

## The Pirate King - Outline

Cold open –

- We open on a hazy, low visibility day out in the open sea. The *Pride*, Lafitte's impressive flagship, emerges from the thick fog. We meet JEAN LAFITTE, barking out orders and looking every bit the "gentleman pirate". He is well dressed, with an aristocratic flair to his clothing and speech. His men, however, look like your run of the mill pirates.
- They are in pursuit of a Spanish merchant ship. But when a second ship appears, Jean decides that chasing the two ships in the fog would be too dangerous, and he calls off the chase. MAURICIO SANTOS, Jean's "loyal" first mate, appeals to the captain's ego. We start to get the idea that Lafitte's ego may be a huge weakness for him going forward.
- Lafitte is convinced, and continues chasing the ships through a narrow pass. The ships emerge from the other side of the pass and suddenly stop, turn and open fire with hidden canons, certainly more firepower than a merchant ship has any business having. They're not merchants at all, but HEAVILY ARMED MERCENARIES.
- Jean commands his men bravely and fights off the mercenaries that board his ship, but it's no use. Many of his men are killed quickly and he knows the battle is lost. In the haze of battle one of his own men turns and attacks him. Jean yells at the man, who he thinks is confused, until another of his men attacks him. Soon all his surviving men are turning on him, and he is forced to cut several down. Jean realizes he's been betrayed and led into an ambush.
- As the gun fire stops, the haze on deck clears and Lafitte is face to face with Mauricio, and a dozen traitorous pirates standing side by side with Spanish mercenaries. Jean demands an explanation from Mauricio, but receives none. Mauricio capitalizes on the shock of the moment and digs a dagger through Jean's chest before tossing the captain down into the rocky sea bellow.
- Darkness... before a hand grasps at a sandy embankment. Jean pulls himself from the ice-cold waters. He's bleeding heavily, barely holding on. He musters his strength and turns back to the ocean, just in time to watch his ship sail away leaving him for dead.

Act one –

- Some time has passed since the betrayal, and we find Lafitte on board a small merchant ship. Gone are his fancy clothes and neatly trimmed mustache. He looks sickly, emaciated. He sports a shaggy beard, unkempt hair, and a fresh set of scars.
- He approaches the boat's CAPTAIN – who is wearing Jean's old coat and hat, albeit a dirty, worn out version of them. Jean tells the Captain that they're close to his home, and if he could just be let off ashore or given use of a rowboat, he would be thankful. The Captain informs Jean that his clothes bought passage, but not use of the rowboat or a drop off, and that if Jean intends to

make it to shore, he best start swimming. The crew laugh as Jean is forced to jump overboard and swim into the bayou.

- After a few hours wading through the swamp, Jean is exhausted. To make matters worse, he finds himself face to face with a massive Gator. He struggles to escape the dangerous animal, but he's tired and slow. Right when it looks like he is a goner, he is whisked out of the water and on to a small boat with two YOUNG MEN. He thanks the men for their help, and they offer him food and shelter for the night. He accepts.
- Night is falling over the bayou as Jean and his hosts eat by candlelight in a small, shack of a home. He regales them with a stories of his past as an older man enters the room. Jean sees the man enter and has a brief look of recognition. He hides his face as the younger men explain Jean's presence to their FATHER.
- The Father is happy to have a guest and takes a spot at the table, but becomes suspicious when Jean refuses to meet his gaze. He shifts a candle, illuminating more of Jean's face, and the atmosphere in the room turns tense. He asks his sons if they'd ever heard of the legendary pirate Jean Lafitte, telling the romanticized version of his exploits, before shifting the story and explaining to them how Jean had deceived his former crew, telling them they were legal privateers while actually sailing as lawless pirates. He says how several of the crew were arrested for piracy, and Jean was nowhere to be found. He finishes with "ain't that right, Captain Lafitte?"
- Busted, Jean fully meets his gaze. The Father adds that Jean is supposed to be dead, and Mauricio Santos would pay a pretty penny to learn otherwise. Jean makes a break for the door, but the Father draws a pistol and shoots Jean through the stomach as he runs. The Father and his two sons pursue Jean through the bayou, but Jean uses his mastery of the terrain to evade the men.
- After a tense chase and fight, Jean is forced to kill all three men to keep his survival a secret. We notice, however, that Jean's pistol wound has been covered in swamp sludge, with bugs already buzzing at the fresh wound.
- Jean steals their boat and paddles upriver.

#### Act Two-

- Jean makes his way back to his blacksmith shop in New Orleans which is still run by his brother, PIERRE LAFITTE. On his way, he notices some new characters in the streets, mainly the intimidating VOODOO PRACTICIONERS that have taken root in his absence.
- The former blacksmith shop/smuggling warehouse has transformed into a bar, much to Jean's dismay. He argues with his brother, Pierre, who is now committed to living on the straight and

narrow. Jean argues that they're pirates who can never live a normal life. Pierre attempt to convince his brother otherwise, but fails.

- Pierre informs Jean that Mauricio Santos now controls Jean's former smuggling operation, wealth, and connections. Pierre mentions that Jean is still considered a hero by many locals for his actions in the battle of New Orleans, and that he may seek old allies with political power to grant him a pardon or offer him help.
- Jean agrees and decides that he will reach out to an old flame, the former governor's daughter Louise Claibourne.
- Pierre reminds Jean that he had previously placed a bounty on Louise's father, the former governor's head, and Jean replies that "he put one on mine first!" Nevertheless, Jean decides to go ahead with his plan.
- That night, Jean sneaks past guards and surprises Louise, who is terrified to see him, having already heard of his death. While she seems happy to know Jean is alive, she is afraid to be seen with the notorious criminal. Louise says her father wields little political power these days. Years of political slander and controversy have left him with few friends and he is on the verge of bankruptcy. And besides that, Jean had placed a bounty on his head! Jean repeats that her father had placed a bounty on his head first.
- Louise affirms that her father won't be useful, but reluctantly agrees to put Jean in touch with a powerful man who may be able to help him. Jean asks where to find the man and she replies that he will find Jean when the time is right.

### Act Three -

- Jean is changing the dressing on his wounds, which we see now are in the early stages of a serious infection. He speaks to Pierre and we find out he has been living in the back room of the bar for at least a week. Jean tells Pierre that he needs to go out and stretch his legs, which Pierre argues against, but Jean is confident. "No one knows these streets better than I do."
- He steps out into the street and doesn't make it far before he is assaulted by several men. He fights a good fight, but the damage from the infected wound is already starting to take effect. He tires quickly, and is eventually beaten by the men. The mysterious attackers scoop up him up, blindfold and bind him before tossing him in the back of a carriage.
- Jean awakens in a dark room. He is tied up, with what appears to be a doctor inspecting his infection. The doctor tells him that if he doesn't treat this wound the fever will take him within the week. The doctor leaves and the leader of the gang of men who kidnapped him appears in the room. He cuts Jean loose, throws him a pile of clothes and tells Jean to clean himself up.
- Jean emerges in a clean, high-fashion getup, his beard now trimmed, and hair slicked. He's surprised to find out that he is at a fancy ball in a stately manor. He is shocked by his surroundings and not sure who he is meant to be meeting with.

- A man is going around the room regaling guests with great historical stories, but Jean disagrees with the man on the historical accuracy of one of his claims. This upsets the man, but Jean doesn't think much of it. Later Jean is beckoned into a private room where he is introduced to that very same man he had just insulted, JACQUES SAINT GERMAIN.
- Jean takes notice of the room's strange decor, seemingly occult artifacts, and thick blackout shades covering all the windows. But most curious of all is Jacques' thick, dark red wine that he pours from a separate bottle than the wine he pours Jean.
- Jacques reveals that he is politically connected, rich, and dangerous. He says he respects Jean as a patriot and the hero of New Orleans, and he would like to help Jean, but he does nothing for free.
- Jean asks what he may do in exchange, seeing as how he lost all his wealth and power. Jacques tells him that he is being threatened by MARIE LEVEAU - the "evil" voodoo queen and her insane devil worshipping cult. He tells Jean that he would like a meeting with Marie, but she is unwilling to even speak with him. Jacques tells Jean that if he can "arrange a meeting" (read kidnap) the voodoo queen, then Jacques would be greatly in his debt. Before leaving, Jean's wound begins to bleed through his shirt. Jacques seems fixated on it, and tells Jean to be sure to clean it, as the wound smells infected.

#### Act Four –

- Jean plans to make a move on Leveau, with his brother Pierre. Pierre offers what little knowledge he has on Leveau and warns Jean that she is powerful and well-guarded, and that Jean may be getting in over his head. Jean sees no other option and chooses to proceed.
- That night, Jean sneaks into Marie's compound, stealthily dispatching guards along the way. However, he is now fully feeling the effects of his infection. He sweats profusely and fights to maintain consciousness.
- He manages to fight his way into the inner circle of her compound but is met with an ambush. Somehow, Marie is aware that Jean is coming.
- Jean believes he has been betrayed by Jacques, but she tells him this is not the case. In the ensuing fight with Marie's guards, Jean is wounded further, and eventually succumbs to his infection and passes out.
- As Jean fades in and out of consciousness, he begins to suffer fever induced hallucinations. Meanwhile, Leveau goes to work in treating his wounds. Jean watches Marie perform a voodoo healing ritual and the combination of the bizarre ritual and Jean's fevered hallucinations make us question if we're seeing real magic or not.
- Marie dances and chants with a large snake wrapped around her neck. Jean fades in and out, seeing the shadows dance along with the Voodoo Queen as they change forms, sing and taunting him. Jean slips out of consciousness.

- He awakens a day or two later, having been healed by Marie, who he finds cleaning his rapidly healing wound. Jean is astounded by the woman, and impressed by her commanding presence, grace, and knowledge.
- Marie explains to Jean that she is wanted dead, not for her beliefs or perceived power, but because of all the dirt she has on the wealthy and powerful citizens of New Orleans, gathered from years as a spiritual advisor to the cities elite. We close with Marie offering Jean a new, mysterious opportunity.