

YO HO YUCK!

by Ken Bradbury



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(The scene is the ship's deck of The Ringworm, a pirate ship. The roles can be played by pirates of either sex, although the script refers to them as "he" for the sake of clarity. It would add a great deal to the presentation if all the characters spoke with British accents although the piece will play with the actor's own dialect as long as it's rough and pirate-ish.)

(Characters: Captain Jacques LeFarge, Scurvy, Boggles, Dogsboddy, Pendragon.)

SCURVY: *(running in with Boggles)* You seen 'im?

BOGGLES: *(frightened)* No. I don't wanna see 'im. The captain's gone bonkers! Crazy as a tuna!

SCURVY: What was it, you reckon? The bad swordfish?

BOGGLES: I think it was the rotten rum. 'E ain't been the same since we crossed the Equator!

LeFARGE: *(voice offstage, crazed)* Batten down the matches! Man the scabbard! Avast! Avaunt! Poo-poo-pee-doo!

SCURVY: *(very frightened)* It's 'im! 'E's comin'!

BOGGLES: What'll we do?

SCURVY: Jump overboard! *(they both move to the rail, begin to climb over then stop)*

BOGGLES: *(holding onto Scurvy)* Sharks!

SCURVY: Oh, blimey! But at least with the sharks we got a chance!

BOGGLES: Sharks or the Captain. What'll it be? *(The two of them go into a quick game of rock, paper, scissors when they're interrupted by the Captain's entrance.)*

LeFARGE: *(strutting in ... half-crazed ... no, let's make that totally crazed)* Boggles! Scurvy! What's going on here?!

SCURVY: Uh ... just lookin' at the ocean, Cap'n.

BOGGLES: Nice ocean. Pretty ocean. *(And both Scurvy and Boggles begin humming a hornpipe melody as they dance the jig)*

LeFARGE: Stop that! I want no dancing on the good ship Ringworm! Think how it would look to passing cruise boat if they saw pirates dancing!

BOGGLES: (*saluting*) You're right, Captain.

SCURVY: (*saluting*) True sir! Very true!

LeFARGE: There's something very strange going on here. Ever since I ate the poisoned swordfish and drank the rotten rum you men have been acting very strangely. Call the crew to order, Boggles!

BOGGLES: Aye! Aye! Cap'n! (*shouting*) Now hear this! Captain (*pronounces it Jack-quez*) Jacques LaFarge ...

LeFARGE: Jacques. My name is Jacques, you squid's liver.

BOGGLES: Jacques LaFarge!

LeFARGE: The title ... don't forget the title, oyster brain.

BOGGLES: Commander of the High Seas! Terror of Her Majesty's Navy! Bloodiest Pirate on nine continents!

LeFARGE: Eight. There are only eight continents!

BOGGLES: Minus one! ... Commands you to hold forth! (*Boggles whistles and the other crew members, Dogsboddy and Pendragon come scurrying into place, all four crew members at a terrified salute*)

LeFARGE: You forgot my junior college degree, but never mind. Men! (*strutting back and forth in front of them*) It occurs to me that something very strange is going on!

ALL CREW: (*Dogsboddy has no tongue but he mouths the words*) Yes, captain!

LeFARGE: Something most ... peculiar and bothersome!

ALL CREW: What's that, Captain?

LeFARGE: There's something fishy ... (*looking from man to man, placing his finger on this man and that*) I can't ... I can't quite put my finger on what it is ...

ALL CREW: Oh, my! That's terrible, Captain!

LeFARGE: (*pulling Pendragon up by the front of his shirt*) Are you ... unhappy, Pendragon?

PENDRAGON: No, Captain!

LeFARGE: (*pulling up Boggles*) Boggles? Any complaints with the way I treat you?

BOGGLES: N ... n ... no, Sir!

LeFARGE: (*grabbing Scurvy*) How about you, Scurvy? Are you happy to be on my ship?

SCURVY: Delighted, Sir! Absolutely ecstatic with joy and elasticity!

LeFARGE: (*grabbing Dogsbody*) And you, Dogsbody! (*Dogsbody stands wide-eyed. He can't talk but his eyes and gestures say it all.*) Poor Dogsbody! The first man to complain about the way I treated him. Cat got your tongue, Dogsbody? (*Dogsbody shakes his head "no!"*) That's right. Who did get your tongue, Dogsbody? (*Dogsbody points to the Captain.*) Very good. In fact, I still have it in a small jar at the head of my bed. I look at it every night before I go beddy-bye. You've learned not to talk about the Captain behind his back, haven't you, Dogsbody? (*Dogsbody nods enthusiastically*) So! I have designed a little ... test.

ALL CREW: A test?

LeFARGE: Yes! Yes! A test! A test! To see which of you loves me best!

ALL CREW: (*moans*)

LeFARGE: What's that?

ALL CREW: (*smiling with a sound of great pleasure*) Ahhhh!

LeFARGE: That's better. And today's category is ... drum roll, Dogsbody! (*Dogsbody does a drum roll on the head of one of the others*) ... Poetry!

ALL CREW: Poetry?

LeFARGE: If you truly do love your Captain ... if you are completely devoted to him and him alone, then it should be short work to compose a poem in my honor. Boggles, you're first!

BOGGLES: Oh, must I, Captain?

LeFARGE: You know there's room for one more tongue in that little jar of mine.

BOGGLES: I've got a poem! It just came to me!

PENDRAGON: It did?

BOGGLES: (*shoots Pendragon a dangerous look then begins*) "Of all the blokes that sail the seas, he is the greatest one!" (*he smiles ... he's doing it! The others stand*



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