

The Great Pirate City

"We are, lads, here to be above all else, free," The long haired man at the other end of the bar told the group gathered around him. "And who are we to deny ourselves the freedom that we so rightly deserve?"

The group of men and women grinned at one another and raised their glasses in cheers to the standing man, who pulled the hat from his head with a grin. He was missing a tooth.

"And I implore you, mates, that all are free aboard my ship. Men, women, young, old, whatever you declare yourself, sign up today and get a taste of real freedom, not what they try to sell you on TV." He continued, nodding to a flat screen mounted on the wall behind the bartender pointedly, when a bitter laugh from the bar made the man turn.

It was a fiery blue eyed young man, with windswept blond hair pushed back with a tattered old bandana, pushing his 24th birthday, barely.

"And what, may I ask, could a tyro sailor like yourself find so funny?" The older man challenged, his black hair swinging in front of his face as he turned to study the man at the bar. He calmly sipped his whiskey, draining the glass before standing up and finally facing the man, his blond five o'clock shadow twitching upwards with his mouth in an amused grin.

"Well, one thing'd be you assume I'm a novice sailor." He smirked and set a few silver coins on the bar before continuing, "The second is you think you can walk into this bar, full of greenbloods, and sell that speech. It takes a lot more than some shiny words to lure one o'them to our decks."

"Oh, and who are you to know so much about it, boy?" The old man sneered in a condescending tone, making the group of patrons behind him watch on with utter interest.

"Captain Gabriel Taylor of *The Bloody King*, at your service." The blond grinned proudly, "And these greenbloods don't know the first thing about becoming a pirate." He turned to the group behind the man, now speaking to them directly, "I don't mean any disrespect now lads, but it's the truth. It's why you're all greenbloods to begin with, s'what we call non-pirates where we're from. I command total respect on my vessel, everything needs to be done right and good, only then can you get your pay. So be letting silver tongued men like this weasel here sell you on something that

ain't true, alright? Only good reason a pirate should be in a bar instead of tavern back home is if he's on business, which this fella ain't."

And with that, the young man turned on his heel and walked out of the bar, and he was indeed quite the spectacle, wearing sailing pants and thick leather boots on his feet up to his knees. A long sleeved shirt covered his torso, along with a brass buttoned coat, covered in blue trim. Two pistols at his side and two were strapped to his chest, and a sword was hanging at his side. Various straps and pouches embossed a skull and cross bones also hung off him, completing the look of what was very much a pirate.

"What a crazy time to be alive. Pirates." A man muttered, shaking his head in disbelief as he watched Gabriel stride out the door with a smirk still hanging on his face.

He inhaled deeply as he stepped into the fresh, cooler night air and made his way towards the docks. A seagull protested as Gabriel brushed past him, taking off from the sand into the air, flying off into the full moon that hung in the sky.

"I believe you lectured me once about disturbing the wildlife at such a late hour." A voice called from the deck of the ship, making the man glance away from the retreating bird.

"Aye, I have." He replied, looking up at the woman who made the remark. She had her hands pressed to her hips, her green eyes bright and playful despite the late hour. Her long dark hair was braided behind her, and she was wearing the same shirt, pants and sailing boots she could usually be spotted in.

Gabriel stepped onto the deck and walked over to her, "What was it you said, there were no quiet hours on the sea?"

"Aye, something to that effect." The woman replied, when a head poked up from the hold down below,

"I only found one full bottle of rum, Summer!" They reported, and a messy mop and curly black hair set a bottle on the deck. "Welcome back, cap'n." He added, before climbing up the rest of the stairs to meet the two.

"Ahoy, Jeremy. I take it you-" Gabriel was stopped mid sentence by a call he didn't recognize from ashore

"Excuse me?!"

The three pirates turned and looked to see a young man around the captain's age waiting in the sand.

"Can I help ya, lad?" Gabriel asked, walking over to the rail of the ship to get a better look.

"Yeah, I wanted to...well, I wanted to ask about a job?" He asked nervously, and Gabriel smirked,

"Well, tell me your name and step aboard." He turned to Summer, "Lass, fetch that lantern and pour out that rum, aye?"

"Aye, we can do that." She nodded and both her and Jeremy turned to their task as the man stepped onto the deck, sitting beside Gabriel. They both sat after setting the lantern and some cups in the center of their small circle.

"Now, my name is Gabriel Taylor, Gabe to my friends. This is the lass, my wife, Summer, and that's Jeremy."

The black haired man gave a left handed wave, but considering his right hand was gone at the elbow, he didn't have much choice.

"Hi. My name is Jack." The young man nodded and exchanged handshakes with the three of them before continuing. "Before we talk about a job, can I ask a question? About how all of this got started? You pirates, I mean."

"Aye." Summer spoke up this time, seemingly happy to explain. "'Bout fifty years ago there was a treaty signed by a number of great captains and most countries with ports. We pirates agreed to only attack one another, or ships that preyed on innocent ships, and countries 'round here agreed to open up a few ports to our sorry hides. The islands around here, Welshman's Bay, Trenada, all those, were claimed by other countries, but agreed to let us have 'em for our taverns and towns. They're safe for that reason," She said, taking a quick pause to pour herself some rum from the bottle at her feet and taking a sip,

"As long as we pirates concentrate on one another and the enemy, it's a relatively peaceful relationship. Sometimes scoundrels will hide out on our smaller

islands and try to cause trouble for the governments, and we're aft to sink them on sight. It's why most governments don't catch you for piracy. It's more likely they'll catch one for trying to steal a map or docking at a non-pirate port."

Gabriel crossed his arms and got comfortable as he spoke next, "Not to say it makes piracy legal, by any means. Since we stay out of their way, they let us do as we please. Sea-thieves are notorious for stealing from government run merchant ships, and us. We stay in our waters, they stay out. We kill their enemies, they leave us be" He added, watching Jack lean back on a crate behind him.

"So it all hinges on one treaty." Jack tilted his head. "But who governs you? The pirates. Anyone?"

"Not really." Gabriel shook his head. "Each ship is run by a captain, and each ship is a country of its own. Captains are elected by the crew and controlled by the Quartermaster just like a president and congress, so to speak,"

"I run this ship, so I make the rules. There's a reason captains are so respected everywhere. If they lot decided I wasn't fair, then they'd organize a mutiny. Just like a country with a ruler they don't wish to follow."

Jack nodded slowly as the information sank in, he watched Summer take a drink from her cup and exhale deeply.

"If I were to join you guys, what would I be doing?" Jack asked again, and Gabe thought for a moment before answering,

"Well, you're a greenblood, not much sailing experience by the looks of you. I'd start you in the powder room. Give you a chance to learn the running of my ship before you do any rigging or weaponry." He said, his words not faltering as he took the rum bottle from his wife and poured himself a glass. He took a drink and spoke again,

"Your pay would start at 250 silver a week, standard for my basic deckhands. Stay on long enough and I'll raise it. We're a hunter ship, we sink on sight the outsiders who hide out in our waters, so you'd best be prepared for battle. Jeremy here can give you sword lessons, I require all my crew be able to use one."

Jack's head was spinning with information, it was just so much to take in. He felt like he had just left a college lecture, and he really wasn't sure how to reply, when Jeremy, the one armed man, spoke,

"I like you. Curious. Curious men get things done. Find things out."

Gabriel grinned and eyed his wife with a playful smirk, the same one he had on after leaving the bar. "I could demote the lass, make Jack here the new apprentice navigator."

Summer jammed her elbow into his ribs, not enough to really hurt him, but enough to make her playful point. "And then I'll lead the crew to mutiny and leave you to stand vigil in the bilge." She smirked back, making the captain laugh, and lean in for a kiss, which his wife granted.

"Are they always like this?" Jack asked, leaning closer to Jeremy, who grinned and shook his head,

"Aye. Bully, those two. That means in love, sorry. Don't think Gabriel isn't one of the most feared captains on the sea just because he dotes his wife." Jeremy snickered and took a swig of his rum.

"Go home, gather your things and meet us back here at dawn." Gabe said, pulling away from his wife, but didn't look at Jack, instead staring into his wife's eyes.

"Uhm, alright." Jack nodded and stood up, feeling a bit awkward, like he should give them some space to do what they needed it. He carefully stepped off the ship and onto the dock, his head cloudy and full of information and choices as he headed back into town, towards his own apartment.

When the sun rose, Jack stumbled his way towards the docks, and to his surprise *The Bloody King* was already bustling with life as the crew was hard at work, tending ropes and lines, setting the sails and doing other various chores in the orange and pink hues of the sunrise.

"Come on up!" A voice in the crowd called, and even though Jack couldn't decipher who had spoken to him he stepped onto the dock and dropped his duffel bag at his feet.

Gabriel was hunched over a barrel, studying a map as they prepared to set sail.

As he studied the course, Jack could hear a faint humming as Gabe lazily scratched the blond stubble covering his chin.

"He likes shanties." Summer chuckled as she walked over to Jack and stood beside him, crossing her arms amusedly. "He hums a lot, you'll pick up sea shanties faster than you'd believe hanging around him."

"Who's beside him?"

"Francis Agramunt. Our Quartermaster. Never, ever play any sort of game against this man, because you will most definitely lose. But he's actually pretty nice—you didn't hear it from me." Summer laughed as Jack watched the black haired man's eyes, which were the color of chocolate, scan the map too. He had a diamond stud earring poking from his left ear, and just shouted for the crew to get to work as Gabriel shifted the helm, and a few men above them unfurled the sails, taking them out to sea.

"What we gossiping about, lass?" A man asked, walking over with a grin.

"No gossip, mate. Teaching Jack about the crew. Jack, meet Tristan. The First Mate. You need anything, you come to this man, and he'll get ya sorted out. And I mean anything. The man has evaded more death sentences than any living person should."

Tristan grinned proudly. "Gabe picked me up not 10 minutes after I busted out of a Spanish prison. Been with the man a fair deal of time, and don't plan on leaving soon."

His amber brown eyes shone with joy as he grinned wider, his gold hoop earring glinting in the sun. "Also got a fair deal of skill in navigating, but Jeremy ain't lettin no man take his job."

"And who's that?" Jack asked, nodding to a man with blue eyes, a tanned complexion, and brown hair in a short braid. He had on a pair of short trousers, a shirt with mid-length sleeves, and a pair of sea boots. He also had a wide-brimmed hat and a long vest, accented in some dull yellow colors. Jack could see the scars from a couple of bullets on his legs below the knees.

"That'd be the boatswain." Tristan said, and Jack tilted his head.

"The boswon?" Jack muttered, the word strange on his tongue.

"...eh, close enough." Tristan mumbled.

"Adam is his name. Baldrige. He's a fair man to us crew. Rumor has it he got a wife back on shore, but none a us ever saw her." Summer snorted, crossing her arms. "See that man who just walked up to Adam?"

"Yeah?"

"Frenchman by the name a Jean-François Barrault. Our ship surgeon."

"This ship has a doctor?"

"Aye." Tristan nodded, all three of them studying the green eyed man, with brown hair cut very short. "He's a little touched in the head, sometimes slippin' into other languages, but he's a bully good surgeon aside."

"Lastly we got the hazel eyed fella with the cropped blond hair, he's our ship carpenter, Abraham Evans. The short man missing most a the fingers he should have, you already know is Manuel Ivanov. Always armed to the teeth and busy shoutin. Never fails to be the best Master Gunner I ever worked with." Tristan grinned at that.

Summer laughed. "Lousy shot, but great leader nonetheless. That there is Fin, our cook, and Julian, our powder monkey. He'll be sleeping in the bunk next to you. Julian will take you down after we set sail and he'll get you settled in in a hammock and teach you the job."

"Julian! Get over here!" Tristan shouted and the young man, no older than about 17, made his way over.

"I'm coming, I'm coming. You must be Jack." Julian smiled warmly and offered him a handshake, which was strong and rough. "Follow me."

He followed the teenager down into the belly of the beast, the first stop was a large area where dozens of hammocks were strung up. "Go ahead and lay your bag here, next to mine. That way I'm always near if you need anythin'."

"Thanks." Jack smiled softly and hefted his bag into the center of the hammock. "So Gabriel said last night he was here on business, what is that? I thought you guys stayed in pirate waters?"

"Well, we're picking up supplies for the islands. We'll be back in our own world soon enough, probably by the time you get sick of hearing me talk." He laughed at his own joke before continuing, "Speaking of, it's right this way."

Julian walked down a narrow walkway and opened a wooden door, revealing both crates and sealed barrels, all surrounded by the metallic pungency of gunpowder.

"So for obvious reasons: no matches or flame lanterns in this room. This room goes, we all go. This here," He paused and pulled a clipboard off a nail on the wall, "Is my stock record. I keep written here how much powder we buy, how much we use, how I rotate the old and the fresh. Standard, I'm sure you've seen something like it before. I always pull from the barrel closest to the door and work my way in, because-

The start of Julian's lecture was cut off by an angry shout, which could be heard from above decks, mingled with the frantic ringing of the bell and the shouts of the crew.

"Pull the sails in! Half sails! Get up there an furl em tight! I need to come about!!"

"They be firing on us sir!"

Julian set the clipboard down and waved Jack back outside, back onto deck, where the scene had descended into organized chaos. Pirates were descending from the sails and rigging like spiders, scrambling to take positions at the guns mounted on deck and load them with cannon balls.

"Brace!" Gabe shouted, and the entire crew hit the deck, grabbing onto the nearest fixed object. Julian grabbed Jack's arm and yanked him down, hard, onto the deck as the enemy's cannonfire ran over their heads.

"When he says brace, he means it!" Julian said over the commotion, as the rest of the crew jumped back up to their feet.

"Man the cannons! She'll be swinging round to our broadside!!"

The same man who had been shouting shoved something in Jack's hands. "Take this below deck, follow Julian! Bring back powder to men who need it!" He shouted over the turmoil, and Jack was dazed as the teenager grabbed his arm and hauled him below deck.

"Fill 'er up and the men will shout for powder, bring it to 'em and keep going!" Julian nodded to the empty container in Jack's hands. "No better time to learn than the heat of battle!" He grinned and hurried past him, back onto deck.

He raced up the steps and caught eye of Summer, instead of up in the rigging as she had been before, she was at a cannon near the front of the ship.

"Fire broadside!!" Gabriel commanded over the noise.

"Fire in the hole!" Summer warned and lit the fuse before covering her ears. Men around her did the same and Jack's ears erupted with deafening the crack of cannon fire. They rang violently, making his head spin.

"Brace!!"

Again, everyone braced against the deck as the enemy ship fired back.

"Load up chain shots! We board her! Raise the red flag! No quarter if they fight back!"

"Wait, what's going on?"

"We're boardin her and takin what we need." Summer said, as she yanked a rope and tied it to a peg. "If they try and fight us, we have no mercy. They fired first."

"Fire broadside chain shots!"

Summer lit the fuse and the nearby crew covered their ears, Jack copying this time, his ears still ringing like mad from the first round of shots.

Chained cannonballs swung across the sea and ripped through the man of war's mast.

“Again!”

“Fire in the hole!”

Jack watched as the mast of the other ship cracked violently and began to fall. Gabe took them closer with one mighty heave of the wheel.

The crew grabbed anything nearby as weapons if they didn't have swords and leapt onto the other ship, some using ropes to climb over, others slapping thick boards across the gap and running across.

The pirates shouted with vigor and suddenly swords were clashing, fists were thumping against heads and limbs, muted by the occasional pistol shot.

Jack remained frozen where he stood, just sort of mesmerized by it all. Julian stood beside him.

“Get ready to fight in case any o’those blighters get on board.” He said, offering him a sword. Jack slowly took the weapon from his hand and gripped it tight, he wasn't sure he could use it should he need to, but it didn't seem right to mention that to Julian in the midst of battle. A cry of pain made Jack look back to the deck of the other ship, where Gabriel had just dropped the captain down to the deck, dead. “Take what we need boys and be off!”

The crew scurried off to work, and the enemy just cowered at the wayside, watching, too afraid to keep fighting after seeing their leader dispatched so easily. Food, barrels and bags of money were hauled over the planks and onto the ship.

“Now, is it fair to assume you see what happens to smugglers and law breakers in pirate territory?” Gabriel growled, seeming an entirely different man than the smirking captain in the bar. “Take this worthless ship of yours, and get out. Next time I see you, I leave no quarter.” He said, his tone nearly as sharp as his sword. “Men! Back on board! We sail away!” He commanded, and the rest of his crew dismounted the enemy's ship and reboarded *The Bloody King*.

By the time this had all ended, the sky was a sleepy orange and purple as stars made their way into existence, the sea was smooth, unaware of the murder and piracy that was taking place on her surface.

Jack, however, was pale and hyperventilating. Never before today had he seen a man murdered, especially as punishment, and never with his own two eyes.

"You look pallid, lad." Jeremy said, and looked up shouting, "Jean-François! Take the new man below, I think his greenblood is showing!"

And as Jack struggled to not hyperventilate and pass out from his sheer panic, the Frenchman lead him down below decks.

It was maybe an hour later when a gentle knock on the doorframe made Jack look up from the cot where he was sitting.

"How goes it?"

"I really wasn't expecting murder." Jack said quietly, and Summer nodded in understanding,

"Aye, I know things are different here. But given the chance, that man would have slaughtered us all, then a bunch of innocents in our wake. Anyway, I know what will ease your mind."

"What's that?"

"Come and see." Summer grinned at him and headed up. Jack hesitated for a moment before following. The crew was all gathered around several lanterns, which had brightened up the deck with a warm orange glow. Several bottles of rum were strewn about, and the men were...singing?

Tristan was leading the song, and the rest of the crew joined in at certain bits, occasionally cheering or shouting joyfully. Gabriel was up at the helm, keeping the ship moving ahead, a little distanced from the crew, but watching with a faint smile. Beside him was the Quartermaster, Francis, who was leaning against the rail beside Gabriel, occasionally saying something to the captain. Summer nudged Jack forward, encouraging him to socialize with the crew.

"You'll find out what lines to sing real quick. Go on, they don't bite."

Jack glanced back at her before walking over and sitting beside Julian, who passed him a cup with a smile, and once he peered inside, he saw it full of rum,

which the rest of the crew was drinking as well. "Nice to have ya join us again. Just sing along with me, I won't let ya get lost."

He turned to see where Summer was going to sit, but he was surprised to see she wasn't there. After looking around, he saw her standing beside the captain, closer than Francis was standing to him.

She said something to Gabriel and he nodded, replying as he passed her the bottle of rum sitting beside him on a barrel. She took a swig as he continued to talk, wiping off her lip before passing it back to him. Summer crossed her arms too and nodded, replying to whatever it was he had said. He watched Gabriel turn to face her, gently running his thumb over the slice on her cheek.

Summer shook her head again, putting a hand over his, and that's when Jack felt his brow furrow in contemplation. He had just seen this man *kill* another without hesitation, and yet here he was worrying over a small nick on his wife's cheek.

Julian nudged him, making Jack turn away from the scene.

"What's eating you now?" He asked, tilting his head a bit.

"Bully good captain, he." Jeremy spoke up, taking a draw from his mug, seeming to understand what the younger man didn't. "Don't you worry none about your safety, Jack. Gabriel would never so much as lay a finger on one o'us. In fact, you're safer in that very spot than you ever were on land."

"Aye." Tristan chuckled, shaking his head as he leaned forward to refill his glass of rum. "Downright terrifying man to his enemies though. Ain't ever wanted to be on the pointed end o' that sword."

"That man," Jeremy raised his glass of rum at the captain in reference, "while you should act like you fear him, no real reason to." Jeremy shook his head. "He even hates yelling at us to work harder, pays Francis to do it for 'im." He added with a snicker.

"Really?" Jack muttered.

"Of course." Tristan said, leaning back again, resting on the crate behind him. "He's really a nice man. We just don't want the world knowing that. He didn't get a reputation for being feared from Florida to Algeria by being a kitten, now did he?" He

snorted and took a sip of some rum. "That's the secret to being a good captain: crew that respects you, enemies which fear you."

Jeremy drained the glass of rum in his hands before he cocked his head back towards the helm and hollered,

"Lass! Come give us a shanty! These men can't sing for the life of them!"

Gabriel and Summer both looked over, from where it seems they had been sharing a kiss, and Gabriel smirked broadly, clearly incredibly amused as he retorted,

"Jeremy, what've I said about keelhauling the next man who interrupts me kissing my wife?!"

"Ah, settle down, captain." Summer laughed and patted his arm gently, "I'm coming, lads." She grabbed her cup of rum and sat down across the circle before taking a swig of the sharp drink, which Jack had been sipping tentatively.

"Now. Requests?"

Several men shouted the names of songs Jack absolutely didn't recognize, but one seemed to stick out to the woman, because she began to sing. She was decidedly better than any of the slightly drunk pirates who joined her for the chorus, and a handful of songs later, most of the crew was ready to call it a night.

"Coming, mate?" Julian asked, and Jack nodded and stood up, he watched Gabriel turn his head to Francis and say something, to which the older man nodded and took the helm from his hands. Summer and Gabe walked off to the deck, to a door just under the helm, shutting it. Jack figured it must've been the captain's cabin, where they were going to sleep for the night as the crew make their way below.

The man chatted quietly, droopy eyed and yawn-filled as they removed their boots and shirts, weapons and whatever layers were unnecessary for sleep before climbing into their hammocks. Whatever lanterns that hung on the walls were snuffed out, so Jack climbed into his white cloth hammock and found it surprisingly comfortable. It swayed a bit with the rocking of the ship itself, and the rhythmic motion mixed with the pure chaos of his day sent him into a deep sleep.

The noise of the waking crew roused him as well, the men around him pulling their boots and swords on, seemingly in no hurry to get above deck today, until he heard a faint cry of land ho from Gabriel.

Jack realized they must be ready to dock at their destination, a city called Welshman's Bay, having overheard the crew discussing it the night before.

While outsiders, greenbloods, weren't privy to much information that went on in the isles, the city of Welshman's Bay was known as 'The Great Pirate City' for being the biggest and first of the cities that dotted the pirate controlled islands. The area was littered with ships busy docking and unloading cargo, or just taking off on a voyage, and as Jack's ship neared the port, he could hardly believe his eyes.

The first thing that caught his eye was the market, where fishermen, farmers and traders who were unabashed by the busy workers, peddled their wares for the freshly docked pirates as they left their ships.

The houses were small and shoved together haphazardly, as if someone just decided to drop it in one spot for convenience, which was basically how it worked. Merchants, fishermen, sailors and their families, all just set up ragged homes wherever they pleased near the shops and brothels. The entire market and docks simply breathed life, with everyone going about their daily business, dogs running around beside their owners and kids playing in the water, sand and streets.

Jeremy walked up beside him with a yawn, clearly more interested in getting home to his bed than sightseeing. "Welcome to Welshman's Bay, mate. If you're going to go house hunting, I'd recommend you get a cabana on the beach like the lass and captain. A city house is all and well until one day you find your neighbor picks the lock and rents out the place your at sea."

"That's incredibly specific." Jack eyed the one armed navigator, who smirked.

"Whether that's a tavern tale or a personal yarn, I'll leave it up to your imagination." He said, clapping his shoulder amusedly before walking over to Tristan on the other end of the deck.

Gabriel eased the ship onto the dock and Francis shouted for the anchor to be dropped. Once that was done, Gabe stepped down the stairs and walked over to Jack.

“Well, here she is. If you’re not ready to commit to a house just yet, there’s a dozen or so taverns nearby with decent beds, you can put it on my tab. All the owners know me by name. We’ll be taking off for sea again in two day’s time anyhow.”

“I honestly never imagined this is what the city would look like.”

“Most greenbloods don’t.” Gabriel chortled, “I was surprised myself, when I came here as a lad. Mate, I know it’s been a busy day since you left home. It’ll take time to absorb it all. But sure as the tides, when you’re settled in, you’ll never be happier. Everyone belongs here, so as long as you’re a good man and you pull your weight. Sailing will get easier, living here away from how you’ve grown will get easier, and soon you’ll find a whole new side of yourself.” He paused to look out to the city as Summer, Jeremy and Tristan walked down the crowded street together, the camaraderie clear on their faces.

“There’s a whole new world here for you, mate. Be glad you’re one of the few greenbloods that gets to see it, there ain’t many of us. That man you saw in the bar, what he was saying wasn’t a lie. We do this for the freedom. I have many loves, the freedom the sea gives me, the ship I worked hard to restore, the silver I get in my travels, the feeling of pure joy when I see my crew celebrate a victory, but nothing compares to the love I feel when I get to do all this with the lass I love,”

Gabriel smiled at him, an amicable, genuine grin. “However I don’t employ men simply for the ability to dream of good things, and now you’ve seen why. It’s a bloody life sometimes. It’s a life full of physical labor, long days and at times, pain. But when I wake each day, I step on deck with a crew of men I call my family, I put in my work, then I end my day with some really, really good whiskey. I never know what the world will throw at me that day, and that’s what I love. I’m a free man in all senses of the word. You’ll do well here, I know it.” Gabriel finished confidently with another smirk, the same self-assured and daring one he’d been wearing in the bar that night, and walked off the deck towards where his wife and two friends had disappeared into the crowd in search of their company.

Jack watched him go until he couldn’t see the blond haired captain anymore. He sighed and picked up his duffel bag before taking a deep breath and stepping into the mass of people himself. There was no turning back now, Jack was a new man.

He was a pirate.

