

Captain Cecily Jack
in
Mutiny on the Booty

a 10-minute naval insurrection for mutineer and she-captain

by Jeff Goode
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(The deck of the Boatswain's Booty. Sounds of a mutiny in progress—cannonfire and sabers clashing. A MUTINOUS MATE bounds onto the deck with a cutlass in either hand.)

PIRATE PETE

Batten up the hatches, boys, and batten down the bilge! Unmuzzle the mizzen muskets and make for the starboard port! Mind the cut o' that jib, ye swabs, and hardtack to the galley, ho! If it's mutiny the captain wants, it's mutiny the captain just got, for the ship is ours now, lads! And more 'n a quorum o' the crew. So bring me Captain Jack and any man loyal. For there's planks to be walked and keels that need hauling. And the first butt we scuttle be that of our dear old Captain Jack.

(Enter CAPTAIN CECILY JACK, a piratess.)

CAP'N JACK

Who're you callin' old?

PIRATE PETE

Ah, there y' are, Cap'n Jack.

CAP'N JACK

Aye, here I be, Cap'n Jack.

PIRATE PETE

Cap'n Cecily Jack.

CAP'N JACK

Aye, Captain Cecily Jack. The master o' this vessel. And mistress o' half the crew. And the other half'll get their chance. But there's a schedule, lads, and we gotta stick to it.

PIRATE PETE

You'll be stickin' to the steerage now that I'm the new master of the Boatswain's Booty and you're just the old.

CAP'N JACK

There ye go callin' me old again. I've filleted souls for less.

PIRATE PETE

I mean old as in former, for me and me hearties have seized your Booty, and yours is bound for the brig.

CAP'N JACK

And who be ye?

PIRATE PETE

Who be I? Who be I??

CAP'N JACK

Aye, that's what I said. You're not Deaf Adam, are you? (*shouts*) I said I was sorry for firin' off that cannon in your earshot. But you shouldn'ta been asleep at the barrel!

PIRATE PETE

(*shouts*) I'm not Deaf Adam!

(*offstage pirate: What?*)

CAP'N JACK & PIRATE PETE

Never mind, Adam!

CAP'N JACK

Well, who are you then?

PIRATE PETE

Y' mean you don't recognize me?

CAP'N JACK

That's what I said, isn't it? (*shouts*) Are ye sure you're not Deaf Adam?

PIRATE PETE

(*shouts*) No!

(*offstage pirate: What?*)

PIRATE PETE & CAP'N JACK

Nothing!

PIRATE PETE

I can't believe me ears ye don't know me. I, the crewmen ye've wronged more than any other.

CAP'N JACK

Aren't you full o' yourself? I'm sure there's many a man jack'd give ye a run for your misery on that score. What about One-Handed Wally who earned his first hook for getting grabby at the gunwales. And it turned out the man was just a kleptomaniac and couldn't help himself?

PIRATE PETE

Aye, that was an unfortunate misunderstanding.

CAP'N JACK

Or Turniphead Turley, who's in a persistent vegetative state after he took a musketball to the frontals on that botched boarding off o' Borneo. And now he's down in the cargo hold and we use him for ballast. Now there's a cur with a cause for complaint. But I've ne'er heard a word out of him.

PIRATE PETE

That's cuz his speech centers is barnacled over and all he does is drool. But trust me, he drools angry.

CAP'N JACK

Well, who are you, then? And how have I wronged you?

PIRATE PETE

I'm Picaroon Pete. And ye've wronged me in ways no man-captain ever could. For 'tis me heart, ye've hewn in twain.

CAP'N JACK

I recognize ye now. Aren't you the mate I demoted for makin' friendly with the figurehead on the bowsprit?

PIRATE PETE

She came on to me!

CAP'N JACK

Sure, she did.

PIRATE PETE

Can I help it that mermaid has a wanderin' eye?

CAP'N JACK

Her eyes are made o' wood.

PIRATE PETE

So's half the men on this boat. But it never stopped you making the fish with four fins with 'em.

CAP'N JACK

Shut your blimey blowhole, ye scurrilous scallywag! What a captain does with her crew is her own business.

PIRATE PETE

Aye, and you're the business o' half the crew, rumor has it.

CAP'N JACK

Can I help it I get good word o' mouth?

PIRATE PETE

That's not all yer mouth's good for.

CAP'N JACK

Arr, now ye asked for it!

(She grabs one of his weapons and attacks. They fight.)

CAP'N JACK

Y' call yourself a mutineer? Why you wouldn't know the first thing about seafarin'. If you did, we wouldn't be bearing straight for those rocks.

PIRATE PETE

What? *(glances to the fore)* Agh! *(shouts to the crew)* Belay those orders, lads! Land ho! Land ho! *(glances aft)* And ho! And some over ho!

(While he is distracted, she disarms and defeats him.)

CAP'N JACK

All right. Now back to yer stations, all o' ye. Mutiny's over. We got piratin' to do. Move along. Nothing to see here. Unless you want to see a flogging. In which case, stick around, that's up next. *(to Pete)* Now what am I to do with you?

PIRATE PETE

Do as ye please. Floggin' won't stop me.

CAP'N JACK

Aye, but floggin's a good start. What'll it be then? Keel haul? Plank walk? Barrel duty?

PIRATE PETE

Ye may beat me to blisters. But I am just one disgruntled swabbie on a shipful of swabs ain't got two gruntles to rub together. And if ye don't give in to our demands, you'll have another mutiny next week, and the week after that, and the week after that, and the next week is Rosh Hashanah, so no mutiny, but the week after that.

CAP'N JACK

So you're tenacious?

PIRATE PETE

I don't know the meaning of the word! But if it means I've got eight arms and I know how to use 'em, then that's me.

CAP'N JACK

That's not what it means.

PIRATE PETE

Never mind then.

CAP'N JACK

Forgive me for sayin', but mutineering doesn't suit ye. Are ye sure ye're up to it? Ye strike me as more a cook. And we're short-handed in the galley.

PIRATE PETE

That's because I quit the galley to become a mutineer!

CAP'N JACK

So you're the missing cook?! (*shouts off*) I found him!

PIRATE PETE

I can't believe you don't remember me.

CAP'N JACK

Well, to be fair, the food is pretty forgettable.

PIRATE PETE

And those kinda cracks is why you're short-handed!

CAP'N JACK

And what is it ye think a mutiny'll get ye?

PIRATE PETE

Well, I'd be captain of the boat, for one thing. And I hear the ladies love a lad in uniform.

CAP'N JACK

She's a ship! She likes to be called a ship. And there's half your problem. Ye wouldn't know how to treat a lady if ye caught one.

PIRATE PETE

Maybe you'll find out first hand how I treat a lady after me and me mutineers have retaken the ship and made you our first mate. And our second. And maybe the third.

CAP'N JACK

Ha! I'd like to see you try.

PIRATE PETE

Give me back my sword and I'll be happy to show you.

CAP'N JACK

Bah! Here. *(gives him back his blade)* I've had enough o' your bluster. You mutineers are all wind and no billows. Come on then, have at me!

(He fumbles for his sword.)

PIRATE PETE

Well, hold on...

(She attacks and intentionally loses, backing herself across the deck.)

CAP'N JACK

Where's your cantankery now? Will you not give me what for? Have ye not half a mind to show me a thing or two?

PIRATE PETE

Slow down!

(She forcibly defeats herself and puts his blade to her throat.)

CAP'N JACK

There! Ye have defeated me. Now what?

PIRATE PETE

I don't know. I never got this far before.

CAP'N JACK

Don't ye want to show me my place?

PIRATE PETE

Right. Your place is in the galley, wench.

CAP'N JACK

(cooly) And where is that exactly? I've never been.

PIRATE PETE

Right this way. *(He starts to lead her to the galley, but catches himself.)* Oh no! You're not getting me down in that galley now that I'm out. It's that way. Find it yourself. And I'll be wantin' something besides fish burgers tonight. We're celebrating.

CAP'N JACK

Aren't you forgetting something?

PIRATE PETE

Let's see... Took the ship. Wench in the galley. Nope.

CAP'N JACK

Ye mean, ye don't mean to plunder me pleasures?

PIRATE PETE

Oh, that's right. (*fumbles with his trousers*) Prepare to be boarded!

CAP'N JACK

Now, hold your drawstring. 'Tis not the cavalry. Ye don't just mount up and ride.

PIRATE PETE

Why? How's it done in the fleet?

CAP'N JACK

'Bout the same, but women and children first. (*pouncing*) Prepare to be boarded!!

(She kisses him voraciously.)

PIRATE PETE

Wait, slow down.

CAP'N JACK

No time for goin' slow, cuz once you're done with me, ye'll have ladies in every port, lined up at the docks, waitin' for your ship to come in. No pun intended.

PIRATE PETE

None taken.

CAP'N JACK

Floating out to meet you in dinghies and dories and frilly flotillas, longing for your salty touch.

PIRATE PETE

Then I'll stay out to sea. There's no need o' goin' ashore.

CAP'N JACK

Aye, but then ye'll be out to sea with a shipful of men and boys who are also out to sea. And you know what that means?

PIRATE PETE

I worked in the galley, didn't I? Friday night shift. I know what happens when a randy rumful crew gets randy and rumful on Rosh Hashanah. But what's that got to do with me? I'm captain now.

CAP'N JACK

Aye, but a captain's first duty is morale.

PIRATE PETE

I thought it was steerin'.

CAP'N JACK

Navigation only gets you so far. Captaincy is a public relations job more than anything. Ye spend most of your time strokin' egos and quellin' mutineers. And ye can't toss 'em all overboard, or who'd make the fish burgers? So it's mostly strokin'. And that pun was on purpose.

PIRATE PETE

You don't mean to say that I, as captain, would be forced to pleasure me own crew?

CAP'N JACK

No, lad, ye won't be forced to do it. You'll do it because you want to. A good captain loves his crew like his own bad children. And that means spankings all 'round, then off to bed with the lot of 'em.

PIRATE PETE

I think I want that galley job back.

(He tries to escape, but she corners him and manhandles him.)

CAP'N JACK

Too late for that now. Sails are in motion. Tides have turned. There's blood in the water. And the she-sharks are circling.

(He suddenly bursts into tears.)

CAP'N JACK

What're you doing? There's no cryin' in piracy! What's wrong with you?

PIRATE PETE

I still can't believe ye don't remember me.

CAP'N JACK

I told ye, the food is lousy!

PIRATE PETE

Captain Jack, do you really not know when a man's fallen in love with you?

CAP'N JACK

Sure, I do. It's right around puberty.

PIRATE PETE

No, not that kind of love.

CAP'N JACK

There's two kinds?

PIRATE PETE

For three long years now, I've followed ye from port to port, in hail and high wind, kraken and hurricane, in hopes of lying in your lovin' arms.

CAP'N JACK

Oh, for the love o' Saint Neptune. We're on the same boat. I'm not that hard to follow.

PIRATE PETE

She likes to be called a ship.

CAP'N JACK

Well, did ye put your name on the schedule? There's a signup in the poop cabin. It's not that complicated.

PIRATE PETE

Aye, but my turn only comes 'round once a fortnight. And I was hopin' to strike up something more regular.

CAP'N JACK

So ye staged a mutiny to get me attention?! Men...

PIRATE PETE

Can I help it I burn with a yearnin' that's turnin' my belly to jellyfish?

CAP'N JACK

Now that could be a touch o' the scurvy that's been goin' around.

PIRATE PETE

Is it scurvy why I've got a footlocker full o' suggestive sonnets and bawdy scrimshaw?

CAP'N JACK

You do?

PIRATE PETE

Have a look. *(hands her a piece of scrimshaw)*

CAP'N JACK

What's this?

PIRATE PETE

That's me privates.

CAP'N JACK

Ew! *(throws it down)*

PIRATE PETE

Do not cast me whalebone aside like a filthy piece of—

CAP'N JACK

Well, it is filthy, ye black hearted artist! Y' oughta be ashamed.

PIRATE PETE

Is it my fault I long for you as no man has ever longed for anything before? Except maybe catchin' a whale.

CAP'N JACK

Aye, that sounds like true love. The kind I've only seen in romantic novels. Or carved into the walls of certain washrooms.

PIRATE PETE

And can you feel nothing for me in return?

CAP'N JACK

Consider it done.

PIRATE PETE

No, I mean, can you not feel more than nothing for me?

CAP'N JACK

I dunno, lad, that's a lotta grammar. So you don't want me to not feel something more than nothing for you?

PIRATE PETE

Yes, I don't!

(He takes her in his arms and kisses her. She swoons.)

CAP'N JACK

Let me see that scrimshaw again.

PIRATE PETE

I'm gonna take that as an "aye".

(He tries to kiss her again, but she stops him.)

CAP'N JACK

Oh, Adam—

PIRATE PETE

Pete.

CAP'N JACK

How I long to feel the passion that you have for me. And for erotic scrimshaw. But, as captain, my first love will always be my ship. And by extension, my crew. And how can I stop loving my ship? And by extension, my crew?

PIRATE PETE

Well, you could start by taking down that signup sheet.

CAP'N JACK

I'm sorry, Adam—

PIRATE PETE

Pete!

CAP'N JACK

But yearn as I may to swing from your lowest yardarm. My duty is to the Booty. And yours is to the grill down below.

PIRATE PETE

You mean—?

CAP'N JACK

No, that's not a pun.

PIRATE PETE

Arr.

(She places her hand on his heart.)

CAP'N JACK

I know this must hurt ye where a man least likes to be hurt...

PIRATE PETE

Second least.

CAP'N JACK

But do ye think ye can ever find it in what's left of your heart to understand?

PIRATE PETE

(thinks about it) No!

(He draws his sword and attacks. They fight, more passionately this time.)

PIRATE PETE

How can I go back to sweatin' o'er a hot galley stove after feeling the heat of your sweet lips?

(He disarms her, seizes her about the waist and kisses her.)

PIRATE PETE

How can I return to a life of pounding out fish patties after my palms have pressed the supple flesh of your womanly bosoms?

CAP'N JACK

Bosoms are up here.

PIRATE PETE

In short, Milady Captain, how in God's green ocean could I ever stop loving you?

(She pulls him close again.)

CAP'N JACK

Well, I am no doctor...

(She slips her sword between his legs and deftly gelds him.)

CAP'N JACK

But that usually does the trick.

PIRATE PETE

Oh...my.

(She offers him a bandana.)

CAP'N JACK

Ye're gonna need a tourniquet for that.

(He nods and takes it.)

CAP'N JACK

Are ye still feelin' that same fire in your belly?

(He shakes his head.)

CAP'N JACK

All right, then. Galley's that way. Somethin' besides fish burgers tonight, will ye, Pete?

(He nods and crawls off to the galley.)

CAP'N JACK

(to the rest of the crew) Anyone else feelin' mutinous? I didn't think so. All right, look lively, you lot. We're late for pillaging. Batten down those hatches, me hearties, and come about hard, all hands. And stow your giggling, you know what I meant. I said stow your gigglin'! Don't make me come over there, Adam!

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