

SWISS FAMILY ROBINSON

rewrite by

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&

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April 27, 2006

Mandeville Films
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FADE IN CLOSE ON:

A SLOE-EYED COW

staring directly at us, her head framed by a round wooden hole. WIDEN to reveal:

EXT. SOUTH SEAS - DAY

The cow gazes from a porthole aboard the RMS Bristol, a homely schooner in Her Majesty's mail fleet. A stiff wind blows. The ship rides heaving swells under a dramatic sky.

SUPERED TITLE: "SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN, 1861."

INT. SHIP'S STEERAGE HOLD - DAY

The cow munches hay, unimpressed by the sight of the passing ocean. Milk SQUIRTS in a pail, O.S. She drops her head for more hay.

JACK ROBINSON, 8, appears in the porthole, looking out with an expression of boredom that matches the cow's. Thirty-five days at sea does that to a kid.

JACK

There's a storm coming.

The cow raises her head, chews more hay.

JACK (CONT'D)

It's getting rough.

His tone is blase. He turns. His mother, HEIDI ROBINSON, a beautiful, strong woman with clean features and intelligent eyes, doesn't look up from milking the cow.

The floor is littered with hay. A donkey, two pigs, chickens and ducks share the Robinson family's cramped cabin, along with mail sacks and cargo.

HEIDI

Mind your chores. Don't forget the captain needs his boots polished.

JACK

Mother... do I have to?

HEIDI

Not if you want to be set afloat in a lifeboat.

JACK

Someday I'm going to sail on a real ship with a stateroom, a dining room...

His eyes light up as he pictures it. Heidi pushes the pail across the floor with a look that says, "And until then..."

INT. COMPANIONWAY - DAY

Jack lugs the brimming pail down the corridor, the ship rolling under his feet.

INT. MESS HALL - DAY

Jack enters. TWO SURLY SAILORS are playing cards at one of the tables. Jack goes to the galley, nearly collides with the COOK as he comes out with a huge iron pot.

COOK
Look out, boy! You'll be dinner next!

The surly sailors laugh. Jack dodges past him to the galley.

EXT. DECK - DAY

Jack comes up onto the heaving deck. His brother, FRITZ, 17, lean, hot-blooded and restless to prove himself in the world, is on hands and knees scrubbing the deck.

JACK
It's almost lunch. You'll want to be in line before the meat is gone.

FIRST MATE GREER, a gruff but fair taskmaster, overhears it.

GREER
It's lunch when I say it is. Keep working, Fritz Robinson.

Fritz rolls his eyes. Jack sees ERNST, 15, using a sextant under the tutelage of CAPTAIN JONES at the helm. Ernst is slender and bookish, with an eager expression.

JACK
How come Ernst isn't working?

FRITZ
He convinced the captain he's put to better use as a navigator.

Their father, JOHANN, slishes water from a bucket and drops to his knees with a brush. A handsome guy of middle years, Johann looks out of place scrubbing a deck.

JOHANN
And why not? "Let every man find the thing for which he is put on Earth." John Locke.

FRITZ
And you were put on Earth to swab the deck?

Johann looks amused by his son's challenge.

JOHANN

Of course not. But in necessity lies invention. Maybe after this I'll come up with a new way to swab the deck, a machine that will free thousands from drudgery, and make us rich in the process. What would you think of that?

Fritz's face shows what he thinks of it, but the ship's BELL sounds before he can put it in words.

CUT TO:

INT. MESS HALL - DAY

The CAMERA TRACKS the faces of the 14 OR SO PASSENGERS (including the Robinsons) who sit elbow-to-elbow at a long table, eating watery soup and thin strips of salted meat.

The passengers have the look of economic refugees, worn out by life and the long voyage. They eat in silence. Johann is the exception, holding forth:

JOHANN

-- the key is freedom. The freedom to follow one's dreams. To be oneself, to think for oneself. Isn't that why we're all on this ship? To be free of the naysayers, the civil servants and fat loafing aristocrats --

HEIDI

(embarrassed)
Johann, please.

JOHANN

Why? You're afraid I'll offend our fellow passengers? Hochstetter, are you a fat aristocrat?

HOCHSTETTER, a gaunt youth with a YOUNG WIFE, blushes.

HOCHSTETTER

I should say not, sir.

JOHANN

And what's your plan when we get to New Guinea?

HOCHSTETTER

To buy a farm, sir. We got evicted from ours by the county squire. They say there's land for everyone where we're going.

JOHANN

And good luck to you, sir. In the New World, a man's future is as big as his dreams.

QUILTY, a hard-bitten Bantam rooster of a man, eyes Johann skeptically.

QUILTY

And what will you do with all this freedom, Mr. Robinson? What's your plan?

Johann takes a beat before deciding to share it.

JOHANN

Wheels. Rubber wheels.

Hochstetter's wife lets out a braying laugh, then clamps a hand to her mouth in embarrassment.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

It's all right, dear. As I always say, if an idea doesn't get a laugh or two, a man's not thinking big enough. The fact is New Guinea is full of rubber trees.

QUILTY

(derisively)

And why in God's name would anyone want wheels made from rubber?

JOHANN

Rubber wheels are the future. Wagons, bicycles, carriages -- someday they'll all run on rubber wheels... inflated with air.

The passengers hoot with laughter. Instead of being offended, Johann raises his cup.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Mark my words. A year from now we won't be choking down old beef and thin soup. We'll be rejoicing in our success. To following one's dreams!

PASSENGERS

Hear hear!

They drink. Ernst and Jack drink and gaze at Johann proudly, impressed as always by his charisma. Fritz doesn't drink and looks like he's heard this spiel or one like it before.

HOCHSTETTER'S WIFE

You have such conviction, Mr. Robinson. It's a fine trait.

JOHANN

Thank you, Berta. But I'm no different than any of you. I simply want what's best for my family.

Johann looks over at Heidi, who smiles supportively. From above comes a cry:

LOOKOUT (O.S.)

SAIL HO!

The passengers trade looks of surprise.

CUT TO:

EXT. DECK - DAY

Johann and his family come up on deck along with a number of other passengers. They go to the railing.

THEIR POV - A RIGGED STEAMSHIP

with all sails drawn, aiming straight for the Bristol. (A "rigged steamship" is a ship with sails and a coal-fired engine, the smokestack placed between the masts.)

BACK TO SCENE

Johann looks uneasy. Notwithstanding the ship's Union Jack, there's something sinister about its dingy sails and belching smokestack. Heidi comes to his side.

HEIDI

It's Royal Navy.

At the Bristol's stern Captain Jones is peering through a spyglass at the ship, speaking urgently with officers. EZRA, a grizzled sea dog, stands near Johann. His face is drawn.

EZRA

Aye, she's Navy. And a bad number too.

JOHANN

Why do you say that?

EZRA

Look at her. Been through a fire. Sails like brothel sheets.

He shakes his head ominously. Johann looks rattled.

THEIR POV - THE SHIP

As it gets closer, they can see that the stern (near the captain's quarters) is blackened by fire. The ship is raising a red and black pennant.

BACK TO SCENE

Ezra breathes in sharply.

EZRA
Blimey...

JOHANN
What is it?

Before Ezra can answer, there is a BOOM and a cannonball SCREECHES over the water, passing before their bow.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
Get down!

The Robinsons drop to the deck. Johann shields Heidi and Jack. BOOM! Another cannonball hits the water, sends water SPLASHING over them.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
Heidi, get the children below!

Heidi dashes below with Jack and Ernst. Sailors are running helter-skelter, Captain Jones barking orders. Greer passes out muskets from a meager arsenal. Fritz goes over.

FRITZ
I'll take one.

JOHANN
Fritz, no! Get below!

Fritz looks at his father in disbelief.

FRITZ
Father --

JOHANN
Now!

Fritz sees Johann's face, knows it's useless to argue. He runs to catch up with his mother and brothers. Johann takes a pistol from Greer.

INT. STEERAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Heidi, Fritz, Ernst and Jack plow through the door. Jack runs to the porthole. Fritz digs in a leather tool bag.

JACK
They're coming alongside!

HEIDI
Jack, get away from there!

Fritz takes a hammer from the bag, hands it to Ernst and takes a hatchet for himself. GUNSHOTS ring out on deck.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Oh my God!

FRITZ

Quick, everyone hide. Mother, you
and Jack in here. Ernst, over here.

They all hide as the attacking vessel creeps alongside.

EXT. DECK - DAY

The battle, it turns out, was brief.

Ezra and two sailors lie dead. Captain Jones has a bullet
wound to his arm. He stands stoically in a line with Johann
and the surviving crew, weapons at their feet.

Emblazoned on the bow of the attacking ship: "HMS ACTAEON."

ON THE ACTAEON

BRITISH SAILORS aim rifles down at the mail ship. There is
something unkempt and undisciplined in their manner. Several
wear uniforms with fire and smoke damage.

A dozen armed sailors swing on ropes over to the Bristol.

CAPTAIN HORACE BRAGG lands on the deck. A dark, commanding
figure with flowing hair and malignant eyes, he goes over to
Captain Jones.

BRAGG

Captain Horace Bragg, Her Majesty's
Navy. Which one of these men is your
navigator?

CAPTAIN JONES

You're the captain sure as I'm the
Earl of Sandwich. Let's see your
papers.

Bragg eyes him with menace. Captain Jones stands his ground.

BRAGG

Say again?

CAPTAIN JONES

You're a mutineer and so are these
men. Where's your real captain? Did
you kill him?

BRAGG

Captain Teawell is dead. Of an
accident. As first officer, I took
over. I am the captain.

He says it mildly but with eerie intensity, his eyes never
leaving Captain Jones.

BRAGG (CONT'D)
 And I believe I asked as to your
 navigator.

Captain Jones glares. Bragg aims a pistol at his head,
 turning to the Bristol's crew.

BRAGG (CONT'D)
 Will the navigator please identify
 himself or do I have to splatter your
 captain's brains on the deck?

A bespectacled officer, HENRY POINTER, raises his hand
 meekly.

BRAGG (CONT'D)
 Your name?

POINTER
 (scared)
 Helm Officer Pointer, sir.

BRAGG
 Where's this sorry tub headed?

POINTER
 The colonies in New Guinea. We're a
 mail ship.

BRAGG
 And you? You've kicked around these
 parts how long?

POINTER
 I beg your pardon?

BRAGG
 I mean you know the place? The
 shipping lanes? The islands? The
 reefs and shoals? How long have you
 sailed the South Seas?

POINTER
 Going on 11 years, sir.

Bragg nods to MAGGOT and KILROY, two burly sailors.

BRAGG
 He'll do.

Maggot and Kilroy take Pointer by the arms. Pointer
 protests, but they march him across a gangplank to the
 Actaeon.

CAPTAIN JONES
 I demand to know the meaning of -

Bragg FIRES. Jones falls, dead. Johann and the mail ship crew gasp with shock. Bragg turns to his men, led by DONEGAL, a coarse-featured, powerfully built first mate.

BRAGG

Mr. Donegal, go below, bring me every map on the ship. The rest of you scare up anything worth your while.

The raiders head below. Bragg's gaze shifts to Johann, drops to his leather boots.

BRAGG (CONT'D)

Misplaced your goat herd, have you? How many passengers like yourself on board? How many women?

His eyes glint. Johann swallows.

JOHANN

I'm the only passenger. Unless you like reading people's letters, there's nothing of value for you here.

Bragg eyes him darkly. A bead of sweat rolls down Johann's cheek.

INT. COMPANIONWAY - DAY

The raiders swarm belowdecks, ransacking cabins and tossing booty into the hall. Hochstetter's wife is pulled screaming from her cabin.

INT. STEERAGE - DAY

The door bursts open and two raiders sweep in. TREVELYAN is small, wiry and dissolute. HOGG is a Frankenstein-like giant, seven feet tall and built like a privy.

FRITZ AND ERNST

watch from their hiding places. Fritz is behind a crate, Ernst crouched in a barrel, peering out through the cork hole as Trevelyan goes to a desk covered with his books and papers.

Trevelyan unrolls a painstakingly drawn architectural blueprint.

TREVELYAN

What is this rot?

He looks at it with a scowl, then sweeps the papers to the floor. Fritz shoots a look at Ernst, shaking his head, silently urging him to stay calm. Ernst fumes.

A flutter of movement makes Fritz turn and look through a porthole at the Actaeon across the water.

FRITZ'S POV - A CABIN BOY

signaling from a porthole on the Actaeon. Later we'll call him ADAM. He's in his mid-teens, a grubby urchin with delicate features. He mouths a frantic but inaudible plea.

BACK TO SCENE

Fritz tries to make out what the boy is saying, but a SQUEAL seizes his attention away.

Hogg is reeling about the cabin with a pig under one arm, trying to capture the other pig. He smashes against the wardrobe.

IN THE WARDROBE

Concealed by hanging clothes, Heidi clutches Jack and covers his mouth as the wardrobe is buffeted. Jack wields a jackknife.

Peering through the clothes, Jack can see Hogg struggle with the pigs and send a chicken airborne with a kick.

The pigs squirm and flail. Hogg loses his balance and falls backwards into the wardrobe. Jack thrusts with the knife.

HOGG

Aaaagghh!

Hogg drops the pigs. He whirls and sweeps aside the clothes to expose Heidi and Jack.

At the same instant, Trevelyan brings up his pistol as Fritz and Ernst leap from their hiding places. They freeze.

TREVELYAN

Ha -- a coupla runts layin' for us.
Go on, boys. I dare you.

The boys drop their weapons. Hogg looks down at the jackknife planted in his ass. He glowers at Jack.

HOGG

You're dead, boy.

EXT. DECK - MINUTES LATER

THUNDER rolls. It's raining, the seas rougher. Raiders bring passengers up on deck and carry plunder across to the Actaeon.

Chickens, ducks and pigs erupt from the companionway in a NOISY SENSATION. Heidi and her sons follow, brought up at gunpoint by the renegade sailors.

Johann watches with growing panic as the Actaeon crew HOOT and SHOUT CATCALLS at the female passengers. Jack looks at his father with pleading eyes.

JACK

Father! Do something!

Johann stands there, helpless. Ten feet away, a raider is bent over, taking boots off a dead sailor. He has a pistol in his belt.

Johann takes a step closer, summoning his nerve. Donegal crosses to Bragg.

DONEGAL

I sent the maps over. We've rum,
dinner and good sport for the crew.

BRAGG

Very well. Show the women on board,
the rest into the drink --

Johann lunges, grabs the boot-stealer's pistol and shoves him to the deck. He fumbles back the hammer, aims at Bragg.

JOHANN

Don't move!

His hands tremble. Bragg regards him coolly.

BRAGG

So you captured Mr. Vaughn's pistol.
Remind me to reproach Mr. Vaughn for
his carelessness.

JOHANN

Get off this ship.

BRAGG

Are you aware Mr. Vaughn was taking
boots from a man he killed with that
pistol? And he's had no time to
reload?

JOHANN

You're bluffing.

BRAGG

Then see for yourself. Pull the
trigger. You're hesitating. Why?

Bragg smiles like a man who knows he's holding all the cards.

BRAGG (CONT'D)

Is it because if you do pull the
trigger, you'll know that I'm not the
one who's bluffing?

There is a GUTTURAL SOUND and Bragg turns.

Quilty, the passenger who challenged Johann in the mess hall, is aiming a fierce little derringer at close range.

QUILTY

Get your hands in the air, you sack of shit. His gun may be empty, but this one will blow your head to Siam. Tell your men to drop their weapons.

Bragg takes his measure, doesn't like what he sees and indicates for his men to surrender their weapons. Quilty hands Bragg's pistol to Johann.

QUILTY (CONT'D)

If he twitches, shoot him. Mr. Greer, how shall we dispose of these scum?

GREER

Cast off lines, men. Hoist the mainsail. They can swim to their ship.

QUILTY

Swim?

GREER

That's right, Mr. Quilty. They may be cold-blooded killers, but my men are still bound by the laws of the sea. We'll report them soon enough.

Quilty nods grudgingly. The mail ship crew cast off lines and the ships start drifting apart. Lightning CRASHES, rain falls harder. Bragg gives Johann a sulfurous look.

BRAGG

Count your blessings, goatherd. Next time there won't be anyone to clean up your mistakes.

Johann trains the pistol on him. Rain beats on their faces. The mainsail gives a WOOF as it fills with wind. Greer waits until the ships are far apart, then addresses the raiders:

GREER

Over the side with you and may God save your souls!

The raiders leap into the sea and begin swimming for the Actaeon. Bragg looks at Johann with loathing. Johann gestures with the pistol

JOHANN

You heard him. Don't test his compassion.

Sneering, Bragg goes to the railing and steps off -- SPLASH. Johann lowers the pistol, legs turning to rubber. Heidi runs to him and they embrace. Jack runs to the railing.

JACK

I hope you drown! I hope a shark
bites your butt off!

Johann laughs weakly. Jack turns, excited.

JACK (CONT'D)

We did it, father! We showed those
buccaneers!

There's a flash of lightning and a HUGE THUNDERCLAP! Greer comes over, has to shout over the rising storm.

GREER

Get your family below, sir. We're
sailing into weather.

The Robinsons trade looks of concern.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRISTOL - DAY - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

Lightning CRASHES. The sky is black with thunderclouds. Rain and wind lash the ship. Johann climbs the furiously tilting deck. Huge waves wash over the railing.

The Actaeon is nowhere in sight. The storm's the danger now.

The shorthanded crew works desperately to keep the Bristol from foundering. Johann helps a sailor secure a luffing sail.

He cleats a line, but a sudden gust whips it free and the boom swings in a lethal arc. The sailor ducks just in time.

Greer runs over, staying low under the whipping boom.

GREER

Mr. Robinson, I told you to stay
below!

JOHANN

You don't have enough men!

GREER

I need sailors, not Swiss burghers!
Get below, man!

Johann sees he's more hindrance than help, moves aft.

INT. STEERAGE - DAY

Heidi and Fritz fight to close a porthole while Ernst and Jack try to calm the animals. The cabin is ankle-deep in water. Loose objects cascade on the seesawing flood.

Johann staggers through the door. A barrel sloshes downhill against the bulkhead. A cage flies open and ejects flapping chickens.

The donkey loses its footing, yanks its tether from the wall and goes sliding across the pitched cabin floor, hooves windmilling, eyes filled with terror.

At the same time there's a HUGE CRASH, the sound of structural failure somewhere in the ship. Heidi screams, reaches out to her husband.

HEIDI

Johann!

He struggles toward her, but the ship lurches suddenly and SMASHES him against the bulkhead.

EXT. BRISTOL - NIGHT

The storm rages. A 40-foot wall of water CRASHES over the bow, sweeping two sailors overboard while a third hangs on desperately to a rope.

INT. STEERAGE - NIGHT

Jack sobs and buries his head in Heidi's chest. Fritz and Ernst cling to a beam. Johann can only watch in horror, powerless against nature's wrath.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

As the Bristol is tossed like a cork in the giant waves, we PULL BACK, higher and higher, until...

AERIAL SHOT

The storm reaches a furious crescendo. A BOLT OF LIGHTNING illuminates the Bristol, just a tiny speck in the angry ocean.

CUT TO BLACK.

Blackness. Silence. Then... a TINY CREAK.

FADE IN:

INT. BELOWDECKS - DAY

Stillness. The interior is dark. More timbers CREAK. Sunlight enters through cracks in the planking. We hear SLOSHING, GRUNTS, then a RASP of shifting wood.

EXT. DECK - DAY

Johann slides away a hatch cover and climbs up into the dazzling sunlight. The ship is tilted over 30 degrees. Heidi and the boys follow, squinting against the light.

JOHANN
Hello? Mr. Greer?
(pause)
Anyone?

There is only eerie silence.

The Robinsons look around in amazement. The Bristol has run aground on a jagged rock washed by the waves. The crew is gone. Sails and rigging lie strewn across the deck.

JACK
Where is everyone?

One by one they turn until they are all facing...

REVERSE ANGLE

... the island.

It's a lush wilderness ringed with sand -- paradise to a modern tourist, terrifying to a castaway. A peak covered with tropical foliage looms over the beach.

ERNST
Maybe they set ashore...

FRITZ
Like hell they did. Look at this.

He stands at the railing, looking down at a gash in the hull that runs nearly the length of the ship and stops just shy of the Robinsons' cabin.

HEIDI
My God, do you suppose we're the only ones alive?

As they consider it, the boat SHUDDERS and slides a few feet off the rock, tilting the deck even further. Livestock BRAY and SQUAWK belowdecks.

JOHANN
We need to get ashore. Go below, get everything you can -- food, clothes --

HEIDI
Medicine.

JACK
What about the animals? We can't leave the animals!

JOHANN

All right, the animals. But hurry.
I'll build a raft. Go!

They run belowdecks. Johann grabs a hatch cover, throws it on the deck and searches for other pieces for a raft.

INT. STEERAGE - DAY

Jack hurriedly untethers and herds animals toward the door.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAY

Ernst throws papers and logbooks in an oilskin bag. He grabs a spyglass, tugs out a drawer and finds pens, protractors and a magnifying glass. It all goes in the bag.

INT. GALLEY - DAY

Heidi hauls foodstuffs from a locker and tosses them in a sailor's hammock. She takes down the hammock, knots the ends together. She grabs utensils from a drawer.

INT. COMPANIONWAY - DAY

Jack sends ducks, chickens and pigs splashing ahead of him down the corridor. Fritz joins him and they use all their strength to pull the donkey and cow up a ramp to the deck.

EXT. DECK - DAY

Johann heaves loosely joined planks and hatch covers in the water, jumps in and treads water as he lashes them together to make a crude raft.

CUT TO:

EXT. SEA - DAY

The overladen raft wallows as the Robinsons pilot it through calm water to shore.

Johann and Fritz keep weight off the raft by swimming alongside and keeping it on course. Heidi, Jack and Ernst kneel on the raft and stroke with makeshift paddles.

Chickens perch on barrels lashed alongside. The ducks paddle happily. The cow, donkey and pigs bring up the rear of the flotilla.

Before them, the dense green curtain of jungle looms.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Johann and Fritz walk the raft in to shore through light surf. Ernst, Heidi and Jack jump off and they all drag the raft onto the sand. The animals struggle ashore.

Heidi and the boys drop to the sand, panting. Johann surveys the beach. It's pristine, untouched by footprints.

Johann looks out to sea. The horizon is empty. He looks up at the peak. Fritz stands, follows his gaze, the same thought forming. Off their faces --

CUT TO:

A SCRAPED-UP HAND

reaches INTO FRAME and grips sharp volcanic rock.

EXT. PEAK - WIDER - DAY

Johann works his way up the hillside. Ernst and Fritz are behind him, gasping as they climb the final grueling pitch.

ERNST

If we can see over the ridge... maybe there's a village... or we're on a peninsula... part of a larger land mass...

Fritz loses his footing, grabs a thorny plant.

FRITZ

Aagh!

They clamber onto the summit, panting. They turn slowly, taking in the 360-degree vista.

THEIR POV

Ocean stretches to the horizon. The island is small, five square miles or less. It's in the middle of nowhere.

BACK TO SCENE

They just stand there. It's a grim sight. No ships or signs of human life. They look at one another, speechless.

There is a CRY and they look down to see the tiny figures of Heidi and Jack waving hopefully from the beach, surrounded by their ragged menagerie.

Johann waves back weakly.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIG - ACTAION - DAY

Pointer, the mail ship navigator, sits in the grimy cell, jiggling one knee. Keys JANGLE and he springs to his feet, backing against the wall. Kilroy opens the cell, flanked by Maggot.

KILROY
Cap'n wants you.

Pointer swallows. Kilroy gestures impatiently. After a beat, Pointer steps warily into the hall.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAY

Maggot and Kilroy show Pointer in. Bragg, Donegal and a third man, CRUMLEY, a snappish, haughty officer, are eating around a table. They barely look up at Pointer.

KILROY
That be all, Cap'n?

Bragg nods, eating. Maggot and Kilroy leave. Pointer just stands there, the men ignoring him as they eat.

Pointer looks around, amazed. The cabin, once handsomely appointed, has been damaged by fire. Soot covers the stern windows. Burned maps and books are heaped in a corner.

Adam, the cabin boy, enters with a serving dish. Bragg shakes his head, pushes his plate away.

BRAGG
Rum, boy.

Adam takes his plate. Bragg wipes his mouth with a napkin, looks up at Pointer.

BRAGG (CONT'D)
I need you to find an island.

Pointer blinks. Adam takes Donegal's plate, goes to Crumley.

BRAGG (CONT'D)
It's small, part of the Banda Chain.
There's two or three hundred islands
there --

CRUMLEY
DAMMIT, BOY! LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!

He shoves back from the table, raising his fist. Adam cowers. Crumley indicates a drop of gravy on his sleeve. Adam hangs his head.

ADAM
Begging your pardon, sir. It was an
accident.

Crumley BELTS him. Adam falls. Choking back cries, he crawls across the floor to retrieve the dishes and runs out. Bragg goes on like nothing happened:

BRAGG
The Bandas. You know them?

POINTER
 (scared)
 Yes.

 BRAGG
 If you cooperate and you're
 successful, I'll let you go. I might
 even reward you. If not...

He leaves it unsaid. Donegal chuckles. Pointer trembles.

 POINTER
 Which... island is it?

 CRUMLEY
 (snorting)
 If we knew that, we wouldn't need
 you, would we?

Pointer swallows. Adam returns, his face red where he was
 struck. He sets a bottle of rum on the table and leaves.

 BRAGG
 The island is uncharted. Captain
 Teawell was able to determine its
 rough location. But when I made
 clear I intended to take over the
 ship, he barricaded himself in here
 and set fire to his work rather than
 share it.

 DONEGAL
 And fricasseed himself while he was
 at it. You can still smell the
 burned flesh.

Pointer looks sickened. Bragg reaches for a soot-covered
 bottle on a shelf. Something RATTLES inside. He uncorks the
 bottle and shakes out a cylinder of parchment. He hands it
 to Pointer.

 BRAGG
 Take a look.

Pointer hesitates, then unrolls the parchment, part of which
 is burned away.

ANGLE TO INCLUDE PARCHMENT

It features drawings of an island in different views, as well
 as diagrams showing the island in relation to different
 celestial bodies. Pointer's head spins.

 BRAGG
 He would have burned that too, but I
 got to it in time.

POINTER

I... I don't understand... This is what you have to go on? You want me to find an island with this?

Crumley scowls.

CRUMLEY

I told you he wasn't up to the job. To the sharks, I say.

POINTER

(quickly)

No -- I didn't mean that. I can find it. I just...

BRAGG

Yes?

POINTER

These celestial observations... they're all right, but they're inexact, done with the naked eye.

BRAGG

Without instruments?

POINTER

So even if we could narrow it down, we'd be talking about a huge search area. We might have to visit hundreds of islands.

The officers trade glances. Bragg seems pleased by Pointer's quick grasp of the challenge. He looks at Donegal.

BRAGG

Show him back to his quarters. Give him maps and anything else he needs. I want a guard on him day and night.

DONEGAL

Aye, sir.

He rises and leaves with Pointer. When they are alone, Crumley looks at Bragg with misgivings.

CRUMLEY

You heard him. It's a process of elimination. It could take months or years to find Melville's island.

Bragg appears unfazed. He takes the bottle and again we hear a RATTLE inside. He tilts it back and forth.

CLOSE ON BOTTLE

revealing a WHOPPER OF A PEARL rolling back and forth inside.

BRAGG
And worth every minute.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Crates are stacked on the sand. The farm animals stay close as the Robinsons bow their heads and join hands around a makeshift dinner table.

JOHANN
Bless us Lord and these gifts, which we are about to receive from your bounty. Protect us in our hour of need, as we pledge to be strong and of good courage. We shall fear not, nor fail you, nor forsake you. Amen.

They survey the unappetizing meal of soggy hardtack and pemmican, try a few tentative bites. Ernst shivers.

ERNST
I'm cold. How could it be cold in the tropics?

HEIDI
You're wet.

ERNST
No, I'm not.

JOHANN
You're sunburned.

Ernst shivers again. They eat some more in silence. Fritz grunts and stops chewing. Heidi looks at him.

HEIDI
Sand?

Fritz reaches into his mouth, removes a tiny crab and holds it up by a claw. Jack's face lights up.

JACK
It's a fiddler crab! Is it alive?

Fritz eyes the crab and shakes his head, tossing it away. Jack looks sad, continues eating. Johann expels a breath.

JOHANN
Look, it's not all lost. We have the sextant. With a little guesswork, we can get a rough fix on our position. I don't expect we'll be here too long.

FRITZ
 (doubtful)
 We won't?

JOHANN
 Sure. Tomorrow we'll light a signal
 fire. Before long we'll see a ship.

Fritz grunts, skeptical. Johann gives him a look.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
 Yes, Fritz?

FRITZ
 Nothing. Forget it.

JOHANN
 You have something to say?

A beat -- as Fritz weighs challenging his father, then:

FRITZ
 There won't be any ships.

Johann gives him a stern look.

JOHANN
 And why's that?

FRITZ
 You know why. They steer away from
 islands because of uncharted hazards.
 The captain said so himself, don't
 you remember?

Heidi looks at Johann, concerned.

HEIDI
 Johann? Is that true?

Johann works his jaw. He doesn't like being contradicted.
 He clears his throat.

JOHANN
 Well, there's always the exception.
 And in the meantime we're not in
 immediate danger. We have food,
 clothing, supplies.

ERNST
 There's more on the ship, father.

JOHANN
 Exactly. Good thinking, Ernst. We
 can fish. We have a pistol so we can
 hunt --

JACK
(excited)
You think there are animals here?

JOHANN
Sure. What kind of island doesn't
have animals?

JACK
I want to see a lion! Or a tiger!
Maybe there's an elephant!

HEIDI
Just don't go exploring alone.

Johann smiles. Heidi looks at him, unsettled.

JOHANN
The important thing is we keep our
heads. We survived the worst of it.
We may find things aren't so bad.

He looks at his family, finding varying degrees of accord in
their faces. Fritz won't meet his eye, the tension
unresolved between them.

CUT TO:

EXT. ISLAND - NIGHT

Lightning flickers in the distance.

INT. LEAN-TO - NIGHT

The CAMERA DOES A SLOW WANDER over the Robinsons as they lie
awake on the sand under a crude lean-to of palm fronds. Wind
RUSTLES the leaves. THUNDER rolls in the distance.

HEIDI
(scared)
Johann...

JOHANN
It's all right. Just a squall.

There's a blinding flash. BOOM! Rain PELTS the structure
and drips through the fronds. Jack whimpers.

JACK
Mother?

HEIDI
Yes, Jack?

JACK
Are we going to die?

JOHANN

No.

More LIGHTNING. Rain falls in sheets. Gusts tear at the structure and send pieces of it flying away. They have to shout over the storm.

HEIDI

We can't stay here!

A huge wave CRASHES and floods the structure with foaming surf. The animals are fleeing to higher ground. The Robinsons jump up and follow. Fritz turns, pointing.

FRITZ

The supplies!

Johann looks over. The surf is carrying away the wooden crates they salvaged from the ship. He shouts to Heidi.

JOHANN

Take Jack! Get under the trees!
Fritz, Ernst -- come on!

Johann, Fritz and Ernst run over to corral the boxes and move them to higher ground. Fritz gets his arms around a crate, but a surge of whitewater carries it away.

He clings to the box. The wave runs out, taking him and the box with it. Another wave SMASHES down. Johann runs into the churning water, grabs Fritz by the arm.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Leave it!

FRITZ

It's all we have!

JOHANN

Leave it!

A wave knocks them flat, the box smashing into Fritz. Johann pulls him to his feet. They stagger from the surf with Ernst.

EXT. EDGE OF JUNGLE - NIGHT

Johann, Fritz and Ernst join Heidi and Jack under a gigantic tree. Heidi moves to Fritz. Blood has begun to flow from a gash on his arm.

HEIDI

Fritz, are you all right?

She tries to examine the gash, but he shakes his head. They turn to look out at the storm.

Rain falls in sheets, hurricane-strength gusts whipping the sea to a frenzy, the crates tossed about on the waves.

The Robinsons stand there, soaking and dazed. The livestock huddle around them. Rain drips through the leaves. Johann looks over at Heidi.

JOHANN

Heidi...

She looks away, shoulders shaking. Johann's eyes fill with sadness as he watches his wife sob quietly to herself.

SLOW FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. EDGE OF JUNGLE - MORNING

With his face pressed to the ground, Ernst stirs and opens one eye. A foot away, a hen pecks for grubs amid the roots.

Ernst sits up, looks around. His clothes are muddy. Fritz and Heidi sleep nearby. Jack is curled against the cow's belly. Ernst looks toward the beach.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Johann is dragging wood from the shipwreck up the sand, tossing it in a pile. The sky is a cloudless blue, the bay calm. Johann doesn't notice Ernst watching him.

ERNST

You building a fire?

Johann looks up, shakes his head.

ERNST (CONT'D)

So what's it for?

JOHANN

A shelter.

He picks up a cube made from bamboo lashed together with vines. He tosses it to Ernst, continues stacking wood.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Try to break it.

Ernst shakes the cube tentatively. It keeps its shape. He bangs it on a root. The others are stirring.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Strong, huh?

ERNST

Yeah, it is. It's really strong.
You think we could build with it?

JOHANN

Between bamboo and wood from the ship, I figure we can put a roof over our heads. We can't have another night like the last, right?

Heidi sits up, rubs her back. Jack looks up into the tree.

JACK

Hey!

They follow his gaze and see a monkey sitting on a branch.

JOHANN

He's been watching you for hours, Jack. I think he likes you.

Jack looks at the monkey, marveling. The monkey suddenly takes off through the trees. Jack jumps up, runs after him.

JACK

Hey, come back here!

HEIDI

Jack!

Johann gestures for her to let him go.

JOHANN

(calling out)
Don't go too far, Jack.

JACK

I won't!

He disappears into the trees. Johann comes over, sits on a rock and takes Heidi's hand.

JOHANN

Look, I've been thinking. This is a chance to use our wits, to use our ingenuity. Until we're rescued, why not make the best of it? Learn from it. The first thing we should do is inventory our possessions, take stock of what we have --

Fritz rises, starts walking away. Johann looks over.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Fritz?

(a beat)

Fritz.

He keeps walking. Johann starts after him, but Heidi gestures.

HEIDI
Let me talk to him.

She heads after Fritz. Ernst looks at Johann, awkward.

CAMERA FOLLOWS HEIDI

as she hurries down the beach after Fritz.

HEIDI
Fritz...

He keeps going. Heidi quickens her pace.

FRITZ
I can't help it, mother. I'm sick of this.

HEIDI
Fritz, stop.

He does.

FRITZ
I wanted to join the army, I put in my papers. I bet he doesn't even know that. In another year I could have been serving with the Guards.

HEIDI
We're a family. Your father is doing his best for us.

FRITZ
We're a "family"? We're a family only when it suits him to talk to about it.

He sees Ernst coming over.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Ernst was going to study architecture at university. Here's your classroom, Ernst. Look at all the architecture!

He gestures sweepingly.

ERNST
Come on, Fritz. Don't make it worse.

FRITZ
And how about you, mother? You're telling me you wanted to emigrate to New Guinea?

HEIDI
 Absolutely I did. Your father needed
 a fresh start --

FRITZ
 Sure he did! Just like after all his
 other grand ideas collapsed. I'm
 tired of him going on about freedom
 and destiny like his freedom and
 destiny is all that matters.

Heidi compresses her lips. Fritz has struck a nerve.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
 Face it, mother. We're starting over
 in the New World because father
 failed in the Old One. And we're all
 paying for it.

Their eyes meet. Jack suddenly bursts from the trees.

JACK
 Mother! Father! Come quick, I found
 something!

They all stare.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

The Robinsons stand at the edge of a clearing, staring up in
 amazement.

THEIR POV - AN OLD TREEHOUSE

nestled in the branches of a huge banyan tree. It's a crude
 structure in serious disrepair, covered with vines and
 cobwebs. Little sunlight reaches it through the dense
 canopy. (Anyone familiar with the treehouse in the 1960
 movie would find this one decrepit and homely by comparison.)

BACK TO SCENE

The Robinsons stand in silence. It's an eerie sight, reeking
 of mystery and foreboding. They speak in whispers.

HEIDI
 You think someone lives there?

Johann is silent, nervously thumbing the pistol stock.

ERNST
 What do you think, Father?

JOHANN
 I don't know.
 (calling out)
 Hello?

Beat. Silence.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
 Anyone there?

There's a MUFFLED SOUND, like a weight shifting in the structure. Johann tenses. Heidi glances at him quickly.

HEIDI
 (soft)
 What is it?

Johann shakes his head, no clue. He looks at the trees.

JOHANN
 Maybe just the wind.

He doesn't sound too sure of it. There's barely any breeze. Gripping the pistol, he moves toward the tree. Fritz follows.

Johann stops, looks at him. Fritz meets his gaze. A beat, then Johann nods and they go to the bamboo steps leading up.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
 (calling up)
 Hello?

A CREAK again. Johann and Fritz trade a look. A big hairy spider on its web blocks the way up. Johann gingerly sweeps away the web with the pistol, tests the steps and begins climbing.

INT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Johann reaches the top step. A crude door sags on its leather hinges, ajar. He pushes on it, steps inside. Fritz follows.

With a SQUEAL, a huge hairless rodent shoots across the floor, sends Johann stumbling into Fritz and plows past them through the door.

Johann clutches his chest. He manages a weak smile, exhales. They look around in amazement.

The place is a shambles, but built with obvious skill. Insects and rodent droppings are everywhere. Vines grow up through the floor.

Heidi's voice reaches them from the jungle floor:

HEIDI (O.S.)
What do you see?

JOHANN
(calling back)
Nothing yet. Stay there.
(soft)
Fritz.

He indicates the back of the door, where a big letter M is carved in the wood, along with a disconcertingly huge number of little notches to mark the passage of time.

Fritz and Johann trade an uneasy look.

HEIDI (O.S.)
Do you see signs of anyone?

Johann doesn't answer. Fritz goes to a small straw cot. There are handmade utensils, a coconut shell bowl and a decomposing ruffled shirt on the floor.

A table lies on its side. Johann goes over, takes a tobacco pipe and moldering leather-bound book from the floor. He opens the book: a King James Bible.

FRITZ
Father, look.

Fritz is crossing to a pocket watch hanging on the wall. He reaches for it -- CRASH! His foot goes through the floor!

Johann shoots out a hand, grabs Fritz by the arm. Fritz draws his leg from the hole. Their hearts are pounding.

HEIDI (O.S.)
My God...

Fritz and Johann whirl. Heidi is in the doorway, looking around in amazement, Jack and Ernst climbing the steps behind her.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREEHOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Johann and Heidi examine artifacts from the treehouse while the boys comb the bushes nearby. Heidi feels the collar of the ruffled shirt.

HEIDI
Whoever this belongs to has expensive tastes. This is Savile Row. What do you think?

Johann doesn't answer, studying the pocket watch.

CLOSE ON WATCH

The silver is tarnished, the hands stopped, but it's intact. On the face: "LA BREGUET, GENEVA." He winds the watch, holds it to his ear and smiles with patriotic pride.

HEIDI

Johann?

JOHANN

I don't know. From the looks of it, I'd say just one person lived here. The question is where's he now?

ERNST

Well, I think he got off the island.

JOHANN

Maybe.

HEIDI

You don't?

JOHANN

I don't know. He left his watch and Bible. Why would he do that?

ERNST

Maybe he had no choice. Maybe he went out fishing in a canoe. Then he saw a ship and was rescued.

Johann considers it.

ERNST (CONT'D)

There's a fire ring here. And a garbage dump, where he threw his bones and shells. He must have been here forever!

Fritz is across the clearing.

FRITZ

At least we know how he got through the long hard winters.

Johann and Heidi trade a look. They go over, find Fritz standing over a primitive moonshine apparatus made out of gourds and bamboo tubes. Jack and Ernst join them there.

HEIDI

What on earth is it?

JOHANN

It's a still. For making rum. And who can blame him?

Heidi nods. They return to the clearing and look up at the treehouse. Ernst turns to his father.

ERNST

So what do you think happened?

JOHANN

I don't know. He could have gotten off, gotten rescued. He could be dead. He could still be on the island.

They look up at the treehouse, eyeing it appraisingly.

HEIDI

Wherever he is, it doesn't look like he's coming back.

The Robinsons trade glances as we --

CUT TO:

EXT. TREEHOUSE - THREE WEEKS LATER - DAY

Johann, with a beard, DRIVES nails in the broiling sun.

He works high in the tree. Sweat pours off his bare torso. He plucks a nail from his teeth and POUNDS it into a salvaged ship timber to form the floor of a new treehouse room.

The treehouse is growing. The old shelter has been renovated and spruced up, the vines cut away. New structures at various stages of construction fan out on multiple levels.

Heidi grunts with effort as she builds a walkway on a sloping branch. She wears a long-sleeved dress and keeps pushing up the frilly sleeves only to have them slide down.

ON THE GROUND

Jack uses a hammer to pry nails from salvaged ship timbers, then bangs them straight on a flat rock. The monkey seen earlier, dubbed KNIPS now, frolics nearby.

JACK

I think his name was Old Black Mike.
He was a pirate.

HEIDI

A good pirate or a bad pirate?

JACK

A good pirate. With one arm. The other got chopped clean off by a cannonball.

He takes aim at a mangled nail -- BANG! The nail flies away. KNIPS runs after it.

JACK (CONT'D)
Give it back, Knips.

Knips hands the nail to Jack.

HEIDI
So how'd he get shipwrecked?

JACK
Maybe he didn't. Maybe the other pirates put him ashore after a fight over a pirate queen. Or maybe he was battling a sea monster, and it ate his ship and his crew and he's the only one who survived.

Heidi smiles, amused by her son's vivid imagination.

EXT. BRISTOL - DAY

The wreck lies heeled over on its side. In the bow, Fritz and Ernst salvage wood and rigging with an ax and heave the pieces onto a raft floating alongside. It's strenuous work. Their shirtless bodies glisten in the tropical sun.

ERNST
Fritz, what if you found out you'd never get off this island. What would you miss most?

FRITZ
I don't know. Girls.

ERNST
Besides girls.

FRITZ
More girls.

Ernst rolls his eyes. Fritz shrugs, relenting.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Lots of things. Snow, skiing, chocolate.

ERNST
Music?

FRITZ
Sure. And friends too. I mean, no offense or anything.

ERNST
I miss books. Books and libraries. What I wouldn't give for just one day in the stacks...

Just thinking about it gives Ernst a dreamy expression. Fritz looks at him like he's nuts.

FRITZ
Quit daydreaming, Plato. The old man's waiting on us.

Ernst nods, resumes working. His mind turning.

ERNST
What do you think he misses?

FRITZ
You mean father?

ERNST
Yeah.

FRITZ
I don't think he misses anything. He sure doesn't miss the creditors that took our house.

He says it bitterly. They continue working. He casts a look toward the bow.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
I'll take those stacks.

He goes over, crawls out onto the figurehead. It's a lonely sailor's fantasy, a life-sized carving of a beautiful, bare-breasted Sea Queen. He grins, cups her breasts.

ERNST
(rolling his eyes)
C'mon, Fritz...

FRITZ
What? I'm serious. Let's take her.

ERNST
We're supposed to be doing a job. Father said to salvage only what we absolutely need.

FRITZ
Well, I absolutely need her. Give me the ax.

Ernst shakes his head, passes the tool to Fritz.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

Work continues on the treehouse. Ernst and Fritz walk ahead of the donkey as it drags a sled stacked high with lumber, the Sea Queen perched atop. From her perch in the tree, Heidi registers it with amusement, trading a look with Johann.

JOHANN

That's a good haul, boys. You'll have time for one more before dark.

Ernst and Fritz exchange weary glances.

FRITZ

Father... we were looking forward to a swim. We've been hard at it all day.

Johann uses his last nail.

JOHANN

Jack, I'm out. Send me up some more.
(to Fritz)
We've a treehouse to finish. You don't see anyone else taking a break.

Heidi is sawing at a limb high in the tree. She looks at Johann, considers saying something, but doesn't. Instead, she continues working. Her sleeve slips down again and she pushes it up with a rasp of annoyance.

ON THE GROUND

Jack takes a bunch of nails, puts them in a pouch and hands it to Knips.

JACK

Go, Knips.

Fritz sighs, starts stacking lumber at the base of the tree.

FRITZ

Yes, sir. We'll go back as soon as we finishing unloading.

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS KNIPS

as he climbs the tree, swings branch to branch over to where Johann is working and hands the pouch to Johann.

JOHANN

Thanks, pal.

He resumes working. There is a RIPPING SOUND. He turns.

Heidi is tearing the sleeves off her dress. She tosses them away and tests her new freedom of movement with satisfaction.

She sees Johann's eyes on her, shrugs and continues sawing the branch. With a CRACK, the branch suddenly breaks away, opening a gash in the trunk. Heidi cries out, startled.

HEIDI

Look out!

The limb CRASHES TO THE GROUND, narrowly missing the boys.

Before anyone can react, white pebbles spill from the gash in the trunk and cascade to the ground, CLICKING and BOUNCING like hailstones, scattering everywhere.

FRITZ
What the hell?

Johann and Heidi descend to the ground. Ernst holds one of the pebbles in his hand. He looks at his parents.

ERNST
These are... they're...

HEIDI
They're pearls.

They pick up more pearls and study them, amazed. The pearls are the size of champagne grapes. Johann looks up.

JOHANN
(stunned)
But... what were they doing in the tree?

HEIDI
They were hidden there... they must have belonged to...

JACK
... Old Black Mike.

Johann nods, dazed.

ERNST
My God... they must be worth a fortune. We're... we're rich. Father, we're rich!

Johann holds up another pearl. This one's even bigger. They stare in amazement.

HEIDI
Where do they come from?

JOHANN
I've seen shells on the beach.

Everyone's eyes meet -- a simultaneous realization.

ERNST
The bay.

Off the Robinsons suddenly running toward the ocean --

CUT TO:

EXT. COVE - MINUTES LATER

Large banyan trees extend over the water. In quick succession, Fritz, Ernst and Johann swing out on vines, soaring high in the air, then let go and splash down in the bay.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

They swim through the translucent water.

EXT. SHORE - DAY

Heidi and Jack wait on a rocky point. Heidi's long dress is too cumbersome for swimming. Johann and the boys surface.

HEIDI
(calling out)
Anything?

They take deep breaths and dive without answering. Heidi looks annoyed.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
All right.

She pulls off her dress. She's wearing a not-too-modest petticoat underneath, but her face says, "Screw this."

HEIDI (CONT'D)
Come on, Jack.

She takes hold of a vine and launches herself out over the water -- SPLASH! Jack cannonballs in.

EXT. UNDERWATER - DAY

Heidi swims along the sloping bottom. Oysters by the thousands cling to the sea floor. Johann and the boys are trying to pry shells loose, but they're stuck fast.

Johann looks over, startled by Heidi's sudden appearance and attire. Swimming past him, she takes hold of an oyster, twists a few times and plucks it with a deft movement.

She swims for the surface with the oyster. Johann and the boys copy her technique. It works.

EXT. SHORE - DAY

Johann and the boys clamber onto the rocks after Heidi and try to open their oysters. Heidi gets hers open first. They crowd around.

HEIDI
My God...

Inside is a humongous pearl.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TREEHOUSE CLEARING - LATE AFTERNOON

Heidi and the boys are in high spirits as they eat oysters and other island fare around a handmade table and toss pearls into a bowl. Even Knips has joined the party, taking great delight in licking the insides of the discarded shells.

Nearby, Johann takes a nip of moonshine from the rehabbed still. His face says... whoa. He fills two hollow coconut shells from the spigot and carries them to the table, handing one to Heidi.

JOHANN
(toasting)
To unexpected good fortune.

She clinks cups with him, takes a sip.

HEIDI
I still can't believe it.

JOHANN
All our dreams, our wildest dreams,
can come true now.

JACK
We can sail the world like real
passengers. In a cabin, with a bed.

ERNST
With cooks to feed us, and servants
to wash our clothes.

FRITZ
Why go on someone else's boat? We'll
buy our own.

JOHANN
That's the spirit.

Johann laughs, enjoying his sons' enthusiasm. As the boys spin fantasies of riches, Heidi speaks softly to Johann:

HEIDI
We could go back to Switzerland.

JOHANN
(caught off guard)
I guess... We could...

HEIDI
You don't want to?

Johann hesitates. In his mind, Switzerland was the scene of his failures. He fumbles for a response.

JOHANN
No... of course... We could go home...

ERNST
(overhears)
Home? Really?

This catches the boys attention.

FRITZ
(pumps his fist)
Yes. That would be better than anything!

As the boys chatter with excitement at the prospect of returning to Europe, Heidi detects a tinge of sadness in Johann's expression.

CUT TO:

SAME LOCATION - NIGHT

Tiki torches cast a warm glow. The celebration continues, now in the form of an archery contest -- kids versus parents. A target is drawn on a piece of sail. Fritz tests the tension on a handmade bow.

ERNST
I made it tighter. What do you think?

Fritz nods approval. He notches an arrow, aims and releases. The arrow misses. He tries another, same result. Ernst and Jack groan.

JACK
That's five in a row! We haven't hit one yet!

ERNST
Neither has father. We still have a chance.

HEIDI
All right, my turn?

Heidi takes the bow while Johann offers instruction.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
Like this?

JOHANN
Right... But stand sideways to the target... More like three-quarters...
(MORE)

JOHANN (CONT'D)
 And draw back like this... Not too far... Now concentrate... Take a deep breath... Hold it...

ERNST
 (teasing)
 Careful, mother. Don't hit anyone --

Heidi releases the arrow. It flies through the air and... THWACK -- hits the target dead center bull's-eye. She turns, thoroughly enjoying their astonished expressions.

HEIDI
 Hmm. Not bad for girl, huh?
 (gestures)
 Give me another of those. Maybe it's just beginner's luck.

The boys warily hand her another arrow. She notches it, pulls back her bow and... THWACK -- another bull's-eye!

HEIDI (CONT'D)
 Nope. Guess I just have a knack for it. What do you think, gentlemen?

Johann and the boys stare, speechless. After a beat, deadpan:

JOHANN
 I think we'll save powder and shot.

CUT TO:

SAME LOCATION - LATER

The torches have burned out. The boys are sound asleep in a lean-to at the base of the banyan tree. It's temporary digs while the treehouse is under construction. Several yards away, Johann and Heidi sit in front their own lean-to, gazing out at the ocean, illuminated by a FULL MOON.

JOHANN
 Look at that. So peaceful, so quiet. Like a sheet of glass. Hard to imagine it almost killed us.

Heidi nods, snuggles up against him.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
 After we get rescued, I'm buying you an archery range.

HEIDI
 I see. And a country manor to go with it?

JOHANN
 Sure, why not.

HEIDI
Johann. I'm joking.

Johann looks at her. He turns, stares out at the ocean again, a pensive expression. Heidi studies him.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

JOHANN
Nothing.

HEIDI
You do believe we'll get off this island, don't you?

JOHANN
It's not that. It's just...

HEIDI
What? We're rich now. Isn't that what you wanted?

JOHANN
I don't know. I left Switzerland to make something of myself. If I go back now, I'm just a failed inventor who found a bunch of pearls.

HEIDI
You're more than that. You're my husband and a wonderful father.

JOHANN
And if I can't teach my boys how to make something of themselves? Create something? How wonderful am I then?

Heidi takes his hand in hers, looks into his eyes.

HEIDI
They're already making something of themselves. Sometimes it's our job just to get out of the way.

Johann stares at her, unwilling to accept it.

JOHANN
And they'll end up where? A ship needs a captain.

She sighs, smiles back at him. She loves him deeply, even if he can't grasp what she's trying to tell him. She takes a breath, cocks her head.

HEIDI
I hear a waltz.

He looks at her, puzzled, then smiles. He rises and takes her in his arms. They begin to dance to imaginary strains of music.

JOHANN

You're an excellent dancer, Mrs. Robinson. Best on the island.

HEIDI

The feeling's mutual, Mr. Robinson.

Their lips meet in a kiss. Heidi pulls him closer. As it starts to get passionate, Johann sees something over Heidi's shoulder.

JOHANN

(muffled through the kiss)
A ship...

He breaks their embrace.

HIS POV

several miles away, a tall-masted ship is barely visible in the shimmering moonlight.

BACK TO SCENE

JOHANN (CONT'D)

A ship. I see a ship!

Fritz, Ernst and Jack snap awake and come running over.

For a nanosecond, everyone stares. Then Johann dives into his lean-to, grabs the pistol and spyglass and takes off like a bullet across the clearing. Heidi and the boys follow.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Johann sprints across the sand, the others following, looking out to sea at the sailing ship. They run for the hilltop.

EXT. HILLSIDE - CONTINUOUS

They scramble up the steep slope, slipping and gasping, leaving Jack far behind. It's a mad dash, family unity yielding to desperation.

EXT. ISLAND PEAK - CONTINUOUS

Johann and Fritz reach the summit. Kindling and wood for a signal fire sits at the ready. Johann drops to his knees, spills gunpowder from the pistol onto the tinder and strikes a spark from the flintlock. The tinder doesn't light.

JOHANN

Dammit! Fritz, we need a flame!

Fritz grabs two sticks and starts rubbing them together furiously. Ernst and Heidi arrive, panting. They immediately assess the problem and join Fritz in trying to start a fire by rubbing sticks.

Johann spills more gunpowder from the breech and tries again, but no luck.

FRITZ

I got it!

Fritz has ignited a tiny flame, but it's enough. The others quickly crowd around, feeding leaves and branches to help the fire catch.

Heidi picks up the spyglass from the ground, peers out at the ship. It's quartering away from them, silhouetted in the moonlight.

HEIDI

It's flying a Dutch flag.

Johann and Fritz add fuel and blow on the fire until it's crackling. Ernst watches the ship, dismayed.

ERNST

It's sailing away!

Johann tosses handfuls of seaweed on the fire, sending flames and plumes of smoke billowing.

ERNST (CONT'D)

Father, it's sailing away!

Ernst starts waving, jumping up and down, shouting.

ERNST (CONT'D)

HEY! HELP! HELP! COME BACK!

Johann throws more seaweed on the fire, looks out to sea. The ship is four miles away, sailing into the night.

JOHANN

Goddammit!

He loads the pistol. Ernst continues shouting.

ERNST

LOOK HERE! LOOK AT THE FIRE! TURN AROUND!

Johann FIRES the pistol in the air and immediately begins reloading. Ernst turns to the others, snapping:

ERNST (CONT'D)

Why are you just standing there!?

Heidi and Fritz join in, waving and shouting at the top of their lungs, their voices growing hoarse.

ROBINSONS
OVER HERE! HELP! OVER HERE!

Jack reaches the summit. He sees the ship sailing away. He looks at his father, anguished.

JACK
Why is it going away? Don't they see us?

Johann FIRES and begins reloading again. The ship is getting smaller. Ernst stops shouting, then the others too. Johann lets the pistol fall to his side, deflated.

They stand there like mourners, watching in disbelief. The CRACKLING FIRE sends sparks aloft.

JOHANN
We'll see another.

His tone leaves doubt. Ernst turn, devastated.

ERNST
But... we've seen one ship... one ship in six weeks...

Johann says nothing. They watch the ship dwindle away. On their forlorn faces...

FADE TO BLACK.

A TITLE CARD READS: "FOURTEEN MONTHS LATER"

FADE IN:

INT. GONDOLA - DAY

A cramped bamboo enclosure. Sunlight enters through the slats. Ernst sits with his knees pressed almost to his chin. He reaches between his legs, takes hold of a lever.

ERNST
Clear!

EXT. GONDOLA - DAY

The cage swings and bounces next to a tree, then suddenly jerks forward and accelerates away, streaking up the hillside on a rope track.

It's like a high-speed ski lift -- built out of bamboo, vines and ship's rigging.

The car gains speed. Leaves SLAP the outside. It moves faster and higher, skimming the treetops.

Ernst appears unperturbed by a stone counterweight racing downhill on a parallel track. It shoots past a few feet away.

EXT. ISLAND PEAK (SIGNAL HILL) - DAY

The gondola slows near the summit, then jerks to a halt at the end of the rope track. Ernst sets a brake, climbs from the swinging cage.

A pyramid of kindling and logs rises 15 feet in the air.

Behind a wind break, a pilot torch burns nonstop, always ready to light the bonfire. The torch is fed by a drip of 200-proof alcohol from the rehabbed moonshine apparatus.

Ernst ladles rotting berries and sugar cane from a bucket into the still.

He takes out a spyglass, steps to the edge of the cliff and scans the horizon. No ships. He collapses the spyglass.

He goes to a daisy chain of pulleys and blocks through which the gondola rope runs in bewildering loops and figure eights.

The daisy chain determines how leverage is assigned in the system, giving the car an effective weight lighter or heavier than the counterweight depending on which pulleys are engaged.

Ernst loops the rope around another set of pulleys and uses a deadeye to take in the slack, granting mechanical advantage to the gondola.

He gets in the bamboo car, releases the brake and descends smoothly over the treetops.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

The treehouse has mushroomed in size and complexity.

Bedrooms on multiple levels fan out around a central multipurpose room (the "parlor") and are connected by walkways, ratlines and ladders. The Sea Queen looks down on an outdoor sitting area. There are flower-filled window boxes, a dumbwaiter, a millstone turned by the donkey on a circular track, a vegetable garden and animal pens. Flying above it all is a Swiss flag.

It's an enchanting sight. All the more so because it's believable, not a fantasy structure. People could make this. Especially people who are clever and resourceful.

INT. PARLOR - DAY

The room is designed with one wall that can be raised on pulleys so it becomes an open-air loggia.

Jack sits at a desk, receiving Latin instruction from Heidi.
Knips plays with an abacus made of pearls.

JACK
Agricola... agricolae... agrico...

HEIDI
Agricolae.

JACK
Agricolam... agrico --
(breaking off)
Mother, why do I have to learn this?
Latin's boring.

HEIDI
It's the root of European languages.
Keep going.

JACK
But we're not in Europe. And no one
speaks it anyway except a bunch of
old monks.

Knips chatters excitedly.

JACK (CONT'D)
(enunciating)
Monks, not monkeys.

Knips makes a face. Heidi looks up, sees Ernst coasting to a halt in the gondola, getting out.

HEIDI
I'm still waiting for that essay on
the English kings, Ernst Robinson.

ERNST
You'll get it, mother. Father wants
us to gather quail eggs in the
valley.

He's going over to talk to Fritz, who is working in the garden. Jack stands, calls out:

JACK
Can I come with you guys?

HEIDI
No. Do your lesson. Someday we're
getting off this island and you boys
will be civilized if it kills me.

She watches Ernst and Fritz head off together, an indefinable furtiveness in their manner that makes her frown.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
I'll be right back... Keep going...
agricola...

She gestures vaguely, heads away. Relieved, Jack goes to a terrarium and lifts the lid. Inside are spiders, snakes and other critters. He takes out a huge snake, grinning.

Knips SCREECHES and leaps away. He hates snakes.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Johann stirs a bubbling cauldron over a fire. Buckets collect sap that drips from spouts in the trunks of nearby latex trees. Johann sees Heidi coming over, smiles.

JOHANN
What do you think? Have I lost my
mind at last?

HEIDI
I don't know. Have you?

JOHANN
Well, it's working a little bit
anyway. Here.

He hands her one end of a rubber string, pulls on the other end to show its elastic properties. Heidi looks impressed.

HEIDI
Not bad. What's it for?

JOHANN
A slingshot if I can perfect it. For
hunting. But really any number of
things. Take off your shoes.
(off her quizzical look)
Come on, I won't hurt you.

Heidi removes her leather moccasins. Johann takes them, dips the soles in the cauldron.

HEIDI
Johann, what are you doing? It took
me two days to stitch those.

JOHANN
That's right. And you're still
getting thorns in your feet.

Johann raises the moccasins and displays their rubber soles.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
Dries off as it cools. Give it a few
minutes.

Heidi touches the rubber.

HEIDI
Well, thank you. That's... amazing.

Johann shrugs modestly, obviously in his element here.

JOHANN

Sometimes I wonder what people back
in Bern would say if they saw me now.
Old Mr. Schultz from the bank?

HEIDI

(with a shudder)

There's a name I don't miss.

Their eyes meet. It's a painful memory. Johann regrets
bringing it up. He looks at her, senses something else.

JOHANN

What is it?

HEIDI

It's Ernst... He's neglecting his
studies.

JOHANN

Really? Well, I can't say I'm
worried. Might get his head out of
the clouds.

HEIDI

But it's not like him. He's off with
Fritz again. Did you ask them to
gather quail eggs?

JOHANN

No. But they can if they want.
We'll eat them tonight.

(a beat)

Wait. Did they say I did?

Heidi nods. Johann looks at her, puzzled.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Johann moves quietly through the jungle. He stops to mop his
brow, bats an insect away. He cocks his head, hearing
something.

There's a CHOPPING SOUND in the distance. He moves toward it
stealthily. As he gets closer, he can hear VOICES. He steps
into a clearing and his jaw clenches.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Fritz and Ernst are building a dugout canoe in a secluded
cove. Ernst uses an ax to chop wood from the dugout while
Fritz attaches an outrigger.

Johann steps into view. He fights to contain his emotions.

JOHANN
Well, very good.

The boys look up, surprised. Johann inspects the boat.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
You've done good work. It must have
taken you some time.

The boys are silent for an uncomfortable beat. Johann looks
at them accusingly.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
So were you going to tell us or would
we just wake up to find you gone?

FRITZ
Of course we were going to tell you.
(a beat, meeting his gaze)
We want to sail off the island,
father.

JOHANN
No. Understand me? The answer is
flat no.

ERNST
We knew you'd say that. That's why
we kept it a secret. We've gone out
past the reef twice --

JOHANN
In this? Are you out of your mind?

ERNST
And it worked. We've got a sail too.
We tested it in high winds. We can
do this.

Johann starts to reply, but Fritz gestures angrily.

FRITZ
Look at what we've done! We built a
treehouse, a gondola. You're saying
we can't build a boat?

JOHANN
You're damn right you can't. If a
house leaks, you get wet. You know
what happens if a boat leaks?

FRITZ
It doesn't leak.

JOHANN
And just where do you think you'd be
going anyway?

ERNST
New Guinea. We know our position
more or less --

JOHANN
"More or less"?

ERNST
Yes! New Guinea's a huge land mass.
Even if we're off by 300 miles, we'll
hit part of it.

JOHANN
And then what? Wash ashore and
stumble around in the jungle? Meet
up with headhunters?

FRITZ
We'll sail along the coast till we
find a settlement. When we do, we'll
send back help. You'll be rescued
too.

JOHANN
It's too risky. I won't allow it.

FRITZ
And what about the risk of staying
here? This whole time we've seen one
ship. One. Who knows if we'll see
another? We could die of old age on
this island!

JOHANN
I said no -- that's final. You've
done a good job. Now paddle it
around to the bay. We'll use it for
fishing.

He starts to leave.

FRITZ
You don't want to get off this
island.

Johann turns. Fritz stands there, defiant.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Just because you don't want to live
in the world doesn't mean we
shouldn't get to try.

JOHANN
You'll stop this instant.

FRITZ
No, I won't. The fact is you like it
here.

(MORE)

FRITZ (CONT'D)
 There's no money, no social position.
 No one to look down on you.

Johann glares, then SLAPS him across the face. Ernst reacts.
 Fritz's jaw trembles, but he stands his ground.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
 Maybe back home you made the rules,
 but not here. We don't need your
 permission. We're doing it.

He gestures to Ernst.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
 Come on.

He turns and leaves. Ernst hesitates, looking regretfully at
 Johann, then goes with Fritz. Johann looks shattered.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

Lightning CRACKLES in the sky. A tropical storm drums rain
 onto the roof of the treehouse.

INT. JOHANN AND HEIDI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alone in the room, Heidi looks out the window with a worried
 expression.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Johann sits on a rock and nurses a flask of moonshine. Fritz
 and Ernst's outrigger canoe is pulled up on the sand, out of
 reach of the waves. Johann eyes it bitterly, heedless to the
 lashing rain. Heidi steps from the jungle.

HEIDI
 Johann.

He doesn't answer. She comes over. He keeps staring at the
 boat, his speech slightly slurred.

JOHANN
 What kind of reckless damn fool would
 sail a canoe like that across open
 ocean?

HEIDI
 You would.

He looks at her, surprised. He scoffs, takes a swig of
 moonshine.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
 Johann... what if years pass and
 we're still here?

JOHANN

Then we'll still be a family.

(beat)

They want to take that apart.

HEIDI

Don't they deserve the chance to have their own family? To know the joy of having children?

JOHANN

(looks at her)

You want them to go?

HEIDI

Of course not. They're my babies. But... I'll let them decide.

He stares at her in disbelief.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Don't you see this island is a prison for them? Fritz wants to make his mark on the world. He can't do that here. And Ernst? With his intellect, who knows how far he can go? I have nothing left to teach him. He needs a real education.

JOHANN

I know about architecture. I can teach him. This may not be the life we chose, but it's better than drowning.

HEIDI

Don't you get it? They're already drowning. That's why they're willing to risk their lives to get away from here.

Johann looks at her angrily, takes a final swig and tosses the flask away. He rises unsteadily, goes to the boat.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

(concerned)

What are you doing?

JOHANN

What I should have done before. I'm launching it.

HEIDI

No!

She goes after him. He takes hold of the boat, begins dragging it toward the crashing waves.

JOHANN

We'll see how goddamn seaworthy it is! And if they build another, I'll feed that one to the waves too!

She tries to block his path. He pushes her away.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Get out of the way!

HEIDI

No! I won't let you do this!

She blocks his path again, but he gives her a shove and she falls backwards. He wheels on her.

JOHANN

Get out of the goddamn way!

HEIDI

NO! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DESTROY THEIR DREAMS!

He looks at her in astonishment. She's never spoken to him like this before. He grabs hold of the boat again and begins hauling it toward the water.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

NO!!!

She springs at him and seizes his arm, pulling him around so their faces are inches apart. Her eyes burn with righteous fury.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

You. Will. Not. Do. This.

Johann stares -- blown away by her white-hot intensity.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

These are their lives.

A beat, as Johann sees he is no match for her iron resolve. Breaking her grip with a furious gesture, he turns and heads into the jungle.

Heidi watches him go, despairing.

CUT TO:

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The Actaeon plows through the stormy night. Its bow climbs the steep face of a wave and CRASHES down into the trough.

INT. COMPANIONWAY - ACTAION - NIGHT

A RAT scurries ahead of Adam as he carries a dinner tray down the tilting corridor, stepping over a sleeping sailor and an unshipshape pile of wet, tangled rigging. The condition of the vessel has deteriorated after the many months at sea.

Adam turns a corner, finds Kilroy standing guard outside the brig. Kilroy, bearded, his uniform filthy, holds up a hand.

KILROY
Far enough, boy. Let's see it.

ADAM
It's barely enough for one man, sir.

Kilroy examines the tray. It's slim pickings -- a slice of moldy bread, a tiny square of meat, a cup of water. Kilroy pops the meat in his mouth.

KILROY
Go on then.

Adam goes to the cell door and opens a slot, through which we glimpse Pointer working by dim candlelight over a map of the South Seas. X's are drawn through islands on the map, scribbled papers strewn around the cell.

ADAM
Your dinner, sir.

Pointer looks up, his eyes burning. He's lost weight and his clothes are in tatters. Ulcers cover his face and hands. He snarls at Adam in a half-mad whisper:

POINTER
The island doesn't exist, boy. It's a scheme to drive me mad!

Adam passes the tray through the slot. Pointer holds up the scorched parchment Bragg took from the bottle. He jabs his finger at the hand-drawn diagram of the stars in relation to the island.

POINTER (CONT'D)
See? Canis Major, yes? But it can't be, it's impossible!

KILROY
Pipe down there!

Adam glances back at Kilroy and brings a duck egg from his pocket. Pointer's eyes gleam as he takes this delicacy.

ADAM
(hissing)
You have to wait --

Pointer can't help himself. He CRACKS the raw egg on his teeth and breaks it into his mouth. He CACKLES with delight, yoke dribbling down his chin.

KILROY

What's going on there?

Pointer wipes his chin and crushes the shell in his hands just as Kilroy comes over, shoving Adam aside and peering through the slot. Kilroy glowers at Pointer.

KILROY (CONT'D)

Back to work, or it's another beatin' for you.

Kilroy returns to his post as Adam retreats down the companionway. Pointer sits at the desk, brushing eggshell fragments from his hands. He looks down at the desk.

CLOSER

The shell fragments have landed to one side of the scorched parchment in such a way as to fill out the constellation diagram. Only now the constellation is different.

Pointer frowns. It isn't Canis Major anymore. He nudges one of the shell fragments with a pen, then draws lines between the points. The resulting diagram is a centaur.

Pointer jumps to his feet, goes to the cell's tiny porthole.

HIS POV - THE NIGHT SKY

Through the thinning cloud cover... the Centaur of the Southern Sky.

POINTER

lets rip with a crackbrained giggle of discovery.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The outrigger canoe sits at the water's edge. Heidi and Jack are seeing Ernst and Fritz off, helping them load gear and provisions.

HEIDI

Remember, your first aim is the shipping lanes. If you see a ship, light one of the smudge pots.

FRITZ

We know, mother. It was our idea.

HEIDI

I don't have to remind you, you don't have enough water.

ERNST

We know that, we have pots to collect the rain. We've planned this a long time.

HEIDI

You're sure you have enough pearls? You may need them to pay your passage on a ship.

FRITZ

Mother. We have plenty. With what we have, we could probably buy New Guinea.

Overcome with emotion, Heidi fights back tears.

HEIDI

Boys, I need to know that you really want to do this. That this is more important than anything, that you understand the risks, because... because maybe your father is right.

Ernst takes Heidi's hand, looks at her reassuringly.

ERNST

We do want to do it. Yes.

She looks at Fritz. He smiles fondly.

FRITZ

Mother. We're going to be fine.

Heidi exhales. She takes an oilskin bundle from the sand and hands it to Fritz.

HEIDI

Take this.

Puzzled, Fritz unwraps the bundle to find the pistol inside. The boys look at her, amazed.

FRITZ

Mother, no. This is all you have to defend yourself.

HEIDI

Keep it dry. You can signal with it if you see a ship.

(meets their gaze)

Your father wants you to have it.

Fritz looks at her, nods. He rewraps the pistol.

ERNST

Will he ever forgive us?

HEIDI

It's not you he's afraid to forgive.
It's himself. He loves you. So much
that he can't bear to let you go.

(a beat)

Someday, I hope you have children of
your own. Then you'll know just how
much he loves you.

Heidi embraces both boys tightly. They drop to their knees
and give Jack a hug. A tear runs down Jack's cheek.

ERNST

We're leaving you in charge, Jack.
Take care of mother and father.

JACK

When the ship comes, do you think
they'll let me take Knips?

ERNST

Sure they will. If they don't, the
hell with 'em. We'll wait for
another.

Jack nods bravely. Fritz and Ernst push the boat out through
the light surf and jump aboard. Ernst waves.

ERNST (CONT'D)

Don't worry, mother. The first leg
is easy. We'll be in the lee of the
island all day.

Heidi and Jack wave. Fritz raises the sail and the boat
begins to move away.

ANOTHER ANGLE

reveals Johann watching from behind a scrim of trees. His
face is heartbroken, his eyes moist. He turns and heads
away.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OCEAN - A SERIES OF SHOTS - DAY

Fritz and Ernst coast along a mile from the dramatic
shoreline. Steady wind fills the sail. The boat rises and
falls on the large but orderly swells.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OCEAN - DAY

Fritz mans the tiller and drinks from a gourd canteen as they sail. Ernst tries to take a reading with the sextant, but the sideways swells are bigger, making it difficult.

ERNST
I can't get a reading. Try pointing
us into the waves.

FRITZ
What for? We know where we are.

ERNST
Because I need practice.

Fritz moves the rudder, aiming them into the waves. He looks at the island while Ernst tries again with the sextant.

FRITZ
We're making good time.

Ernst peers through the sextant. Fritz eyes a rocky cape in the distance.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
We come around that cape, we could
pick up some wind.

As if on cue, a gust wallops the sail. It happens so fast that Ernst nearly drops the sextant.

ERNST
Hey!

FRITZ
What'd I tell you? Hang on!

The boat rides up and over the waves. After the initial surprise, it's a kick in the pants. Fritz pumps his fist.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
I told father she was seaworthy!

Fritz laughs. The sail strains from the force of the wind. The outrigger rises up out of the water.

ERNST
We've got too much sail!

FRITZ
No we don't!

Fritz lets out a howl of glee. The boat is really flying.

ERNST
We need to reef it!

He crawls aft to reef the sail. A sudden wind shift throws him off balance and he grabs the outrigger boom to keep from falling. He ties off the halyard.

Fritz is looking back over his shoulder, troubled. A long slick of brown foam and leafy debris is being swept along on the water. A coconut bobs on the surface.

ERNST (CONT'D)
What is it?

FRITZ
Current, I guess. And we're in it.

They turn to look the other way. Although they are still a half-mile from the cape, the current is sweeping them toward it. Waves crash against the rocks. Ernst looks concerned.

ERNST
Aim higher into the wind. We'll sail around it.

Fritz moves the rudder, tries to steer crosswise to the current, but they're still being swept sideways by it. The rudder VIBRATES from the force of the water.

ERNST (CONT'D)
C'mon.

FRITZ
I'm trying. It's pushing us in.

Ernst looks toward the cape. The boat is crabbing sideways. They're both scared now but trying not to panic.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Dip your paddle. Use it as a rudder.

Ernst sticks his paddle in the water, using it as another steering device to stop the sideways slippage. The far side of the cape is revealing itself as they get closer.

ERNST
(tensing)
Hey Fritz...

Fritz follows his gaze, reacts.

THEIR POV - THE BREAKERS

coming into view as they round the cape. These are no ordinary waves. They're 40 foot monsters that CRASH against a barrier reef with a sound like LIQUID THUNDER. From where the waves break to the shore is a mile of churning white water studded with boulders.

BACK TO SCENE

Ernst and Fritz are being swept right toward the breaking waves.

ERNST
Turn us around!

FRITZ
Too late! We'll smash against the rocks! Paddle!

Ernst sees he's right. They're committed. He grabs his paddle, digs in.

ERNST
Aim higher!

Fritz hauls in the sail. They are already impossibly close-hauled, vying desperately to steer away from the breakers. The rudder VIBRATES from the current.

Ernst paddles for all he's worth. The boat rides up the face of a huge swell and teeters on the crest before the bow comes down with a SPLASH!

The current forces them closer and closer to the break zone.

ERNST (CONT'D)
We're not going to make it!

FRITZ
Yes, we will! Stroke!

Suddenly the rudder SNAPS clean off!

Fritz gives a startled cry. Ernst whirls, registering the sudden stall in forward motion. The bow is swinging lazily into the wind.

They are rudderless, out of control. They stare dumbly at the rudder floating a few feet away, then look toward the breakers and grab their paddles.

They paddle like crazy. But now the boat is totally at the mercy of the current. They're drifting right into the break zone. A huge wave looms. They aim straight for it.

Miraculously, they ride up the face of the wave and SPLASH down safely on the other side. Another wave rolls toward them. This one is bigger. It's starting to break.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
We'll punch through it!

They dig in with their paddles. The wave is curling as it reaches them. For a moment it looks like they really will knife through it.

Then it CRASHES down on the boat!

Just like that the boat is gone. No sign of it. Just brilliant white water. Two boys and a flimsy boat swallowed by the sea.

IN A SERIES OF UNDERWATER AND SURFACE SHOTS

The CAMERA is spun in a watery centrifuge. A foot flies into the air, then is gone. The pistol and sextant vanish in the turbulence. Pearls spill from a drawstring bag. Fritz is thrown to the bottom with a THUMP. Ernst breaks the surface, gasps, then is forced down again. Fritz somersaults like a rag doll and SMACKS a submerged rock, blood misting away.

ERNST

breaks the surface, coughing and sucking for air. He's pulled down again, then shoots up 20 feet away. He fights to stay atop the boiling shore break.

A swell picks him up, hurls him like a cork against the rocks. He tries to hang on but is swept away and goes under again. The terrifying process repeats.

He reappears closer to shore, but the receding flow pulls him back before another frothy swell launches him into the shallows.

He gets to his feet, dazed and choking, stumbles through the rocks and collapses on shore. He lies there, chest heaving, clutching his battered sides.

ERNST

Fritz... Fritz...

After a beat, he sits up. Scrapes and bruises cover his body. He looks seaward, searches for Fritz.

ERNST (CONT'D)

Fritz!

Fritz is nowhere to be seen. Ernst staggers to his feet. There's nothing but angry ocean.

ERNST (CONT'D)

Fritz!

He supports himself against a rock. In a moment, he leaps back to his feet. This time his voice is filled with rage.

ERNST (CONT'D)

This isn't a joke, goddammit! Where are you?!

He collapses against the rock again, lets out a choked sob.

ERNST (CONT'D)
FRITZ, YOU BASTARD! ANSWER ME!

Tears begin to roll down his cheeks.

ERNST (CONT'D)
Oh God, please God, don't let him
die!

Fighting back his emotions, he rises and starts to call out again, then goes still.

ANGLE ON FRITZ

standing on the shore and looking out to sea 500 yards away.

BACK TO ERNST

Ernst stares in amazement, a huge smile spreading across his face. He makes a bullhorn with his hands.

ERNST (CONT'D)
FRITZ!!!

Fritz looks over. A beat, as he appears to struggle to convince his disbelieving eyes this is really Ernst calling out to him.

Then, in a pantomime of thanks to God, Fritz comically falls back on the sand and thrusts his arms to the sky.

Ernst grins and starts walking over.

EXT. SANDY COVE - SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Fritz lies on his back, staring up at the sky. His clothes are shredded, blood is caked in his hair and on one arm. He looks over as Ernst comes trudging across the sand.

FRITZ
I thought you were dead.

ERNST
I thought you were dead.

Ernst sits. They are silent for a beat. Ernst pours sand through his fingers.

ERNST (CONT'D)
(deadpan)
Hey Fritz, I have an idea.

FRITZ
Yeah?

ERNST
Let's build a boat and sail off the
island.

FRITZ

An outrigger, with a sail? So she'll
be seaworthy?

ERNST

Yes, and we'll go to...

FRITZ & ERNST

... NEW GUINEA!

They crack up. Ernst drops back against the sand.

ERNST

For the record, this was your
brilliant idea.

FRITZ

Nonsense. It was yours. You're the
genius.

ERNST

And you're the one driven so insane
by the absence of girls on this
island you decided to risk my life
getting off.

Fritz smiles. They go silent. Fritz reconsiders.

FRITZ

You know, actually I think the idea
was... father's.

They crack up again. Fritz exhales.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

He's going to kill us.

ERNST

No, he won't. We're coming home
safe, aren't we?

FRITZ

"Home"?

They turn somber, reflecting on the meaning of it. Fritz
stands. He eyes the dense interior of the island.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Let's get started. We have a long
walk ahead.

Ernst rises, brushes off sand. Fritz looks down the shore.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Hey, look.

Ernst turns. A piece of their shattered boat is washed up on
a finger of rocks.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Let's see what else washed up.

They go over. Bits of rigging and sail are tangled together with the shattered hull. Ernst sees the gourd canteen.

ERNST
We can use this.

He picks it up. Water gushes out of a hole in the bottom. He tosses it away.

FRITZ
(suddenly)
Get down!

Fritz shoves Ernst down behind a rock. Ernst starts to protest, but Fritz is peering over the rock. Ernst follows his gaze.

THEIR POV - A SHIP!

anchored in a sheltered cove. The ship has seen some rough sailing, but there's no question: It's the Actaeon.

BACK TO SCENE

Fritz and Ernst stare.

ERNST
That's the ship that attacked us!
What are they doing here?

Fritz shakes his head, no clue. He indicates for Ernst to follow and they move closer, staying low. They duck behind another rock.

When they peer around it, a dozen sailors are descending a Jacob's ladder, getting into a longboat. Even at a distance, it's clear the man in the stern is Bragg.

ERNST (CONT'D)
That's him, isn't it?

Fritz nods. The sailors begin rowing to shore. Rifles bristle above the rowers' heads. There are other faces we recognize -- Donegal, Crumley and Adam. Pointer is holding a map, looking around.

FRITZ
It could be a hunting party. Maybe they need fresh water.

He doesn't sound too sure of it. Ernst and Fritz trade a look, nod silent agreement and slip into the jungle.

They begin working their way around to the cove.

EXT. COVE - DAY

The sailors get out in the shallows and haul the longboat onto the sand. They are rough and disorderly, all decorum shot to hell.

Bragg moves past them onto the beach, barking orders.

ANOTHER ANGLE

reveals this is Ernst and Fritz's POV as they lie prone under a mango tree, too far away to make out any words.

ERNST
(whispering)
What are they doing?

Fritz shakes his head, mystified. They watch Adam set up a folding table on the sand. He places an oilskin bag on it.

FRITZ
That's the boy I told you about. I
thought he was a prisoner.

Fritz motions for Ernst to follow.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
C'mon, let's try to hear what they're
saying.

Fritz and Ernst crawl forward on their stomachs, staying hidden in the brush.

Without warning, Kilroy raises his rifle and FIRES into the trees. He shares a guffaw with his mates, turns impatiently to Adam.

KILROY
Well come on. It won't put itself in
the boat, you lazy git.

Adam goes over, picks up the bloody carcass of a tropical bird and carries it to the boat.

THE BEACH

Bragg looks on as Pointer uses a compass and studies his map, looking around at various geographical features. Pointer looks like he's aged a decade.

BRAGG
You're sure this is Melville's
island?

Pointer doesn't answer at first, taking another compass reading, wetting his lips nervously.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Ernst and Fritz lie prone in the bushes, within earshot.
Ernst looks at his brother, mouths "Melville?" Fritz shrugs.

BACK TO SCENE

Bragg looks at Pointer impatiently.

BRAGG (CONT'D)

Well?

Pointer summons his courage.

POINTER

You said if I found the island, you'd
grant me my freedom.

BRAGG

Yes, so?

POINTER

But... I have no guarantee?

BRAGG

(furiously indignant)

Are you actually questioning my word
as a gentleman?

POINTER

No, sir... I would never...

BRAGG

(biting off the words)

Then is this or is it not Melville's
bloody island?

POINTER

It is.

Bragg eyes him a beat, then draws his pistol and FIRES.
Pointer falls dead, the map in his hand.

BRAGG

Insolent toad.

FRITZ AND ERNST

react to the cold-blooded killing, aghast.

ADAM THE CABIN BOY

also reacts with horror. PUSH IN on his face as he bites his
lip, his eyes darting between Bragg and the dead navigator.

BACK TO BRAGG

turning to his men.

BRAGG
 Very well, men. We begin searching
 immediately --

He breaks off as Adam suddenly bolts across the sand, seizes the map from Pointer's dead hand and runs for the trees. He stands there a beat, astonished. Then quickly recovers, roaring:

BRAGG (CONT'D)
 STOP HIM!

Adam feints around sailors trying to block his path and slips into the trees. Bragg and the sailors take off in pursuit.

FRITZ AND ERNST

see their chance to make an overdue escape. They leap to their feet, run for it.

INT. JUNGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Adam sprints uphill through the thick brush, fleeing for his life.

THIRTY YARDS AWAY

Ernst and Fritz run sideways up the same hill. Fritz hears BRANCHES CRASHING, looks across the slope to catch glimpses of Adam sprinting in the same direction.

FRITZ
 Hey! Hey!

Adam looks over, alarmed by the sight of them. He runs faster, climbing away.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
 HEY!

Adam runs for all he's worth. Fritz kicks it in high gear, climbing to intercept the cabin boy.

ADAM

leaps a stream and scrambles up the bank. His feet slip in the mud. He struggles higher, then freezes. Fritz stands before him, blocking his path.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
 Don't worry -- we won't hurt you!

ADAM
 No... no... you stay away...

Adam backs away, then sees Ernst coming up behind him, raising both palms in a placating gesture. They can hear a RIVER RUSHING beyond a rise just out of sight.

ERNST

We can help you, we know the island!
Come with us!

Adam swallows. There's fear in his eyes, but he's beginning to relent. Ernst takes a step closer. Adam hauls off, SOCKS him in the nose!

Ernst stumbles backwards and Adam takes off again, plunging through the trees.

Ernst jumps to his feet, clutching his nose, wipes away a trickle of blood.

ERNST (CONT'D)

I'm going to kill the little runt.

Ernst and Fritz bolt after him.

EXT. RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

Adam jolts to a halt. The river is a torrent. Although only 20 feet across, it's set in a deep gorge. He stares, gulping.

Ernst and Fritz fly out of the trees and tackle Adam to the ground behind a boulder. Adam tries to break free, but Ernst pins his arms while Fritz cocks a fist in his face.

ADAM

Let me go dammit!

FRITZ

(hissing)
You can have us. Or you can have them.

Ernst rotates Adam forcibly so he can peer through the brush and see Donegal and two sailors grunting their way up the hill 200 yards away.

Adam stops struggling. A beat, then Ernst releases him.

ADAM

(voice low)
Who are you?

FRITZ

Fritz, Ernst. We were aboard the Bristol. I saw you through the porthole.

Adam looks at him, the memory returning.

ADAM

You look different...

FRITZ
We shipwrecked here.

ADAM
There's more of you?

FRITZ
Our parents and a little brother. We
have to get back and warn them about
the pirates.

A bullet RICOCHETS off the rock. They whirl to see a BIG
BASTARD OF A SAILOR hurriedly reloading his pistol 100 feet
downhill.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
C'mon!

They run to the edge of the gorge. The river THUNDERS below.
There are vines hanging from a tree near the gorge. Some of
the vines have GOLD FLOWERS, some have WHITE FLOWERS.

Fritz grabs hold of a vine with gold flowers. The sailor is
climbing toward them for a better shot.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
(to Adam)
I'll go first. Remember: use the
gold. Gold is bold, got it?

ADAM
Gold is what?!

FRITZ
Gold is bold! Use the gold!

Adam's head spins. Fritz gets a running start, swings on the
gold-flowered vine across the gorge and lands on the other
side.

He grabs rocks from the ground and begins pelting the sailor
on the hillside. Ernst grabs another gold-flowered vine,
extends it to Adam.

ERNST
Your turn! Go!

ADAM
(scared, stalling)
No! I can't!

ERNST
Yes, you can! It's easy! Watch!

He pushes off, swings across the gorge and sticks the landing
like Fritz. They rain rocks on the advancing sailor.

ERNST (CONT'D)

Come on!

Adam takes a vine, realizes it has white flowers and trades it for a gold-flowered vine. There's a GUNSHOT and a bullet SMASHES into the tree.

The sailor swears and charges up the hill.

Adam takes a huge breath, pushes off and swoops across the gorge, landing on his ass. Ernst and Fritz help him to his feet.

The sailor reaches the gorge and grabs a vine to copy the maneuver. The vine has white flowers. He gets a running start, swings out over the gorge.

The vine SNAPS.

The big bastard goes into a free fall. It's a 150 foot drop to the river. He hits with a SPLASH and is swept over the rapids.

Adam watches the sailor being carried downstream, clutching his white-flowered vine like a prom bouquet.

ADAM

(shouting)

Gold is bold, asshole!

He turns. Ernst and Fritz are jogging into the jungle. Adam hurries to catch up.

CUT TO:

INT. RIDGE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Fritz stands atop a boulder and peers down the hillside. Satisfied no one's following, he jumps down and goes over to Adam, who stands beside Ernst.

FRITZ

We're safe for now. Maybe you should tell us what this is about, starting with your name.

ADAM

Adam...

FRITZ

All right. So... what are they doing here?

Adam eyes them guardedly. Fritz and Ernst wait.

ERNST

Look, we did just save your life. I should think you'd trust us by now.

ADAM

You're right, sorry. The fact is... there's a treehouse on this island. I need you to take me there. Please. I have a map, but the part showing the location of the treehouse was burned in a fire.

ERNST

(suspicious)

What's so special about the treehouse?

ADAM

It's... where the pearls are.

Fritz and Ernst trade a look, turn back to Adam.

FRITZ

What pearls?

ADAM

Look, if we could just get started, I'll tell you everything. I promise.

Fritz eyes him closely, then nods and they begin walking.

ADAM (CONT'D)

It's like this. Seven years ago an explorer was shipwrecked here. As recently as three years ago he was alive, hoping to be rescued.

ERNST

How do you know?

ADAM

Because a bottle washed ashore in Australia. Inside was a dated letter and a pearl.

Ernst holds back a branch. Adam ducks under it.

ERNST

I heard them talking about someone named Melville. That's his name?

ADAM

That's right, Andrew Melville. Lord Melville really. He's an explorer, geographer, any number of things.

FRITZ

How come he put the pearl in?

ADAM

As an incentive. He promised more pearls to whoever rescued him.

(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

He said he had a whole king's ransom of them.

ERNST

(figuring it out)

Clever. Because without coordinates he couldn't direct anyone to the island. He knew it would take a lot of time and effort to find him.

ADAM

Exactly. All he could do was describe the island and include rough celestial observations. He figured it would help his cause if he offered a reward to anyone willing to undertake the search.

Ernst nods, appreciating the ingenuity of it. Fritz stops.

FRITZ

Hang on.

He undoes his fly to pee. Ernst does likewise. Adam takes a step away, looks around at the exotic setting.

ADAM

At any rate, the bottle was found and sent straight to the Royal Society in London, where cartographers went to work figuring out the location of the island and dispatched a ship to rescue him.

FRITZ

This Melville guy must be pretty important.

ADAM

(shrugging)

I guess. To some he is.

He continues looking around at the jungle. Fritz and Ernst shake off and stow their gear. Ernst looks thoughtful.

ERNST

So really it's the pearls that caused all the trouble. Melville wanted to induce people to rescue him. Instead he induced the crew that was supposed to save him to mutiny.

ADAM

That's right. Once Bragg found out there was a fortune waiting, he led a takeover of the ship. The captain knew Bragg would kill Melville and make off with the pearls, so he burned the maps and only a scrap of Melville's sketch remained.

(MORE)

ADAM (CONT'D)

Your navigator was pressed into service to recreate the work that was destroyed.

Fritz and Ernst look sobered, reflecting on Pointer's fate.

ADAM (CONT'D)

So you can see why I ran off. Once I realized this was the island, I knew had to run ahead and warn Lord Melville.

FRITZ

Well, it was a good try. Too bad you're a little late.

ADAM

Why's that?

ERNST

Because Melville's dead. Probably anyway. We've been here two years and haven't seen him.

FRITZ

And we live in his house.

Adam stares. Fritz and Ernst turn and start walking again, but Adam just stands there, dazed, a look of disbelief and sadness coming over him. Ernst looks back.

ERNST

You coming?

Adam nods slowly, follows.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHORE - DAY

Bragg and several of his men are gathered around the sailor who was swept down river. The big bastard looks like a drowned rat. One arm is skewed grotesquely behind his back.

He grimaces through the excruciating pain as Crumley tries to ease the arm back into its socket.

BIG BASTARD

There was three of 'em, there was... Not just the one... Bloody hell that hurts!

BRAGG

Three?

BIG BASTARD

Aye. It was the... ow... damn... you know the...

BRAGG
 (getting in his face)
 I don't know. Who, dammit?!
 Melville?

BIG BASTARD
 No... the... oh, Jesus...

Bragg shoves Crumley aside, grabs the man's arm and yanks hard. There is a POP. The big bastard screeches.

BIG BASTARD (CONT'D)
 AAAAAGHHHH!

BRAGG
Who?!

The big bastard pants, recovering.

BIG BASTARD
 Them boys from the mail ship... You
 know the ones, their old man what
 done us... Aye.

He works his arm. Much better. Bragg glowers darkly.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Adam appears lost in thought as he follows Fritz and Ernst through the jungle. Fritz and Ernst come to a halt, jolting Adam from his reverie. He looks past them at a wide, muddy river.

ADAM
 Can we wade it?

FRITZ
 It's that or swim.

Fritz is already splashing into the river. It gets deep fast. Ernst follows. Adam stays on the bank, uneasy.

ADAM
 You don't think there are snakes, do
 you?

FRITZ
 Could be. No crocs though. Crocs
 are night-feeders.

Adam blanches. Fritz smiles to show he's kidding.

ERNST
 You'll be fine. My brother thinks
 he's funny.

Adam manages a half-smile and starts wading across, placing his feet carefully. Fritz is already up to his chest.

FRITZ

The truth is we haven't seen any --

In the blink of an eye Fritz is gone, swallowed up by the river in one gulp. Adam gives a start. Fritz breaks the surface, treading water.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Well, I guess we're swimming!

He strokes across. Ernst and Adam push in and swim. Fritz clambers onto the far bank. He shakes like a wet dog, slicks water off his limbs. He looks down and his face drops.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Oh no...

There's a fat black leech on his chest. Fritz lifts his shirt and we see there are more leeches on his torso. He's covered with leeches!

He turns. Ernst and Adam are emerging from the water with irregular black polka dots. One look at Fritz and they wise up to the revolting situation.

In an instant everyone is shrieking, tearing at the leeches.

ERNST

Get it off! Get it off!

They pluck madly at the leeches. Fritz and Ernst strip naked. Fritz tries desperately to reach a leech on his back.

FRITZ

Get this one!

Ernst yanks it off. The leeches leave red welts. Fritz sees Adam feeling under his clothes.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Take your clothes off!

Adam keeps his clothes on. Fritz points.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Get them off before they burrow into your skin! Take your shirt off!

ADAM

(flustered)

No!

FRITZ

You'll never get them off like that!

He goes over, tries to raise Adam's shirt.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
I'll get it!

Adam parries his hand away.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
What are you doing?! Take your
clothes off!

He tries to remove Adam's shirt again. Adam suddenly whirls, raising a fist to slug him. Their eyes meet and time stops. Fritz just stares and in that instant he knows.

She runs behind a stand of trees.

Fritz turns to his brother. Ernst is slack-jawed, having realized the same thing at the same moment. The brothers stare at each other. They look over.

Abby (that's her name) is behind the trees, undressing.

Fritz and Ernst take a few steps to the side, peering furtively around the side of the trees and are rewarded with a tantalizing glimpse of bare skin.

She's unwrapping a band of cloth from around her chest. For an instant the side of a breast is visible. She whirls, grabs a rock and lets fly.

ABBY
GET AWAY!

Fritz and Ernst duck away. With a shock they realize they're naked too. They cover their privates, dart away.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIVER - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Fritz and Ernst, fully clothed, sit on a rock and talk in hushed voices, mortification sinking in.

ERNST
We peed in front of her.

FRITZ
We did more than that. We stripped
naked.

ERNST
I pulled a leech off my...

He points helplessly. He clutches his head, rocking. He's never going to live this down.

ERNST (CONT'D)
I think I'm going to die.

There is a COUGH. Fritz and Ernst turn. Abby stands there.

How they (and we) could have mistaken her for a boy is beyond imagining. She's not just sort of pretty, she's very ridiculously pretty. And without corset, she's stunningly curvy too.

Fritz and Ernst stand formally.

FRITZ
Hello.

ABBY
Hi.

ERNST
(mumbling)
'Lo.

He stares at the ground, shuffling.

ABBY
My name is Abby.

FRITZ
I'm Fritz. This is Ernst.

ABBY
I know.

Fritz winces at his stupidity. They stand there awkwardly. Abby clears her throat again.

ABBY (CONT'D)
I impersonated a boy because I wanted to go to sea. I don't think it's fair only boys get to have adventures.

FRITZ
You kept it a secret from everyone... all this time?

ABBY
No. The captain was a family friend. He said a ship could be dangerous for girls. I pleaded with him and he agreed to take me on as cabin boy. He alone knew the truth.

Fritz considers it, then turns to the six foot-high dirt wall leading up out of the river basin.

FRITZ
We should get going. Ernst?

He laces his fingers and boosts Ernst up the wall, then turns to Abby. They look at each other, suddenly feeling the physical intimacy of it, awkward.

ABBY

That's all right... I can...

FRITZ

No... here... I...

Avoiding eye contact, she puts a foot in his laced fingers and he boosts her up. For a moment her hip presses against his cheek, the electricity of it registering in his eyes.

She pulls herself up. Fritz is suddenly short of breath.

ERNST (O.S.)

Hey Fritz, get up here.

Fritz looks up. Ernst sounds alarmed. Fritz takes hold of a root and clammers up the dirt wall to find Ernst and Abby standing on a knoll, looking out to sea.

ERNST (CONT'D)

They're searching for the treehouse.

Fritz goes over, follows their gaze.

THEIR POV - THE ACTAEON

sailing along the coast.

BACK TO SCENE

Fritz, Ernst and Abby look at one another, registering the urgency.

FRITZ

C'mon.

They head off at a run.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREEHOUSE - DUSK

Smoke curls into the sky. Heidi stirs ingredients into the pot over a crackling fire. Jack shells peas. Johann chops wood with morose efficiency, bringing the axe down with more than necessary force. A heavy mood prevails.

Knips plays on the woodpile. Johann splits a log. Knips jumps closer. Annoyed, Johann kicks dirt at the monkey.

JOHANN

Beat it, Knips.

Knips moves away. Johann gets ready to swing, but Knips hops onto the cutting stump. Johann check-swings to avoid hitting him.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Dammit!

(looking over)

Jack, you want to tell your monkey to get out of here so I don't take his damn tail off?

JACK

Knips!

The monkey runs over and sits in Jack's lap. Jack looks wounded by his father's angry tone. He trades a glance with his mother.

Johann resumes splitting wood, then utters a rasp of frustration and tosses the ax into the woodpile. He looks over at Jack.

JOHANN

Sorry... I...

He gestures extenuatingly. Jack nods. Johann goes to the treehouse. Jack looks over at his mother for reassurance, but she's watching Johann, her face worried.

Johann climbs the treehouse steps. He hesitates on the landing outside Fritz and Ernst's room.

INT. OLDER BOYS' ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Johann enters. The room feels empty but is still imbued with the boys' contrasting personalities. He goes over to Fritz's bed.

On the wall are clamshell replicas of army medals, regimental ribbons woven out of reeds, a motto carved on a plaque: "SEMPER VALOREM."

Johann goes to Ernst's desk, opens a notebook. Inside are stunning drawings of faraway places -- landscapes, city scenes, the Arc de Triomphe. Johann's eyes glisten. He turns the page to find a loving portrait of Heidi.

A step CREAKS. Johann looks up to see Heidi in the doorway.

JOHANN

He never showed me these.

(a beat)

Did you know about them?

HEIDI

Yes.

JOHANN
Why didn't he show me?

HEIDI
He didn't want to disappoint you.

JOHANN
(disbelief)
Disappoint me? But these are
incredible.

HEIDI
It's not what he thought you wanted
from him.

JOHANN
With his intellect, I planned on his
being an engineer, a scientist...

HEIDI
He would have agreed with you once --
he still likes those things -- but
he's changing.
(a beat)
Ernst has a gift from God. He is
anything he wants to be.

JOHANN
How could I not know this?

HEIDI
You never asked him.

Johann stares into space.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
We can't plan our sons' lives. All
three of them are whatever they want
to be.

JOHANN
But I tried... I tried to plan your
life too. I took you halfway around
the world, away from Switzerland,
your friends, everything you loved.
I didn't even ask if you wanted to
go.

Heidi says nothing. He looks at her.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
Why didn't you refuse? Why didn't
you dig in your heels, fight?

HEIDI
Because some things aren't done. I'm
your wife. I don't get to make those
decisions.

He sits there, staring.

HEIDI (CONT'D)
 And you didn't take me away from
 everything I love, Johann. I had
 you, I had our boys...

He casts his eyes down, ashamed, filled with sadness and
 guilt, feeling unworthy of her love. She moves to him, puts
 her hand on his shoulder tenderly. He gazes up at her,
 choked up, barely able to continue.

JOHANN
 Heidi... what I have done to us?

VOICES float up from the jungle floor.

Johann and Heidi look at each other, blinking. The VOICES
 are animated. They're out the door in a flash.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Johann and Heidi come flying down the steps. Ernst is
 tipping the cookpot on the fire. Steam and ash billow.
 Fritz runs over with a water basin, heaves it into the fire.

JOHANN
 (overjoyed)
 Fritz! Ernst!

FRITZ
 Father, put those torches out!

HEIDI
 But what --

She breaks off, registering Abby's presence. What the hell?!
 Ernst caps off the torches. Abby and the boys are winded,
 drenched with sweat.

ERNST
 Bragg and his men, they're here... We
 were coming over the ridge, we saw
 the ship...

FRITZ
 Where's Jack?

Johann's head spins. He looks at Heidi.

HEIDI
 He's... he went fishing.

Fritz takes off running for the cove. Ernst chases after
 him. Johann and Heidi stare at Abby. She smiles weakly.

ABBY
 Hello?

Johann and Heidi trade a baffled look. Then they all run together for the water.

EXT. COVE - MOMENTS LATER

Fritz comes flying out of the trees and sees Jack spearfishing from a dugout canoe 100 yards from shore.

FRITZ
(shouting)
Jack! Get down!

Jack looks over. His face lights up.

JACK
I caught two already! What are you doing back?

FRITZ
Get out of the boat!

Fritz runs into the shallows and swims for the canoe, gesturing furiously as he gets closer. Jack reaches down and proudly displays his catch.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
GET OUT!

Fritz reaches the dugout and tips it over, spilling Jack into the water.

JACK
Hey, hey! What are doing -- ?!

Jack turns, sees the Actaeon appearing around the jutting arm of the cove. He blinks, then cops to it suddenly and stops protesting.

Fritz rotates the dugout entirely upside-down and they tread water behind it.

FRITZ
Stay down!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Johann, Heidi and Ernst stay out of sight in the trees and watch as the Actaeon slinks past the cove, the empty dugout in the foreground.

ERNST
They've come for the pearls. They've been searching for the island all this time.

Johann and Heidi glance over to where Abby is hiding behind some rocks. They still have no clue who this girl is.

EXT. CROW'S NEST - ACTAEON - CONTINUOUS

The LOOKOUT peers through his spyglass at the island.

HIS POV - THROUGH SPYGLASS

panning the shore, then backing up to focus on a log floating in the cove. It looks peculiar floating there.

BACK TO SCENE

The lookout lowers the spyglass and studies the log with his naked eye, then shrugs and continues glassing the shore.

EXT. EDGE OF JUNGLE - CONTINUOUS

The Actaeon passes behind a headland. Fritz and Jack wait till it's completely gone before wading ashore. Johann, Heidi and Ernst step from the trees.

FRITZ

Mother, father -- we didn't make it to New Guinea.

Heidi hugs both boys.

HEIDI

I guess we figured that much.

JOHANN

C'mere, boys...

Giddy with emotion, he pulls Fritz and Ernst into a bear hug.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Can you ever forgive me for being such a horse's ass?

Fritz looks at Johann solemnly.

FRITZ

Father, I'm the one who needs to apologize. You were right. It was foolish what we did. We didn't get five miles before we wrecked on the coast. We lost everything, including the pistol.

Johann laughs and hugs them again, tears rolling down his cheeks. Abby appears from behind the rocks. Ernst shoots her a look, embarrassed.

ERNST

He isn't always like this.

Abby laughs nervously. Fritz steps away.

FRITZ
 Father, mother, I'd like you to meet
 Abigail.

HEIDI
 How do you do, miss?

ABBY
 Very well, thank you, ma'am.

JACK
 I don't get it. You brought a girl
 back from New Guinea?

ERNST
 (laughing)
 Abby escaped from the Actaeon. She
 was posing as the cabin boy.

Johann and Heidi trade a look, finding it hard to fathom.

HEIDI
 Those must have been some blind
 sailors. Welcome to our home.

ABBY
 (blushing)
 Thank you, ma'am.

Fritz looks out to sea.

FRITZ
 We should get out of sight. There's
 a lot we need to tell you.

They move back into the trees.

CUT TO:

SPYGLASS SHOT

of the Actaeon's anchor plunging soundlessly into the sea.

EXT. HILLTOP - ANOTHER ANGLE - EVENING

Johann lowers the spyglass and hands it to Fritz. They lie
 prone on the hilltop with Ernst. The Actaeon is in a cove
 two miles away.

ERNST
 They'll split up into search parties.
 It won't be long before they find us.

Johann eyes the ship, nods grimly.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREEHOUSE - NIGHT

Light glimmers behind drawn curtains. MUFFLED VOICES drift from the parlor. Another faint light comes from Heidi and Johann's bedroom.

INT. HEIDI & JOHANN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Abby sits alone before a mirror. She has bathed and wears Heidi's dressing gown. Her wet hair lies flat against her scalp.

She studies the girlish face in the mirror with wonder, like someone encountering a long-lost acquaintance.

She looks at the vanity table. There are clamshells containing cosmetics made from berries and plant extracts.

She applies a dab of red powder to her cheek. It goes on too thick. She tries to rub it in, but it gets worse. She grabs a cloth and rubs till it's gone.

She rises from the vanity. Heidi has laid out clothes for her. She holds them up, then notices the thousands of notches carved on the back of the door.

Abby goes over, crouches. Sadness washes over her and her eyes begin to fill as she traces the carved M with her finger.

EXT. PARLOR - NIGHT

The Robinsons engage in heated discussion around the table.

FRITZ

We need to be bold. Look at the big idiot who chased us today. He took the wrong vine. That's how we can defeat them!

ERNST

By their making dumb mistakes?

FRITZ

No -- because we know the battlefield and they don't. It's a basic principle of warfare.

HEIDI

Battlefield? We're an unarmed family!

FRITZ

We don't have to be. We have tons of weapons. Ernst even knows how to make gunpowder.

HEIDI
 (to Ernst, amazed)
 You do?

ERNST
 Actually, you weren't supposed to know that. But yes, it's pretty simple. Charcoal, bat poop and sulfur.

JACK
Bat poop?

Ernst shrugs. Heidi and Johann trade a look that says, "Is there anything this kid doesn't know?" Fritz picks up the argument again.

FRITZ
 Well, I say we fight them. And I say we can win. Right, father?

Before Johann can answer, the door opens and Abby enters. Everyone stares. Heidi draws an audible breath.

Abby might as well be a different person. She wears a simple dress that's modest enough but doesn't hide her figure. Her skin glows, her hair is brushed to a sheen.

ABBY
 Uh... hi...

She stands there, self-conscious. Her eyes meet Fritz's. Heidi clears her throat. Johann and the boys shoot to their feet.

HEIDI
 Abby, come in. My family seems to have lost its manners. You look lovely.

ABBY
 Thank you, ma'am. It feels good to be clean again.

Heidi shows Abby to a chair. They all sit.

ABBY (CONT'D)
 I'm afraid I've brought nothing but trouble to this island.

HEIDI
 Don't be silly. It's not your fault. You're with us now.

ERNST
 Well, with us or without us, we still don't have a plan. Father, what do you think?

All eyes turn to Johann. He has been silent till now. He measures his words carefully.

JOHANN

Well... I think we're a family. And we need to agree as a family. Our lives are at stake. I can't make this decision for us.

The others exchanges glances. Fritz speaks for the group.

FRITZ

But we can't agree. C'mon father, what do you think we should do?

A beat -- as Johann weighs it.

JOHANN

It seems to me if we fight them, we'll lose.

ERNST

(vindicated)

See? I knew father would take my side. So it's settled, we'll head for the interior --

JOHANN

On the other hand, if we hide out, there's no guarantee we won't have to fight anyway if Bragg comes looking for us. He might decide he doesn't want any witnesses.

The Robinsons look confused.

HEIDI

I don't understand, Johann. Then what are you suggesting?

Johann looks at Abby.

JOHANN

Abby, you know the Actaeon. In a pinch, how many could sail it?

ABBY

In a pinch? I don't know... I suppose using just the mainsail... six?

Johann nods, looks around the table.

JOHANN

So how about it? Who's for stealing their ship?

Off their astonished reactions...

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Donegal hacks with a machete as he leads a search party through the jungle. They're sweating buckets. Donegal stops suddenly, and a WEASEL-FACED SAILOR eyes him curiously.

WEASEL-FACED SAILOR

What?

Donegal chucks a look across a clearing... to the treehouse.

CUT TO:

EXT. COVE - DAY

The Actaeon is anchored in the cove. Three longboats row toward shore, each with seven or eight armed men, Bragg in the lead boat.

INT. HEIDI & JOHANN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Bragg KICKS open the door and steps inside. There's no one here. His surly gaze takes in the clever homemade decorating touches. He turns, goes to the landing.

EXT. TREEHOUSE LANDING - DAY

Bragg takes in the scene below. Sailors are scavenging the site, carrying away plunder. He scans the treetops, suspicious. Hogg, the hulking giant, climbs the steps toward him.

HOGG

Beg your pardon, sir. I'll just see if there's any valuables worth taking.

He squeezes past Bragg, goes to Heidi's dresser. Bragg descends the stairs.

INT. PARLOR - DAY

Sailors ransack a cabinet for provisions, rip into sacks and release airbursts of flour and sugar. A bear of a sailor gorges on dripping honeycomb. Another samples from a cask.

RUM SAILOR

Gor! It's rum!

The sailors ditch everything and fight for turns at the spigot. They stop suddenly as Bragg appears in the doorway. They clear a path.

OBLIGING SAILOR
A drink, Cap'n?

Bragg says nothing. Another sailor chimes in.

SYCOPHANT SAILOR
Cleared out in a hurry they did.
Didn't want no truck with you, I
should say not, sir.

Bragg turns and leaves. The sailors resume squabbling.

VARIOUS SAILORS
Hey, it's my turn! I had it next!

EXT. SWIMMING HOLE - DAY

An obese sailor floats on his back and another scrubs his pits under the waterfall while a third pisses in the shallows. Bragg eyes it all with a brooding expression.

EXT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

Donegal gnaws a stick of jerky. Bragg comes over, crouches and holds his hand over the ashes in the fire ring.

DONEGAL
Aye, sir, it hasn't been long. What
do you think?

Bragg shakes his head, doesn't know what to think. He stands. A HAIRY APE OF A SAILOR indicates the treehouse.

HAIRY APE
It's not half-bad, you know. Built
out of spare bits. I always wanted
to build something with me hands,
never had the time.

Bragg gives him a withering look.

HAIRY APE (CONT'D)
All I'm saying, it's ingenious
really. And someone's got a real
eye. You should see what they did
with the curtains...

He trails off. Bragg is really glaring now.

Bragg's gaze returns to the treehouse. He frowns at something, goes over and peers up at the underside of the parlor.

Nails have been pulled almost completely from the joists.

His eyes narrow. A length of sturdy twine runs from a wooden block under a joist. The twine joins with others coming from elsewhere in the structure and disappears into the foliage.

Bragg reacts, jumping away.

BRAGG
LOOK OUT!

ON A BRANCH HIGH IN THE TREETOPS

Fritz yanks hard on a whole braid of twine.

THE FLOORS

of the multi-room treehouse swing open all at once like trap doors and send the sailors into free-fall.

The startled sailors CRASH to the ground, furniture, bedding and crockery raining down on and around them. Hogg SMACKS the turf wearing Heidi's nightie over his clothes.

Bragg leaps away from the wreckage, whipping around, searching the trees. He points suddenly.

BRAGG
THERE!

Donegal and another crewman FIRE their rifles into the trees.

IN THE TREES

Bullets POCK the trunk. Fritz takes hold of a vine and pushes off, swinging out over the jungle, grabbing another vine and swinging again.

ON THE GROUND

Bragg barks at his men as they stagger from the wreckage.

BRAGG
On your feet! After him! Harrow,
signal the men in from the ship!

HARROW, a hatchet-faced sailor, runs to the cove. Bragg looks at Donegal, jabs a finger at the treehouse.

BRAGG (CONT'D)
Burn it.

Donegal smiles, happy to oblige.

IN THE SWIMMING HOLE

The sailor who pissed in the shallows looks up as Fritz swoops out of the trees, aiming a furious mid-air penalty kick to his jaw.

Fritz connects -- CRACK! The pisser drops.

The other sailors splash ashore. The obese sailor sees Knips climbing a tree with their clothes.

OBESE SAILOR

HEY!!

The naked sailors give chase.

JUNGLE

Fritz drops to the ground and takes off through the jungle, dashes across a rope bridge spanning a broad riverbed.

Under the bridge, the river is barely a trickle. Heidi lurks behind a rock on the other side, ready with an ax to eighty-six the bridge.

Bragg and a dozen men run for the bridge. At the last instant, Bragg sees the trap and jerks to a halt, motioning the others to stop.

He raises his rifle, but Heidi ducks out of sight. He looks down at the piddling stream.

BRAGG

This way.

They pick their way down the bank, splash into the stream. When they're halfway across, Heidi lets rip with a SHRILL WHISTLE through her fingers.

UPSTREAM

Johann touches off a fuse, hightails it.

NEAR THE ROPE BRIDGE

Heidi, Fritz, Ernst, Abby and Knips scoop up handfuls of rock and rain them down on the sailors. In a moment, Johann arrives and joins in. Jack fires arrows from his bow.

The crewmen shrink away, trapped in the riverbed, shielding themselves. A flimsy arrow glances off Bragg's arm, a stone strikes his chest. He snatches a pebble from midair, stares at it.

He wheels on his men, disgusted.

BRAGG

THEY'RE PEBBLES, DAMMIT!

Suddenly there is a FIERY EXPLOSION!

The sailors pivot to see the dam above them fly to pieces in an eruption of rock and dirt, followed by a ROARING WALL OF WATER pushing huge chunks of debris downstream.

The panicked sailors bolt for safety.

Some are carried away instantly. Others jump to the bank and cling to trees. Another takes off downstream ahead of a cart-wheeling tree stump, like a rabbit trying to outrun a train.

Bragg leaps in the air and grabs the rope bridge, his feet hanging in the torrent. Knips dashes out, BANGS Bragg's fingers with his fists.

JACK
Look out, Knips!

Sailors are arriving across the river, FIRING. Bullets strike near Knips. He runs off the bridge, takes off with the Robinsons through the jungle.

EXT. SIGNAL HILL - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The Robinsons reach the summit, panting. They drop behind a parapet of boulders. Jack suddenly points down the hill.

JACK
Look!

They turn, peering past the boulders.

ERNST
They didn't have to do that.

THEIR POV - SMOKE AND FLAME

rising above the treehouse.

BACK TO SCENE

They look on in silence. Knips's eyes express the sadness they all feel, their resolve turning to tempered steel in the flames.

JACK
It's payback, Knips.

Knips seems to nod. Johann looks up, sees the gondola cable wobbling like a line with a fish on the end.

INT. GONDOLA - DAY

As flames consume the treehouse, a SNAGGLE-TOOTHED CREEP sits in the gondola and wrenches the control stick. Nothing happens.

SNAGGLE-TOOTH
Come on, damn you! Bloody 'ell, you
piece a --

The gondola takes off with a WHOOSH! The sailor is thrown back in the seat, gives a shriek of surprise. The car races over the treetops.

After the initial shock, the creep starts enjoying the ride. The car rockets higher, really picking up speed. He cackles with demented glee. Then his smile fades.

The stone counterweight is racing downhill on its parallel track, but somehow it seems... too close? He tilts his head like a puzzled dog, eyes it crookedly.

The counterweight BLASTS into the gondola!

EXT. SIGNAL HILL - DAY

The Robinsons witness the impact without comment, no one shedding a tear for this jerk. Fritz quickly secures a heavy chain to the gondola rope. Johann looks down the hill.

JOHANN

They're coming. Everyone in position.

He drops down behind the boulder. The Robinsons move to assigned stations behind the parapet.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

Right flank?

ERNST & HEIDI

Ready!

JOHANN

Left flank?

FRITZ & ABBY

Ready!

JOHANN

Firing line?

JACK

Ready!

JOHANN

Jack, call your troops.

Jack WHISTLES through his fingers and in a moment a HALF-DOZEN MONKEYS scamper over and join their cousin Knips on the firing line.

BASE OF HILL

Bragg raises his sword in the air.

BRAGG

CHARGE!

Three dozen sailors emerge from the trees and start running up the rocky slope, yelling WAR CRIES and brandishing rifles, sticks and clubs.

ON THE HILLTOP

A bullet SINGS off the rock. The Robinsons stay low, waiting. The HOWLS are closer. Jack hands out bulging leather sacks to the monkeys.

JACK

All right, men! It's like this!

He takes a handful of pearls from a sack and flings them down the hill. The monkeys love this. Leaping about and somersaulting with glee, they fan out to chuck pearls down the hill.

ON THE SLOPE

Bragg leads the assault higher. Tiny projectiles begin to BOUNCE and CLICK off rocks. One lands at his feet. He picks it up, eyes widening as he sees it's a pearl.

He looks around in dismay. Sailors are behaving like giddy suckers, chasing after the pearls.

VARIOUS SAILORS

It's the pearls! I got one! That's mine! This one's a honker!

BRAGG

YOU IMBECILES! CAN'T YOU SEE IT'S A TRAP?

The sailors ignore him, grabbing pearls.

HILLTOP

Johann sees the enemy fall into disarray.

JOHANN

Right flank, fire!

Heidi and Ernst remove a wooden barrier and send a heap of boulders rolling and bouncing down the hill.

ON THE SLOPE

The men see the rock slide heading toward them and run sideways on the hill to avoid it, the boulders CRASHING down on stragglers.

ON THE HILLTOP

Johann watches them run.

JOHANN

Left, fire!

Abby and Fritz yank away supports and a stack of logs rolls down the hill, gaining speed.

ON THE SLOPE

The sailors change directions, running back to the middle, the logs OBLITERATING more slowpokes. Bragg rages.

BRAGG

Go, you fools! Get them!

ON THE HILLTOP

Johann sees them moving higher, grouped in the center of the hill. Ernst stands ready at a giant rubber slingshot stretched between two trees, loaded with a squirming sack.

JOHANN

Artillery, fire!

Ernst yanks a cord. The slingshot bucks and the sack flies through the air, opening in mid-flight to release snakes, spiders and scorpions.

ON THE SLOPE

The attackers freak as critters rain down, serpents wrapping around necks, tarantulas and scorpions landing on bald pates.

Another sack flies through the air and sends forth more creepy crawly mayhem. Trevelyan howls and dances in a circle as a black mamba shoots down his bib-front overalls.

A third airborne sack fails to eject its payload. It lands like a snug hood on Hogg's massive head and sends him screaming and running blindly away.

ON THE FAR LEFT FLANK

A SNEAKY GOON stays low to the ground and picks his way up the hill, away from the main battle, moving rock to rock with a cutlass between his teeth.

ON THE HILLTOP

Johann runs to the gondola mechanism, pulls a lever and the heavy chain we saw Fritz attach earlier begins to pay out, descending on the gondola rope.

JOHANN

Anchor's away.

The gondola rope sags as the Bristol's anchor is hauled off the hilltop and glides downhill at an accelerating clip.

ON THE HILLSIDE

Donegal sees the anchor. It's moving fast down the slope, just off the ground, twirling and bouncing crazily.

DONEGAL

GET DOWN!

The spinning flukes BASH sailors left and right. Bragg goes flat and the anchor clears his head by inches, BLASTS into a tree and turns it to wood chips.

ON THE HILLTOP

Johann lights the fuse on a coconut filled with gunpowder and hurls it -- BOOM!

JOHANN

Fire at will!

It's a free-for-all. Fritz and Heidi pick off attackers with bows and arrows. Ernst launches hornet nests with the slingshot. Abby and Johann fling coconut bombs.

Jack dips feathered darts in a vial of inky fluid and fires them with his pea-shooter -- PHWT!

He almost doesn't see the sneaky goon approaching on his flank till it's too late. The goon leaps up, utters a WAR CRY and charges.

Jack swings around, fires the blowgun. The dart sticks on the guy's nose. He peers at it, cross-eyed. Then his eyes roll back and he falls.

DOWN THE HILL

Bragg hunkers behind a rock and takes slow aim with his rifle. He FIRES.

ON THE HILLTOP

Johann staggers, hit in the shoulder, a coconut bomb tumbling from his hand and rolling away. Heidi whirls.

HEIDI

Johann!

He grits his teeth against the pain, pointing frantically at the coconut. The fuse is burning down.

JOHANN

Get it... get it...

Ernst dives for the coconut and flings it down the hill -- BOOM! Heidi starts toward Johann, but he gestures.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

They're on the move! Keep firing!

He rips his shirtsleeve for a tourniquet.

ON THE HILLSIDE

Bragg shouts to his men as they fan out and begin to advance on a broad front up the hill.

BRAGG
Fan out! Surround them!

ON THE HILLTOP

Fritz sees the change in tactics and runs over to Johann.

FRITZ
That's it, father. They're flanking us. Let's go!

Johann rushes toward the cliff edge, looks down to see a longboat with more crewmen rowing in from the Actaeon.

JOHANN
It's too soon. We have to wait till the rest of them reach shore.

FRITZ
We can't. They'll circle the hill and cut us off. Take Jack, mother and Abby. Ernst and I will hold them off.

JOHANN
But how will you get away?

FRITZ
I know a way. Father, please. I know how to do this. You just have to trust us.

A long beat as their eyes meet. An understanding passes between them. Mutual respect. Father and son as equals.

JOHANN
Good luck. I'm proud of you son.

They shake hands. Fritz beams and runs back to the parapet. Johann turns away.

JOHANN (CONT'D)
Heidi, we're moving out.

He goes over to her.

ON FRITZ

Fritz drops down next to Ernst behind the parapet and notches an arrow. Ernst sees Johann, Heidi, Abby, Jack and Knips leaving. Abby looks back with misgivings.

ERNST
What's going on?

FRITZ
They're leaving --

ERNST
What?!

FRITZ
-- we're staying. It's all right, I
volunteered you.

He fires the arrow, notches another. Ernst just stares. A bullet KERPOWS off the rock. Ernst winces, resumes firing.

EXT. BACKSIDE OF HILL - DAY

It drops off steeply here. Johann, Heidi, Abby and Jack descend a bamboo ladder to a ledge. Johann takes the ladder, lowers it down to another ledge. Abby looks up, torn.

EXT. HILLTOP - DAY

Fritz and Ernst put up a furious fight. Fritz rapid-fires arrows. Ernst hurls a coconut bomb, reaches for another and finds the arsenal exhausted.

ERNST
We're out!

Fritz is too busy picking off attackers to answer. At a loss, Ernst loads the slingshot with loose rocks, runs over to grab some more from a pile.

A garrote closes around his neck. He's yanked off his feet.

Crumley pulls the garrote tight. Ernst thrashes and aims feeble, oxygen-deprived punches. His face turns crimson. Crumley grins with sadistic pleasure.

Fritz continues to shoot arrows down the hill.

FRITZ
Ernst, cover your flank!

Ernst SLAMS his heel on the dirt, but Fritz has his hands too full to notice. Ernst gropes for a rock, but there is none. He's close to passing out.

Then a shadow falls. Crumley looks up. Abby stands over him.

ABBY
Hey Crumley, remember me?

Crumley looks at her, frowns.

CRUMLEY

Wait a minute... You're the cabin...

He's about to say "boy" but trails off, confused. Abby nods.

ABBY

... girl.

She swings a rock at his head. Crumley goes flat. Ernst sits up, gasping and coughing. Only now does Fritz look over. He's surprised to see Abby.

FRITZ

What are you doing here?

ABBY

I don't turn my back on a fight.
Ever.

She jumps down behind the parapet, lets fly with rocks like an Amazon warrior. Fritz looks at her with awe. Ernst points.

ERNST

Look out!

Fritz turns. A band of men are moving laterally across the hilltop, flanking them. Fritz turns, sees the last of the Actaeon's longboats coming ashore.

FRITZ

This way! Let's go!

Fritz, Ernst and Abby run toward the cliff edge.

ON THE HILLSIDE

Bragg and his men climb toward the undefended hilltop.

EXT. EDGE OF CLIFF - MOMENTS LATER

Fritz watches waves roll against the headland. Ernst and Abby stand with their backs to Fritz, keeping an eye out for the attackers who will appear any second.

Fritz tosses rocks down from the cliff, his lips moving as he silently counts the seconds before they splash into the sea.

ERNST

Explain this again. What are we doing?

FRITZ

Waiting for a wave.

ERNST

So pick one. For God's sake, there's nothing but waves out there. Let's do it.

FRITZ

We can't. It's too shallow. We need the right one.

Fritz tosses another rock, counts silently.

ERNST

What difference does it make? It's a wave!

FRITZ

They come in sets of five. The third's the biggest, except every other time, then it's the first. We have to time our drop.

Ernst stares. He's trusting his life to this?

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Tell me something. Does a heavier body fall faster than a lighter one?

ERNST

No! Of course not! Thirty-two feet per second per second! What the hell were you doing in school?!

FRITZ

Thinking about girls.

Ernst rolls his eyes. Abby cracks a smile. Fritz turns to her suddenly.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Kiss me.

ABBY

What?

FRITZ

We're about to jump off a cliff. And I don't know if this is going to work.

She looks in his eyes. They're the only people in the world.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Please. If it doesn't, I don't want it to be without ever... you know...

(a beat)

One kiss before I die?

ERNST
Before you die?

Fritz and Abby ignore him. Their lips come together. It's a long, indescribably beautiful kiss.

ON THE SEA BELOW

Johann, Heidi and Jack have paddled a dugout canoe around to the base of the cliff. Knips is in the bow. Everyone stares upward, watching Fritz and Abby kiss high above.

HEIDI
Oh my God...

ON THE CLIFF EDGE

The kiss goes on... and on. Ernst stares, then reacts as Bragg and his men mount the hilltop 100 yards away.

ERNST
Oh no... oh no... Hello, Fritz?
Hello? HEY!

The kiss finally ends. Bragg's men are running toward them. Fritz looks at the waves, takes Abby and Ernst's hands.

FRITZ
NOW!!!

They jump off the cliff.

The fall seems to last forever. The guano-speckled cliff rushing past is a blur. Fritz, Abby and Ernst hit the peak of a super-big swell with a HUGE SPLASH!

UNDERWATER

They knife through the water, deeper and deeper, and come within an inch of hitting the bottom, so close that the shock wave leaves an imprint of their bare feet in the sand.

SURFACE

They break the surface, gulping air.

JOHANN
This way! Hurry!

Abby and the two brothers turn, swim for the canoe.

EDGE OF CLIFF

Maggot is the first to get there. He doesn't hesitate, geronimos off. Another sailor follows. Then a third sailor jumps. This one has a PEG LEG.

UNDERWATER

There are THREE SPLASHES in rapid sequence and the men plunge toward the bottom.

SURFACE

Fritz, Abby and Ernst climb into the canoe and grab their paddles. Maggot breaks the surface, screaming bloody murder. Then the second sailor, bawling.

As for Peg Leg, he doesn't surface.

UNDERWATER

Peg Leg struggles to pull his wooden leg from the sandy bottom. It's stuck like a pushpin in a corkboard. He yanks on it in a frenzy.

UP ABOVE ON THE CLIFF

Bragg reaches the edge and looks down, his face contorting with rage. The Robinsons are paddling away as his own men tread water and howl like babies.

He aims his pistol and FIRES, but the shot splashes wide. He hurries to reload, sees more of his men running over.

BRAGG

Shoot them!

They FIRE. A bullet gouges a splinter from the dugout, the others miss. Bragg stabs his finger at a POTBELLIED SAILOR.

BRAGG (CONT'D)

You -- jump!

POTBELLY

Sir, they've nothing to show for it but broken bones!

BRAGG

JUMP!

The sailor gestures, wants no part of it. In a fury, Bragg tries to march him to the edge, but the guy twists away.

BRAGG (CONT'D)

Damn you, I said jump!

WEASEL-FACED SAILOR

Well, I'll be Jack Tar: they're stealing our ship.

Bragg lets go of Potbelly, whirls. The Robinsons are making a beeline for the Actaeon. Bragg stares.

Everyone stares. If the Robinsons get to the ship, they're screwed. Pearls or no pearls. Potbelly stands at the edge, mouth agape.

Bragg looks at the longboats a quarter mile away on the beach. He gives Potbelly a push, turns to the others.

BRAGG
On the double.

Potbelly falls. Bragg and his men run for the beach.

DOWN BELOW

The Robinsons paddle for the Actaeon and don't look back as Potbelly does a GIGANTIC BELLYFLOP in the waves.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

Bragg and his men run pell-mell down the hill and through the jungle, meeting sailors coming the other way.

BRAGG
No! This way!

The sailors look confused but reverse direction.

EXT. CANOE - DAY

Blood seeping from his shoulder wound, Johann grimaces through every stroke. He shoots a look toward the beach.

JOHANN
Faster! They're coming!

The Robinsons paddle mightily.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Bragg leads the pack racing down the beach. The sailors arriving from the Actaeon are pulling their boat onto the sand. Bragg points at the Robinsons.

BRAGG
They're stealing the ship!

The sailors take one look, shove the boat back in the water and grab the oars. Bragg and two more men jump aboard. They row like crazy.

EXT. SEA - DAY

The canoe and longboat are in a do-or-die race to the Actaeon.

The Robinsons paddle like hell, Bragg and his men row like hell. The Robinsons have a head start, but their crude dugout is a pig and the enemy's longboat is sleek and fast.

They started from different points, but the two boats are on converging courses as they get closer to the Actaeon.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Sailors leap in the two remaining longboats (that have been sitting here) into the surf and grab the oars.

DONEGAL
Row hard, men! Stroke! Stroke!

They pull on their oars. Water shoots up out of holes in the floors of the boats, producing an effect like a whale spout.

VARIOUS
What the blazes?! They put holes in us!

EXT. CANOE - DAY

The dugout crashes through swells. Spray flies over the bow. A rifle CRACKS. Johann turns, sees Bragg in his longboat handing a rifle to a sailor to reload, taking another.

JOHANN
They can't hit us! We're out of range!

Not for long. Another BANG. He ducks despite himself.

INT. GALLEY - ACTAEON - CONTINUOUS

A cramped compartment. Meat and cheeses hang from hooks.

The cook, a bloated creature in a greasy apron, stirs ingredients into a huge steaming pot. His name is LE BOEUF. He tosses scraps into a barrel teeming with flies.

There's a MUFFLED BANG. Le Boeuf frowns, goes to a porthole and looks out. His jaw drops. He runs from the galley.

INT. CREW QUARTERS - DAY

Le Boeuf bursts in.

LE BOEUF
REPEL BOARDERS!

An invalid, GORMAN, bolts upright in his hammock. His face is swollen from an impacted tooth, wrapped like a mummy in filthy gauze.

EXT. SEA - DAY

The Robinsons paddle like mad. Bragg's longboat is closer now, the men rowing with long machine-like strokes.

A bullet SHATTERS Abby's paddle and she yelps in alarm!

Heidi looks across the water with simmering hatred. She thrusts her paddle to Abby, takes Fritz's bow and arrow and stands in the pitching and rolling boat.

FRITZ

Get down, mother! It's too far, you can't hit them!

Heidi ignores him. She draws back the arrow, aiming high for distance. She squints, adjusts fractionally.

HEIDI

(quietly, to herself)
Don't you dare shoot at my family.

A deep breath... then she unleashes the moonshot.

LONGBOAT

Bragg sees the arrow fly up on a steep trajectory. At this distance hitting anything but water would be a miracle. And yet it's coming down... coming down... coming...

BRAGG

LOOK OUT!

He ducks and the arrow STICKS in the floor of the boat, O.S., the rower behind Bragg letting rip with an ungodly scream!

UNDERWATER

The arrow juts through the bottom of the longboat.

IN THE CANOE

Everyone stares at Heidi in awe. The longboat has stalled, sailors missing strokes and jumbling oars as the wounded guy flails and bellows.

Johann looks toward the Actaeon, reacts.

JOHANN

GET DOWN!

There is a CANNON BOOM and grape shot lashes the canoe and turns the water frothy white. Fritz's hand flies to his temple and comes away bloody.

ACTAEON BELOWDECKS

Smoke billows. Doing the work of six men, Le Boeuf and Gorman juggle gunpowder, grape shot and a flaming torch as they reload the cannon.

IN THE CANOE

Johann digs in with his paddle.

JOHANN

It's grape shot! Quick, paddle!
Before they reload!

They paddle straight for the ship, putting themselves at point-blank range.

BELOWDECKS

Le Boeuf touches off the fuse.

IN THE CANOE

Johann slices the water with his paddle, throwing his weight and purposely capsizing the canoe away from the ship, spilling Knips and everyone else into the water. The cannon ROARS!

UNDERWATER

Grapeshot SPLASHES in the water and quickly loses velocity, drifting down past the Robinsons.

BELOWDECKS

Le Boeuf and Gorman see the Robinsons surface and swim for the ship.

GORMAN

They're swimming for the ladder!

Le Boeuf smothers the torch in wadding and they run out, the CAMERA staying just long enough to see a wisp of smoke rise from the wadding.

GALLEY

Le Boeuf wrestles the barrel of rotting food scraps to a hatch and tips the contents into the sea. He does the same with a barrel of putrid meat, feathers and bones.

SEA

Food scraps litter the surface. The Robinsons swim for the ship, Knips riding on Ernst's shoulders. Suddenly Knips CHATTERS, points at a shark fin cutting through the water.

UNDERWATER

Scraps sink past the Robinsons' stroking limbs. A fish head stares at us as it wafts downward. A shark SWEEPS INTO FRAME and scarfs it.

DECK

Gorman pulls up the Jacob's ladder just as Ernst swims up to the hull and makes a grab for it.

GORMAN (CONT'D)

Ha! Try to come aboard now!

He cackles sadistically, dashes to a longboat davit and reels in the pair of ropes dangling in the water. He runs to another davit, sees Fritz climbing the rope.

He pulls back the ratchet and the rope spins out of the winch, plunging Fritz back into the shark-infested water with a SPLASH.

GALLEY

Le Boeuf throws open a porthole and heaves a pot of fish guts down on Abby. Spluttering with disgust, Abby sees dorsal fins slicing through the water toward the oily chum slick.

LE BOEUF

Come, little fishies!

IN THE LONGBOAT

With his men rowing again, Bragg grins with amusement at the Robinsons' vain efforts to get aboard the ship.

SEA

The Robinsons fan out around the ship. Johann swims for the bow anchor. Fritz shouts to Ernst:

FRITZ

Give me Knips!

Treading water, Fritz takes Knips from Ernst's shoulders and does a water polo throw with the monkey, sending him up and over the railing to skid on his ass across the deck.

STARBOARD BOW

Johann climbs the anchor chain. A wooden boat hook LANDS across his shoulders. He falls back, but catches himself and clings to the chain.

Reaching out over the railing, Gorman SMASHES him with the 16-foot pole. Johann catches the pole, twists it away and lets it fall. He begins to climb again.

Gorman runs to the anchor capstan and releases the brake. The capstan spins. The heavy anchor chain rushes out and SPLASHES Johann back into the sea.

PORT SIDE

Knips operates a davit winch and lowers the rope down to Abby and Fritz. Sharks are converging around them in a feeding frenzy. She indicates for him to climb first.

ABBY

You go!

FRITZ

No, you go! Go! Go dammit!

Abby begins to climb.

STARBOARD BOW

Treading water, Johann reaches up with the boat hook, catches the railing and begins to climb the pole.

Gorman runs over, tries to pry the hook off the railing, but the weight on the pole makes it impossible and Johann climbs higher.

Gorman waits till Johann is within reach, then SMASHES his knuckles with a belaying pin. Johann clings to the pole, a huge shark waiting below. Gorman SMASHES his knuckles again.

Without warning, Abby appears behind Gorman, spins him around and drives a fist into his bandaged jaw. Gorman's eyes bulge and he screams! She follows it with a kick to the balls!

In the next instant, Fritz rushes across the deck, seizes Gorman by one arm while Abby takes the other and they send him flopping backwards over the railing into the sea.

Johann clambers onto the deck. Heidi, Ernst and Jack are climbing the Jacob's ladder (lowered down by Knips) and pulling it up after themselves.

JACK

We did it! Knips, you're a hero!

They laugh, giddy with victory. Then Heidi looks out to sea. The longboat has changed course and is making a beeline for the stern. Her face falters.

HEIDI

I don't understand. They can't come aboard at the stern, can they?

The longboat passes out of sight as it maneuvers up to the stern. Suddenly it hits them how the pirates are coming aboard.

JOHANN

Run below, grab any weapon you can!
We have to fight them on the ship!

They run across the deck.

EXT. STERN - DAY

Bragg climbs a skein of knotted bedsheets hanging down to the longboat from the window of the captain's quarters. Le Boeuf reaches out and helps him over the sill into the stateroom.

Down below in the longboat, the next sailor begins to climb.

INT. BELOWDECKS - DAY

The Robinsons tear open lockers in a frantic search for weapons. Jack runs to the gun deck.

INT. GUN DECK - DAY

Jack comes flying through the door, stops dead. The cramped space is filling with smoke. Flames spread across the floor.

The fire has nearly reached the gunpowder magazine.

EXT. DECK - DAY

An assortment of last-resort weapons CLATTERS on the deck -- tools, empty bottles, a bullwhip, prosthetic leg, fishing net and other junk.

The Robinsons rummage in the incredibly lame arsenal. Ernst tries out a cat-o'-nine-tails with a look of dismay. He's going into the battle of his life with this?

Jack comes running up, breathless.

JACK
There's a fire in the magazine! We
have to abandon ship!

They stare at him.

INT. CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS - DAY

The last sailor climbs the bedsheets into the stateroom, leaving the longboat to drift away on the current. Bragg loads his pistol.

BRAGG
We're taking this ship back. No
quarter. Not for man, woman or
child. Everyone load up.

Shadows flit past the window, followed by SPLASHES. Bragg and his men rush to the window.

THEIR POV - ABBY AND THE ROBINSONS

swimming after the drifting longboat, clambering aboard. All except Johann, that is. He's nowhere to be seen.

BACK TO SCENE

Bragg and his men stare in amazement.

WEASEL-FACED SAILOR
Well, I'll be Jack Tar... now they're
stealing the longboat...

Bragg lets out a growl of animal rage.

BRAGG
Fire at will!

He aims his pistol out the window. There's a FURIOUS WHIPCRACK and the tip of the bullwhip flies down and stings his face. He stumbles back from the window, roaring.

ON THE POOPDECK

Directly above, Johann leans out from the railing and CRACKS the bullwhip down at the window, keeping Bragg and his men from firing at the longboat.

Fifty feet from the stern, Abby and his family climb into the longboat. Fritz and Ernst dig in with the oars.

HEIDI
Johann, jump!

JOHANN
Row! Get out of range!

He CRACKS the whip, raises it again... KAA-BOOOM!!!

The Actaeon ERUPTS IN A BLAST that cracks it open amidships like a pipe bomb and sends a huge fireball billowing in the air!

Debris flies everywhere. A huge column of smoke shoots into the sky. The stern and bow sections form a V and sink toward the middle.

IN THE LONGBOAT

A massive concussion wave races toward the longboat, lifts it up like a bathtub toy and sends it splashing down. Heidi makes a grab for the gunwale, searches in vain for Johann, horrified.

HEIDI
Where is he? Does anyone see him?

Ernst points suddenly at the sinking ship.

ERNST
There he is!

ERNST'S POV

Johann staggers to his feet on the tilting, sinking deck.

IN THE LONGBOAT

ERNST (CONT'D)
 Father! We're coming!

Ernst reaches for his oar, but it's gone. In fact, both were swept away by the tsunami-like wave.

ON THE STERN SECTION

Johann grabs hold of the railing, signals weakly to his family. Loose objects tumble down the deck and SPLASH into the water.

A hand closes around his ankle, yanks him to the deck.

Bragg is emerging from the jagged blast hole in the deck. He is scorched and bloody, clothes nearly burned off. He belts Johann across the jaw.

Bragg stands over Johann, panting. Johann tries to get to his feet, but Bragg boots him savagely. Johann's head snaps sideways. Bragg boots him again, then heaves a heavy piece of the shattered mast and rigging on top of him, pinning him to the deck.

Bragg looks over. The Robinsons are paddling toward the Actaeon with their hands. The longboat barely moves, making for a pathetic spectacle.

Bragg draws a huge knife, rests his boot on Johann's chest. Johann struggles, but he's pinned helplessly. Bragg nods toward the longboat, a malignant smirk.

BRAGG
 They're going to watch you die,
 goatherd. The only question is
 whether I let you drown with this
 sinking wreck, or have the pleasure
 of killing you by my own hand.

Johann strains with all his might.

JOHANN
 Go to hell.

BRAGG
 You first. And then your family.

IN THE LONGBOAT

Heidi screams as she sees Bragg kneel on top of Johann, raise the knife and start to swing it down for a death blow.

ON THE STERN SECTION

Johann manages to barely deflect the blow with his forearm. Bragg raises the knife, tries again to plunge it in again, but Johann's face fills with righteous fury.

Straining with all his might, he frees one arm and hammers Bragg's face with his fist. Bragg yowls. Johann seizes him by the hair and smashes his head against the mast -- once, twice, three times. Bragg stumbles backward, shrieking.

Johann wriggles free of the mast, gets to his knees, draws back a fist and PUNCHES Bragg so hard across the jaw that it sends him toppling unconscious to the deck.

An instant later --

A SHIP'S HORN

lets rip with an EARSPLITTING BLARE!

BACK TO SCENE

Johann nearly leaps out of his skin, whirling.

A HUGE RIGGED STEAMSHIP bears down on them, fast. SAILORS crowd the railing, shouting and waving life rings. A Union Jack flies from the mast.

Johann stares. Heidi and the children stare. Knips stares.

CUT TO:

EXT. DECK - BRITISH NAVY STEAMSHIP - MINUTES LATER

BRITISH SAILORS in spotless uniforms help Abby and the Robinsons onto the deck. The ship sparkles with newness, representing the cutting edge of naval technology.

The Robinsons look around, dazed. Jack clutches Knips protectively. Johann moves to the railing. Sailors in lifeboats are fishing Bragg and a handful of survivors from the sea, taking them into custody.

CAPTAIN EVERETT (O.S.)

Lady Abigail...

Johann turns. CAPTAIN MILES EVERETT, 50, is crossing the deck with TWO OFFICERS and an older man, LORD CHANCELLOR PETER SELWYN. They go over to Abby.

CAPTAIN EVERETT (CONT'D)

Captain Miles Everett, Her Majesty's Navy. I believe you know the Lord Chancellor.

ABBY

How do you do, Captain? Sir Peter,
it's so good to see you.

The Lord Chancellor bows.

LORD CHANCELLOR

The pleasure is ours, M'lady. I've
felt for months we were just a step
behind your ship; I regret it took so
long.

The Robinsons look blown away. Ernst looks at Fritz and
mouths: "M'lady?" Fritz shrugs, clueless.

ABBY

Captain, Sir Peter -- I'd like you to
meet the Robinson family of Bern,
Switzerland. I owe them my life.

LORD CHANCELLOR

It is indeed a pleasure. On behalf
of Her Majesty, may I express our
gratitude. Your ministry in London
will be informed of your service at
the first opportunity.

JOHANN

(head spinning)

Well... of course... great...

Abby turns to the Robinsons.

ABBY

Mr. and Mrs. Robinson, please accept
my apologies. I've done nothing but
deceive your family. I hope you'll
let me explain.

Sailors bring Bragg aboard the ship in shackles. The Lord
Chancellor looks at him with contempt, ushering Abby and the
Robinsons away.

LORD CHANCELLOR

If I may, M'lady, there will be time
for that later. A matter of vital
importance awaits you.

Abby looks puzzled. The Lord Chancellor ushers Abby and the
Robinsons head across the deck.

INT. STATEROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The Lord Chancellor leads Abby into a large, well-appointed
stateroom. Abby stops in her tracks.

ABBY

Father!

LORD ANDREW MELVILLE is propped up in bed, attended by a DOCTOR and NURSE. A bluff, hearty aristocrat with a booming voice, Lord Melville has the look of a classic British adventurer. He breaks into a huge grin.

LORD MELVILLE
Oh my gorgeous child!

Abby flies into his arms.

ABBY
You're alive!

LORD MELVILLE
More so now that I've laid eyes on you. My God, look at the size of you!

Abby clings to her father. Her eyes fill with tears.

ABBY
I thought you were dead.

LORD MELVILLE
And I thought the same of you. What on earth were you thinking, joining the search for me?

ABBY
I only wanted to see you, father.

She turns. The Robinsons have been standing in the doorway, watching with amazement.

ABBY (CONT'D)
Please come in. Father, these are the Robinsons. They were shipwrecked on the island. They saved my life.

LORD MELVILLE
By Jove, did you really? Outstanding!

He struggles from his bed. The doctor and nurse react.

DOCTOR
M'lord, you mustn't tax yourself --

LORD MELVILLE
Oh, would you stop? Don't you see it's indolence that makes a man unwell?

He stands.

ABBY
This is Mr. and Mrs. Robinson, Johann and Heidi. This is my father, Andrew Melville.

They shake hands. Abby indicates the Robinson boys.

ABBY (CONT'D)
And this is Ernst... Jack... And
this... this is Fritz.

She blushes a little as she says his name. A beat, as Lord Melville eyes her, trades a knowing look with Heidi and Johann.

LORD MELVILLE
I see, I see. Well, excellent. Most
delighted to meet you all.

HEIDI
But tell us, Lord Melville, just how
did you get off the island?

LORD MELVILLE
I was blown off course while fishing
one day and spent 55 days at sea
until I was picked up by a trading
junk out of Penang. From there I
hopscothed my way back to England,
arriving just after this young lady
got it into her head to join the
search for me. Fortunately, I'd been
snacking on oysters the day I was
blown out to sea so I had a few loose
pearls to pay my passage.

The mention of pearls has a visible effect on the Captain and Lord Chancellor, who press forward, wetting their lips with anticipation. Lord Melville indicates them, winks mischievously.

LORD MELVILLE (CONT'D)
Speaking of pearls, these two lofty-
minded chaps might like to know what
all the fuss is about. Purely
scientific, of course. You did find
that stash I left behind.

The Robinsons exchange glances.

JOHANN
Yes, sir. And we harvested quite a
few more of our own.

CUT TO:

INT. CAVE - DAY

Darkness gives way to light as the Robinsons enter with torches. Captain Everett, the Lord Chancellor and several officers follow. Lord Melville walks assisted by a cane and two sailors on either side. He stops. His jaw hangs open. The others stare, also astonished.

LORD MELVILLE
Good heavens...

CAPTAIN EVERETT
There must be two or three...

The Lord Chancellor shakes his head, at a loss for words.

LORD CHANCELLOR
... bajillion?

ANGLE ON PEARLS

Far too many to count. At least a bajillion, maybe even a kazillion. The pearls overflow from buckets, spill in great drifts across the floor, shimmering in the torchlight. It boggles the imagination.

Lord Melville looks on, reflecting.

LORD MELVILLE
Funny how these things work. The whole time I was here, eating oysters, endlessly collecting pearls, I might have been the richest man in the Pacific, and what good did it do me? I didn't have what mattered most.

He looks over at Abby fondly. She and Fritz have moved some distance away and are speaking quietly together.

LORD MELVILLE (CONT'D)
My, my...

Their attention is suddenly seized away.

ERNST (O.S.)	JACK (O.S.)
You can't do that! They're our pearls!	And this is our island!

Johann, Heidi and Lord Melville rush over, find Jack and Ernst trying to defend the pearls as sailors move to transport them from the cave.

JOHANN
What's going on?

JACK
They're stealing the pearls! They're just as bad as the pirates!

The Lord Chancellor looks at Lord Melville, apologetic.

LORD CHANCELLOR
I tried to explain to them, M'lord. This island is the property of the Crown.

(MORE)

LORD CHANCELLOR (CONT'D)
 Your tenancy made it legally binding.
 That goes for the pearls too.

Heidi looks at Johann with concern.

HEIDI
 Johann, is that true?

LORD MELVILLE
 No, Mrs. Robinson. It is not.

He gives the Lord Chancellor a severe look, conjuring the image of a Headmaster scolding a First Former.

LORD MELVILLE (CONT'D)
 Not sporting, Peter. You know as well as I do my tenancy ended when I left the island --

LORD CHANCELLOR
 But M'lord --

LORD MELVILLE
 Now if the Robinsons wish to forfeit ownership of this island and its pearls, only then would possession transfer to the crown. Mr. Robinson, it's your choice. Would you like to surrender all this to the Queen?

Johann and Heidi exchange a look.

JACK
 What, you think we're nuts?

Melville, the Robinsons and even some of the sailors laugh. The Lord Chancellor reddens, shuffling cravenly.

CUT TO:

EXT. TREEHOUSE - DAY

Jack speaks to Knips through the bars of a too-small bamboo cage. Knips is the picture of sadness. Jack doesn't look so happy either.

JACK
 Don't be sad, Knips. It's just till we get to Switzerland. The captain says you can't run around on the ship. But you're going to like Switzerland. There are streets and tons of houses and factories and smokestacks and freezing cold snow and... maybe you won't like Switzerland...

Knips looks at him morosely.

WIDER

Johann and Heidi pack their belongings outside the remains of the treehouse. Johann wears a starched shirt and frock coat and tugs repeatedly at the collar. Heidi wears a borrowed dress that is heavy and concealing.

Sailors transport crates of the Robinsons' belongings down to the beach. Ernst rummages for his notebooks in the charred structure, talking a mile a minute.

ERNST

If that ship's as fast as it looks, we'll be in Europe no time. Father, do you think we'll stop at many ports of call?

JOHANN

(tugging at collar)
I don't know... some. God, what is it with this thing?

ERNST

Well, I hope not. If we hurry, I could be back for the International Paris Biennial. Do you know Paul Gauguin is exhibiting there? Lord Melville says he'll introduce me. Wait till old Paul hears where I've been these past two years!

HEIDI

That's wonderful, darling.

Ernst finishes packing. Sailors are transporting crates down to the beach. They carry away the cage with Knips inside, Jack walking alongside.

ERNST

I'll scare up Fritz and tell him we're going. He's off with Abby again. See you down at the beach.

He gives a cheerful wave and heads off, leaving Johann and Heidi alone. Johann eyes the remains of the treehouse.

HEIDI

(re: treehouse)
It held up pretty well, didn't it? Considering...

JOHANN

Yeah.

HEIDI

You don't like leaving it like this, do you?

JOHANN

Not really. But... what the hell?
It's just a treehouse. We can always
come back and visit. It's our
island, right?

Heidi smiles. He tugs at his collar again.

JOHANN (CONT'D)

I don't get why this doesn't fit.

HEIDI

It doesn't fit because you put on
muscle.

JOHANN

Yeah, I guess.

They resume packing. Then Heidi stops, looks over.

HEIDI

I need to confess something.

JOHANN

(concerned)
What is it?

HEIDI

Sometimes... I used to think you were
full of hot air.

He stares.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

I can't help it. All your talk about
freedom and destiny... being your own
man... swimming against the
current... Honestly, I thought it was
a crock.

He continues staring, wounded. She shrugs helplessly.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

Sorry, but it's how I felt. I didn't
say anything because... well, it
wasn't my place to disagree.

A beat.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

But then I realized...

She looks in his eyes.

HEIDI (CONT'D)

This is a place where I can be free -- where I can dress how I want, pick up a hammer and drive a nail and swear like a soldier when I hit my thumb. Where I can raise my boys without snobbery and go swimming in clothes that won't make me drown. This is a place where I can tell my husband he's a blowhard and where I can tell him to make love to me under the stars.

Johann looks at her, a curious expression.

JOHANN

Heidi Robinson, what are you saying?

She locks eyes with him, the hint of a smile forming.

HEIDI

I think you damn well what I'm saying, Mr. Robinson.

A beat as a silent understanding passes between them. Heidi moves to him, holding his gaze.

As their lips come together in a kiss --

DISSOLVE TO:

THE BOW OF A SLEEK YACHT

slicing through tropical water.

EXT. YACHT - ANOTHER ANGLE - DAY

Fritz and Abby stand at the bow railing with the wind in their hair, looking several years older, dressed casually but fashionably for the times. Fritz holds their lovely two year-old daughter, ROSE.

Ernst stands at the starboard railing, peering through a spyglass. He lowers the spyglass, gnaws his lip.

ERNST

I don't see the island.

FRITZ

I don't either.

They look at each other, worried.

ERNST

Do you think it's changed much?

ABBY

It must have. Some. Ever since my father funded the botanical institute.

FRITZ

Well, it can't have sunk below the waves. We know that much, right?

They trade a look. They all seem nervous, the way people are when they've been away for a long time from a place and people they love dearly.

LOOKOUT (O.S.)

LAND HO!

They turn and look up. The LOOKOUT is pointing off the starboard quarter. Ernst raises the spyglass, reacts.

ERNST

I see it! I see it! I see it!

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. PORT OF ROBINSON ISLAND - DAY

The yacht glides into this small port. Treehouses are visible here and there in the trees. A new dock bustles with life. Workers unload cargo from a small trading vessel moored there. Children play on the sand and splash in the waves.

ON THE YACHT

Fritz kneels beside Rose at the railing, directs her gaze.

FRITZ

Do you see it, sweetheart? Do you know what that's called?

A beat -- as Rose forms the word.

ROSE

Island...

Fritz beams with pride. He stands with Abby and Ernst. They search the dock. Ernst reacts.

ERNST

I see them!

THEIR POV - THE DOCK

Johann and Heidi stand on the dock, waving. They look hale and hearty. Heidi holds Knips by the hand.

BACK TO SCENE

Fritz, Ernst and Abby wave. Ernst looks troubled suddenly.

ERNST

I don't get it. I see mother and
father, I see Knips. Where's Jack?

A look of concern crosses Fritz's face.

FRITZ

You don't suppose something happened
to him?

A beat -- as they look at each other. Then a SHRILL WHISTLE
pierces the air. They whip around, look toward the cliff.

ERNST

Oh my God...

JACK

stands at the highest point of the cliff. He is shirtless,
tan and positively brawny. He raises his hand in a salute,
takes a running start and sails off the cliff.

A flip... a tuck... two somersaults... a layout... and he
knives into the water without a splash.

ON THE YACHT

Fritz, Abby and Ernst stare, jaws hanging open. Jack is
swimming to the surface, grinning and waving.

They look toward the dock, see Heidi and Johann laughing at
their amazed reactions, Knips clapping his hands and jumping
with glee.

WIDER

As the yacht glides into the idyllic harbor, we PULL BACK,
higher and higher until...

AERIAL SHOT

We see the tremendous natural beauty of Robinson Island, a
tropical jewel in the South Pacific.

FADE OUT.

THE END