

THE DREAD PIRATE ROBERTS

A Pilot for The Lost Adventures of the Black Masked  
Sallywag(s) from The Princess Bride,  
William Goldman's Timeless Tale of True Love.

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## THE DREAD PIRATE ROBERTS

We are above the World as it spins and we start to dive as Europe and Africa come into view, but we continue past to the vast Atlantic Ocean...

As the Americas come around, we focus on the Carolina coast:

THICK CLOUDS obscure our view, but the white gets replaced with dark and gray SMOKE--

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

The smoke breaks, and we drop directly into the chaos of a magnificent 17th century naval battle!

Cannons explode between two ships:

*THE REVENGE*, an 8-sail sloop with black flags, and its main deck filled with mangy, flea-ridden, toothless PIRATES;

*THE QUEEN'S PRIDE*, a 20-sail galleon with its white sails holding prim and proper SAILORS and NAVAL OFFICERS doing all that they can to fend off this attack.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

With more cannon fire in their arsenal, *The Queen's Pride* causes more damage than what *The Revenge* can return.

### EXT. THE QUEEN'S PRIDE, QUARTERDECK

Standing proudly next to the HELMSMAN, the CAPTAIN (50s) distinguished, clean shaven, flashes an over-confident grin.

CAPTAIN

These picaroons will be food for the sea. Reload! Make this pass our last!

A triumphant affirming CRY goes up from the orderly CREW, who swiftly and efficiently work at reloading the cannons.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

(to the Helmsman)

Let her come up.

After eyeing the pirate ship in disarray, the Captain turns to his steward, a YOUNG MAN (18) with engaging bluish gray eyes and moppish hair...

This is YOUNG WESTLEY.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Off to my cabin for my victory snuff.

But before Young Westley can obey the order, the Captain's over-confident grin gets knocked from his face.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

What in name of King Humperdinck do they think they're doing?

**ABOVE THE SEA**

The desperate *Revenge's* sails are shifting so that it's taking direct aim at--

**EXT. THE QUEEN'S PRIDE, QUARTERDECK**

CAPTAIN

They're going to ram us! They'll sink us both! Hard a-starboard!

The Helmsman spins the sailing wheel, and the ship maneuvers just enough so that the ships' sides SLAM into each other.

CRASH! As the Crew gets knocked off their feet, the Pirates launch grappling hooks, locking these two ships together.

The Pirates swarm the ship!

CLANGING and CLINKING SWORDS fill the air as the two sides engage in fencing duels. The teeth-disadvantaged seem to be beating the scurviless naval mariners quite handily.

The Captain witnesses TWO OF HIS SAILORS choose the ocean water instead of combat.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Stand your ground! That is an order!

He removes a dagger from his sash.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

We have to get free from that ship.

But after nervously eyeing the frenzied fighting filling the Main Deck, he slaps the dagger into Young Westley's hand.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Go.

Without hesitation, Young Westley charges into the fray, zigzagging through this melee.

OVER ON THE REVENGE

A pair of BLACK MASKED EYES studies the melee, but they get drawn to the resourceful Young Westley as he ducks blades, rolls over barrels, and slides under shifting booms.

THE QUEEN'S PRIDE, MAIN DECK

Young Westley charges to a grappling hook, but a pirate, SCARS, blocks his path. He's 50... probably. A walking scar from a life aboard a ship makes his true age indiscernible.

SCARS

Why don't ya make this easy on  
yourself and join your friends?

Young Westley glances to see MORE MARINERS jumping ship.

SCARS (CONT'D)

What'll it be, boy?

With that, Young Westley charges to the side of the ship. Scars reacts: *That was too easy.*

But Young Westley doesn't go overboard. He launches himself into a taut rope and slingshots back at Scars.

SCARS (CONT'D)

Oh, sh--

Young Westley declcats Scars, before dropping into a roll that puts him right at a grappling hook's rope. He saws away.

The rope frays. Young Westley's almost through when--

A MAN IN ALL BLACK flies past his head.

Young Westley whips around to see the Man in Black soar (with the use of a rope) up to the crow's nest.

This pirate's presence ripples through the fighting below and *The Queen's Pride* men slowly surrender to their counterparts.

SAILOR #1

That's him. That's him.

Everyone's eyes, even those of *The Queen's Pride* Captain, are on this MAN IN BLACK triumphantly standing on the nest's rim.

With his eyes on the Man in Black, Young Westley doesn't feel the knife at his neck until it's too late.