



Hoist the Colours

Downtime - The Story Between Events, Episode 2-3
September 2023 - Summer-Autumn 1722

Foreword

Downtime is determined by the rolls of the five crews at the end of each event. An outline of the Downtime process can be found in the Design Document [here](#).

Where possible we have taken into account rerolls (given by the Merchant archetype) as situations that could have failed, and were recovered before disaster, rather than immediate successes. There may be a little tweak of the way we manage the downtimes at following events, to streamline things as much as possible for the Clerk NPCs and enable two crews to roll their results at the same time in different locations.

We have aimed to give mentions to any members of the crews who rolled particularly well - over 10/12 in the case of officers, and 6 in the case of able seamen and deckhands.



The Santana

Action: Opportunity/Intelligence

Best Roll: Maurice Grant (6/6), Fergus MacGregor (11/12) and Cassandra Vane (11/12)
Worst Roll: Ketil Snapcore (1/6)

Upon leaving port with the precious cargo of the French Captain and his enigmatic mistress, the primary concern of Captain Psalms and his crew was keeping up the subterfuge all the way to New France. Happily, one element was in their favour - the crew were all too willing to play the part of fervent Spanish Catholics, holding mass two, three, sometimes even four times a day to ensure their roles were convincing.

Finding the crew a little more pious than his taste generally allowed, Leclère politely excused himself to his quarters - that which had previously been Quartermaster Millie's before a flip of the coin had forced them to give them up - allowing the rest of the crew to crack a smile and down the cup of communion wine. Those Protestants, Quakers, Jews and Muslims aboard had enjoyed the sly wink of pageantry in jesting with their papist shipmates by dressing, speaking and praying the part as if in a comedy on the stage at Drury Lane. The Catholics aboard in their turn, had borne the friendly mocking with shakes of the head, as they competed in coming up with new and elaborate ways to keep the Frenchman in his cabin.

Three weeks into the voyage, they had brought the ruse to a fine art - waking the Captain at four hour intervals throughout the night and insisting he sit awake for an hour's prayer at Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers and Compline. Between them, various crewmembers would enquire about his health, ask for advice, offer to read to him in Latin, show him new and unexpected pimples or warts, and generally fill his waking and ever-drowsy hours with hour after hour of continuous busywork, so by the end of the fourth week, Captain Leclère shut himself away, sending Cicely to tell the crew that he had a monstrous headache and asked to be excused from the usual services.

Cicely herself seemed to be finding the crossing much more enjoyable, alternating between the doting mistress; fetching her beloved wine, cheese and other fancies from the stores, shutting herself away with him when she felt he was becoming restless aboard ship, and the skilled actress who once dominated the stage. Her particular favourite pastime was bringing together a handful of crewmates and teaching them a scene from her favourite comedies and tragedies; Act Two of *The Way of the World*, a bilingual monologue from Moliere's *The Imaginary Cuckold*, and the China Scene from *A Country Wife* - the latter of which caused First Mate Nathaniel to choke on his grog when he realised the double-entendre laden scene wasn't about porcelain...

When they breached the mouth of the St Lawrence river, the roles were all cast, and the scripts had been learned. With James William Quartermaine, top of the billing in the role of the Spanish Governor.

The Santiana sailed past French settlement after settlement, spying hunting camps gathering furs for export back to the old country, and up to Quebec harbour itself - a large town, that belied the vastness of the wilderness of New France beyond.

The gangplank was lowered, and practically skipping, Captain Leclère visibly sighed with relief as he took his first steps for many months on French soil.

Immediately following him with all the grace of Ophelia or Titania, Cicely, her dress mended and sparkling, assisted by a contingent of sailors in the best clothes that could be scrounged

from amongst the crew. Alongside the "Governor", Quartermaster Millie and Boatswain Cassandra Vane took the fore, with Fergus MacGregor the Ship's Cook and Able Seaman Ketil Snapcore behind, the latter pair carrying a box of spare trade goods between them.

Following the Captain, the group made its way to a stone building, still surrounded by roughshod planks and ropes to allow access to the masons who were clearly working on the facade. Seeing the pirates peer up at the archway above their heads carved with "Ministère de la Marine", Cicely whispered back that the previous building was burned down by the English - so let her do the talking.

Watching Captain Leclère nervously report for duty and give his report of the destruction of his ship in the summer storms, it was only when an admiral descended the steps that there was any need to give account of themselves. Cicely piped up with an enthusiastic squeal and flurry of French, curtsying to the gentleman and allowing him to kiss her hand. In the following series of introductions - where she took the lead in the talking - Admiral Desrosiers insisted on inviting the Governor and his party to tea in the Officer's drawing room.

Leading them through to a comfortable room with a large table covered in maps and charts, he ordered tea from a servant, and began moving the documents to one side. Stopping for a moment, the Admiral unrolled one again, and stretched it out in front of Governor Quartermaine.

"Where exactly is it, this colony of San Pedro?"

Pausing while the party looked at one another in surprise, those that understood the swift French not sure how to respond, Cicely interjected

"Perhaps I should translate my Lord? The people of this colony are made up of émigrés of many nations who have found sanctuary under the Kingdom of Spain - many are Jacobites and the like who left in order to live under a proper Catholic King, and they have taken to using English as a Lingua Franca... If you see what I mean"

Smiling through the Admiral's questioning gaze at the party, Cicely gestured to the maps

"He's asking where exactly San Pedro is situated... I must confess I wasn't paying much attention on the voyage" she gave Quartermaine a pointed look.

His finger quivering, he gestured over the maps, first hovering over the Antilles, then Boston Sound, before the Bosun came to his rescue, flipping the maps around and putting a definitive finger down on a tiny island off the coast of Florida.

"Walker's Island eh? Funny, I thought that place was overrun with Pirates after the English Governor died"

"Ah... haha... yes it was quite an effort on the part of His Majesty King Phillip, but the place is transformed. Renamed in fact, San Pedro is the flower of La Florida" Cicely smiled a disarming smile and changed the subject to more disarming topics, asking of the scandals of the town since her departure. Being given a rundown of the recent betrothals, elopements and duels among the colonial court, Admiral Desrosiers required very little input from the Governor or Spanish colonists and allowed them to sip tea and eat dainty pastries without interruption. Glancing at a clock on the mantle and bowing to leave, the Admiral called in a young Officer.

"If you have business in town, Enseigne Laurante will take you to the preferred merchants. He has my seal, and will make sure they do not cheat you"

Hearing Cicely's translation, and followed by the young officer, they turned to the door, before the Admiral's voice called them back.

"Oh - yes. Governor, I would be honoured if you would attend the ball tomorrow night to celebrate the young King's Majority? It should be a cheerful affair, we cannot afford the formality of our fellows back in France of course, but we will make an attempt!"

With the assistance of the young officer, the crew found the merchants in question, selling a bolt of damask silk at a favourable rate - apparently fabric was in great demand in Quebec - and the good quality timber in the hold of the ship.

Although initially alarmed at the idea of attending a ball with the high-to-do of New France, a note from Cicely arrived at the ship that afternoon. It contained a formal invitation, a short letter with the address of a warehouse storage dock on the Île d'Orléans, and three suits of finest clothes.

"Admiral Derosiers begs the company of Governor Quartermaine, Laird MacGregor and Mistress Vane for the celebration of His Most Honoured Royal Majesty King Louis XV's Birthday, with a ball beginning at Six of the Clock"

The note read:

"Sorry about the Lairdship, Fergus - I had to think fast.

Guards will be light on the warehouse, every officer wants to be off-duty tomorrow night. Move fast and I'll keep my end of the bargain."

So at six o'clock, a carriage was waiting dockside for the Governor and his party. They were led into the candlelit ballroom, where all around them the well to do of Quebec chatted and mingled. Quartermaine managed to nod his way through several conversations, before managing to extract himself and helped himself to the excellent champagne. "Laird" MacGregor quickly found his way to the kitchens where he passed a very agreeable few hours with the exhausted and overburdened head chef, who was quite willing to share a bottle of brandy he kept for stressful evenings. In between tasting the dishes as they went out, and complaining about the tastes of the young officers who did not appreciate the quality of his menu, Monsieur Roulo found the Scotsman very good company - especially considering how his glass always seemed to be full...

After circling the ballroom once, Mistress Vane was immediately whisked off by Cicely in a grand blue and red gown, arms interlocked as they stepped through to the private quarters of the Admiral, where they met a woman in a gown with more lace than Cassandra had seen in her life. Introduced as "Madame Duvall", it became clear in very few moments that she was the mistress of Admiral Derosiers, and wife to a cavalryman who preferred the company of his fellow officers. An hour into the conversation, with an uncharacteristic clumsiness, Cicely swatted a glass of wine onto Madame Duvall's with her fan, and in the ensuing panic of apologies, maids bringing water to swab the lace and the lady withdrawing to a dressing room, Cicely pulled on a door handle and delicately drew Cassandra through to a grand bedroom. Here she walked over to a bookcase, considered the titles for a moment and then pulled one volume free. She made a few notations on her fan, then, smiling, took Cassandra's arm once more and led her back to the ballroom.

Not a moment too late - for it was clear that the Governor had imbibed more than his share of champagne, and had drawn a small crowd teaching them a song that he insisted was in Spanish, but which Cicely had only heard in the ale-houses of Gravesend. Laughing loudly, the pair swept him up under the arms and led him out the front door, where they found Fergus loading two barrels of salt pork onto the coach - a gift from Monsieur Roulo.

Meanwhile, the Santiana had moved quickly, sailing around the Île d'Orléans, and finding the warehouse exactly where it was described, continued downriver and made anchor in an inlet. Twenty sailors, commanded by Mr Trevalyan rowed ashore, and, as darkness fell, dropped onto the grounds of the warehouse from every side. Quietly and efficiently they took out the guards at each entrance, and moved up to the buildings. Finding them locked as expected and quiet within, they attached small bundles of gunpowder to each door, lit them and moved back. Doors blown on both buildings simultaneously, the sailors poured forth to loot the contents.

One building was entered first by Maurice Grant, who found a pair of guards sitting in confusion at a table with cards in their hands. Before they could react, he kicked over the table and overpowered them, leaving them tied up and making off with a box of shot, prepped and ready for French rifles.

The others weren't so lucky - Ketil Snapcore kicked in the door to find an officer in a smart blue coat, holding a pistol to the pirate's head. The stand-off poured water on the ferocity of their assault, and it was only when the cries of success in the other warehouse drew the Officer's attention for a second that Kit Trevalyan was able to throw a bottle at the Officer's head, which smashed and caused him to shoot wide. In the following assault, a smashed lantern caught on spilled powder, sending the second warehouse up in a plume of fire and smoke.

The crew got out with no casualties, but mostly empty-handed as all the most valuable booty in the warehouses were reduced to ashes. Returning to the Santiana, they took advantage of the South-westerly winds to return to Quebec in time to pick up the "Governor" and leave the region before word could spread.

In the late Summer on their return to their Island home, the Santiana spent a little time circling the coast in an attempt to make a map of the coastline. However, without time to make land and investigate every islet and point of interest, the map produced is rudimentary at best. Perhaps if they were able to spend a season in defence of the island, patrolling its waters, a better version of it could be made?

Cassandra Vane starts the next game with a "Gift" from Cicely, a book and mysterious sheet of paper.

Quartermaster Millie starts the next game with four doubloons from the sale of timber and fabric in Quebec.

The Santiana starts with two barrels of food in her hold due to the actions of Fergus the Ship's Cook.

Maurice Grant starts the next game with twenty shot, the loot from the French Warehouse on the Île d'Orléans.

Charting the coast of the island required a particularly high score due to its being an additional action on top of the opportunity described above, therefore only a rudimentary sketch was able to be made.

If a ship was to spend a season on patrol around the island solely charting it, a much more detailed map could be created.



The Marengo

Action: Opportunity

Best Roll: Gideon (12/12), Jack Hughes (6/6) and Mutch Wurse (6/6)

Worst Roll: Jennifer Salter (1/6), Sally Skathmarrow (1/6)

In the days following the summer meeting of the five ships, the crew of the Marengo returned to their ship and formulated a plan. The trade vessel *Coquette* sat in anchor in plain view, waiting on the return of her captain and those guards who had travelled ashore to deliver the requested stock of opium to the Clerk's office. The fact that they were a few days late did not seem to bother the other ship - perhaps the captain made a habit of taking shore leave whenever he had deals to be delivered on, or perhaps he had other business ashore besides what was on the books.

Regardless, three days after the Santiana, the Chariot and the Devil's Daughter left harbour, the Marengo weighed anchor and pulled up alongside the *Coquette*. Bearing down on them from their quarterdeck, the much larger ship of the line raised their sails and slowed to a halt, with a handful of crew leaning over the side.

The crew of the *Coquette*, amiable but thrown by the larger, clearly pirate vessel alongside, smiled and took their place on deck close enough to be heard on the other ship.

"All well aboard, friend?" called the bosun of the *Coquette*.

"All's well" replied a sailor.

"Do you make this place your home port?"

"Yup" replied another

"Are you... Aha... I mean... Have you had a fortuitous season so far? We return to Port Royal as soon as the Captain returns"

"Oh yeah, we know"

Finding the answers puzzling, the bosun leant over to another sailor and whispered something.

"I wouldn't do that" shouted someone from the Marengo's deck

With a gesture, all the starboard-side gunports raised as one, and thirty cannons were pushed through, feet from the side of the Coquette.

"I see you've got the swivel guns loaded" shouted Captain Blowhard, "but you'll be at the bottom of the sea before you get a second shot off. We're going to send over a friendly little party and you're going to do exactly what they ask, and we'll let you go wherever you want, that alright?"

The bosun nodded, slowly, looking at the dozen or so sailors watching aboard the Marengo in a piecemeal mixture of red, green and blue jackets, leaning on well-polished rifles.

The gangplank laid, a contingent of the Marengo crossed over; sailors Sally, Jennifer, Jack and the ship's carpenter Gideon, each holding loaded pistols, and made their way below to the Captain's Cabin, while Mutch Wurse stayed on the deck of the Coquette and laid an arm around the bosun's shoulders.

Below, the pirates soon found the cabin and began to rifle through it for what they sought. It was Jack Hughes who put his hand on the item - a ledger with lists of sales of food and luxuries throughout the Atlantic - but Gideon was somewhat distracted by the panelling on the cabin's wall. With a snort, he picked up a boarding axe and swung it twice, revealing a hidden compartment. Inside, a duplicate ledger and velvet pouch containing a few vials of opium lay in the splinters of what was once a beautifully constructed piece of woodwork. This ledger was much more interesting, listing towns in the British and Spanish colonies... Savannah Sound, Cat Island, Rock Point... all of whom clearly enjoyed delivery of supplies without the necessity of the customs officers taking their cut.

With a thud, the captain's cabin door slammed shut on the four pirates, and the sound of an impromptu barricade on the other side could be heard being constructed.

Although they kicked and slammed at it, the door wouldn't budge.

A sailor dashed up to the top deck and nodded at the bosun, still in the arms of Mr Wurse.

"It seems we're at a stalemate Sir" called the bosun. "I have your crewmates. You let us go right now and no harm will come to them, and my captain won't have to inform the Clerks of New Nassau that their trade partner the Coquette has been overrun by a rogue pirate ship" Pausing, the bosun wondered why the Pirate captain was smiling.

"You won't sink a ship when your own sailors are aboard"

He swallowed.

"Surely?"

Mutch Wurse shot him in the leg.

Later, when the blood of the dozen or so crew who had been caught in the first rifle volley had been cleared away, the remaining members of the Coquette were learning the meaning of the phrase "hostile takeover". Relieved of their cargo and ledger, a grizzled shipmate was

elected the new captain and sent back to their port with a letter for the owner of the opium plantation, detailing terms for a new business relationship.

The four members of the Marengo crew returned aboard, Sally Skathmarrow and Jennifer Salter with injuries from the scuffle below deck, but six bolts of silk in hand, as well as a spare sailcloth and the Coquette's rum supplies.

In the following months the Marengo mostly stayed close to the Island's waters, putting in to harbour often and attacking two other ships in that time - a sloop with a cargo of pig iron blown off course on its heading to Newfoundland which surrendered immediately, and a Brig that had recently suffered an attempted mutiny and was on its way back to Carolina to hang the mutineers. Once the ship was taken, the four prisoners were offered the chance to jump ship, which they all gratefully accepted.

A few days before the other ships were due to meet for their twice-yearly parley, the Coquette was spied on the horizon. A few hours later, the same grizzled captain - now much better dressed and outfitted - handed over a letter for the captain.

Quartermaster Ada Frogitt starts the game with promissory notes for six bolts of fabric, and three rum, plus a sack of iron fit for smelting.

Sally Skathmarrow and Jennifer Salter will begin with lingering wounds from the fight onboard the Coquette

Captain Blowhard will begin with a letter from the Coquette's Opium Contact.



The Chariot

Action: Smuggling

Best roll: Ettie (6/6), Greaves (6/6) and Genevieve (6/6)

Worst Roll: "Red" Jen (1/6)

Following the Ship's Parley in late spring 1722, the Chariot was the first to raise anchor and head west, with the unexpected addition of Captain "Cutthroat" Reeves and his crew to the ship's roster.

The Chariot, though at first finding the extra bodies to be additional pressure on a ship already fit to bursting, found Reeve's crew helpful and ready to take their turns at watches and the most backbreaking duties aboard ship. It was clear that whatever Reeve's own shortcomings, he was correct when saying he had hired the best he could get his hands on.

Finding their duties alleviated, the journey to Plymouth Harbour was an easy one. Just a stone's throw from Boston, the pirates were aware that the Navy here kept a particular watch for any signs of criminal behaviour, so playing the part of the merchant ship they kept to the most populous routes and let the flow of the pack of fellow schooners lead them right to the docks. Captain Reeves was immensely thankful, and bundled along by his capable crew, they left the ship with their belongings and made for Reeve's contact, the Right Honourable Lord Fitzherbert whose manor was supposedly inland. As the cheerful little man waved goodbye, Captain Finley waved and muttered that hopefully it was the last they'd see of the worst pirate in the Atlantic.

The ship took advantage of the weeks of quiet, trading to several towns in Cape Cod Bay, from Sandwich round to Providencetown, and with their tradespeople making a decent profit. All of them, that is, except Red Jen, who was persuaded by a dockside cardshark to bet all of their earnings on a game of Find the Lady, and with the "assistance" of Ettie, chose wrong. By the time the rest of the crew heard and the swindler could be found, all their winnings had already been spent, but as Ettie - feeling remorseful - later said, at least he won't be shuffling cards any time soon, what with all his fingers being broken.

When the winds began to turn, and Captain Finley felt their welcome was in danger of wearing out, the Chariot headed back along the sound, this time heading south west as far as Nantucket. Taking advantage of their trading relationship with the Kubińskis of Tuckernuck Island, they made for the little islet, and finding ten vials of opium in the appointed hiding place, picked them up and sailed to the couple's isolated farmhouse where they offloaded five hundredweight of timber and the same again of iron. Happily taking the remaining one hundredweight of timber to repair their fleet of rowing boats, the eldest Kubiński son rowed over that evening with a cask of what appeared at first to be rum.

"Not rum" he explained as they cracked it open. "Vodka. Much better."

Late that night Quartermaster Pendleton and the young man came to an agreement - the three doubloons from the ship's purse would buy 30 additional shot, which were duly loaded in by his younger siblings the following morning.

A few weeks passed, and the Chariot took advantage of a thick fog to travel through Martha's Vineyard and made anchor at West Point to make the acquaintance of some traders there. While they sat at a dockside inn, sailor Greaves overheard an excitable conversation at the next table over. Three young women were leaning over a copy of a newspaper broadsheet, where, in great big capitals proclaimed "SCOURGE OF THE SEAS CUTTHROAT REEVES HANGED". Standing up to peer at the front page, Greaves saw the image of a bearded, ferocious-looking fellow with a barrel chest and a noose around his neck. Reading over the ladies' shoulders, it appeared "Cutthroat" Reeves have been hanged that previous week, after a dashing capture by the Right Honourable Lord Fitzherbert of Middleborough, Massachusetts, with the assistance of one Mr Richard Lowbottom of Surrey, England. Peering even closer, Greaves was sure he recognised the flop of hair and slightly

confused expression of the English gentleman in question, but the notorious Captain Reeves? Greaves was certain they'd never seen him before. Some of the other sailors of the Chariot had started looking over too, and reading the headline with interest.

"Have you kept up with the criminal news?" one of the young ladies asked, seeing Greaves' interest

"Well, actually, my shipmates here met him once!" called a sailor

The rest of the evening, all their drinks were paid for and there were few patrons of the inn who weren't keen to press a coin or two into their hands in exchange for a tale of the great murderous monster of the seas, Cutthroat Reeves...

Adam Plenty, Genevieve, Tobias, Branton and Annabelle will start the game with additional gold from their trade exploits; with Red Jen receiving half of what she would have earned in addition.

Quartermaster Pendleton begins the game with 30 additional shot of Gunpowder.

Sailor Greaves starts with 8 pieces of eight in tips from grateful patrons of the inn at West Point



The Diamond

Action: Piracy

Best Roll: Rodrigo di Olaiv (11/12), Liau Mei Lin (6/6)

Worst Roll: Henry Bishop (3/12)

The Diamond stayed in harbour for almost two months after the parlay of ships in late spring 1722, conducting an emergency refit after taking damage in action in the season previous. Although the work was easy enough, the predicted storms slowed their progress, forcing all aboard but the necessary workforce to make for the town and assist with battening down the hatches. In harbour, the Diamond's 20 cannon were unloaded and splinters removed from their workings, then cleaned and provided with repaired carriages and wheels. The Diamond's hull was stripped in places, and patched with good timber.

Once repairs had been made and Ship's Carpenter Henry Bishop was satisfied the vessel was seaworthy, the tradesfolk aboard coordinated to bring aboard the necessary stores of food, rum and black powder. The sailors worked reinforcing the walls of the powder hold as they did so, which had been badly damaged and in danger of collapse in the joint attack on the HMS Kilmartin. Satisfied, the officers left the stores. It was a week later, when Tibs cracked open a barrel of hard tack to inspect its contents that they discovered a problem.

Below the surface of the water, damp had found its way into the cargo hold, so the Quartermaster Cedric had all the dry powder hauled out again to investigate the leak. It was Liao Mei Lin who discovered the crack - volunteering to dive below the ship with other strong swimmers - and was able to push a thin rod of iron through the gap which could be located on the other side. Patched, and pitched, the repair was made, and not a moment too soon.

In the end, three barrels of food had to be emptied into the harbour, and although they were able to secure another from the Clerks' Office, when the Diamond left the island in search of prey, they were under-provisioned, and all the crew knew it. Food would be a priority in their attacks, if Captain Bean and First Mate Henly didn't want morale to hit a dangerous low.

The first likely candidate that was spied was a small ketch, too far out to sea to be comfortable, Captain Bean predicted. Sure enough, she had been caught in the summer storms and blown further out than the coast-hugging vessel usually operated in. With just a warning shot, the *Piper* surrendered to the Diamond and allowed them to take what they wanted. Unfortunately their stores were much depleted from their longer than expected journey, so the pirates relieved them of some stores of timber and let them go.

The second was much more likely - a schooner that appeared to be in distress; its foremast tangled and a skeleton crew attempting to repair it, Bosun Rodrigo gave the signal for false colours to be raised, choosing the Diamond's original *Northumbria* flag, showing them to be an English whaling vessel. Coming alongside, Boarding Officer Sloane Wiley called out to the struggling crew.

"Holten" she called out, indicating herself "now Master of the *Dunbar*, out of Salem. You've caught us at a bad time, friend - we've not long met the *Devil's Daughter*"

The crew put on a show of being shocked, while Captain Bean cursed under his breath, and asked how badly they'd been hit.

"Took all we had, and killed the Captain and eight of our best hands. Should've surrendered as soon as we saw the black flag. If you've got any food, we'd appreciate it, though I can only promise to pay your whaling office back in turn"

Leaving the schooner to their struggles, they headed south, determined to break the string of bad luck.

Three weeks later the Diamond reached Bermuda, and a hunting ground of old. They hit two sloops in one afternoon, the first swiftly boarded and officers subdued, while they collected a cargo of good-quality calico and were in the midst of relieving those aboard of their jewellery and particularly fine items of clothing, when the second came up alongside, seeing two ships apparently in distress after a collision.

By the time they realised their mistake it was too late: a broadside led by the quick thinking Esmarelda stopped any chance of escape and a second boarding party led by bosun Rodrigo took immediate charge - claiming a box of gunpowder from the scuppered ship before it could sink. Unfortunately, the first had poor stores, being on its way back to harbour, and the second was below the sea before any stores could be claimed.

With both captured crews aboard the smaller *Rockrose*, and Bermuda in their sights, the officers held a meeting to discuss their dwindling stocks.

Heading further south, the Diamond put in at Balfour Town, judging the smallest of the Turks and Caicos islands to be quiet enough to lie low and collect stores. Going ashore, a contingent found ample supplies of fruit and seafood, but little in the way of dry goods that would keep on the voyage. The Captain took the news with a sigh, before declaring two weeks of shore leave under false colours. They were to be Whalers, and nothing more, putting in for shore leave after a poor season. Groups were sent to hunt, fish, barter for other supplies and prepare for a long winter up in the north, hunting grey whales, sperm whales and whale sharks. As far as the locals were concerned at least.

Drying and smoking racks were built on the sand, and barrels of salt fish prepared - at least they didn't want for salt. Fruits were mashed to a pulp and dried, or, if they wouldn't keep, eaten joyfully there on the sand.

When the Diamond made for the north once again, they were damned sure they wouldn't be wanting for food.

Quartermaster Cedric starts with five hundredweight of wood, three bolts of fabric from the season of Piracy.

Boatswain Rodrigo di Olaiv starts with twenty shot looted from the scuppered ship before it sank.

The ship's stores start with four barrels of food, prepared by the ship during their shore leave in Balfour Town.



The Devil's Daughter

Action: Piracy

Best Roll: "Salty" Pete (11/12) and William Colton (6/6)

Worst Roll: Cade Drake (6/12) and Avery (6/12)

Following the meetings ashore in the spring of 1722, the crew of the Devil's Daughter were in no particular hurry to get out of port. Their hold was well-provisioned, with excess food, wood and iron to trade - the latter two belonging to "Stinky" Pete Smith, signed up to the crew for the season.

When Captain Li was satisfied with repairs to the rigging and foremast, and that the cargo was loaded properly, they set sail, heading first north following strong winds brought in by the summer storms, then east toward the Azores, pausing only to relieve an english Schooner of some particularly good-quality food stores.

Their luck was moderate - although a regular stream of ships passed their way, and most too slow of wit or cunning to outmanoeuvre them, pickings were slim. The first two were tartanes, transporting supplies between the Portuguese islands, and barely worth their time or shot. Although the crews of both were questioned about ships of interest or valuable locations in the region, and their stores ransacked, each produced barely a barrel of usable food between them - although Doctor Batholomew was lucky enough to find a few dusty bottles of port in the Master's personal effects.

Putting the surviving crews in their rowing boats, and idly watching as Master Gunner "Salty" Pete used the tartanes as target practice with the swivel guns, Monsieur Lavender and Pisspot discussed their options. Too much too close to the Azores would bring out the Portuguese navy eventually, but it may also bring out some more valuable targets, if only they could get close enough to find out what richer pickings might be out there. Perhaps one of the outlying islands - Flores or the smaller Corvo island. Corvo had been home to pirates before, perhaps some of the Portuguese settlers there would be willing to trade coin for information?

The other officers agreed it was as good an idea as any, so approaching Corvo from the north, the Devil's Daughter lowered the black and put into the harbour at Caldeirão. Finding the village quiet, a contingent of the crew went ashore with pockets full of gold and two remaining bottles of Dr Bartholomew's port.

It didn't take long to find out the local gossip - the inhabitants had a list a fathom long of complaints with their Governor; who was only interested in his personal wealth, their King; who was only interested in the Azores colonies as a stepping stone to Brazil and bringing home the wealth that was to be found there, and their neighbours in the larger islands; who commanded a greater share of the power and wealth of the populace.

Pete Smith found a dockside smithy who was more than willing to take his excess cargo off his hands, and sent a couple of urchins down to the ship with a cart to begin unloading it. Although not the best price, the Blacksmith and Cooper were a convivial pair, who though speaking little English, enjoyed the sport of haggling in whatever currency was available. By the evening they had agreed on a price, and thrown in a few bolts of fabric to sweeten the deal.

In the market, in exchange for a bottle and two doubloons, an elderly fishmonger described to Morgana the ship she'd seen pass by from her fishing boat, with gilded letters over her stern: "Santa Luzia". Three masts, at least 60 cannon. Putting into Ponta Delgada on route to Lisbon. Certainly - explained the fishwife - having left Brazil with a hold full of the gold that everyone knew the new world had as abundantly as fish in the ocean.

The following morning they made sail, with the proceedings only postponed while Somewhat Broader - somewhat hungover - heaved over the side having gone round for round with the salt-preserved fish gutters at the dockside tavern. According to the pirate it had been worth it however; they had passed on the tip that supposedly saved their life once: "when the gulls are silenced - turn and run". If they could only work out what that meant, it would almost certainly be worth SB's weight in Brazilian Gold.

Heading due-eastward, the Devil's Daughter made a loop around São Miguel, the largest of the Azores, getting close enough to the capital of Ponta Delgada to get a good look at the naval ships taking up much of its docks. There was indeed a galleon there, old compared to the sleek modern ships-of-the-line alongside it, but sitting low in the water. Clearly her hold was well-laden, and like a satisfied diner, she was heading home with a full belly. She would not be travelling alone however - the two warships alongside her were clearly an entourage, to ensure she would return safely to the Portuguese King who craved the prestige of all European Monarchs. Fifty guns apiece maybe. Faster than the Devil's Daughter, but only standing up to her firepower if both were able to fire at once. They would have to be clever.

Once they saw her leave harbour, they sailed on ahead eastward, and made to set their trap. A mid-sized schooner or small frigate would do - easily captured and their crew tied to their posts on deck. On the second day of searching, they found a likely 20 gun sloop, who was overpowered with ease. Taking what little provisions they could from the stores but largely uninterested, Llewellyn the carpenter and their team sabotaged the rudder and wheel and left her to drift. Far enough away to appear as any other man-o'-war in the shipping lane to Madeira, the Devil's Daughter waited.

When the ship was within spitting distance of the ships, the one remaining member of the Devil's Daughter crew - the one who had drawn the short straw - acted. William Colton smashed the lantern he held onto the deck of the ship, and all hell broke loose. The overproof rum they'd spilt onto the deck caught in a whoosh of heat and hair-singing translucent flame. The bags of gunpowder stitched into the rigging exploded with a cacophony of percussion that sent the sailors and marines aboard all the ships staggering back. They were close enough to hear the screams of the sailors tied to the rigging, of the few who managed - alongside Mr Colton himself - to throw themselves overboard to avoid the flames.

The three ships baulked, steering in separate directions to avoid the fireship, one warship, the Princesa do Céu, drawing axes to cut themselves free as the sloop's single mast fell and tangled in their ropes. The Devil's Daughter's sails dropped, and with everything they had they flanked the second warship, the São Jorge. Without delay Gunnery Master "Salty" Pete ordered a broadside, with all fifty port-side guns tearing through her hull and lower decks. They had made a risky move to get such a fortuitous shot however, and though the São Jorge began its slow descent below the waters, the Santa Luzia opened fire, with thirty of hers ringing through the Devil's Daughter forecastle, smashing through the planks of Quartermaster Avery's cabin. If she had been within at the time, she would have certainly been made a pincushion by the flying debris, but on deck she could only swear and point in the direction of the galleon.

The battle lasted three hours: first the Princesa do Céu cut themselves free, but their morale was clearly affected, and her movements erratic. They managed a volley of shot that did as much damage to the Santa Luzia as to the Daughter. Coming around with another broadside, the Pirate ship seemed to take her time, lining up the shot and only firing with precision. Once it was clear the Princesa do Céu had lost control of her steering, Captain Li Ming turned his attention back to the prize, and ordered the deck's swivel guns to be pointed at the mainmast and for the Gunning crew to fire at will. No hull shots. No possibility of losing this one. With a slow, dreadful creaking the mainmast crashed into the mizzen, and the sailors aboard scrambled to hoist a white flag using anything they could.

All told, the Galleon held a bounty in bolts of brazilian cotton, and casks of rum from His Majesty's sugar plantations. Perhaps not a King's bounty, but a good day's work and another handful of survivors who will spread the name of the Devil's Daughter.

The Devil's Daughter requires 20 hundredweight of Wood if she is to take any action but Refitting next season, to represent the repairs needed to keep her afloat.

The figurehead has also been badly damaged, and will need to be rebuilt with 2 hundredweight of good quality timber.

Quartermaster Avery will start with a promissory note for 30 bolts of fabric and 5 casks of rum, as well as a prize of 30 doubloons.

Pete Smith will start with a bolt of fabric and pouch of coins from his trade deal.

Quartermaster Avery, Pisspot, First Mate Cade Drake and Captain Li will start with injuries from the action.