suddenly notice LeChuck just stopped his feverish stir, started on purpose by him to sharpen my levels of pain to the threshold of madness.

LCK: "No! No! Wait! There's somethin' wrong here, too! I must try somethin' different!"

G: "... what's... happening... LeChuck... did you just find a big spider in one of those Menu of Cheap Cabbage... that usually needs two? Ah! Ah! AAAAAAARRRGHHH!!!"

LCK: "I'LL MAKE YA GO AWAY THE WILL TO JOKE ONCE AND FOR ALL, SHEEPGOOD! AS I'VE TOLD YA, THIS IS JUST THE WARM-UP! So, let's try again..."

The debacle, the disaster, the torment of what happens next is maybe impossible to describe for an ordinary human mind. In the usual hell of tickings, clicking of temporal gears and glimmers of memories I didn't even know to have, reality unwraps itself and recomposes even thousands of times per second, while LeChuck tries to implant the seed of the most humiliating defeats in every single second of my life. Hanged for futile reasons to the main mast of my ship sailing to Mêleé. Exploded with Rapp Scallion in his little restaurant on the shores of Scabb Island 'cause of the gas left accidentally open. Rotten to death by boredom in Phatt's prison. Stumbled in the magmas under Monkey Island's hell 'cause of an extra daiquiri-grog before lunch. Devoured by the cannibals of the Kaflu's village 'cause of a caustic and contemptuous comment about their ritual dress. And then again, and again, in an eternal succession of readjusted details, of reinvented elements, to project me in that inexorable crescendo of the most disgusting horrors the fate, now as a repulsive and bearded Time God, could ever conceive. And LeChuck is always there, to click the spring of the ruination, to turn on the mechanism of my destruction, to... and yet, I notice something odd in him. Every time I'm able to see him even for just a few instants before dying, I notice he's distracted, empty, almost melancholic. I'm now destroyed and shaking, while I realize I've been buried from days in the crypt of Blood Island without a tool that could allow me to open my coffin. Then, the reality rips itself once again, and I see it recompose there, where everything started. I'm still on Blood Island, this time forge of the Triad, and the Time God LeChuck is in front of me, visibly panting and distraught.

LCK: "It's impossible... IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!!! It doesn't matter how many details I change, how many choices I influence or how many forces I manipulate... ALWAYS IN THE SAME WAY! It ends... always... IN THE SAME WAY! I've scanned to the most distant and deep recesses at the end of time... but... but... there is no timeline... NOT EVEN ONE... in which ELAINE MARLEY AT THE END CHOOSES ME! ELAINE... WON'T BE MINE... AND WON'T EVER BE!!!"

Good old LeChuck. He needed to aquire the most devastating power ever conceived to realize something another average pirate would've realized in thirty seconds to then philosophically comfort himself in the warm embrace of some

courtesan. And I would willingly express this thought of mine in the form of one of my usual sarcastic comments, but the memory of what I've just lived is so chilling that, despite everything seems to have been deleted from the rivers of time, I'm only able to lay on the ground with my eyes open wide, completely paralyzed by the humiliation, the pain and the horror. Plus, I'm starting to feel something weird. A call towards... something. Apparently senseless thoughts start to crawl along my back. Like a glimmer of desire to... control the events. To own... THINGS I don't have!? No, it's more something like... a will of undisputed and everlasting DOMINATION on the Caribbean wielded by... by my person? W - what in the hell is happening to me?

LCK: "Relax, LeChuck! Relax! If in the past ya were defeated it's also because ya were never able to keep yer head cool. Ya were furious. RECKLESS! Perfect, let's start all over, from point zero. 'This time I'll start by SLAUGHTERIN' yer parents before yer conception. Or maybe DURIN', what do ya think? Ahr! Ahr! Ahr! Of course, and then I could 'TRY TO... AAAARGH!'"

LeChuck is knocked by something that gets him right in his divine stomach. Then, that... thing uproariously explodes, making part of his face and three quarters of his body fly away, and breaking him in a million of gears now scattered everywhere. W -what was that? It -it seemed... a golden cannonball with a big "S" on it!



<<CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD! STAN ISLAND HAS BEEN CONQUERED!  
>>

Stan Island! Stan's mega store and giant statue, and its terrible, devastating cannon anti-non-paying-clients! Of course! There is no worst mistake on this world than to underestimate, forget, don't pay attention to Reginald Van Winslow, the "greatest hero of all times". It's a shame that... in this instant all those gears scattered everywhere are reassembling on their own, slowly recomposing, and they're taking again... the original form of the Time God LeChuck.

LCK: "Mpf! I've let the midget escape. Grave mistake. It's a shame that... if ya have the complete control over the streams of time... there is no mistake ye're allow to make! Ahr! Ahr! Ahr! Just wait that I completely recompose meself..."

A second, devastating cannonball explodes right on his face. LeChuck gets disjointed again in many, microscopic shreds, which however, once again, after flying away, slowly fit, repair and gently roll themselves to what's left of the carcass to recompose it in the original form.

<<I CAN'T KEEP SLOWING HIM DOWN FOREVER FROM HERE, CAPTAIN! THINK SOMETHING UP, AND DO IT FAST!>>

I wish I could say I have no idea on what to think up to get out of this mess. But the truth is that I realize to be sick, doomed, lost forever, after being just chosen as the new, unwavering paladin... of the wrongest power that could ever be evoked by accident on this earth!

*First it chooses as its nourishment the strongest human around.*

*And it waits, it waits that his fear suffocates him, that his anger stabs him, that his pain burns him.*

*Because only then every certainty, every support, every claim for compensation collapses, and that soft and weak flesh at the core of his spirit remains naked and skinned, ready to be devoured.*

*And with it all his sanity, all his logic, all his structure.*

*But the seal is magnanimous. The seal is generous. In exchange for what it devours, it gives him access to its unlimited power over others minds!*

*And he only has to hope that with his mind now infected from the most horrifying madness... he can make good use of all those brilliant gifts.*

*Of course, this never happens.*

*Never.*

Yes... I'm Guybrush Threepwood, mighty pira... no... mighty and wonderful RULER OF ALL THE CARIBBEAN! Buahahahaahahaah! Yes! I'll even delete from the memory of mankind every single misdeed of the Triad and I'll make sure that every person would be the lowest SLAVE of my shabby FILIBUS-TOPIA of PURE anarchy, plunders, skipping monkeys and oceans of GROG! I take advantage of the confusion of my obnoxious adversary and I run, ravenous, to the entrance of the Great Path of the Bell. To Horatio Torquemada Marley. To the musical and seductive voice... of the Seal of Power!

<<CAPTAIN! I HAVE NO CANNONBALLS ANYMORE! CAPTAIN! LECHUCK IS ALMOST BACK AT THE MAXIMUM OF HIS TAWDRY POWER! DO SOMETHING, QUICK!>>

I rummage in the pockets of the not excessively devastated body of Horatio-Herman-Soze, and I find it in the internal pocket of his Supreme Leader of those CISSY weirdo's big and baroque white jacket! Mine! Yes! MINE! The seal that will allow me to finally fix everything in the Caribbean! Yes! I'll quickly be able to...

LCK: "What do ya want to do with that gubernatorial stamp? Deprive me of me sane democratic rights by rejectin' my request in double copy of Electoral Certificate? Ahr! Ahr! Ahr! Ye're RIDICOLOUS!"

G: "You know very well what this is, LeChuck! The power... of the seal... is more devastating... where greater is the 'TORMENT' of who grips it!"

LCK: "Oh, yes, and after everythin' ye've experienced 'cause of me little trips through time now ye're feelin' so DEVASTATED, right, little princess? And despite this ya think ye're able to use it to CONTROL the mind of a Time God? I've never heard ANYTHIN' more hilarious than this! COME ON, GUYBRUSH! TRY TO TELL ME WHAT TO DO!"

G: "Then why... you're not able to activate any of your powers?"

LCK: "W -what? I -I'm just reflectin' on the way... on the moment from which to start to REWRITE time... I..."

G: "And I notice you're walking backwards. What, your powers now activate only after an ungraceful imitation of some new species of divine SHRIMP?"

LCK: "NO! I... I'm just tryin' to... D -DAMN YA!"

Keeping myself lucid is practically impossible. Trying to control even just a little part of the mind of a God is the second... no, no, is exactly the most horribly devastating SENSATION ever conceived by man. It's like all the blades, the demons, the whips and the flames of the twelve hells of the cults of Dodekagon Island break out to their maximum power in every hem of your brain. With side dish of Mambo's irritating questions. And yet, more and more, minute by minute, my spirit starts to intoxicate itself of scary, eccentric and wonderful thoughts feeding and multiplying the effects of that repulsive power. And so once again, like two brothers bound by some weird whim of destiny LeChuck and I walk together on the only, scorching pathway leading upstream, accompanied by the gurgling of the lava and the screams of my traveling companion, who's pouring on me his entire and very little refined repertoire of pirate curses. Higher, higher, to finally reach the last edge of the pit of Mount Acidophilus. I stop a few meters from there and I let him proceed. The rest of the path is reserved to him.

LCK: "THREEPWOOD! EVERYTHIN' YA DO IS USELESS! DID YA HEAR ME? IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YA KILL ME, I WILL ALWAYS COME BACK, UNDERSTOOD? I'VE MADE PACTS WITH FORCES THAT GO INFINITELY BEYOND YER PATHETIC ABILITY TO WAVE AROUND THE LAST 'TRENDIN' CURSED TOY! I'LL COME BACK, AND I'LL 'TORMENT' YER DREAMS EVERY SINGLE DAY OF YER EXISTENCE, UNTIL YER LAST BREATH AND WAY BEYOND! DO YA HEAR ME, THREEPWOOD? A... AAAAAAAAAAAAAARGHHHH!!!!!"

The last step, and LeChuck flies down in the magma of the volcano. The pit echoes of terrifying screams, while the once Time God gets swallowed and melted from the voracity of that lava. And I slowly feel the flames of my brain extinguish. I don't need to control anything anymore. His mind... is dying. That means I can

FINALLY USE THE POWER OF THIS SEAL ON EVERY SINGLE, PATHETIC HUMAN DERELICT STILL INFESTING THIS ARCHIPELAGO! Yes... think of all the things I could FINALLY realize, the CHANGES I could break out. MY FILIBUS-TOPIA! I could institute a new, inflexible pirate organization WAY MORE powerful than the one of... Horatio... who became nothing more than a horrible assassin, dead alone and DEVoured by obsession... BUT HORATIO WAS AN OLD FOOL! I'M NOT! AND I'LL USE THIS POWER way BETTER than HIM! BUHAUAHAHAHAHAHAHHH! THINK OF THE CARIBBEAN COVERED OF INFLEXIBLE PIRATE ACADEMIES FOR ENERGETIC DESCENDANTS OF 'THREEPWOOD'™! First year, class in hanging with Crooked Noose. Hanged with a Crooked Noose if you don't pass the class in hanging with Crooked Noose. And the mess halls serve REAL ROTTEN VODOO FOOD and rat vichyssoise of steamed rat of cooked rat and decomposed and putrid ham and... yes! YEEESS! AND THE WATER WILL BE PROHIBITED! Death, prison, KEELHAUL in the GULF OF THE SPITEFUL SHARKS to whoever drinks water!!! ONLY GROG! Five thousand pieces of eight, a daily pint! A daily pint, five thousand pieces of eight! Half the prize for the kids! And all the ISLANDS WILL BE CONNECTED WITH UNHEALTHY CABLES, PASSABLE ONLY IF YOU HAVE WITH YOU A SHINING CHICKEN WITH A... no! No! No! Look at the Baron! Look at LeChuck! Look at the Voodoo Lady! Too much power in a single person is simply wrong and leads to solitude, corruption, MADNESS! BUT THE FILIBUS-TOPIA! THE CARIBBEAN GOING BACK TO THE OLD TIMES! No, no! They forced the people around them to become slaves of their personal obsessions and all that was born was horror, death, DEVASTATION! FAKE TREASURES BURIED EVERYWHERE FOR YOUR SANE ENTERTAINMENT! AND THE ONLY WAY TO HAVE A SHOVEL IS TO REMOVE FROM YOURSELF A... and all this insane power... is everything a true, mighty pirate... must FIGHT WITH EVERY FIBER OF HIS BODY! NYAAAAARGHHH!!!

The seal probably weighs three or four pounds, like a little piece of stinking nacho cheese. And yet at the moment of throwing it to the pit of Mount Acidophilus the sensation is that of trying to throw away the entire Archipelago of Melange with mermaids, manatees and Voodoo Lady at her worst physical form. And yet, I'm able to free myself. And yet, the aim of Guybrush Threepwood is terrifying enough to miss the target despite I'm a few meters from the pit, and hit the last edge. I run to it. I look at it for a few seconds, conscious of the fact that my dream to go back to a golden age of piracy will die forever with it. Then, a last, well dealt kick. And the Seal of Power too is in the chasm of flames, in the good company of LeChuck, a mountain of fresh vegetables and who knows how many other repulsive human sacrifices. I turn, still destroyed and traumatized, and I start to

descend stumbling more and more times along the now deserted streets leading to the sea. Then, right when I'm near the entrance of the Great Path of the Bell, I notice something I didn't before. A big, shining lighthouse turned on on a cliff nearby, which rays clearly enlighten the course to Stan Island. And then, in the distance in the fog, a little, familiar boat departing from the fog, led by a haggard, sad and hooded silhouette.

W: "How kind the old Welshman. Like always! He and his magnificent jokes on his dreamy... CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD! WE DESTROYED LECHUCK! WE DID IT!"

G: "..."

W: "Captain? What are you looking at? We destroyed him... right?"

G: "No, Van Winslow. It's not over... and it won't ever be!"

<<THREEPWOOD...>>

I feel every single remaining glimmer of force in my legs die, while I see... the gutters of lava of Blood Island changing direction and suddenly going upstream to converge all together in the volcanic cone of Blood Island, now shaking and gurgling even more convulsively than before. The stagnant magma inside it starts to shine of sinister demonic lights and the sky seems to scan me with killer eyes, while LeChuck's voice echoes on the entire island, hoarse and powerful like the most inauspicious and terrifying of death omens.

<<THREEPWOOD... REMEMBER... WHAT I'VE TOLD YA! IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW MANY TIMES YE'RE ABLE TO KILL ME! EVEN WHEN THE ENTIRE PLANET WON'T BE ANYTHIN' ELSE THAN A VAGUE MEMORY ON THE DEPTH OF THE ABYSS OF THIS EARTHLY DIMENSION... I WILL STILL BE HERE... TO MAKE SURE THE ABYSS IN WHICH YA ARE... WILL BE THE MOST REVOLTIN' OF ALL! DID YA HEAR ME, THREEPWOOD?>>

G: "He just resisted... even to the fall in the lava! We... can't do anything anymore..."

W: "Or maybe we can do something to defeat him once and for all, captain. Isn't THIS what you thought since the beginning? Since the moment you've decided to break the bottle?"

G: "Yes... but I've hoped... hoped to don't have to do it. I..."

W: "Let's start to prepare it, Captain Threepwood. I'm with you. Even in this last journey. Even if it means to... perform the Egsanzyon!"



The Egsanzyon. The last resource. A ritual so terrifying that even Hellbeard ran away in terror to not complete it. The spell which phases remained clearly engraved after reliving the dodecagonal memories of Nor Treblig, to the point that I could reproduce it in every place at every time. Three lives sacrificed... in exchange of the ability to banish forever a place in a dimension beyond every conceivable space and time. In an unknown beyond every spiritual afterlife imaginable. Our lives... to send Blood Island to the only limbo from where LeChuck can't ever come back!

G: "I... Van Winslow! F -for the Egsanzyon we need the lives of THREE people. Otherwise the risk is that it will happen what happened to Vodun Island! An island between two dimensions without any logic! And our sacrifice... would be completely useless!"

W: "Oh, there's no problem. If you'll wait for me here just a second I'll go take the non consentient body of Stan lying in front of the gates of his island. I suitably knocked him out with a stodgy Van Winslow's slaps sandwich and..."

<<NO, I'LL OFFER MY LIFE, IF NECESSARY!>>

W: "Yikes! The dead talked!"

G: "Grandpa!"

The Baro... Herm... Grandpa Marley is standing in front of us. Wounded, dazed, but apparently still alive. And now is staggering towards us, gazing at us. The spirited and upset look of Soze is not there anymore, now replaced by the endless emptiness of two eyes profoundly sad and melancholic. But above all, despite his limping walk, I don't see that instability, that typical eccentricity of Herman anymore, now replaced by that regality and that prominence you can only see in the greatest pirate leaders.

G: "Grandpa! I thought... I thought you were dead!"

H: "I... still can't believe... that infernal object! It led me to do ATROCIOUS things! HORRIFYING! That I will never be able... to forgive myself about. One of these... was to MODIFY my body with those REPULSIVE TECHNOLOGIES to make it... more resistant to the inevitable call of death. And this had inevitably... made my skin more leathery! My flesh more resistant. My organs... sigh... I don't EVEN think I have NORMAL, working BOWELS like every other human anymore..."

G: "Grandpa... I'm sorry we have to do all this! You don't have to give your life for the ritual banish-Blood-Island... I..."

W: "We have Stan!"

H: "You don't have to be sorry, sonny. You were able to resist the enticements of the same power I allowed to DEVASTATE MY existence and that of all the CARIBBEAN. And you were able to destroy it! Only now I comprehend... you always were the great pirate who deserved to stay beside my granddaughter. Greater than I could ever hope to become. So, if it's my life I need to give to at least... PROVE to fix my terrifying actions and KICK THE ASS OF THAT HORRIFYING AND BEARDED DIVINE PARASITE, THEN YOU CAN BE SURE FROM NOW ON IT'S COMPLETELY YOURS, GUYBRUSH THREEPWOOD! MIGHTY PIRATE!"

G: "Oh, grandpa!"

I run towards grandpa and instinctively give him a long, suffocating hug, of those he seems to not particularly appreciate. When I let go, he replies with a silent and dry pat on my shoulder, of those in which there are all the certificates of esteem never pronounced in years and years of consecutive, and maybe never really heard, "my granddaughter has married an imbecile". The decision is taken, then. We three will send LeChuck to his last limbo. The old generation of the great piracy that was, the new and maybe last generation of piracy that will never be anymore and... ehm... Van Winslow!

W: "But Staaaan!"

<<WHICH POWERS WILL HAVE THIS ME NEW BODY? MMMH... I'M ABSORBIN' EVERY SINGLE ELEMENTAL ENERGY OF THE VOLCANO'S DIVINITY. AND SOON I'LL BE ONE WITH THE EARTH. WITH ITS MAGMA. WITH ITS HORRORS BURIED UNDER METERS AND METERS OF METAL! I'LL BE... THE BLOOD GOD LECHUCK! BUAHAUAHAUAHAUAHAUAH!>>

We try to ignore the ceaseless rants of LeChuck, and we focus on the execution of the last ritual of which that unpleasant imbecile will ever hear. The agreement is silent and immediate. First, as tradition wants, the exchange of three elements of three basic branches of voodoo: Head, Thread, Body.

*The first gives to the second a part of the head  
The second gives to the third a part of the thread  
The third gives a liquid of its body to the first  
And let go of your spirits, on this place they'll rest*

I give to Horatio the piece of rope I used to keep my hair. The same that, still stinking of monkey, helped me descend along the pits of Monkey Island for the first time. They can't say I never was a sentimental pirate. Or particularly careful to

monkey-esque aromas I was emanating towards everyone around me. Horatio gives to Van Winslow those Supreme Leader of the Triad's repulsive shoulder pads and Van Winslow, prey of the symbolic disgust for the received gift, reacts with a rich and rustic phlegm à la Van Winslow directly on my right hand. The... ergh... exchange of gifts is done. The voodoo bond between our lives is established. There is nothing more but set sail to the Last Ocean.

<<I HEAR... THAT YE'RE SILENT. WHAT... WHAT ARE YA DOIN' DOWN THERE?>>

*To its extremes you'll go, everybody on the road  
And trace on the floor the symbol of the Crossroad  
Turn off the lights, it's the end of the way  
Banish this place, give your lives away*

I'm now on the southern beach, tracing the voodoo symbol that will communicate to the spirit world I'm ready to abandon my last vital energies to transfer this island beyond every dimension. Then, a green light. The horizon starts to shrink. The sea to sinisterly calm. Something terrible starts to materialize behind me. And for a second it touches me, just like it happened to Hellbeard, the terrible and coward idea to dive in the ocean and flee from the clutch of death. But, what gives me back comfort is the sight of Horatio there in his location motionless, arrogant, proud of being able to finally redeem himself from the slavery of all his life, and maybe hopeful to soon meet again his rickety crew of the Four Map Pieces for a brawl and a game of "Liar's Dice, Asphyxia and Dysentery", just like the good old times.

<<NO... WHAT ARE YA... DOIN'? N -NO! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!>>

And then I smile too, now in a bloated and arrogant pose in front of the Stinky Lady, while I think of whoever choose a different destiny from ours. That when the Sun will be extinguished and the oceans frozen, the mega-blood-demon LeChuck will still be here, to reign over his rocks of eternal solitude.

And think of... all my rickety old crew waiting for me on the other side! And all the pirates of Tortuga! And all the mysteries still unsolved, and the treasures still buried! And... Elaine! I must find Elaine again!

I look Van Winslow and, from his location, he says goodbye with a simple, silent motion. A finger pointing to the starry sky, as to indicate that this is not the end, but just the beginning of a greater adventure. As to say we're pointing the finger on the biggest map of all, the one drew by nature without any limits nor borders beyond the ones we'll be able to give it. To the great oceans beyond the infinite,

which unknown can only represent the beginning of the most extraordinary adventure!

*And it will never be said I'd escape the journey to such a route!*

*Because I am, and I will always be, Guybrush Threepwood! Mighty Pirate!*

<<THREEPWOOD! NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!!!>>



... I raise my head from that pile of salty and stinking sand. I reopen my eyes and I give myself two violent slaps on my face, to wake up from the terrifying hallucinations of that dream of Hell Bell, fatter Voodoo Ladies, ghost scientists and time-demon-LeChucks.

Scabb Island. "I'd rather be a pirate on Scabb than a scab on a pirate", said an old song. And yet nowadays you'd be lucky even if you saw half a buccaneer's ghost around here. Now I'm the last person on this dark and fetid island, and I've been here for a year so far: well, for the first time in my life I can understand how it felt for Herman Toothrot. When you've been alone for so long, well, your mind starts playing tricks on you... you see people that are not really there... you live experience

which never really happened... imagination confuses you, mistifies you, tortures you... imagination... yeah, maybe it's there I'll live my last adventures... after all, Guybrush Threepwood's age has come to its end. The age of piracy itself has come to its end! Now we're in the age... of the Triad! Oh, a ghostly halluc... AHIA!

W: "CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD!"

G: "Hallucination of Van Winslow. More ungraceful, solid and painful than usual. Wait a second that... YIKES!"

W: "WAKE UP, CAPTAIN THREEPWOOD! THERE'S NO TIME TO WASTE!"

After that unpleasant and unnecessary stodgy Van Winslow's slap sandwich my dazed and confused mind starts to reconstruct the reality around itself, and just then I realize... I'm not on Scabb Island! The sky is black and gurgling with weird voodoo energies. The skinny shadows of the buccaneers around me are solid and real, and those who aren't busy cursing, drinking shining ghostly grog and punching each other for futile reasons, are all busy loading chests on a ghost ship at the end of a pier facing an endless and thundering ocean. Suddenly I feel... at home!

W: "ELAINE MARLEY! I KNOW WHERE IS ELAINE MARLEY, CAPTAIN! NAPOLEON HELLBEARD! It seems that damned SWINDLER he's playing again the role of the scourge of the Oceans since he arrived down here! AND AFTER DISCOVERING YOU TRICKED HIM, PRETENDING TO BE THE SON OF HIS OLD CREWMATES, HE KIDNAPPED HER AND DRAGGED HER IN HIS FORTRESS OF ANXIETY! ALL JUST TO SPITE YOU!"

G: "What? I didn't trick anyone! It was just an unpleasant case of homonymy that..."

W: "Unfortunately Hellbeard doesn't believe in homonymy! But look! Horatio and I are preparing an expedition! We'll set sail all together beyond the endless and lethal routes of the Seven Oceans of the Afterlife to free her! And look... look at who I've found! THEY'll come with us!"

G: "He doesn't believe in homonymy? But that doesn't make any se... oh no, not you!"

DSG: "Oh oh oh oh! Silly pirate! There's no reason to turn pale in that SPECTRAL way! This "Afterlife" Reginald is talking about is just a colorful pirate nickname to define this strange continent that is mysteriously not on any earthly map ever drew by man, right Reginald?"

W: "YES, MARQUIS! Don't contradict him, captain, or he will materialize again in the World of the Living, and get him back will be more problematic than that embarrassing matter of the Dynamitard Courtesans!"

G: "A -alright."

W: "... mmh... Dynamitard Courtesans..."

DSG: "REGINALD!"

W: "Yes, Marquis! Of course, Marquis! Never felt so alive in our lives. You see? The liver beats excitedly. My kidneys overflow with sweat, and even the intestines are... ehm... intestining."

DSG: "Honored to be informed. CEPENDANT the Narwhal of Hell is almost finished and ready to set sail! Are the instruments of navigation alchimique ready, Largo?"

LL: "Oh yes, the Compass of the Otherside is almost completely calibrated on the maleficent streams of this sector of the Realm of the Dead! Set sail and unleash the hawsers, you kind of skinny and ectoplasmic YOKELS! This morning I have the GREAT DESIRE to energetically beat up some... BEARDED voodoo villain!"



THE END



## LAST TALES OF MONKEY ISLAND

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*You scored 800 of 800 points*

*Now turn your computer off and go do something constructive*

No, wait...

- "... and so, from then on it became illegal to do conversations about funny hats, and the hygienically scrupulous Soldier Camembert brought back to his office his well compiled certificate, to avoid infringements would recur in the future of this... ooh, he finally fell asleep. I'm really exhausted today. Time for me to go to..."

- "GRANDPA! GRANDPA! ANOTHER STORY! ANOTHER STORY!"

- "Oh, for the Great Architect..."

- "Tell me once again about the Incredibly Enlightened Smirk-Eleven-Thirtyeight and how he transformed that filthy chaos of alcoholic buccaneers into our SHINING utopia of order, logic and blind obedience to a wise and inflexible DISCIPLINE!"

- "Y -yes. Alright. S -so... it happened a long time ago, in a more or less lukewarm day, the Great Baron and the Admiral Cortèz interrupted their vital functions after a childish mutual skirmish. And so the great Smirk recognized the impurity of such beings, he replaced them and took in his hands... no... wait! This evening I want to tell you another story... a DIFFERENT story!"

- "Different? But grandpa! At the Institute of the Descendants of the Triad the teacher of Virtue said the interruption of the routine is a dangerous poison to our well functioning brains. That we can develop a Right Society only thanks to the sane mental alienation of a rhythm that must never go beyond a certain type of variations and..."

- "SHUT UP AND LISTEN! They say in some nights, when the moon becomes red and strange borders between dimensions reduce, it's possible to hear a voice. At the beginning it was just a whisper, but then through the decades it started to become a clear and limpid voice. A promise. To come back for the last time, to destroy forever in the embrace of his scorching and purifying magma an enslaved mankind, with all its world, now too tidy, empty and sad to have a single reason to exist."

- "Ooooh, it sounds inconclusive. The world has its origin, purpose and reason to exist in the Triad, after all. And mankind was never this satisfied as of now, in its eternal and Triple present. And then? What happened?"

- "N -nothing. Nevermind. After all it's just a story. Like the one of Eleven Thirtyeight, anyway. We all know the Triad always existed and there never was a different world before it, right? Now sleep!"

- "Yes... and tomorrow I will denounce you to the Department... of the Propaganda... for dangerous... stories..."

- "I love you too, sonny!"

- "... oh, look... even tonight... the moon is red... and may the... Triad triumph..."

- "Yes, yes. Sleep, now..."

- ~~~~~

*"... yes, LeChuck. There is no hope anymore. And soon every thing will be ready for your return. Yes... for the Infinite Eruption. And the Last, great Red Dawn of this world..."*



*Lots of amazing LucasArts/nostalgic Monkey Island  
merchandise on:*

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