

THE BALLAD OF THE PIRATE QUEENS

a musical

Book, Music, and Lyrics by
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AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Calico Jack Rackham (sometimes spelled Rackam), Mary Read (sometimes spelled Reed), and Anne Bonny (who went by various aliases including Fulford and Bonn) were actual historical figures, though verifiable documentation about them is sparse. Most accounts of their lives and adventures are based on Captain Charles Johnson's *History of the Pyrates* from 1724. This musical, in general, follows the outlines of the "accepted mythology" that has been developed through the centuries about Bonny, Read, and Rackham, though I have felt entirely free to stray from it if the dramatic situation suggested it.

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The Ballad of the Pirate Queens (version of 8.01.08)

[note: in any cases where there are discrepancies between the script and lyrics in the music, the music should be considered correct.]

Overture—the orchestra [MUSIC CUE 1]

ACT 1 Prologue [MUSIC CUE 2]

[We hear a lively Irish drum rhythm. Lights up on each of the following characters as they speak. Each is dressed in the appropriate clothing of their own time and culture. As they speak, a number of other women join them.]

GRACE O'MALLEY

I am Grace O'Malley. Once I commanded three great galleons and two hundred brave Irishmen.

RUSSLA

I am Russla, and, by Odin, even the strongest Vikings cowered before me.

ELISSA

I am Elissa, also called Dido. I founded Carthage.

SARAH BISHOP

Sarah Bishop. From New York. I was taken captive by the British and forced to join the crew of a privateer. [pause] And by God, I loved it.

[General laughter and assent from the others. It breaks the ice and formality a little.]

TEUTA

I was an Illyrian Queen. I led many warriors and had many husbands.

[laughter]

SUSAN GRANT

I am Susan Grant. Mergers and acquisitions. We plundered over a dozen companies under my watch.

[Derisive laughter and catcalls]

What? That doesn't count?

[Everyone argues..]

GRACE O'MALLEY

We were strong, true, and brave...

MARGARET JORDAN

Maybe *you* were brave. I was afraid all the time.

[Reaction from the others]

GRACE O'MALLEY

We were lovers of many men...

SARAH BISHOP

And sometimes, we were wives. And mothers.

GRACE O'MALLEY

But above all, we were women...

[Assent from the crowd...]

And we were

RUSSLA

Free.

TEUTA

Yes. Free. And we were...

ALL

Pirates!

[MUSIC CUE 3: THE ONLY LIFE THAT MATTERS]

GRACE O'MALLEY

*The only life that matters
The only life that's true
The only life that matters
Is the one lived well by you
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

RUSSLA

*The only life that counts at all
Is one that you control
The only life that matters
Is the one that makes you whole
If you never sail the ocean
Or make the sea your home
The only life that matters
Is a life you call your own.*

A SMALL GROUP

*Set aside your needle
Stow away your kettle
Put away your petticoats and lay away your lace*

MORE JOIN IN

*Sail instead on the rising tide
Sail into the setting sun
With the sea in your hair
And the wind in your face*

*The only life that matters
The only life that's true
The only life that matters
Is the one lived well by you
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

GRACE O'MALLEY

*We may be gone from life, sisters, but not from the
world. Not from the imagination.*

SARAH BISHOP

We're there in the warm breeze of a tropical night...

GRACE O'MALLEY

What? No, that's not what I...

ELISSA

*We're there when a woman feels the power in the point
of a spear...the heft of a flintlock in the hand...*

GRACE O'MALLEY

Well, yes, but...

MARGARET JORDAN

We're there when a woman stands over a man, listening to him whimper, begging for mercy, as you...

SUSAN GRANT

Make him *pay* for pinching your butt one too many times on the way to the coffee machine. Why, that little, sniveling, bald-headed,...

[All the women join in with their own stories. They are interrupted by...]

MARY READ [*running on stage, late*]

I'm late. I'm sorry, sisters.

GRACE O'MALLEY

Where have you been? We've waited a long time. After all, this is *your* story we're here to tell. Yours and Anne's...

MARY READ

I was out on the cliffs. Watching the tide come in and the moon rise over the bay.

ALL [*wistfully*]

Ahh...

ELISSA

And Anne? Where is Anne?

MARY READ

She is...with Jack.

RUSSLA

Of course.

SARAH BISHOP

I don't understand. Two *fine* husbands...

[crowd assents]

A hundred lovers, and who does she mourn? At whose grave does she stand vigil, night after night? Calico Jack Rackham.

[crowd agrees]

A handsome fellow to be sure, but a coward of the worst ki...

[there is a commotion and suddenly ANNE BONNY is behind her, holding a large knife to her throat]

ANNE

Speak ill of Jack again and those words will be your last...*sister*. [*she waves her knife threateningly at the others*] And that goes for all of you.

GRACE O'MALLEY

Hold, Anne. She meant no ill.

SUSAN GRANT

Yeah, *chill out, dude*. [*the others look at her like she's crazy*] I mean, yes, prithee thee calm down... *arrr!*

ANNE

I am sorry, sisters. But please, do not speak despairingly of my Jack... He had weaknesses and faults to be sure, but he was strong, and bold, and...he was the last of his kind. The last Pirate King.

GRACE O'MALLEY

Anne, this is your story. The telling of it is your business. The broad strokes *and* the particulars. It must be told. It must be sung. There is music in our living and our lives are full of song.

ANNE

But will you sing the ballads, Grace O'Malley? And Sarah? All of you...you all sing so sweetly and so true.

GRACE O'MALLEY

Aye. It is the purpose of our assembly.

MARY READ

Then we will gather the other players. Come, sisters! Piratical brothers, join us! (*The ENSEMBLE ENTERS*)

SUSAN GRANT [as others join in]

*You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea*

*The only life that matters
Is a life that's free
The only life that matters
s a life that's free*

ENSEMBLE

*One life to call your own
One course to set
One voyage to make alone
So never forget that...*

*The only life that matters
The only life that's true
The only life that matters
Is the one lived well by you
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

[MUSIC CUE 4: TRANSITION]

BLACKOUT

Scene 1

[SARAH BISHOP and two women of the ensemble are stage right, narrating the scene. Center stage, an obviously prosperous MASTER WILLIAM is standing, speaking with his wife, and MARY BRENNAN brings him a cup of tea, bows and stands off to one side, waiting for instructions. MASTER WILLIAM can't take his eyes off of her.]

[MUSIC CUE 5: UNDER THE GARDEN TREE]

SARAH BISHOP

We begin with the story of Anne. Well, Anne's mother and father.

*Mary Brennan was a serving maid
And young and fair was she
She caught the eye of her Master, Will
Who said:*

WILLIAM:

Mary, come follow me.

We'll meet in the garden after midnight

Oh, do you fancy me?

MARY BRENNAN:

*Sir, I find you fair
So I'll meet you there
Under the spreading garden tree*

SARAH and WOMEN:

Under the spreading garden tree

[lights change and we see MARY BRENNAN and WILLIAM in the garden]

*Mary and William met that night
The gentleman and his maid
And soon they fell to kissing
But Mary was afraid*

MARY BRENNAN:

*Oh sir, if we're discovered
What will become of me?*

WILLIAM:

*You've naught to fear
We're quite alone here
Under the spreading garden tree*

SARAH and WOMEN:

Under the spreading garden tree

[In this next sequence, WILLIAM is standing as before, now being served by an obviously pregnant MARY BRENNAN. WILLIAM's wife and two other ladies stand to one side, gossiping. MARY is trying to get WILLIAM's attention, but he is intent on ignoring her.]

SARAH:

*Yes, Mary and William met that night
And many an evening mild
And it was clear that his Mary dear
Would soon bear him a child*

MARY BRENNAN

[turns upstage; when she turns around again she holds a baby in her arms]

Oh sir, here is your daughter

Now will you marry me?

WILLIAM

*We can't speak here
But I'll meet with thee
Under the spreading garden tree*

[music continues under spoken dialogue]

SARAH

*Well, they did meet that night, and soon after,
fleeing prosecution for adultery, the couple
sailed from Ireland.*

WILLIAM and MARY BRENNAN

*We are bound for a new world
Bound to a new life
Seeking our fortunes in America*

MARY BRENNAN

A new husband

WILLIAM

*A new wife
Bound to a new life
Seeking our fortunes in America*

ENSEMBLE

*Bound for a new world
Bound to a new life
Seeking our fortunes in America*

*There's a fortune to be made
In a land that sings with promise*

MARY and WILLIAM

*Where a master and a maid
Need never be afraid*

[Scene changes to ANNE'S home in Charleston]

*We will build a home
Here in Charleston
The master and his wife
We will make a home*

*Here in Charleston
We will make a life
And we've naught to fear
We're together here
Under the spreading garden tree*

[stage is set with crates and tools]

SARAH

They settled in Charleston, South Carolina, and in not very much time, William had made a great fortune, and his new family prospered. His daughter Anne grew from a spirited child...

[MUSIC CUE 6: UNDERSCORE]

[Young Anne runs across the stage, chasing a playmate with a kitchen knife, finally tacking the other child]

YOUNG ANNE

You will hand it over. Give me your doll!

CHILD

No!

YOUNG ANNE

Then you will feel my blade slice through your throat.

[YOUNG ANNE feigns that she will cut the CHILD'S throat, grabs the doll. The CHILD runs off, screaming]

SARAH

...into a beautiful, headstrong young woman, who was bold, reckless, and always the center of attention.

[a grown-up, teenage ANNE runs on, being chased by one of the plantation's young WORKERS. There are crates, tools. We aren't sure if ANNE is in danger or not]

ANNE [*backing away from him*]

You'll be wise to stay away from me, you randy little runt.

WORKER

But you can't be kissing me like that, Anne, and then just tell me to stop. It isn't right. I just want what's coming to me.

ANNE

What's coming to you is a swift kick to your privates and day in the infirmary. You know I will do it. Now, go back to work. Leave me!

WORKER

You do love a good chase!

[In the end, the WORKER catches ANNE, who laughs as they embrace.]

We've got to be quick about it, Annie. I'm due back at the gate.

ANNE

Then quick it is.

[She is about to lead him off when they are surprised by her father WILLIAM CORMAC, and a CONSTABLE]

WILLIAM

Constable, this is young Mr. Simpson. He is in my employ. Would you please be so kind as to escort him back to work? If he resists, you have my permission to use whatever *force* is necessary to persuade him. In fact, I *insist*.

[CONSTABLE leads the WORKER off, roughly. ANNE starts to cross, opposite.]

No, Anne. Don't leave. You must sit. This will not do.

ANNE

The company I keep is my business. It's none of yours.

WILLIAM

It may have been shame that brought us to this country, Anne, but I have worked to earn not only wealth, but respectability. I treat my workers fairly. I contribute to my community. And I have a daughter...

[ANNE makes a rude sound, gets up to leave; WILLIAM pushes her gently back down]

...a daughter who has become the scandal of Charleston. Barely sixteen, and spending her nights in the public houses or with the workers, flirting, drinking, swearing, and God knows what else.

ANNE

Hah!

WILLIAM

Anne, you are a respectable, educated young woman from a decent family and it is time you behaved as such.

ANNE [*very angry*]

What would you have me do? Get married? Have babies? Be a plantation wife?

WILLIAM

That is *precisely* what I intend. And I have found you a suitable husband. Mr. James Bonny. Young, ambitious, respectful. Knows how to listen and when to speak. Why, even our fine governor has shown interest in him. You are to be married in two weeks' time.

ANNE

Bonny? Bonny?! Oh, I know *Bonny*. A dull-eyed, scrawny, beardless boy of a man who has probably never kissed a woman, let alone bedded one. I won't do it. You can't make me. I'll run away. I'll stow away on a cargo ship bound for India and...

WILLIAM

The matter has been decided, Anne. Decided, and arranged. From now until your wedding, you will spend your days--and your nights--at the house, under guard if necessary. I hope it won't be. And after you are married..

ANNE

I will run away. The moment I can make my escape.

WILLIAM

You will not. There are laws that govern a wife's duties to her husband, Anne. It is time for you to put aside your willfulness, and grow up. [*Less formally. Gentler.*] Bonny will be a good husband,

Anne. You will...age together. Now, it is nearly supper. Come along.

[WILLIAM EXITS]

ANNE

[A great cry of frustration, anger and pain] No!

INTERLUDE: the Wedding

[As GRACE O'MALLEY sings the ballad, the action is mimed on stage: upstage center, the wedding of ANNE and JAMES in very cool, dark colors, almost in shadow; on the stage left apron, in warm, daylight, we see CHILD ANNE, gazing out to sea]

[MUSIC CUE 7: SOMETHING MORE]

GRACE O'MALLEY

*When she was a tiny child
she stood upon the shore
And gazed out on the ocean wide
And dreamed of something more*

*She dreamed of something more
She dreamed of something more
And gazed out on the ocean wide
And dreamed of something more*

CHILD ANNE

*What is there, beyond the sea?
What is there, waiting for me?
Oh when will I grow up and be
Somewhere that's far away*

*For I know that I can be
More than they expect of me
It's out there, somewhere, beyond the sea
I know there's something more*

[The wedding is over; JAMES and ANNE sit stiffly at a dinner table, while servants stand behind them. ANNE barely notices JAMES, who is talking animatedly at her. Stage left apron, YOUNG ANNE has replaced CHILD ANNE]

GRACE O'MALLEY and CHILD ANNE

And when she was an older girl

*She stood outside the door
She looked to the horizon
And dreamed of something more*

[Some of the SPIRIT PIRATES have appeared to join the chorus]

*She dreamed of something more
She dreamed of something more
She looked to the horizon
And she dreamed of something more*

[Now, ANNE and JAMES are strolling together, when the WORKER from the previous scene passes by. He nods courteously and moves on. ANNE breaks away from JAMES and starts to follow, but JAMES angrily pulls her back. Meanwhile, SL the SPIRIT PIRATES have gathered as a chorus for the next verse]

ANNE and SPIRIT PIRATES

*And now that I am married
My longing I'll ignore
No longer will I look beyond
And dream of something more*

*And dream of something more
And dream of something more
No longer will I look beyond
And dream of something more*

BLACKOUT

SCENE 2: The Ballad of Calico Jack

[As GRACE speaks, the scene is set.]

GRACE O'MALLEY

We must leave Anne, for the present, and turn our attention elsewhere. The year is 1718, and though their numbers were dwindling, it was a time when the last of our brother pirates sailed the Caribbean with impunity. The captain: a fearsome, ruthless pirate named Charles Vane, once a lieutenant of Blackbeard himself. [*Vane appears on deck*] His quartermaster: a bold, headstrong, ambitious young man... [*During the first stanza of the ballad the crew enters and assumes their place in tableau*]

[MUSIC CUE 8: BALLAD OF HANDSOME JOHN]

ELISSA

*Jack was born in a London brothel
A beardless boy when he went to sea
Found his way to America
Grew to be a man in the Royal Navy*

*Oh you can take the tiller
And I'll take the wheel
You can play the fiddle
And I'll dance the reel
We'll tell the story
We'll sing the song
This is the ballad
of handsome John*

THE CREW

*Well, it's
A short life and a merry life
A calm harbor and a willing wife
A bottle of rum and a bed to lie in
It's a good day to die, boys
A good die to die*

SADIE

*Jack, oh he took to the ship and the sea
Rhythm of the waves like his lullaby
Climbed to the top of the highest mast
Said, I will be a sailor till the day I die*

*Oh you can take the tiller
And I'll take the wheel
You can play the fiddle
And I'll dance the reel
This is the ballad of handsome Jack
The ballad of a man
who never looked back*

THE CREW

*You can take my sword
Hide my cutlass
Break my blade and
Foul my gun
Leave me stranded*

*On the beach
As long as you
Give me my pipe and rum*

*Well, it's
A short life and a merry life
A calm harbor and a willing wife
A bottle of rum and a bed to lie in
It's a good day to die, boys
A good die to die*

[MUSIC CUE 8A: UNDERSCORE]

[The tableau comes to life. There is a cry of "sails, a mile to the east" and most of the crew rush to the rails to look. CHARLES VANE and JACK RACKHAM stand together on the quarterdeck.]

CHARLES VANE

Quartermaster, a word?

JACK

Aye, sir.

CHARLES VANE

The ship just sighted: no doubt the French sloop we lost in the fog last night.

JACK

Likely, yes. And unless she's hiding her guns behind closed ports, no match for the likes of us, eh?

CHARLES VANE

It is my intention to let her go. To not make chase.

JACK

But, why? We surely out-gun her. The crew is set on taking her, and she would be a pretty little prize. They will not be easily dissuaded. They will likely resist.

CHARLES VANE

Damn you, Jack. I will quarter no dissent from you or the crew.

CREWMAN 1

She's almost within range of the guns. Men, to your stations...

[The men move to their battle stations]

JACK

Hold, all of ye. Captain Vane has decided to let her pass.

[There is a loud, dissenting clamor from the crew]

CHARLES VANE

I smell a trap. Our holds are nearly full. She carries little of value...

CREWMAN 3

Except for coin.

CREWMAN 1

And drink...and food

CREWMAN 2

Aye, food...we've been eating bilge rats for a fortnight.

[The crew erupts in agreement. They move in threateningly]

CHARLES VANE

Listen. We are not savages. This is not the Royal navy. We *all* live by the piratical code. The articles say, if you want to vote a new captain...

CREWMAN 4

Jack, you're the quartermaster. What would you do? Let her pass, or take her? But decide quick. Once we engage 'twill be too late to put it to a vote. That's the code.

CREWMAN 1

She's sighted us. She's turning away. We must fire soon.

JACK

I would...I would...

[Tableau/freeze.]

[MUSIC CUE 8B: BALLAD OF HANDSOME JOHN, PART 2]

ELISSA

*Jack was ruthless, Jack was bold
One look from Jack would make the blood run cold
But Jack had a secret no one knew...
Oh, handsome Jack was afraid*

JACK

*My nerves are as taut as rigging in a wind
My heart is beating like thunder
My mouth is as dry as a powder keg
I'm drowning, going under*

*With fear, with dread
I'll soon be dead
I'm sick, I'm weak
I feel like running away*

*These men think I have courage
These boys think that I'm strong
If they knew, they'd know
There's something wrong here
I don't belong here*

*Every fight, every battle
Brings me closer to that endless sea
Brings me nearer to the endless nothing
Brings me closer to the end of me*

[Tableau comes to life]

I would...throw the damn cook overboard if it gave us enough speed to catch her. There's treasure inside her, boys, I can feel it.

CREWMAN 1

Then by the pirate articles I say put it to a vote. Right here. Now.

CREWMAN 2

The vote is no confidence and to put Rackham in as captain. All in favor?

CREW

Aye!

CREWMAN 2

Any opposed? Speak up now, lads.

CREWMAN 1

Harwood, take Mr. Vane below and lock him in his quarters. When this fight is over, we'll set him adrift.

[HARWOOD leads VANE below decks]

JACK

Let's to it, men. Let's tack and catch that fine piece of French pastry!

CREW

*Well, it's
A short life and a merry life
A calm harbor and a willing wife
A bottle of rum and a bed to lie in
It's a good day to die, boys
A good die to die*

[The men assume battle positions and freeze and there is a short musical interlude as the scene transforms to a boisterous public square in Nassau. It is nighttime, and crowded, noisy, and dangerous, populated by pirates, and rough men and women, exotic-looking merchants, animals, and crates of treasure. There are tables and chairs to one side—an open-air pub. Several CUSTOMERS are looking at the wares.]

[MUSIC CUE 9: TAVERN DANCES part 1]

Scene 4

CUSTOMER [picking up a silver plate]
This is a fine piece. Beautiful.

MERCHANT

Aye. And, I promise, very reasonably priced.

CUSTOMER

Just how did it come into your possession?

MERCHANT [improvising]

*Well, that is a very sad tale
That is a very sad story
The widow who sold it was old and frail
She was desperate to make a sale...
I, uh, might have offered her a glass of ale...*

CUSTOMER

Are you sure it's not stolen? That it didn't come from pirates? Look, it says "property of the Royal Navy"

COMPANY

[they proceed to rob the CUSTOMER as they sing]

*Pirates?
Did someone just say pirates?
There are no pirates here
Just honest men and women
As pure as they can be
Who'd never steal or cheat or lie
Or act improperly
So just ignore the wild stories
So disregard the tales of fear
Just ignore what you've been told
There are no pirates here*

[there is a short, lively dance]

CUSTOMER 2

This is a beautiful necklace.

MERCHANT

Yes ma'am. Thank you, ma'am.

CUSTOMER 2

But it wonder...might it not be stolen?

MERCHANT

*Oh, I am deeply hurt, ma'am
I am deeply wounded
This necklace was my mother's
I was her favorite boy
She left to me the necklace
Along with many others that you might enjoy*
[he holds up a large bunch of necklaces]

CUSTOMER 2

Just as I suspected. Stolen. Procured from pirates,
no doubt.

COMPANY

[they proceed to rob the CUSTOMER as they sing]

*Pirates?
Did someone just say pirates?
There are no pirates here
Just contented men and women
Happy as can be
Who'd never steal or cheat or act
With impropriety
So just ignore the wild stories
So disregard the tales of fear
Just ignore what you've been told
There are no pirates here*

[there is a short, lively dance, at the end of which, ANNE BONNY and JAMES BONNY enter; ANNE is greeted enthusiastically and immediately drawn into a crowd of dancers while JAMES sulks in a corner, watching. The dance is interrupted by the entrance of WOODS ROGERS and two SOLDIERS. They are dragging a BEATEN MAN with them and they throw him into the center of the square. The BEATEN MAN is bloodied and his clothes are torn. The mood shifts immediately from celebration to wariness. WOODS ROGERS paces through the crowd as he speaks, attempting to intimidate the onlookers.]

WOODS ROGERS

I believe *this* belongs to you. He's one of yours.

WOMAN IN CROWD

God. He's beat near to death. What have you done to him?

WOODS ROGERS

In spite of my best efforts, he refused to yield any information about the piracy that continues to plague these waters.

MAN IN CROWD

That's just old Tom Bostwell. He's feeble. He doesn't know nothing about...I mean, we're all honest men and women here, sir. There's no need to be hurtin' innocent people.

WOODES ROGERS

Hear this: I have been appointed by the King, and chosen by God, to rid these islands of piracy and all crimes against the crown, and this I will do. In this fight there are no measures too extreme. I have friends among you. I have ears and eyes. And I will succeed. You have been warned.

[The CROWD moves in menacingly but the SOLDIERS raise their weapons. WOODES turns to leave and as he exits, he makes eye contact with JAMES BONNY. Several people help take the BEATEN MAN offstage.]

MAN

You have been warned. Ha. Damn the governor, I say. And the King. Friends among us? He's bluffing. None here would betray us.

A WOMAN

Aye, none would dare!

[The music and dancing start up again. ANNE goes to where JAMES is sitting]

ANNE

Husband. Will you get me a pint of ale? And some food. I'm starving.

JAMES

No, Anne. It's time I was taking you home.

ANNE

Then dance with me.

JAMES

No. You embarrass and disgrace me with your...

ANNE [*to the crowd in the pub*]

My *husband* thinks I am *disgraceful*. He will not honor me with a dance. This is Nassau, not Charleston. And *these* people are trollops and thieves and brigands!

[A cheer of agreement and humor from the crowd]

MAN [*stepping forward*]

Your husband is a fool, ma'am. No disrespect, sir.

[The MAN gallantly offers his hand and they begin a somewhat courtly dance that soon turns much more energetic as others join in. Finally, JAMES has had enough and he makes to exit, pulling ANNE with him. She reluctantly joins him, laughing and protesting. Their exit is blocked by the arrival of JACK, dressed in expensive, elaborate dress and arriving with the attitude of a rock star. He even has an entourage—a few members of the CREW. ANNE pulls away from JAMES and gazes with interest at JACK]

JACK

[*throwing a bag of coins to the bar-keep*]

Pardon me, ma'am. [*Somewhat formally*] My friends, we have had a most pleasant and prosperous voyage. Our catch was bountiful, we are still alive, and now we must celebrate.

[*more roughly*] Drink up, you sons of whores! And when you wake up in the gutter you may blame the French coin that put you there!

[Everyone cheers and the party begins. JACK approaches ANNE]

You must pardon me, miss. I have been too long at sea, and in any case, I am unaccustomed to finding a proper lady in this stinking den of tarts and buccaneers. You are...

JAMES

[*pushing between them without much confidence*]

She is my wife, sir. And we are leaving.

ANNE [*pushing JAMES aside*]

I am Anne. Anne Bonny. And you are, no doubt, John Rackham. Known here as Calico Jack.

JACK

Aye, Miss. Guilty as charged. [*deep bow*]

ANNE

I've have long heard stories of you, sir. Frankly, I thought you more legend than man.

JACK

Well, Anne Bonny, I am honored to make your acquaintance. Might your husband permit me a dance before you take leave? Though I may be a simple, uncouth sailor, I learned well to dance and ladies seem to find me an agreeable partner.

ANNE

I don't ask his permission, sir. I care little what James Bonny thinks or does. Yes, I *will* dance with you.

[Lights change, ANNE and JACK are dancing a formal minuet as the whole of the pub is illuminated in a soft blue light. Stage right, FLORA BURNS steps downstage to sing, and down stage left, KI MING joins her]

[MUSIC CUE 10: TWO LIVES]

FLORA

*One river starts in the mountain
Making its way to the sea*

KI MING

*One river flows from the valley
Growing stronger endlessly*

FLORA and KI MING

*Then they meet and they move together
Stronger than either alone could be*

*Two into one
The dance has begun
lives intertwined
Forever*

FLORA

*One singer soars on a melody
Sweet, and pure, and strong*

KI MING

*One singer joins with a harmony
Content to be carried along*

FLORA and KI MING

*Then they meet and they sound together
Stronger than either alone could be*

*Two into one
The music's begun
Lives intertwined
Forever*

[Light up on ANNE and JACK; they have moved off alone]

ANNE

God, how I wish to be free from this place. Nassau may be less of a prison than Charleston, but jail it still is. Oh, to be rid of Mr. James Bonny and my father and...*take me with you, Jack Rackham*. I know we have just now met but I think that with you lies the key to my freedom.

JACK

Take you? To sea? It is no place for a woman. For a fine lady such as yourself. Anne Bonny, you are a handsome young woman and I'd take you a-bed in a moment, but do you know what I am? I'm a...rough man, course vulgar and ...a lawless man...a...

ANNE

Pirate, of course I know it. There's a bounty on your head in Nassau and half the other ports and the governor wants you dead. Bugger all that! I'm strong, Jack. I'm as brave as any man and twice as fierce. More than once I've threatened my fine husband with a knife if he dared touch me. Take me with you, Jack. You are my destiny.

FLORA

*One breeze, soft, with a promise
Of summer yet to come*

KI MING

*One breeze, swift, with a warning
Of a storm that's soon begun*

FLORA and KI MING

*Then they meet and they move together
Stronger than either alone could be*

*Two into one
The dance has begun
Two lives intertwined*

Forever

[Lights change back. ANNE stands defiantly with JACK]

ANNE

I'm leaving you, James. I'm going with Jack.

JAMES

Not without a fight, you're not.

JACK

So be it. But here's my offer: I'll buy her from you, nice and legal. Divorce by sale, they call it. [*He throws bag of coins at JAMES' feet*] If you're smart...

JAMES

She is my wife...

[JACK has a cutlass and JAMES a knife and they have a short, humiliating fight, after which JAMES finds himself weaponless on the floor. JACK takes ANNE and moves to exit. He takes the bag of coins]

JAMES [*not convincingly*]

Let her be.

ANNE

There is something you all need to know. This man, Mr. James Bonny, is in the secret employ of our governor, Woodes Rogers.

JAMES

No, Anne! This is not true.

ANNE

This man is a spy. He sits amongst you—amongst us—and listens as you boast and plan and then meets with the governor in secret. He is no friend of the pirates and I say now, he is no husband of mine. This is a time of war. In wartime, spies are punished. Do what you will.

[ANNE and JACK exit as the PIRATES and crowd gather menacingly around JAMES. Blackout.]

[MUSIC CUE 11: PLAYOFF/TRANSITION]

Scene 5

[Center stage: a series of scenes aboard Rackham's ship; stage left, the office of governor Woodes Rogers; stage right, MARY READ and a small ensemble of Spirit Pirates]

[MUSIC CUE 12: UNDERScore]

SARAH BISHOP

[stage right, standing with YOUNG MARY]

We must mix the past and the present. Years ago: young Mary Read-- a child born into poverty, dressed as a boy, a ruse played in order to earn a meager allowance from distant relatives who cared nothing of the child or her mother but only that a male child might survive. The beginning of a journey that will bring her to Anne and Jack.

SADIE THE GOAT

[stage left, standing behind WOODES ROGERS, seated at a desk]

Woods Rogers: wealthy son of a trader and explorer, a former privateer, and with a single-minded determination to rid the sea of pirates, willing to bend the laws of man in the service of his obsession...

ELISSA

[center stage, on the deck of the ship]

Anne and Jack: together on the good ship *Pretty Anne*, about to sail into history..

SARAH, SADIE, and ELISSA:

For all of them, no charts, no compass, and no turning back.

YOUNG MARY

[Putting on a boy's coat and hat]

If they think I'm a boy, if they're too stupid to see the truth, then so be it. I will run away and go to sea. Or I'll join the army. Yes!

[MUSIC CUE 13: NO TURNING BACK]

*All of my life
I've lived in the shadows
Lived in the darkness
Lived in the cold*

*All of my life
I've lived out a lie
watched as my life
Went sailing by*

*But give me a horse
That can fly away
And give me a road that is true
And give me a chance
To set a new tack
I've sail a new course
And there's no turning back.*

WOODES ROGERS [*at his desk, writing*]
A proclamation: that all barbarous acts of piracy, being an affront to all people and to the most loving Lord and most excellent King, will be persecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Retribution and punishment will be swift and merciless, and may the souls of those condemned, forever burn. No. And may the souls of the condemned find mercy from God. [*under his breath*] For you will have none from me. Issued, this third day of June, 1718.

I kneel before you, Lord, and ask for success in this enterprise. In your name, Amen.

*All of my life
I've watched and I've waited
Sailing the world and
Seeking a sign
All of my life
I've waited for something
Of all of the lives
God's chosen mine*

*So give me a boat
And a strong wind to push it
And give me a course that is true
And give me a chance
To set a new tack
I've set a new course
And there's no turning back*

JACK
[*addressing his assembled crew*]

Tonight, under cover of darkness we will row out into the harbor and take the *Royal*. You know the plan. But listen: Anne here is joining us.

CREW

[loud dissent] No, Jack, a woman? (etc)

JACK

She will fight and she will prove herself or she will be sent back to the sniveling dog that was her husband, God have mercy on him. But know this: Any man here who lays a hand upon her will have his guts spilled before he can cover his belly and any one of you who has a problem with Anne on board can take your money and take your leave.

*All of my life
I've followed the orders
Of men who were stupid
Of men who were blind
All of my life
I've watched and I've waited
I'm waiting no longer
And vengeance is mine*

MARY

[now a grown woman, dressed in a man's soldier's clothes, disguising her identity], JACK, and WOODS ROGERS

*So give me a boat
And a strong wind to push it
And give me a course that is true
And give me a chance
To set a new tack
I've set a new course
And there's no turning back*

JACK

And maybe I'm damned

MARY

And maybe I'm doomed

WOODS ROGERS

And maybe I'm fated to be

JACK and ANNE
Outlaws and pirates

MARY
Forever alone

WOODES ROGERS
*Fulfilling God's destiny
For me*

ANNE
*All of my life
I've scanned the horizon
Hoping someone would come
Set me free
All of my life
Has lead to this moment
And now I set sail
To find me*

ALL
*So give me a boat
And a strong wind to push it
And give me a course that is true
And give me a chance
To set a new tack
I've set a new course
And there's no turning back*

Scene 6

[MUSIC CUE 14: UNDERSCORE]

[The Spirit Pirate Women again]

SUSAN GRANT
Young Mary spent years dressed as a man, a mercenary soldier...whom no one suspected was a woman.

[MARY appears, dressed in a soldier's uniform...she is at camp with a few other men from her division]

She fought as courageously as any man. Time and again, she was promoted for her bravery and fierceness in battle.

[FREDERICK enters with a pack and a sealed letter. He approaches MARY and salutes.]

FREDERICK

Sergeant. Frederick Heath reporting for assignment.
Sir. My orders.

MARY

[reading, obviously with some difficulty]
Boy, it says here that your entire regiment was wiped out.

FREDERICK

Yes, sir. Well. Nearly, Sergeant. A few of us survived. Wounded badly. I was...

MARY

Courageous? Stupidly brave?

FREDERICK

Lucky, was my thinking.

MARY

Well, friend, a brave soldier is always welcome here. A lucky one, too. Maybe you'll bring us all a little good fortune. Stow your gear and get some sleep. We muster at dawn.

FREDERICK

Yes, thank you, sergeant. Where is my tent, sir?

MARY

You'll have to tent with me, boy. Over there. I'm afraid it's the only space we have.

FREDERICK

Yes, sergeant. Thank you, sir.

SUSAN GRANT

Frederick was brave. He fought with determination and strength, always under the watchful eye of Mary, who came to fear that, without her protection, some harm would come to the young soldier.

Months passed. Mary and Frederick grew closer. But of course, Mary could not reveal her secret.

[*FREDERICK prepares for sleep*]

[MUSIC CUE 15: THIS BRAVE BOY]

MARY

*This boy
This brave young boy
Who fights beside me
Strong and true
If he knew the truth
What would he do?
He looks at me
And sees a soldier
Looks at me and
Sees a friend
He doesn't know
He doesn't understand*

*I watch him
while he sleeps
And I dream
Of telling him
Of holding him
Of taking him
Far away*

*How long can this charade
Go on?
This masquerade, so neatly played
So long?*

*This boy
This brave young boy*

MARGARET JORDAN

One night, on the eve of major skirmish, desperate with the fear she might lose Frederick in battle, Mary confessed her secret. Frederick was overjoyed. and...relieved.

FREDERICK

Oh, thank God. All of these many weeks, sensing your feelings for me but thinking you were a...I thought...Oh, Mary, I am so relieved.

MARGARET JORDAN

Mary and Frederick were married. They opened an inn. It flourished, frequented by soldiers on leave from the war.

SUSAN GRANT

But the war ended. The inn grew empty. And Frederick became ill.

MARGARET JORDAN

He died in Mary's arms.

MARY

*This boy
This brave young boy
He stood beside me
Strong and fine
Now just memory
Left behind*

*I watch him
while he sleeps
And I dream
Of loving him
Of holding him
Of taking him
Far away*

Scene 6

[The Ghostly Pirate Women enter on either side of the stage. As they sing, JACK, ANNE, dressed in simple woman's clothes, and the CREW take their places on the deck of the *Pretty Anne*.]

[MUSIC CUE 16: ALWAYS DANCING]

GRACE O'MALLEY

*The sea is mistress
The sea is a curse
The sea is a goddess
Entrancing
As cursed as a graveyard
As holy as a church
The sea's like a partner
Dancing
Always dancing*

GHOSTLY PIRATE WOMEN

*The sea is a lover
As cruel as a kiss
The sea is a wound
That won't heal
As haunted as a graveyard
As thrilling as a tryst
The sea's like a partner
Dancing
Always dancing*

JACK

Lads, we've had a long, good run. With Blackbeard's corpse rotting in a gibbet, and Vane nowhere to be seen, we are the last of the brave Pirate Republic.

ANNE

None can stop us, Jack.

JACK

No, Anne, I fear there's them that can.

ANNE

But for now, we're free. To go where we will. To do what we will. This is the life I always dreamed of as a child, Jack. Free from fathers, and husbands, and nothing ahead but adventure.

CREW

*Well, it's
A short life and a merry life
A calm harbor and a willing wife
A bottle of rum and a bed to lie in
It's a good day to die, boys
A good die to die*

HARWOOD

Dobbins, play us a tune, boy.

[DOBBINS plays the fiddle; ANNE dances with the CREW while JACK looks on; when the dance is over she rejoins JACK at the helm]

JACK

Anne, I know this will not sit well with you, but I'm thinking we should find a little cove, and scuttle the boat. Maybe it's time to take up an honest

life. Quit the account while we still have our heads.
We could buy a little farm in Tortuga...

ANNE

Calico Jack Rackham, a farmer? And me, a fat, little
farmer's wife? I'd rather hang from the yard.

JACK

And that ye may well do, if Woodes Rogers takes us.
He's in for us. I can feel his shadow, Anne. And I
fear it.

ANNE

The King has offered a pardon to any pirate sayin'
he's quitting the life. Rogers can't go against the
King.

JACK

Anne, you should know. The thing of it is, I *took* the
King's pardon. Long before I met you. But it didn't
stick. Maybe now I have you, it would. And there's
something else. A few of us in the trade *welcomed* the
governor when he arrived. I blew up his ship, Anne.
Right as it sailed into Nassau harbor. He's lucky to
be alive.

ANNE

Well, *that's* a pretty thing, Jack.

CORNER

Jack, sails off the port bow!

EARL

A Dutch merchantman, by the looks of her. Heavy and
slow. Easy prey, Jack. Hasn't seen us yet.

JACK

Show 'em the colors, then.
[JACK stumbles, weak with fear and nausea, embarrassed to
be seen by ANNE in such a state of weakness] Damn.

ANNE [*putting on a sailor's coat*]

Ready your weapons, boys, and take no prisoners!

[MUSIC CUE 16: BATTLE 1]

[Dramatic music. There is a series of tableau, each one illustrating a scene of a fight aboard the ship. Tableau 1: JACK, ANNE, and the CREW about to board the Dutch ship' Tableau 2: a fight with cutlasses and pistols; Tableau 3: the Dutch crew defeated]

[The Dutch crew stands in a small group as JACK and crew surround the. MARY READ, disguised as a male sailor, stands with the Dutch crew]

JACK [with false gallantry]
You were smart to lay down arms. Do you know who I am? Eh?

[JACK'S crew taunts the Dutch sailors...ANNE moves around them and stands near MARY]

I am John Rackham, about here known as Calico Jack.
And you have been...

MARY
Save your breath. They don't understand you. They don't speak English. They won't fight you.

But I will!

[MARY leaps at ANNE with a knife; ANNE defends herself with a boarding ax; the two have a short fight which ends with MARY'S knife at ANNE'S throat.]

JACK [laughing]
Well played, sir. But if your blade so much as grazes her skin, it will be your last moment on this earth.

MARY [surprised]
Her...skin?

JACK
There is a small spit of land not far from here. You will all be put ashore. No harm will come to you if you cooperate. Boy, can you tell them this?

MARY [speaking broken Dutch]
Niet bang ben. U zal aan wal worden gezet en niet zult berokkend worden.

JACK

Any of you wish to join us, to turn pirate, to take up the Sweet Life...we welcome you.

MARY

Wil iedereen piraat draaien?

JACK [knowing they don't understand]

Fine. Now, with your permission my crew will proceed to take everything of value on your ship. We will drink your rum, toy with your women, and...

MARY [interrupting]

My name is Read. Mark Read. I have been six weeks on this boat and I have nothing to show for it but an empty belly, the stinking rags on my back, and a desire to be far from these Dutchmen. I'm a fair sailor and good with a cutlass, rifle, and pistol. I guess I will join you, if you'll have me.

ANNE

I dunno...There's something different about this sailor, Jack. I can *smell* it.

DOBBINS

Anne, I'd guess that smell is two months sleepin' in the head.

FETHERSTON

When it comes down to it, none of us smells any better.

JACK

Read, welcome to the crew of the Pretty Anne. Keep awake during watch, keep your sword sharp and your powder dry, keep your wits about you in a fight and you'll be one of us. And God help your soul!

[MUSIC CUE 17: ALWAYS DANCING REPRISE]

GHOSTLY PIRATE WOMEN

*The sea is a lover
As cruel as a kiss
The sea is a wound
That won't heal
As haunted as a graveyard
As thrilling as a tryst
The sea's like a partner
Dancing*

Always dancing

Scene 8

[SUSAN GRANT remains behind and listens from the shadows, upstage; WOODS ROGERS is at his desk, writing. Now and then he rises, and paces in agitation]

[MUSIC CUE 18: UNDERSCORE]

WOODS ROGERS

Dear Father. It grieves me to hear that your condition has worsened. By the time this reaches you, perhaps there will have been some small improvement. I pray for you often. Thank you for the books and the charts. I hope that, in my time here, I can add some little bit to the navigation of these waters, filled as they are with small islands and coves.

[ELISSA enters from upstage and comes to where SUSAN is sitting; WOODS continues to write at his desk]

ELISSA

There you are.

SUSAN

Yes.

WOODS ROGERS

You will be pleased to know that the prosecution of the pirates has had many successes.

SUSAN

That man *sucks*.

ELISSA

What?

SUSAN

I mean, he's..evil. Bad. Why does no one see?

ELISSA

The same was said about all of *us*, you know. It *is* a crime to take that which is not yours.

WOODS ROGERS

Some weaker souls have called my interrogations over-zealous, cruel even. But the pirate numbers are much diminished and their access to these waters is less each passing month.

SUSAN

The thing is...It isn't...it wasn't about the money. Not at first, anyway. It was about *becoming* something, or letting something be born.

ELISSA

We heard the voices of the gods telling us what to do.

SUSAN

Well. I had the *Wall Street Journal*.

*I was standing there
at my office window
Looking at the sky
Seeing myself reflected
As I wondered why
I couldn't get ahead
I didn't feel contented
And suddenly I understood
The choice that my life presented*

*Listen to the voice
That says take control
Make the only choice
That will finally make you whole
Failure's not an option
If you make the choice to be
True to yourself
Moving forward
Free*

WOODES ROGERS

Just today, I sent a well-armed brigantine to capture John Rackham. He may be the last of his kind, father, and he is much- liked by the despicable people of this island.

SUSAN

Later, there was the money, so much money, and the power, and everything all got confused. I lost my way. You know?

ELISSA

I do know. Sometimes the gods stop talking to us.

WOODES ROGERS

Do you know, father, that he sails with a woman by his side? Can you believe it? Such an abomination of God's divine will: a woman, dressed in man's clothes, playing pirate and by all accounts as cruel and Godless as Rackham himself. No matter. The gallows does not discriminate one sex from another, and neither shall I!

SUSAN

*Listen to the voice
That says take control
Make the only choice
That will finally make you whole
Failure's not an option
If you make the choice to be
True to yourself
Moving forward
Free*

Scene 9

[MUSIC CUE 19: TRANSITION/JEALOUS JACK'S SONG]

[Sudden loud, agitated music. JACK and several members of the CREW are on board the Pretty Anne. JACK is angry and upset. He takes frequent drinks from a bottle of rum as he rants.]

JACK

How close is the brig?

HARWOOD

Less than two miles, but we're gaining fast. Her gun ports aren't yet open. It won't be long now. Do we tack and run or attack?

JACK

Damn the governor. Where's Anne?

DOBBINS

Below decks. With Read.

JACK

With Read! With that sniveling, beardless boy. Leave me, both of you. Ready the crew. We must be prepared. This is it, men.

[pacing, talking to himself]

You're going to lose her...to that boy. No! I'll see him flayed alive before I let him touch my Anne. I'll hang him from the yard until the sun drives him mad. I've seen the way she looks at him. They whisper. They have secrets. Damn her, they'll be no secrets from ME. I am Jack Rackham!

What do I fear?

What am I afraid of?

Is it simply dying, or something more?

Why do I shake?

Why do I tremble?

What is this wind that chills me to the core?

I won't let her be taken

I won't let her go without a fight

I won't let her know how much I

ANNE

Jack, I heard you yelling. Has the fight begun? I heard no cannon.

JACK [*grabbing ANNE roughly*]

Have you cuckolded me, Anne Bonny? Disgraced me in front of my crew?

ANNE

Unhand me, Jack. You think I won't take my knife to your throat?

JACK [*pushing her away*]

Well, Anne, is it true? Are you in love with that... boy? Read? From the first day he set foot on my ship I...I knew he would be trouble for us.

ANNE

Read? Jack, fear the governor, fear the scaffold, but you have nothing to fear from Read..

JACK

No? Let me hear it from him. I want to look on his face and see for myself. [*shouts*] Read! Read! Show yourself!

ANNE

Jack, you need to know...

MARY

[*now dressed as a woman, her hair down; She is armed and ready for battle*]

Captain Rackham...

JACK

What is this? *Who* is this? What manner of joke...

ANNE

Jack, Read is a woman. Like me, she has disguised her sex in order to fight in a world of men. I've known it since the day we met.

JACK

I don't understand. You lied to me. You deceived me.

ANNE

She is for all the world a sister, Jack. But you're right about one thing. There is a secret I've been keeping from you.

MARY

Tell him, Anne.

HARWOOD

Rogers' ship, Captain. It is within range! We need to fire and take the advantage while we can.

JACK

Ready the guns, then. Take up arms and prepare to be boarded. Anne, we will settle this deception later... if we do not die in this battle. Read, boy, whatever you are...be handy with your pistols.

ANNE

As you wish, Jack. But I must tell you something...I am with child. Your child, Jack.

[JACK can only stare, dumbfounded; the CREW begins a battle chant]

DOBBINS

Death! Death! Death!

[MUSIC CUE 20: BATTLE 2]

Scene 10: The Battle

[Part 1: ROGER'S crew attacks with cutlasses and pistols. There is a great deal of noise, smoke, and hand to hand sword fighting. MARY and ANNE are in the thick of it, as are the CREW, but JACK hangs back, finally disappearing down a hatch.]

[Part 2: The tide is beginning to shift in favor of Roger's men. At the end of this section, JACK is nowhere to be seen, and MARY and ANNE are surrounded; most of JACK'S CREW are wounded]

[Part 3: The music changes to *The Only Life that Matters* and the Ghostly Pirate Women appear—from below decks, from everywhere—and Roger's men are turned away by the newly inspired CREW. MARY, ANNE, and the Ghostly Pirate Women defeat the last of Roger's crew.]

[MUSIC CUE 21: THE ONLY LIFE THAT MATTERS REPRISE]

GRACE O'MALLEY

*The only life that matters
The only life that's true
The only life that matters
Is the one lived well by you
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

ANNE and MARY

*The only life that counts at all
Is one that you control
The only life that matters
Is the one that makes you whole
If you never sail the ocean
Or make the sea your home
The only life that matters*

Is a life you call your own.

JACK [below decks, alone]
A child. Oh, Anne. This cannot be. This cannot stand.

COMPANY

*The only life that matters
The only life that's true
The only life that matters
Is the one lived well by you
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

BLACKOUT—End of Act 1.

Act 2, PROLOGUE

[MUSIC CUE 22: ENT'RACT]

[MARY is alone on stage with an accordion. She plays and sings.]

[MUSIC CUE 23: WHAT WE LEFT BEHIND]

MARY

*I remember the breeze
When it blew off the bay
I remember the green hills in spring
The smell of the morning
The cold of the stars
I remember and I sing*

*I sing for the memories
So clear in my mind
I sing so I'll not forget them
I sing for longing
I sing for home
And what we leave behind*

[Other Ghostly Pirate Women join Mary on stage]

SARAH and MARGARET

I remember the day

*When the boy sailed away
I remember I thought I was dying
The pain my heart
Like a great rolling wave
My tears, an ocean of crying*

*I sing for the memories
So clear in my mind
I sing so I'll not forget them
I sing for longing
I sing for home
And what I leave behind*

[short musical interlude as all the Ghostly Pirate Women enter]

*I remember the first time
Our ship caught the wind
I remember my first night at sea
I remember the sky
Like a carpet of diamonds
And I knew I was where I should be*

*So I sing for the memories
So clear in my mind
I sing so I'll not forget them
I sing for longing
I sing for home
And what we leave behind*

[the music changes character]

SADIE

*The cursing, the yelling,
The stink of his breath
How the way that he loved me
Felt something like death
I remember things too
They're clear in my mind
And I'm happy to say
That I've left them behind*

SADIE and some Spirit Pirate Women
*The way that he touched me
The way that I cried
The way I felt
Something dying inside*

*I remember things too
But I wish I did not
That was a life
That is better forgot*

[There is a musical interlude during which JACK, ANNE, and the CREW enter and take positions center stage]

MARY

*I remember my Frederick
So brave and so dear
And the way that he would hold me
I remember how death
Stole his last breath*

*I sing for the memories
So clear in my mind
I sing so I'll not forget them
I sing for longing
I sing for home
And what we leave behind*

[The Pirate Women retreat to the sides and watch]

[MUSIC CUE 24: TRANSITION]

Scene 1

ANNE [*shouting, angry*]

You mean to leave me here, Jack Rackham? Alone, pregnant with your child? You would maroon me like a disobedient sailor? Abandon me like some common tart you cast aside when your pleasure has been satisfied.

JACK [*interrupting*]

Hold, Anne. You will not be alone. Sister Abuelita of the parish will attend to you. I have made a sizable donation to the...

ANNE

No, Jack. I will not spend the next seven months with Cuban nuns. I can't speak Spanish and they have no use for me, a pirate whore...a *pregnant* pirate whore.

FETHERSTON

[*under his breath but still audible*]

If she didn't want to be left she shouldn't have gotten a baby, I say.

ANNE [leaping at him]
What did you say, you son of a...

FETHERSTON
Now, Anne, don't be riled at me. It was Jack who said it first.

[The CREW assents]

ANNE
Jack Rackham, you cowardly, rum-sotted rat. I will see you run through with my cutlass before I...

JACK [*pulling her aside*]
Anne, listen to me. You have been a brave and steady fighter, there's truth to that, but have some sense. Our life does not suit a woman with child.

ANNE
Even with a great belly I wager I'd be a better sailor than half those men..and braver fighter than any of them.

JACK
The crew is uneasy.

ANNE
Bah, the crew.

JACK
It's bad enough luck sailing with a woman on board and to be with child besides? We're sure to be cursed.

SARAH
Someone must stay with her. She cannot be alone.

ANNE
Not the crew, Jack. It's you who wants to be rid of me. It suited you well enough to sail with a strong, young woman fighting at your side, but now I am what? An anchor. Ballast.

MARY
I will stay.

[MARY enters the scene]

ANNE

Read, do you know what Captain Rackham intends to do? Maroon me. Alone. Here. For seven months, until I have this child, *his* child. Do you really think, Jack, that I ever expect to see you again? How many girls, Jack, in how many ports are waiting for you to return?

MARY

I will stay with you, Anne. We will be sisters. We will dress like proper women again and learn to live on land. In some ways, won't it be a relief?

JACK

I thank ye, Read.

MARY

It is not for you, Jack. I owe you nothing. It is for Anne.

JACK

I swear to ye, Anne. We *will* be back. We will return with full holds and treasures beyond imagining. You will have the child and you and Read will be on the account again.

ANNE

Go Jack. All of you. Leave us now before I pull my pistol and put a bullet through your cowardly head.

JACK

But Anne...

ANNE

Go!

[JACK and the CREW turn and exit upstage. The Spirit Pirate Women move downstage. The scene changes to a small room by a window, as ANNE and MARY sit together and look out to sea]

[MUSIC CUE 25: UNDERSCORE]

ELISSA

Jack and the crew of the *Pretty Anne* sailed that night, leaving Anne and Mary in Cuba.

FLORA

Months passed. The two women grew closer, no longer just fellow pirates but as friends and sisters.

KI MING

They shared secrets, intimacies.

ANNE

Mary...do you miss Frederick? Do you miss your husband? From your telling of it, he was a fine man.

MARY

Of course I miss him. Every day, Anne. We were very happy, for a time. And so it makes me feel ashamed, that I have feelings now for someone else.

ANNE

But Mary, it was years ago that Frederick died. You do no disservice to his memory. It is understandable that a young, healthy woman would...

MARY

You do not understand. This is not simple, carnal desire that I speak of. I am not you, Anne.

ANNE

Now, Mary...

MARY

I think of myself as a good Christian woman and I will not sleep with a man outside of marriage. I want for Tom and me...

ANNE

Tom? Thomas Earl?

MARY

Aye, Anne. But as long as we're on the account, he will not even consider it. It is not a life for a woman, nor a wife, he says. And I think he wants off

that damn boat, but he's young, and he's afraid of what Jack will do.

And I want...well, all I want is what I had with Frederick.

ANNE

A home.

MARY

A little home, yes. A family, in time.

[MUSIC CUE 26: MAKE ME A HOME]

*Build me a bed
Build me a table
Plant me a garden
And sit by my side
Together we'll sit
Never alone
Make me a promise
And make me a home*

ANNE

I wonder if I will ever see Jack again. Every day I watch for his sails.

MARY

When the child is born, that's what he said, Anne. He'll return.

ANNE

And your Tom with him.

MARY

Yes. I'm certain of it.

*Build me a table
And bring me the wine
Sit by my side, love
Oh that would be fine
Warm by the fire
Never alone
Make a promise*

And make me a home

ANNE

*I trusted him, I sailed with him
I left my life behind me
I made to him a promise
And expected one in kind
Now I fear that I was stupid
I fear that I was blind
I fear that I'm just something
Left behind*

MARY

You are tired, Anne. It has clouded your thinking.
The child will come soon, and Jack will return, and
we will all be on the account once again.

[They sing together]

Build me a bed

I trusted him

Build me a table

I sailed with him

Plant me a garden

I left a life behind

And sit by my side

I made to him a promise

Together we'll sit

And asked for one in kind

Never alone

I fear that I was stupid

Make me a promise

I fear that I was blind

And make me a home

I fear that I'm just something

Make me a home

Left behind

ANNE

You're right, Read. I am tired. Leave me now, I am
going to sleep. No doubt when I wake I will be in
better spirits.

[MARY kisses her cheek and leaves. ANNE settles into the
chair and sleeps. The lights change to an eerie, dream-
like color. As ANNE sleeps, several little girls enter-

around her, at various places on the stage. These girls represent young ANNE, as well as ANNE's unborn child]

[MUSIC CUE 27: THE NIGHTMARE]

CHILD 1

*When I was a tiny child
I stood upon the shore
And gazed out on the ocean wide
And dreamed of something more*

CHILD 2

Mama? The are soldiers here.

CHILD 3

[sitting with a real or imagined deck of cards]
*This one is the hanging man
Hanging man, hanging man
This one is the hanging man*

CHILD 4

Mama? Where are you?

CHILD 2

The soldiers, mama. They want you to come out.

CHILD 1

*You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

CHILD 5

I'm sorry I never knew you, Mama. Aunt Susan says that you did bad things, that you were wicked and went to hell.

CHILD 2

Where are the soldiers taking you?

CHILD 3

*This one is the hanging man
Hanging man, hanging man
This one is the hanging man*

[The children draw closer to the sleeping ANNE. They surround her.]

CHILDREN

*You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

CHILD 5

Were you really a *pirate*? That's what I'm going to be, too. I won't have to wear these silly dresses and I'll have a ship and a crew and they'll all have to take orders from *me*. [beat] Sometimes Aunt Susan hits me, Mama. She says I'm bad and wicked just like you.

[All the children begin their singing and speaking, overlapping and building, with the music, to a nightmare crescendo. Suddenly, they disappear and ANNE sits up in alarm, clutching her belly.]

ANNE

Oh! My! Mary! MARY!

[Blackout]

Scene 2

[JACK and the crew are standing with MARY and ANNE, dressed again in men's clothes. ANNE is handing her baby to Sister Abuelita; two sisters from the convent and some Cuban villagers, including a young man, stand to the right of the Pirates. Downstage right and left, the Spirit Pirate Women sing]

[MUSIC CUE 28: WHAT WE LEFT BEHIND REPRISE]

Spirit Pirate Women

*I remember the breeze
When it blew off the bay
I remember the green hills in spring
The smell of the morning
The cold of the stars
I remember and I sing*

I sing for the memories

*So clear in my mind
I sing so I'll not forget them
I sing for longing
And what we leave behind*

[JACK, MARY and the CREW exit, MARY and ANNE linger;
finally they start to leave and then turn back, watching
the Sisters and villagers leave]

ANNE and MARY

*I sing for the memories
So clear in my mind
I sing so I'll not forget them
I sing for longing
I sing for home
And what we leave behind*

[MUSIC CUE 29: TRANSITION/STORM]

Scene 2A: Interlude

Scene 3

[A storm at sea, with great wind and rain. Aboard the
Pretty Anne, the crew is huddled together upstage, while
JACK and ANNE argue downstage. The sky is illuminated by
great flashes of lightning]

FETHERSTON

Will this storm never break? It has been three days
now.

DOBBINS

Our foremast is gone, the sails are in tatters, the
rigging all but lost. Even when the weather does
break, we will be lucky to even reach safe harbor. If
the governor's brig doesn't catch us first. Jack
said she lost us in the storm. But with the luck
we've been having...

HARWOOD

We've long ago eaten the last of the stores. We'll
starve out here. Unless we can catch ourselves a
little boat...

FETHERSTON

Are we even pirates now? Ever since Anne returned,
Jack has done nothing but drink and boast about the

old times when he sailed with Vane. I say, time to put Jack Rackham to a vote.

FETHERSTON [whispering furtively]
It ain't Jack. It's Anne. Her and Read. It ain't right having women on board. It ain't natural.

HARWOOD
Know what else ain't natural? Not eatin'! Not having none to drink but bilge water and grog. And this damn rain!

[MUSIC CUE 30: TOO LONG AT SEA]

CREW
*Well it's been too long without a meal
And too long without a bed
And too long without home
Too long at sea*

*Well it's been too long in the wind and rain
Too long in the cold and dark
Too long without a fight
Too long at sea*

*Too long
Too long at sea
Too long
Too long at sea*

JACK
He's closing on us, Anne. We can't outrun him this time, not with our mast gone.

ANNE
Who?

JACK [In a panic]
Rogers. The damned governor. I should have taken the pardon. We're all going to hang. Even you. You think that being a woman will spare you from the gallows?

ANNE

The men are tired, Jack. But they are still your men. They will fight for you. So will Read. But you must lead them.

JACK

Lead them? I cannot, Anne.

[MUSIC CUE 31: THE BALLAD OF COWARD JACK]

*These men think I have courage
These boys think that I'm strong
If they knew, they'd know
There's something wrong here
I don't belong here
Every fight, every battle
Brings me closer to that endless sea
Brings me nearer to the endless nothing
Brings me closer to the end of me
I will die, and I will burn
I will be punished
It's the fate I've earned
There will be nothing left of me
Not a footnote
To history
Even you, Anne,
Even you
You'll forget me
Yes, you too
This is not the song of
A man of courage
Not the song
Of the brave and true
This is man who turned his back
And this is the ballad of Coward Jack*

[THOMAS EARL rushes on, followed by MARY]

EARL

Ship! The governor's ship! Less than 500 yards. We lost it in the dark and the storm but it is right close upon us, Jack. Even her topgallants are down and she means to catch us. What are your orders, Captain?

[The Crew joins JACK downstage]

JACK

What are my orders? What are my orders? Sod it all, I'm going below. Fight if you want. Or come with me. The end will be the same.

ANNE

Jack!

MARY

You be damned, Jack Rackham! Well, I will not be taken without a fight. Who is with me?

DOBBINS

I'm with Jack. I've no fight in me. At least in prison maybe I'll get some food.

ANNE

Listen. We are free women and men. Does that mean nothing to any of you? Maybe it *is* time to hang it up. Maybe our time is over. We stand our ground now, then we find a safe little harbor and disappear. We start new lives. But we can't do that swinging at the end of a hangman's noose. Now, all of you, take up arms and prepare to fight!

JACK

Please let the governor know I await the pleasure of his company. Men, there is rum below and a friendly game of cards if you're willing.

[The men follow JACK below decks; ANNE and MARY remain and prepare for battle]

MARY

Courage, Anne. With some luck we may yet prevail. The governor's sailors have little experience with pirates.

ANNE

Or women!

[MUSIC CUE 32: BATTLE 3]

[There is a battle. ANNE and MARY fight courageously but are simply overwhelmed by numbers. At the end of the fight, MARY and ANNE are being held by the governor's men as he approaches them]

WOODES ROGERS

And this must be Bonny, the famous pirate trollop. And where is Calico Jack? Where is the crew? Tell me now or you will hang.

ANNE

I will surely hang in any case, but the Captain is below. No doubt drunk, or crying like a sodding baby.

WOODES ROGERS

It is a trap. I have been chasing Jack Rackham for too long. He would not lay down so easily.

MARY

It is no trap. You *will* find the Captain below and your men will meet no resistance.

[WOODES ROGERS sends his men below, leaving MARY and ANNE bound together and under guard]

[MUSIC CUE 33: MAKE ME A HOME REPRISE]

ANNE

*I trusted him, I sailed with him
I left my life behind me
I made to him a promise
And expected one in kind
Now I fear that I was stupid
I fear that I was blind
I fear that I'm just something
Left behind*

[ROGERS' men emerge with JACK and the Crew under arrest. JACK is clearly drunk and shaking with fear]

WOODES ROGERS

The fearsome Jack Rackham at last. The great pirate King, wetting himself in fear and too drunk to stand. What a vile and worthless abomination you are. I should throw you to the fishes now, but better to see you and your whores brought to trial so that you can all hang before God. Put the prisoners on our ship, and take them below. Shackle them tightly, and then set fire to this pathetic ship. On second thought,

lash these prisoners to the rail, so they can watch their ship burn.

[JACK and his men are led off. As he passes by ANNE, JACK looks at her pitifully.]

JACK

Anne, I...I don't want to die.

ANNE

Jack, I am sorry to see you thus. But if you had fought like a man, you would not hang like a dog!

Blackout

Scene 4

[The Ghostly Pirate Women appear as at the beginning]

GRACE O'MALLEY

They fought bravely, Anne and Mary.

ELISSA

Yes. They were pirates true to the end.

RUSSLA

I am proud to be in their company.

SARAH BISHOP

But Rackham was the worst sort of coward.

GRACE O'MALLEY

Yes, Jack had weaknesses. But there was more to it.

RUSSLA

He knew it was the end for his kind. There was no fire left in him.

[MUSIC CUE 34: SAIL AWAY]

*When the great storm comes
When the great winds blow
When the darkness covers
Everything you know*

GRACE O'MALLEY

You can turn aside

Or stand your ground

GRACE, RUSSLA, and ELISSA

*Hold to what's true
Stay the course
Move ahead
Without fear or remorse
Set your sights on the
Horizon line
And sail away*

[The scene is being set for the Trial]

SARAH

*When the great fear comes
And you want to flee
When you lose your strength
To uncertainty
You can make the choice
You can find your voice*

SARAH, GRACE, RUSSLA, and ELISSA

*Hold to what's true
Stay the course
Move ahead
Without fear or remorse
Set your sights on the
Horizon line
And sail away*

*Even if the course isn't always clear
Even if you feel uncertain
Even if it seems like a little fear
Has turned into an endless ocean*

*Hold to what's true
Stay the course
Move ahead
Without fear or remorse
Set your sights on the
Horizon line
And sail away*

[MUSIC CUE 35: THE TRIAL]

Scene 5

[We are at the trial of ANNE and MARY, who are now dressed in rough prison clothes, and stand together before the JUDGE, who will sit on an elevated platform upstage center. The prosecutor is stage left. A large, noisy crowd has gathered to watch the proceedings.]

BALIFF

All rise! This Wednesday, November the sixteenth, year of our Lord 1720, a Court of Admiralty to be held before his Excellency Sir Nicholas Laws, His Majesty's Captain General over His Majesty's Island of Jamaica and other territories...

CROWD

[has been growing in a murmuring intensity and finally erupts]

*We're here to see the women tried
We're here to see the pirates brought to justice
We're here to see them plead and beg and cry
Hang them
Hang them*

BALIFF

The court will be silent!

JUDGE

Let us proceed. Mr. Prosecutor.

PROSECUTOR

George, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King, defender of the faith...

ANNE

Sweet Jesus! Hang us if you will, but don't bloody bore us to death!

CROWD

[The CROWD erupts into laughter, which turns to anger]

*We're here to see the great brought down
We're here to see the devils burn
Tried in the name of God and Crown
Hang them
Hang them*

JUDGE

Silence! One more outburst from the prisoners and you will be gagged. Anne Bonny and Mary Read, this court has unanimously found you both guilty of the piracies, robberies, and felonies charged against you in the third and fourth articles which have been exhibited against you; further, you have been found guilty of likewise felonies as described...

CROWD

*We're here to see the witches spit and curse
We're here to see the slatterns beg
Their souls will burn in hell but first
Hang them
Hang them*

JUDGE

Have either of you anything to say or offer why sentence of death should not be passed upon you for said offenses?

MARY

No, your honor.

ANNE

No. Your honor.

CROWD

[A low, "hang them" chant begins and builds to a climax]

JUDGE

Very well. You, Mary Read and Anne Bonny, alias Bonn, are to go from hence to the place from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, where you shall be severally hanged by the neck until you are severally dead.

JUDGE and CROWD

And God of infinite mercy be merciful to both of you...

ANNE

Your honor?

JUDGE

Order! Order! The prisoner wishes to speak. Yes, what is it?

ANNE

If it would please your Honor, we would ask there be a stay of execution.

JUDGE

What? On what basis?

MARY

We plead our bellies, sir.

JUDGE

What?

MARY

Yes, sir. We are both of us quick with child.

[The CROWD reacts noisily]

JUDGE

Silence! Anne Bonny, who is the father of the child you allegedly bear?

ANNE

Mr John Rackham, late of Cuba, whom I believe sits in your prison awaiting his execution.

JUDGE

Mary Read, who is the father of your child?

MARY

I decline to say, sir. And though he was a rogue and a pirate by your Honor's definition, he was an honest and true man who was seeking the opportunity for an honest life. Our marriage was sanctioned by no church, but it was good and true. I call the fellow husband. Further. I never committed adultery or fornication with any man, and I condemn any court that says otherwise!

JUDGE

Silence. Very well, I order the prisoners to be examined by a doctor of physic, and if it be found that they are quick with child, as they claim, then their executions shall be stayed until after the time of their laying in. Bailiff, remove the prisoners.

[As the CROWD exits, the scene shifts to WOODS ROGERS at his desk once again]

[MUSIC CUE 36: UNDERSCORE]

WOODS ROGERS

Dearest Mother. I am writing to thank you for sending the small case of father's books. He was a great man and I will never cease to treasure his memory. He would be proud and pleased to know that John Rackham, the last of the pirate scourge here in the Caribbean, has been brought to justice. His hanged corpse, and those of his godless mates, rot in gibbets as a warning to those inclined to take up the sweet trade. His pirate whores sit in prison and will be hanged as soon as they deliver their bastard children.

In truth, Mother, we may never see each other again. I spent my little meager allowance on the persecution of the pirates, which I believe was God's will. I have little left and even if I could afford passage back to England, I fear my health will not permit it.

[MUSIC CUE 37: ALL FOR LOVE]

[During the introduction and verse, we see the gallows being constructed at the top of the upstage platform]

MARGARET

*I gave him all my kisses
I gave him all my heart
I gave to him a promise to be true
I did it always knowing
We'd someday be apart
In the end
I did it all for love.*

TEUTA

*All for love
It was all for love
Everything I did
It was all for love*

WOODS ROGERS

I hope that father knew—and I hope you do, also—that my days as a privateer were a source of much shame and that I often wished they could be stricken from my life. Yet in some way, perhaps, it was God's desire that I glimpse the lawlessness and sin first hand, that I might someday redouble my desire to rid it from the world.

[During the following verse, JACK is lead to the gallows]

MARGARET

*Some say love's a flower
Some say love's a song
Some say love's a blessing, some, a curse
I say love's journey
To find where we belong
And in the end
We do it all for love*

TEUTA and MARGARET

*All for love
It was all for love
Everything we do
It is all for love*

*All for love
It was all for love
Everything we do
It is all for love*

[As the instrumental continues, a black hood is placed over JACK'S head and at the end of the song, there is a dramatic shift in light and we see JACK hanging from the gallows]

WOODES ROGERS

So, Mother, I will say a prayer for you and ask that you do so for me, as well. This vast ocean between us is as nothing to God and I am happy knowing that someday we, and all the souls of the righteous, will be together once again.

[Lights down on WOODES ROGERS and up on ANNE BONNEY and MARY READ in their prison cells. ANNE is pregnant; MARY is not. They are separated by a stone wall but can make contact through a high barred opening between the cells.]

[MUSIC CUE 38: UNDERSCORE]

ANNE

God, what I would do for a change from these stinking clothes and a chance to brush the filth from my hair.

MARY

What you would do? You would do anything. You always would.

ANNE

Aye, I would at that. I am a vile creature. But I'll be damned if they'll hang me in these filthy rags. I was raised to be a lady. My father would be ashamed to see me thus. Perhaps I should write to him. Tell him that his pregnant, runaway pirate daughter needs a clean dress in which to be hung.

MARY

Well, m'Lady, we could overcome the guard and demand a pair of new bloomers. Ribbons for our hair. Cachet, perhaps. French toilet water?

ANNE

Aye. The next time he comes too close I'll grab him.

MARY

Well, it won't be long until you have your chance. I can see through the bars that it's nearly dawn. They'll be coming soon, you know.

ANNE

Perhaps they've decided to wait.

MARY

No. My poor little baby boy has been taken to the orphanage and now it is time for my sentence to be fulfilled. They'll waste no time. If you were smart, Anne, you'd hold on to that child you bear for a few extra months, at least.

ANNE

Oh, Mary. My sister.

MARY

I do not fear death, Anne. I was a soldier for too long. I will see Frederick again. But you, Anne,

I fear for you. You are so young, and you will be
all alone here.

[MUSIC CUE 39: DON'T FORGET ME]

ANNE

*I have loved
Won, and lost
Lived a free life
Paid the cost
I would not
Change a moment
I would not
Change a day*

MARY

*I have fought
Lost, and won
And my life
Has just begun
Now it ends
Much too soon
But I would not
Change a day*

MARY and ANNE

*No turning back
From this course we set
Moving ahead
Without fear or regret
Sisters, together
We'll always be*

MARY

Don't forget me

ANNE

Don't forget me

ANNE and MARY

*We are free
Even here
And there's nothing
We need fear
The darkness comes
And the night will end
But I'll stay with*

You, my friend

MARY and ANNE

*There's no turning back
From this course we set
Moving ahead
Without fear or regret
Sisters, together
We'll always be
Don't forget me
Don't forget me*

[They are interrupted by two armed guards]

GUARD 1

Mary Read, we are here to carry out the sentence of hanging. Are you prepared?

MARY

Oh, Anne. Suddenly, my courage has gone.
[She holds ANNE'S hand tightly through the bars of the cell]

GUARD 2

Shackle her.

MARY

No, I will go willingly. Please do not put me in chains.

ANNE

My sister. Take heart.

[she sings, weakly]

*We are free
Even here
And there's nothing
We need fear
The darkness comes
And the night will end
But I'll stay with you
My friend*

[The Spirit Pirate Women appear from all areas, some moving forward to surround MARY. They join in the song. MARY sees them but no one else does. They smile and bow to her.]

GUARD 1

It is time, Mary Read.

[The GUARDS lead MARY off, as the Spirit Pirate Women follow]

MARY

Sisters, thank you for coming.

ANNE

Sisters? Mary, I don't understand.

MARY

Oh, Anne. You will see. You will see!

[The music swells as MARY is led away. ANNE is left all alone in her cell.]

ANNE

*There's no turning back
From this course we set
Moving ahead
Without fear or regret
Sisters, together
We'll always be
Don't forget me
Don't forget me*

[Lights fade to black. Music changes to a reprise of "The Only Life that Matters.]

[MUSIC CUE 40: UNDERSCORE]

GRACE O'MALLEY

I am Grace O'Malley. Once I commanded three great galleons and two hundred brave Irishmen.

RUSSLA

I am Russla, and, by Odin, even the strongest Vikings cowered before me.

ELISSA

I am Elissa, also called Dido. I founded Carthage.

MARY

I am Mary Read. I was fearless in battle and brave in heart. I was free. *And I was free.*

ALL

*The only life that matters
The only life that's true
The only life that matters
Is the one lived well by you
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

ANNE

I am Anne Bonny. I lived freely. I was free. I was a pirate. Not long after Mary died, my father used his wealth and influence to buy me a reprieve. I gave birth to a beautiful baby girl and she grew into a fierce, independent and headstrong young woman.

SARAH [to the audience]

She is there among you. Anne's strength has been carried forward.

GRACE O'MALLEY

We may be gone from life, sisters, but not from the world. Not from the imagination. We were lovers of many men...

SARAH BISHOP

We were wives. And mothers.

GRACE O'MALLEY

But above all, we were women...

[Assent from the crowd...]

And we were

RUSSLA

Free.

TEUTA

Yes. Free. And we were...

ALL

Pirates!

[As the women sing, they are joined by JACK, FREDERICK, and the Crew of the Pretty Ann]

ALL

*The only life that matters
The only life that's true
The only life that matters
Is the one lived well by you
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

*The only life that counts at all
Is one that you control
The only life that matters
Is the one that makes you whole
You can live out on the ocean
Or never sail the sea
The only life that matters
Is a life that's free*

BLACKOUT. END OF MUSICAL.

