

TRUNCATED SAMPLE SCRIPT

Two thirds of this radio play has been deleted. The full play runs 22 pages--about 26 minutes of air time.

If you wish to secure the royalties to the play and the recorded orchestral score, contact Palermo@RuyaSonic.com

GRIM SCARY TALES

"The Pirate's Curse"

An original radio drama by

Tony Palermo

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PRODUCTION SCRIPT
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GRIM SCARY TALES

"The Pirate's Curse"

Prod. #20-X

CAST

NARRATOR	Old pirate captain
DOÑA TERESA	Young Spanish noblewoman
CAPTAIN NEVILLE	Young pirate captain
JUAN PATINO	Ghostly conquistador
MR. BAPTISTE	Pirate quartermaster
CATALINA	Feisty old governess
HOST	The creepy host
SMOLLET	Pirate seaman
POMPEY	Pirate seaman
CAPITÁN CRUZ	Spanish ship's captain
LOOKOUT	Spanish ship's lookout
PEDRO	Spanish scribe

WALLA WALLA ROLES:

Pirates/Sailors/Nervous men

NOTE: The above list is for a cast of 12. A smaller cast of 8 can be used if the following roles are combined for one actor each:

POMPEY/CAPITÁN CRUZ/PEDRO

SMOLLET/LOOKOUT

HOST/BAPTISTE

Either the regular cast or another group can do the Walla Walla roles.

Five sound effects artist teams are also required.

SCRIPT NOTE: Asterisks besides a cue number (for example: 3*) indicate that the performer of that cue wait for music or a sound effect to establish itself and in some cases, await a signal from the director to begin. It is recommended that the master script be marked with a hand-lettered "Q" to the left of these special cues, so they stand out better.

Visit Tony Palermo's Radio Drama Resources web site at:www.RuyaSonic.com

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE/GLOSSARY: "The Pirate's Curse"

DOÑA TERESA	DOEN-ya Tar-EES-ah	Young Spanish noblewoman
CAPTAIN NEVILLE	CAP-tin NEV-ill	Young pirate captain
JUAN PATINO	WAN pah-TEEN-oh	Ghostly conquistador
MR. BAPTISTE	bap-TEEST	Pirate quartermaster
CATALINA	cat-ah-LEEN-ah	Fiesty old governess
SMOLLET	SMALL-it	Pirate seaman
POMPEY	POM-pay	Pirate seaman
CAPITÁN CRUZ	CAP-ee-tan CREWZ	Spanish ship's capitan
PEDRO	PAY-dro	Spanish scribe
Atlantis	at-LAN-tis	Ancient island city that sunk into the sea.
Avast, there!	uh-VAST, there	Stop!
Capitán	CAP-ee-tan	Spanish pronunciation for "Captain"
Conquistador	con-KWIS-ta-door	A leader in the Spanish conquest of America and especially of Mexico and Peru in the 16th century.
Cristobal Colòn	krees-toe-BAL co-LONE	Spanish pronunciation for Christopher Columbus. Italian: Cristoforo Colombo.
galleon	GAL-yee-un	a large Spanish ship
Gobernador	go-bur-nah-DOOR	Spanish for Governor.
Harpy	HAR-pee	A winged monster--half-man, half bird.
mizzenmast	MIZ-en-mast	The mast aft or next aft of the mainmast in a ship.
Señorita	Seen-yor-eeta	Spanish for "miss".
Nereid	NAIR-ee-id	The name of the pirate's ship--after a greek sea fairy.

The Pirate's Curse

1. MUSIC: [A-1] GRIM INTRO. ESTABLISH. CONTINUE UNDER. LET FINISH.

2* HOST: Good evening. Welcome to the horror anthology series, "Grim... Scary Tales". That's right, I said scary tales....NOT the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm--there's no... "happily ever after" here!
(EVIL LAUGH) So turn up the radio, turn down the lamp, and prepare for a little fright... at Midnight--a truly... "Grim ...Scary Tale."
(PAUSE) Tonight, we venture back hundreds of years for a story we call... "The Pirate's Curse" (EVIL LAUGH)

3. MUSIC: [B-2] OLD NEVILLE/SPANISH GALLEON - [BED]- UNDER.

4* NARRATOR: My name is Thomas Neville. I am an old man--lying here, on my death-bed. (COUGH) I've done much in my life--many things I regret. I was a pirate. I butchered men, sank many ships, but I can still recall the one treasure I lost... Doña Teresa de Olivar! (PAUSE) Many years ago, in 1720, she was sailing from Spain to the New World. Doña Teresa was ravishingly beautiful--a spirited young woman of 21, with an old nanny in tow....

SCENE ONE - EXT. SPANISH GALLEON - DAY (1720)

(CATALINA, DOÑA TERESA, CAPITAN CRUZ, LOOKOUT, NARRATOR)

1. **SOUND:** FOOTSTEPS ON DECK. WALLA--SAILORS. WIND. CREAKING.
- 2* **CATALINA:** Doña Teresa! Please get below! You'll catch your death up here, on the deck! Be a lady, m'lady!
3. **DOÑA TERESA:** Catalina, please! It's so dark and confining down there. Let me feel the wind on my face--experience life. Oh, how wonderful this New World is!
4. **CATALINA:** Give me the Old World! There, we're safe from sea serpents, tempests, and the curse of these strange lands. You are young and full of hope. I am old and only seek to keep body and soul together.
5. **DOÑA TERESA:** You are a superstitious fool, Catalina! In Panama, I will study the natives and show them the way of God. Oh, Capitán Cruz! How much farther?
6. **CAPITÁN CRUZ:** (DISTANT) This is the mid-Atlantic ocean, Senorita de Olivar. We're not even near Bermuda!
7. **CATALINA:** Bermuda! Isn't that where the sea monsters lurk?
8. **DOÑA TERESA:** Catalina! Trust God. HE will protect us from evil.
9. **CAPITAN CRUZ:** Ladies, at sea, nothing is impossible and nothing improbable. But it is from men that we must...

1. LOOKOUT: (DISTANT) Capitán! Capitán! A ship is approaching fast! They're flying the black flag!
2. CAPITAN CRUZ: Pirates! (SHOUTS) All hands aloft! Keep the helm amidships! We'll try to outrun them!
3. MUSIC: [A-3] PIRATE ATTACK -[BED]-CONTINUE UNDER.
4. SOUND: WALLA--PIRATES. WIND. CREAKING. CANNON SHOT.
- 5* CAPTAIN NEVILLE: (DISTANT) Ahoy! Spaniards! Strike sail and surrender! Or we will send you to the bottom!
- 6* NARRATOR: Try as they did, they couldn't outrun my black schooner, the Nereid. We came about and fired a broadside into her--toppling the mizzenmast.
7. SOUND: CANNON FIRE. CRASHING. GUNSHOTS.
- 8* NARRATOR: Then volleys of musket-shot! We grappled the ships together and boarded her. It was a glorious battle!
9. SOUND: SWORD FIGHT. WALLA--BATTLING PIRATES

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

(several scenes later...)

9. DOÑA TERESA: All right! (TO HERSELF) It's very cold in here.
What's that smell? (GASPS) Wait! Someone is in
here... with me. (SCREAMS) Ahhh!
10. CONQUISTADOR: (WHISPER) Perdon, senorita. Excuse me.

1. DOÑA TERESA: Who-who are you? You're not a pirate...
2. CONQUISTADOR: I am Juan Patino, a Spaniard--of La Serena.
3. DOÑA TERESA: Why, that's from my part of Spain. Almira! Why are you dressed so strangely? Your helmet, your armor! You look like a conquistador from the 1500s.
4. CONQUISTADOR: Si. I sailed with Admiral Cristobal Colòn--seeking a new passage to India and Cathay.
5. DOÑA TERESA: (PUZZLED) Cristobal Colòn? That was in 1492! It's 1720! (GASPS) H-How did you get here? Are you mad?
6. MUSIC: [B-6] THE CONQUISTADOR'S TALE -[LONG BED]-CONTINUE.
7. SOUND: THUNDER. WIND.
- 8* CONQUISTADOR: No! Admiral Colòn--he was mad! We sailed for months. No land in sight. We feared the monsters, storms, disease. Some of us mutinied! We wished to turn back to Spain, but the rest overpowered us. I and ten other mutineers were cast adrift in a small boat. After weeks at sea, we landed upon a small, deserted island.
- (MORE...)

SCENE SIX - EXT. ATLANTIS -- NIGHT (1492)
(CONQUISTADOR, PEDRO, NARRATOR)

1. SOUND: SEA GULLS. WAVES ON SHORE. JUNGLE INSECTS.

2* CONQUISTADOR: It was a strange and hellish place! There was no sun! It was forever midnight! At the foot of a fiery volcano, lay an ancient temple--with grisly blood-drenched altars! Searching for treasure we accidentally pushed over a pagan idol.

3. SOUND: CRASH. WALLA--NERVOUS MEN.

4* CONQUISTADOR: Beneath it was a large stone tablet. Pedro, the scribe, could make out the words. It was... in some kind of Greek language...

5. PEDRO: (DISTANT) A-T-L-A... Atlantis!

6. SOUND: WALLA--"ATLANTIS!" BUBBLING FOUNTAIN.

7. CONQUISTADOR: The lost continent of Atlantis! At first we rejoiced, but then we remembered that Atlantis had been destroyed by their gods. Stranded in this cursed place...we scouted for food, but found instead--hideous.... skeletons--only half human, with monstrous wings and claws!

1. CONQUISTADOR: Preparing to flee, I was sipping some water from a huge bubbling fountain in front of the temple, when we heard the beating of enormous wings...
2. SOUND: FLAPPING WINGS. SIREN. MAN SCREAMS-OFF. WALLA-GASPS

**SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT
(several scenes later...)**

6. SOUND: SWORD FIGHT. WALLA--PIRATES ATTACK. "GET HIM".
7. MUSIC: [B-8] THE STORM -[BED]-CONTINUE UNDER.
- 8* NARRATOR: I was no match for 80 determined men! They tied me up--then roused Doña Teresa and old Catalina from their cabins. They were just about to set the three of us adrift in a rowboat when, without warning, the weather suddenly.... changed!
9. SOUND: WIND. WAVES. THUNDER. WALLA--PANICKED CRIES.

- 1* NARRATOR: It grew from a dead calm to a fierce gale. The sea started quaking and our ship began to toss. The winds screamed through the shrouds! In vain, the crew manned the chain pumps, but we were doomed!
2. SOUND: CLACKING PUMP. THUNDER. WIND. WAVES.
- 3* BAPTISTE: (DISTANT) Pull! You fat-gutted chuckleheads! Pull!
4. SMOLLET: (DISTANT) Heaven help us! All is lost!
5. NARRATOR: The sea crashed down so hard, it split the ship in two! And down she went--taking nearly everyone to the bottom with her.
6. SOUND: WIND. WAVES. THUNDER.
7. MUSIC: [A-9] THE ISLAND-[BED]-CONTINUE UNDER.
- 8* NARRATOR: Only three of us survived. If I and the women hadn't been in the rowboat, we would also have perished. We washed up on an island, but it was the very last place in the world I wanted to be... Atlantis! Trapped by the tide, we wandered through the ruins until we found ourselves in the same place the conquistador and his party had been--two hundred years ago...

SCRIPT HAS BEEN TRUNCATED AT THIS POINT

(several scenes later...)

1. SOUND: FLAPPING WINGS. WIND.

2* HOST: Some say love never dies, but sadly, it does.
However, it's far worse when it comes back...
looking for you! Just remember, nightmares can come true. (PAUSE) We'll return in a moment, but first, a word from our sponsor...

3. MUSIC: [B-12] FORMULA B-4 COMMERCIAL--LET IT FINISH.

4. MUSIC: [A-13] GRIM SCARY OUTRO-[BED]-CONTINUE UNDER.

5* HOST: This concludes tonight's "Grim... Scary Tale." Our program was written and scored and directed by Tony Palermo. Until next time, we bid you well and remind you--nothing is more evil... than the mind of...man! (EVIL LAUGH)

6. MUSIC: GRIM OUTRO--LET IT FINISH (WOLF HOWLS).

[CREDIT SEQUENCE FOLLOWS ON NEXT PAGE]

1* HOST:

(PAUSE) Our program starred:

- _____ as the Narrator
- _____ as Dona Teresa
- _____ as Captain Neville
- _____ as Catalina
- _____ as the Conquistador
- _____ as Baptiste
- _____ as Pompey
- _____ as Smollet
- _____ as Capitán Cruz
- _____ as Pedro AND...
- _____ as the Lookout

Our sound effects artists were:

- _____, _____,
- _____, _____,
- _____, _____,
- _____, _____,

Our director was _____,

Engineering by _____. I'm _____,

(PAUSE) "Grim Scary Tales" is a hair-raising
production of the _____ Radio Network. (EVIL LAUGH)

THE END.

Radio Skills School

Microphone Technique:

- 1) Sensitive and dead areas. Don't touch!
- 2) Proximity effect. (Boomy if too close.)
- 3) Proper distance for radio acting.
- 4) Dynamics and distance. (Back off to yell.)
- 5) Off mic use for distant sounds. Asides.
- 6) Popping "P"s and S-S-S-Sibilance.
- 7) Mic safety. (hitting, blowing, dropping)
- 8) Assume every mic is always ON.
- 9) Quiet script page turning.

Radio Acting:

- 1) Quiet in the studio.
- 2) Don't cough, laugh, or talk during production.
- 3) Watch the director. Wait for your cue. (Q)
- 4) Speed equals excitement. Don't bore audience.
- 5) Jump in if there's dead air.
- 6) Wait for director's signal at end of show.

Radio Direction "Sign Language"

- 1) "Wait" - Open hand.
- 2) "5-4-3---" - Finger count down.
- 3) "Theme starting" - Form a "T" with hands.
- 4) "Watch for cue" - Point to person then eye.
- 5) "You're on" - Pointing finger.
- 6) "Cut" - Finger slits throat.
- 7) "Faster" - Move index finger clockwise.
- 8) "Stretch it out" - Pulling taffy.
- 9) "Come in/"Back off" microphone - Move hand towards/away from face.
- 10) "Louder" - Elevate the hand, palm up.
- 11) "Quieter" - Lower the hand, palm down.

Grim Scary Tales

Our program, *Grim Scary Tales*, is a 1955-style horror anthology written especially for radio drama workshop use. There are enough acting and sound effects roles to occupy 15-20 participants. The genre, music, sound effects, and themes are all period-authentic.

What's more, the series itself has a back story that's also an education in radio drama.

In the mid-1950s, network radio was dying because television was luring away the game shows, sitcoms and dramas--and their big audiences. That left radio open to more "eccentric" programs--things that you couldn't do on TV such as horror and science fiction. These genres were also in vogue with the emerging teenage culture of the time. So our program is a contemporary of those irony-filled E.C. comic books such as *Weird Science* and *Tales from the Crypt*, as well as movies like *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and *The Thing*.

Our fictional series, *Grim Scary Tales*, is what was called a "sustaining" show--meaning it was being produced by the network *without* a commercial sponsor. Orson Welles' famous 1938 "War of the Worlds" radio drama was also a sustaining show--which sparked such ratings that Campbell's Soup immediately signed on. Sustaining shows often tackled controversial subjects and were much artier than sponsored shows since they were free from advertiser meddling or ratings anxiety. This freedom was attractive to radio dramatists and produced interesting programs. However, as desirable artistic freedom may appear, most radio shows aspired to being sponsored, since the alternative was low budgets and eventual cancellation.

"The Pirate's Curse" relies heavily upon mood music playing underneath the dialogue and sound effects. I composed the music to sustain a sense of dread--which is key to producing horror. In keeping with the 1955 setting of the series, the instruments used are all authentic--there are no synthesizers here, but that is a real Theremin playing on the introduction.

As a radio dramatist, I wrote with the music in mind, intending to create a story that was truly scary and not just a rehash of vampires, werewolves and other horror clichés that, by endless repetition, have lost much of their power to frighten. At the same time, I wrote a drama with 1950s levels of horror, since 21st Century style horror would not be suitable for a student workshop. I don't think students performing the show will be frightened, but listening to it may be another story. Radio drama is a perfect medium for horror. I hope you enjoy telling this grim, scary tale as much as I did creating it.

If you enjoyed this program, there is another, similar script/score available, concerning crooked Crusaders in 1204 A.D. running afoul of creatures from the Arabian Nights. For more information see:

http://ruyasonic.com/em_scripts.htm

Tony Palermo
Writer/Composer

CASTING MONOLOGUES: "The Pirate's Curse"

All actors are asked to read some lines, called "sides," aloud, to audition. The director will cast the roles in our production based upon these readings. Please take a moment to read the lines below several times, both silently and aloud. These monologues can also provide some "back story," giving an idea of who the characters are and what kind of story we are producing. Since radio actors often play several parts, we encourage the use of different voices or accents when auditioning for the different roles.

HOST: Good evening! I'm the creepy host of "Grim...Scary Tales," a 1955 monster-horror-chiller radio show. I do a pretty good Dracula imitation and act real scary to introduce each episode. I have a laugh so evil, it gives me the creeps! (EVIL LAUGHS) Boo!

NARRATOR: I'm a dying pirate, about 80 years old. I tell the story of how I lost the one treasure that mattered to me--a young Spanish noble-woman named Doña Teresa de Olivar. I recall the pirate battles, storms and spooky adventures that led to my ruin!

DOÑA TERESA: Hola! I am Señorita Doña Teresa de Olivar, the 21 year-old daughter of the Governor of Panama. I am on my first voyage to the New World when our ship is captured by pirates! I befriend the capitán, who permits me do what I like best--exploring. However, my curiosity gets me into trouble, but I do survive --in a manner of speaking. You will see!

CONQUISTADOR: I'm Juan Patino, a Spaniard who sailed with Christopher Columbus in 1492. I was set adrift and discovered the lost continent of Atlantis--and its terrible curse. I'm a good storyteller and ghost stories are my specialty. Boo!

CATALINA: I am Catalina Diaz, the governess of Doña Teresa de Olivar. She's young and full of life. I am old and full of fear! With the pirates and storms and ghastly creatures of this New World, I'll be lucky if I make it out of this horror story alive!

SOUND EFFECT ROLES: "The Pirate's Curse"

NOTE: For info on how to make/buy sound effects, see:
http://ruyasonic.com/rdr_sfx.htm

SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #1:

FOOTSTEPS ON DECK - FOOTSTEPS RUN UP
CRASHING
FLAPPING WINGS
SIREN CALL

SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #2:

CREAKING - CREAKING FLOOR.
SWORD FIGHT
JUNGLE INSECTS
ROWING
SWORD UNSHEATHED
CLACKING PUMP

SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #3:

WIND
BODY DROPS TO FLOOR
BUBBLING FOUNTAIN

SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #4:

CANNON SHOT
SWORD FIGHT
CRACKING DECK
THUNDER
A MAN SCREAMS--FADING
SPLASHING WATER

SOUND EFFECTS ARTIST #5:

GUNSHOTS
WAVES. WAVES ON SHORE
FOOTSTEPS RUNNING
SEA GULLS -- VOICE

WALLA WALLA VOICE ARTISTS:

SAILORS--NERVOUS
PIRATES--Battling, cheering, laughing, ship talk, grumbling,
agreeing
SHIP TALK
NERVOUS MEN
ROWERS GRUNTING--"PULL. PULL. PULL. PULL"--quietly.

SOUND EFFECT HOW TO: "The Pirate's Curse"

FOOTSTEPS ON DECK

FOOTSTEPS RUN up, FOOTSTEPS RUNNING
Run at various speeds on walk board.

CRASHING

Shake crash box SFX device.

FLAPPING WINGS

Rapidly open and close an umbrella (be careful!)

SIREN CALL

Crank the Glass-Scratch SFX device.

-

CREAKING - CREAKING FLOOR.

Twist loose SFX chair--(DON'T sit on it!)

SWORD FIGHT

Large metal cooking spoons hit together and on pancake flipper.

SWORD UNSHEATHED

Scrape metal cooking spoon against the edge of pancake flipper.

JUNGLE INSECTS

Rapidly shake several egg maracas.

ROWING

Rhythmically splash in water bucket.

CLACKING PUMP.

Twist toy noisemaker ratchet--continually.

-

WIND:

Crank wind machine SFX device or make mouth sounds close to a mic.

BODY DROPS TO FLOOR

Club a large cardboard box and drop clubs to the floor.

BUBBLING FOUNTAIN

Blow bubbles in water cup--not too often.

-

CANNON SHOT

Club a large cardboard box. (Yell "Fire" first!)

CRACKING DECK

Twist Styrofoam pieces.

THUNDER:

Shake a 2'x4' plastic sheet or a thunder drum

A MAN SCREAMS--FADING

Voice used to simulate harpy victim. "Help help help ahhhhh!"

SPLASHING WATER

Use hands to splash water in bucket.

-

GUNSHOTS

Snap clipboard or rap a leather cushion with a drum stick.

WAVES - WAVES ON SHORE

Tilt wave drum SFX device.

SEA GULLS

Imitate sea gulls with voice.

WALLA WALLA VOICE ARTISTS:**SAILORS--NERVOUS**

PIRATES--Battling, cheering, laughing, ship talk, grumbling, agreeing

SHIP TALK**NERVOUS MEN**

ROWERS GRUNTING--"PULL. PULL. PULL. PULL"--quietly.

ENGINEER'S NOTES: "The Pirate's Curse"**EQUIPMENT NOTES:**

Three unidirectional mics would accommodate actors of various heights. Use one or two mics for sound effects. A dual CD player would allow for fast cross-fading of the music cues, many of which butt up against one another in quick succession. However, a boom box player will serve. There are no special effects or reverbs called for in this script.

MUSIC CUES: "The Pirate's Curse"

These music cues are available from www.RuyaSonic.com as downloadable MP3 files, or on CD. Contact Sales@RuyaSonic.com for details.

- 1) Grim Scary Tales Intro (0:55) [A-1]
- 2) Old Neville/Spanish Galleon: (1:14) [B-2]
- 3) Pirate Attack (1:14) [A-3]
- 4) Doña Teresa's Theme (1:03) [B-4]
- 5) Sea of Lost Ships (1:19) [A-5]
- 6) The Conquistador's Tale (2:46) [B-6]
- 7) A Lonely Death (1:47) [A-7]
- 8) The Storm (1:10) [B-8]
- 9) The Island (0:51) [A-9]
- 10) The Fountain (2:12) [B-10]
- 11) The Return (2:02) [A-11]
- 12) B-4 Commercial (0:34) [B-12]
- 13) Grim Scary Tales Outro (0:44) [A-13]

Music composed by Anthony E. Palermo

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