The secret journal of captain Cook

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THE SECRET JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN COOK
A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the degree

DOCTOR OF CREATIVE ARTS

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

MARK McKIRDY M.C.A.

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

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DECLARATION

The thesis, *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook*, and its accompanying annotations, have not been submitted for a degree to any other university or institution.

Signed

[Signature]

Date

August 1, 1994
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to acknowledge the assistance given to me in the preparation of this thesis by the School of Creative Arts within the University of Wollongong.
On the 26th of August, 1768, James Cook sailed from Plymouth in his ship, the *Endeavour*. It was the first of three great voyages by Cook, and part of his commission was to observe the Transit of Venus in Tahiti in June, 1769, and to then locate, if possible, the Great Southern Continent before returning to England. Cook completed the former, and on the 19th of April, 1770, he located the latter, sailing up the east coast of Australia till the *Endeavour* ran aground near *Cape Tribulation* on the 11th of June, 1770. The ship was repaired and finally reached England on 13 July, 1771.

In his daily journal, Cook recorded the details of the voyage along the east coast of Australia, and ascribed the main cause of his ship running aground to the inconstancy of unfamiliar waters.

My thesis, *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook*, concentrates on the Australian section of Cook's first voyage, from April 19, 1770 till mid June, 1770, and purports to be Cook's 'truthful' account of what really happened during that time. It was supposedly written in his house at Mile End not long after he had returned to England.

As he states in this 'newly-discovered' work, it was not the inconstancy of unfamiliar waters which was the cause of the ship running aground. The truth of the matter was that the crew Cook took with him was so
incompetent and preoccupied with personal feuds that disaster was inevitable.

Being an honourable man, Cook felt compelled to set the record straight, irrespective of the cost to his reputation or naval future.

Cook's authentic and serious account of his first voyage was written in diary format. Unlike that diary, my thesis is a humorous, largely fictitious, first-person narrative.
THE SECRET JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN COOK

Being the True Account of the *Endeavour*

and Her Crew in the Antipodes

1770
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Introduction

The remarkable document revealed for the first time within these bindings began its own voyage into the broad, and sometimes hostile, waters of scholastic scrutiny and public interest on a blustery English day in the autumn of 1983.

I was in residence at Balliol College, Oxford, preparing a post-doctoral dissertation on electromagnetic radiation and how microwaves in their various lengths have greatly advanced the science of reheating left-overs. As I was about to place a portion of yesterday's pork pie into the oven, my concentration was interrupted by a knock on the door. Upon opening it, I was greeted by a grey-haired, leather-faced old man in a blue duffel coat. When he removed the pipe from his mouth and said, "Mornin'. William Abernathy, able seaman, retired, Sir," his voice was the deeply resonating result of years of salt, aromatic Amphora and rum.

Abernathy knew of my work in the fields of science, anthropology and history, and he told me that he possessed a manuscript which might be of interest.

Unaware at the time of the significance of his remark, I ushered him into the room and closed the door. For me, another was about to open.
Depositing his skeletonised frame into a chair, Abernathy then unbuttoned his coat and produced the dust-covered volume. I put my glasses on and read the title; *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook*. It was an exhilarating moment.

After scanning the text for a few minutes, I asked Abernathy how he'd come by the manuscript and he explained that it had been in his family since it had been willed to his great-great grandfather, the publisher whom Cook had submitted it to following his 1770 antipodean voyage.

According to my visitor, the manuscript, whose publication had been suppressed by the Admiralty because it reflected poorly on several prominent members of that august body, had then passed into the hands of succeeding Abernathy generations.

As the present holder had no heirs, or indeed graces, judging by the way he polished off my pie, he had decided to donate the journal to the University.

Hence our meeting.

During the years since my introduction to the manuscript, much research has taken place in order to validate it and I am now in a position, after consulting extensively with England's A.J.P. Taylor and Australia's Geoffrey Blainey, to stake my reputation on the fact that it is authentic.
I have now released the Cook manuscript to public exhibition because of its intrinsic historical interest, its implications upon the body of work in anthropology and as a result of being offered a whacking great advance by Oxford University Press.

Mark McKirdy
On Sabbatical,
Poolside Bar,
Club Med,
Ebb and Flow

April 1770
THURSDAY 19th April 1770. ... Never, in the history of great ocean voyages, has there been such a marked contrast between two succeeding days as there was between April the 18th and today.'

That was the final sentence of my log entry which signalled the beginning a truly remarkable period for my ship, Endeavour, and her crew.

The 18th began as so many days had begun before it. A Kilkennyman master I'd once served under, on a vessel many years earlier, had a phrase that described it: "Jimmy, loif at sea's oither gob-gapin' boredom or it ain't. An' if it ain't, den you ain't at sea. An' if you ain't at sea, den y'r prob'ly a bookkeeper. An' oi can't tink of anytin' more gob-gapin' dan bookkeepin'. Would y' be handin' me one more of dem bottles, Jimbo? Oi'm feelin' a wee bit tirsty."

It took me a while, but I finally worked out what the rum-ruined master was trying to say. There's a sameness to the tides and the oceans and days on ships that can become tiresome. The 18th was one of those. The sun rose and filled the sky, and the lack of a breeze again saw the ship's main topgallantsails empty. In response to the boatswain's barking, the hands then rose, cursing the early hour as usual, reported for muster then
scrubbed the upper decks. That's stretching it a bit. It wasn’t really a scrub; more like a light buff because the only thing any of those idlers ever put his back into was his shirt. At seven bells the hammocks were piped up, and at eight bells the crew was assembled for breakfast on the lower deck. As soon as the eating was done, the boatswain bellowed his familiar order: "The cap’n’ll be ’ere any tick so get your snouts out of the trough and swab these decks!"

I was already there, and the boatswain turned in surprise when I said quietly, "Bullying again, Mr Gathrey? How many times do I have to tell you that you’ll find the men less resentful if you give them a little respect?"

"I reckon they get as little as they deserve."

Given the cramped conditions, I stood as tall as I could and asked Gathrey if he was being deliberately obtuse.

The boatswain’s face reminded me of a navigation chart; blank at first then heavily lined as a scowl of uncertainty appeared.

"Ostube, Cap’n? What’s..."

"Obtuse. It means dull; feeble-minded."

"No, Sir. Not me. Nothin’ deliberate ’bout it. It comes natural like."

"I feared as much. Then let me try a different tack. Does the word ’bastard’ mean anything to you?"
Gathrey’s grin indicated that we were now sailing in familiar waters.

"Now we’re getting somewhere. And has anyone ever called *you* a bastard?"

A couple of seconds of thoughtful silence followed.

"You mean like in ‘Good on y’r, you ol’ bastard’?"

"No, more like ‘You stupid bastard’.

Irritatingly, Gathrey sucked some air into the decayed hole between his front teeth. "Maybe one or two."

"Who?"

"Well, me mother f’r starters. And her boyfriends. And her lodgers..."

"I get the picture."

"... and me school teachers...

"I said I understand."

"... and me five ex-wives. And every sailor I’ve ever been to sea with, ‘ceptin’ you, of course..."

"Gathrey, you stupid bastard! Will you shut up and get on with it!"

"Yes, Sir. Right, lovely boys, you ’eard. Let’s get some air down ’ere."

Hatches were then opened, throwing light and air onto the damp and musty shawl that had settled over every sack, cask and barrel the previous night. At midday, the sun’s altitude was taken by the ship’s officers and then, in response to the master’s report, the officer of the watch stepped across the quarter-deck, took off his hat, and advised our latitude.
"Make it twelve, Mr Hicks," I replied, formally marking the beginning of another nautical day. Eight bells was then sounded and the crew was ordered to lunch. Towards the pinkening evening the routine continued, with the crew being piped to their meal and then later to their hammocks on the lower deck where they were told to pipe down or else. The night watch was then set and the ship, its wake a silvery squiggle in the moonlight, followed the course determined.

The conversation I had with my 3rd lieutenant in my cabin later that evening reflected the regularity.

"It's always the same. Yellow sun, blue sea and salt on the teeth. Sir, I've got an idea. Remember those chess games we played at the start of the voyage, the ones where we drank a couple of beers and you kicked your shoes off and talked about your family? How about a game now?"

"No thank you. I'm too preoccupied with this southern continent. If we don't find it soon we'll be forced to sail home with part of our commission incomplete, and that's not a prospect I welcome. I'd rather the ship went down with all hands."

Gore unbuttoned the collar of his shirt and shook his head. "I'm not sure the hands would feel the same sense of duty, given that they're all devout quakers."

"Quakers? Who told you that load of rubbish?"
"Nobody. I've seen them. In their boots when it's rough, in their hammocks in the dark. There aren't enough vertebrae between the lot of them to make a complete backbone."

For once, Gore was right. Even though he'd come to the *Endeavour* with an enviable reputation, I concluded very early in the voyage that the only type likely to envy John Gore's standing was that which operated low to the ground and left a slimy trail. But he did have a quality which I found attractive; he made himself scarce on just about every occasion involving work or decisions. It was a case of out of sight, out of mind; my sight, his mind.

"John," I said, mesmerised by the scene of his long fingers scratching at the lice leaping through his reddish, matted hair, "you're quick to point out the speck in your brother's eye, but you should take a look at yourself now and then. You might see the log in your own."

Gore had trouble grappling with the gist of the comment. "How would a log get in my eye in the first..."

"Don't bother closing the door when you leave. I'll do it."

I did, and the hull, decks, masts and rigging all vibrated for a solid minute.
It had been just another twenty-four hours in a twenty-four-month voyage, and with the words 'New day, new land' in unison with the rhythm of the tick-tocking clock in the cabin, I lay on my bed and stared through the porthole. A shooting star flared across the sky, its light-line impressed on my retinas as my eyes closed. It was just past 2 a.m.

Then at dawn on the 19th, as six bells was sounding and the ship's bow was slicing through a paper-smooth sea under a southern sky that was just beginning to flame with new energy and hope, I was woken by a startling cry from the look-out that echoed long and loud through every part of the ship.

"LAND HO!"

It was the cry that I'd been waiting weeks to hear.

As I pulled my uniform on and opened the cabin door, a melee of marines was rushing past.

"Mornin', Cap'n!"

"Good news, eh, Skipper?"

"Comin' up, Sir? Sounds like we've done it! The Great Southern Continent! Let's hope it's not another Nieuw Zeeland."

"Look out, you buggers! I'm comin' through like one of the cook's oat cakes! Oh, sorry, Sir, didn't see you there. After you."
I told Sergeant Edgecumbe to lower his voice and move his carcass out of the way. Then as I stepped into the narrow corridor, surrounded by bright smiles, blackened teeth and stubbled chins, my mind flashed back to the last port of call just mentioned by the charging seaman. It was the island group Abel Tasman first called 'Staten Landt' in 1642, and while I'd relished the six-month challenge of charting its coast and recording some observations regarding the war-like, tattooed natives, there wasn't much else of note. The bubbling mud held little scientific significance and I agreed, at least in part, with Joseph Banks when he'd said one day ashore, "Mr Cook, warm springs are only worth jumping into when they're supporting a feathered mattress. And a feathered mattress is only worth jumping onto when it's supporting some giggling country girl with really large holdings. Know what I mean?"

I knew precisely what the indulged lecher had meant but I didn't bother commenting. In fact, a lot of Joseph's conversation during the three years wasn't worth commenting on. He was in some respects like Nieuw Zeeland. The most attractive part of one was its rapidly receding shore-line and the most gratifying part of the other was his steadily receding hair-line.
So on this invigorating April morning, with the wind in my face and a speckling of salt on my lips, I stood on the *Endeavour*'s quarter-deck and viewed the object of our search for the first time. And what a remarkable sight it was. Truly exceptional. From a distance of almost a league, the land appeared to be rather flat and brownish-green, with almost no hills as interruptions. A few trees, similar in size to poplars and with thick canopies, were scattered at irregular intervals, their dark green foliage contrasted by the white feathers of the birds that flocked and squawked all about them. Surrounding these trees, for as far as the eye could see, was a low, woody scrub. They reminded me of guardsmen in busbies encircled by a crowd of scruffy-haired children.

Through the telescope, there was no sign of any natives, although several crude shelters and the remnants of as many cooking fires were visible near a clearing at the shore. It was this shore which really commanded one's attention. Wide and white as a tablecloth, flattened even more by the occasional breaker that swept on to it and then swept quickly back.

I closed my eyes for a couple of seconds, breathed deeply and then opened them. The land was still there. On the quarter-deck with me were John Gore, 2nd Lieutenant Hicks, Joseph Banks and his two dogs carried from England.
"Anybody want a hug?" the wide-eyed 2nd lieutenant said to no-one in particular. "One minute you're dragging yourself around the ship with your bum out of your breeches, and bingo, the next sees you up here piddling yourself with excitement."

None of us dared move so much as an eyelash. It was the sort of comment I'd heard often from Zachariah, a lanky man whose spirit and substance depended for their happiness upon one factor - the sea. From it flowed his joy and purpose, and his knowledge of it, according to him, was an addition to my own. Again by his own assessment, he was competent, mature and hesitant to defer to lesser intellects. Gore's judgement was slightly different, and I'll quote the words he used in his speech of welcome in the officers' mess not long after we'd sailed from England: "Mr Hicks, I know I speak for the entire British navy when I say you're the sort of person who brightens a room just by leaving it."

"Hear hear!" we'd all added as he flung the door open and stormed out.

So when the first glimpse of the Great Southern Continent was acknowledged with shouts and acclamation from Mr Banks, my chest heaved. Mr Gore's chest was also heaving, but it had less to do with pride and more to do with the swells we were riding.

"You don't seem your normal chirpy self, John," Hicks commented. "This is a moment that will go down in history so perk up."
Gore’s literal interpretation of the suggestion sent several crewmen scurrying for cover. Not so mobile was the ship’s goat, the one which had previously circumnavigated the globe with Samuel Wallis in his ship, *Dolphin*. It was a reliable milker, essential for our coffee, and it had been kept atop since leaving Nieuw Zeeland because the smell below had become intolerable. For the goat, that is, so to get it away from the reek of the ranks, I had it tethered to the windlass. Now here it was, being banged and buffeted by panic-driven sailors, its hooves slipping and eyes bulging as it spun in ever-diminishing circles. Finally the rope gave way under the strain and the enraged ruminant made a direct charge towards the only part of Gore which wasn’t hanging over the quarter-deck’s rail. And at the eagerly anticipated moment when horns were just about to contact hindquarters, Gore straightened and stepped aside. Undeterred, the bleating, blurting goat kept going, ramming the rail and knocking itself stupid.

"That’s better," Gore said as he wiped his mouth with his sleeve. "I feel like a new man."
Sergeant Edgecumbe stepped out from behind the main mast and hoisted the goat onto his broad shoulders. "You won’t find any up here, Mr Gore," he said, slipping slightly on the wet deck, "but I'll see if I can get you one below after I've dumped this poor bugger in the hold. And now that it's out of commission, it looks like youse'll have to settle for short blacks with your ports t'night."

As usual, Joseph Banks sought to impose himself into the situation. "Mr Cook," he announced, steadying himself by grabbing hold of the rigging, "let's forget this egalitarian rubbish about inviting natives, either short or tall, onto the ship and concentrate our intellects upon the imperatives of nomenclature which will elevate an already distinguished member of our company to a pre-destined, socio-historical prominence; a stature iconic in its influence and..."

My jaw clenched involuntarily. "Will you speak plainly. You're not at a Royal Society meeting now!"

"All right," he snapped, gazing towards the shore. "Because that outcropping of rugged land is over there and I'm here, I propose that it be called 'Cape Banks'. If you could just jot that down on the chart, I'd be very pleased."
I told him, in no uncertain terms, that I wasn’t one of his Lincolnshire servants employed for the sole purpose of toadyng to his privileged conceits. Before he had a chance to respond, I asked the others to suggest alternative names.

2nd Lieutenant Hicks wasted no time in adding his tuppenceworth of grey-matter. "I vote we call it 'Point Hicks'."

"'Point Hicks' be damned!" Banks bellowed. "I’m the eminent scientist. What are you? A working-class waste of skin in a funny hat."

Overhead, a lone gull hovered against the breeze as Hicks stood his ground. "I say it should be called 'Point Hicks' because I was the first to point at it."

Hicks may have been a waste of skin in a funny hat, but because we shared the same place in society, Banks had as much chance as clean sheets in a dosshouse.

"Sounds fine to me," I said. "What about you, Mr Gore? Any objections?"

Gore had his backside in the air and his head over the rail again. I swallowed hard and stepped back just as a thundering, chundering jurgle rent the air. "Was that a 'no'? Good, that’s settled. 'Point Hicks' it is."

Incensed by the rebuff, Banks’ face turned a furious red and the large vein in his forehead bulged. He then seized his whippets, thumped Gore in the guts for good measure and strutted off to his cabin.
At the time, the incident struck me as being trivial, so I didn’t attempt to call Banks back. Hicks took a different view, which was nothing new. “You’d better say something to him, Captain, or you know what’ll happen. He’ll sit in his cabin and sulk and hate us even more because we’re the type who work for wages. I reckon those notions come with their mothers’ milk.”

Gore came up for air, heard the word ‘milk’, then went down again.

I looked at my hands as they gripped the rail. The knuckles were white. “As far as I’m concerned, the arrogant little prick can stuff himself into one of his jars, jam the stopper and rot in his cabin forever.”

Hicks’ eye-brows shot up as he asked me why my language was less tempered than usual.

My hands tightened even more. “Because the effect is quicker than grog and less guilt-ridden than murder. Does that answer your bloody idiotic question?”

The lieutenant nodded, then added obsequiously, “And you’re right about Banks. Let the stupid little prick sulk till the cows come home. Who frigging-well cares?”

“If you mention cows or milk again, Zachariah,” Gore spluttered, turning seaweed-green as he dropped to the deck, “I’ll kick your arse all the way back to England.”

As I took the wheel, I actually heard myself laughing for the first time in months.
Although I didn't ever tell him, I realised later that Hicks had been right and that I should have said something to Banks. Here, in a distant latitude and adjacent to an uncertain shore, my prejudice had unwittingly sown the seeds of disharmony which were to bear much soured fruit during the remainder of our southern voyage.

To set the record straight, just so that I can sleep without waking up in a cold sweat, I want to reveal, for the first time, that it was this disharmony which almost ended our journey and our lives on the coral reef near Cape Tribulation two months and 1,650 miles further on.

I am fully aware that this contradicts my official journal, in which I stated that the reason for our running aground on the reef was the inconstancy of unfamiliar waters. These waters were a factor but only a minor one.

This revelation may well cause the Admiralty to review my status and naval future. If so, then it's a price I'm willing to pay because the worry bound up in half-truth is becoming unbearable. And it's worse when Elizabeth and I fight. At any given moment, the slightest glance is enough to provoke an argument, one I can never win. "You're a father," she says at the end, "so for your children's sake, tell what really happened."

A knife in the heart.
And when we're not bickering, we simply sit in the cold silence of our separation and loathe both the distance and the deception. She's not the same woman she was three years ago and I haven't got a clue why. All I know is that since returning from the voyage, the Elizabeth Batts whom I married in the Parish Church of Little Barking ten years ago is now a terrier yapping at my heels.

It has to stop.

So a short time after land had been sighted and Banks had taken himself below, he clambered back up through the main hatch and joined Hicks and me at the wheel. I'd hoped that his earlier outburst would have caused him to be a little embarrassed, but when he smiled, held out his arms and shouted, "I'm back, chaps, but please don't cheer!", I sensed that the botanist's lexicon didn't list the term *shrinking violet*. Wanting no further strife, I welcomed him with a casual nod and then asked him to identify certain structures which dotted the shore-line and distant hills. Joseph pondered for a moment or two, then, without asking if he could borrow it, grabbed my telescope and clamped it to his eye. He then dropped the 'scope onto the deck and called for one of his reference books. It was brought by Briscoe, one of his retainers, and after his master had consulted several pages, he looked up and announced, "According to this, they're trees of some sort."
In order to minimise the irritation which my twitching figers betrayed, I then mentioned to Zachariah my curiosity regarding some smoke billowing near the beach. The 2nd lieutenant immediately conferred with Banks, turned back to me as I picked up the 'scope and said, "He tells me it's the visible vapour from burning substances."

In terms of a heroic act of will, it didn't take much to ignore Hicks. "Joseph," I said as I turned the wheel gently, "where were you educated?"

"At Harrow and Eton and then Oxford."

The ship listed slightly to port, crested a wave, then levelled. "And you were made a member of the Royal Society at twenty-eight?"

"It was twenty-two. The youngest to be given such an honour and damned-well deserved, I might add."

"I thought you might. And roughly how much do your estates in Lincolnshire, Derbyshire and Sussex bring in each year?"

Banks uncurled eight lily-white fingers. "About six thousand pounds."

"And you're on good terms with the Earl of Sandwich and King George?"

"Absolutely. But what's all this leading to?"
"Well, Joseph, it's like this. You've got wealth, education, prominent connections and prestige, so why do you act like a bloody idiot sometimes?"

Banks grabbed the wheel, held it rock steady and looked me straight in the eyes. "Just who are you calling a bloody idiot?"

I answered by simply returning his stare.

With that, the botanist turned on his heels and was gone again. When Hicks saw me rubbing the backs of my aching legs, he took control of the ship's course and said, "Good on you. I bet nobody's had the courage to call him a bloody idiot before."

A large swell suddenly caused me to grab hold of the poop's rail. "Perhaps, but I believe in speaking it as I see it. By the way, has anyone bothered to wash this rail down since Gore puked on it?"

Like some pesty mole coming up for air, Banks' head popped up through the hatch. "So who's the bloody idiot now, Mr Cook?"

Again my knuckles turned white, in fairly definite contrast to the little bits of orange, green and pink muck that oozed up between them. A four-letter word expanded in my throat then exploded across the blue, brine-brimming valleys. "GORE!"

Wisely, Zachariah took a step back. "You're not happy."
As the sun vanished behind a fleecy cloud, I took a small step towards the 2nd lieutenant, who in turn took a lamb-white leap in the direction of the main hatch.

"And you're sharp as a tack-head. See the hatch? Open it. See the hole? Fill it now! Boatswain, drag yourself up here and take the wheel!"

What on earth had happened to this day that had promised so much? There had been times in the voyage, admittedly few, when I'd enjoyed the smells of cabbage, wet wood and livestock which filled every hold and cabin. The stench now was overwhelming. Once the flap of a sail or the slap of water against the bow was a sound that rang in my ears like the bells of some great cathedral. I listened, and all I could hear were fingernails dragging down a wall.

I went below to my suite, opened the Bible, and read about the trials of Job. After twenty minutes or so, I was convinced that in relative terms, he had little to grizzle about.

As I closed the book and settled back into the sighing leather of the chair, my father's words came quietly into my thoughts. 'James,' he would say to me as a lad all those years ago, 'thou'll get nowt in life by sittin' and thinkin'. Doin' is what brings in the crops. Little by little and the job's soon done. Lad, thou can't sit on thy hands frettin' if they've got a dirty big shovel in 'em and a pile o' earth to be moved'.
It was time to shift some sods, and the carpenter was going to be first. I stood and opened the porthole. Air flooded in, fresh and full. Grabbing hold of the door's cold, brass knob with both hands, I twisted, pulled the door open and stepped outside.

In the dim, yellow lamp-light, I made my way down to the carpenters' storeroom aft on the lower deck, thumped on the door and entered. John Satterley was asleep on the floor, so I wrenched off his wooden leg and pounded the planks near his head.

"What the frig..." he shouted as he jumped to his foot. "Oh, it's you, Cap'n. Blimey, you're a sight for sore eyes. I don't get many visitors down 'ere."

"No wonder. That sign on your door that says 'PISS OFF!' isn't much of an encouragement to anyone. Pull it down."

"I can't. The hinges are on real solid."

"Not the door, the sign!"

"What! And 'ave the likes of Hicks an' Gore hangin' around like smells in a privy. Not on your nelly! So what's up? I'm terrible busy at the moment."

While I had been thinking in my cabin, an idea had struck. Why not give the men an opportunity to express their grievances? If they knew they had a say in the day-to-day running of the ship, it seemed likely that strife would be reduced.
"Mr Satterley, I want you to construct a box. Not too big, mind. About the size of that thing over there you keep your nails in. It's to be completely sealed except for a slot at the top. You've got half an hour to finish it then bring it to my cabin. And get rid of the sign now."

Thirty minutes later Satterley brought the box up. I was discussing my idea with Lieutenant Hicks over coffee and he was in agreement.

"The notion's good, Captain. If we encourage the men to jot down their ideas and concerns and then put them in the box, I'm positive they'll all be a lot happier. And it'll certainly put to rest some of the negative feelings towards you."

I asked him to be more specific.

"Some of the lads think all your years at sea have turned you a bit crusty and short-tempered."

"I was short-tempered long before I joined the navy," I snapped as I dropped my cup back onto its saucer.

"That's what I told them. I also said that appearances can be misleading and that beneath your stiff jacket there beats a heart..."

"Yes, go on, a heart of...?"

"Nothing, just a heart. Some of them think you don't have one at all."

"So that's your idea of support? Now, about the box. Any other thoughts?"
Hicks pensively ran his finger around the rim of his cup and nodded. 

I poured my usual second cup, added exactly one level teaspoon of sugar and told the lieutenant to speak his piece. 

"I don't think many of the men can read and write."

After a moment's deliberation, I came up with the suggestion that any illiterates could sketch their ideas. 

"Splendid," the lieutenant gushed. "It's obvious why the Admiralty chose you to lead this expedition."

The soft-soaping was being applied a little too thickly for my liking, so I told Hicks to confine it to the ablutions area. I then ordered him to assemble the men on the main deck because I wanted to tell them about the box.

A few minutes later I could hear Hicks yelling "All hands on deck!", so I waited the appropriate time then strode up. As I climbed through the hatch, the sun flared like a match in a cave, blinding me for a moment. It was strong; brilliant, and our English light seemed spiritless in comparison. A mile or so to port, the land was a ribbon of rippling green, and under the ship, the sea groaned its depth and weight as it rolled gently over. A cormorant settled on the spritsail-yard, spearing its hungry gaze into the water. Then, like a dart, it
went down, skewered its silvery catch and quickly flew off. I followed its flight, looking for the horizon but unable to make it out against the sweep and reach of blue, pacific sky.

The voice that steadily bored into my ear was like some small, irritating insect. "Captain, did you hear me... the crew's waiting... Sir?..."

I had heard him. Even in my sleep I heard him. "All right, Hicks. Now stand behind me and shut up. Men," I continued, lifting the box up and casting my eyes over the lines of curious brown faces that swamped the deck, "can anyone tell me what this is?"

Nobody answered, so I lifted the box higher. From the back of the ranks an arm waved frantically.

"Yes, Able Seaman Peckover?"

"Beggin' the Cap'n's pardon, Cap'n, Sir, but it be your 'and, Cap'n, Sir."

The sun grew a little less radiant.

"You're a simpleton, Peckover," Hicks ventured over my shoulder.

"Why, thank you, Mr 'icks. Only too glad to be of 'elp."
I got straight to the point. "Lads, if anyone's giving you trouble, or if you can think of a way to make things run more happily, jot it down and put it in this box. And if you can't write, then sketch your suggestion. The best idea will be awarded a monthly prize. And you needn't be afraid to speak plainly because you don't have to sign your name. Are there any questions?"

Peckover's hand went up again. "Beggin' the Cap'n's pardon, but if you don't want us to be signin' our name, 'ow will you know who wins the monthly prize?"

Hicks' mouth was quickly at my ear. "Peckover's right."

I reluctantly agreed, advised the men that they could sign their names then asked if anyone else had a question.

Peckover persisted. "But what if some bilge rat writes somethin' filthy like 'Joseph Banks is a consentin' agronomist' and then signs someone else's name? Will the wrong man be flogged?"

My jaw tightened involuntarily. "You answer him, Mr Hicks. I've lost patience."

Hicks stepped forward of the quarter-deck, stood beside me and said, "To avoid the possibility of that happening, I order that no names whatsoever be signed. But you can if you want to. Now if there are no more...?"

"Just one, Mr 'icks."

"Bugger me, Peckover! What is it this time?"
"What be the monthly prize?"

Before the furious lieutenant could charge into the ranks to throttle the seaman, I pre-emptively seized his salt-stiff collar and said, "Stand there and listen. You might learn something. Men, this is an opportunity for you all to begin participating in the scheme. You're going to decide the prize. Mr Hicks, hand out pencils and paper. When the boatswain presents you with the box, lads, put your paper into it. We'll adopt the most popular suggestion."

When the last paper had been inserted, the boatswain squeezed his bulk through the ranks, around the masts and brought me the box.

And it was then that I saw the problem. There was no lid so the wretched thing couldn't be opened. At least not by the usual method. Down to the deck dropped the varnished container and down went my polished boot on top of it. Toe, heel, sole, the lot. All thumping and grinding.

"Don't worry, men," I said, glowering at Satterley, "this was only a replica. From this evening you'll find the proper box nailed to the wall outside my cabin. Now, let's hear what you've all had to say. Stand easy while Mr Hicks reads out the first suggestion."

Hicks picked through the splinters and seized a crumpled piece of paper. He smoothed it out and glanced at the writing. "You wouldn't be interested in this one. I'll just grab another one."
"Lieutenant, everyone's ideas, no matter how trivial, are of equal interest so read what's there!"

Hicks stood chastened. "Sorry. It says here 'I vote we troll for sharks using Hicks as bait. Yours truly, J. Gore'."

The sun suddenly went dark and another headache was coming on.

"Next one, Lieutenant."

"Let's see... 'a night in bed with the wife. And I don't care whose wife. J. Banks, Esq.' And there's a sort of stick-drawing with it, like the ones kids do. It shows a woman and a bloke with his long johns round his ankles and she's all goggle-eyed because..."

"That's enough. Boatswain, dismiss the men!"

After a while the sound of running feet died away, and in its place came the susurration of wind through sails. It was as if each caress of the canvas was somehow extending down to me. An odd, unexpected experience, but nonetheless real. It also brought with it a clarity of thought; an absolute determination to press on. Even though the initial experiment with the box had been unsuccessful, there was every reason to persevere. Much depended on its acceptance.

So I went back to the carpenters' storeroom and ordered Satterley to construct a new box, stipulating that I wanted it nailed to the wall outside my cabin by night-fall.
Two hours later Satterley was humming and hammering on the wall.

"It's up, Cap'n," he shouted. "Come and look."

There it was, square, smooth and varnished, with a neat slot and its own boot attached.

I immediately ordered the carpenter inside, so he hopped in and supported himself on my desk. He coughed, twitched then scratched his beard. A few drops of perspiration formed on his forehead.

"John," I said, "just so that you know where you stand, let me spell it out. I want a box with a lid; I for lazy, i for idiot, d for dullard. Lid! Now shove off and do it properly!"

Had the box been in place at the time I'd wanted, the friction that continued during the remainder of April might well have been minimised. Two crewmen in particular were central to the disharmony, and the incident involving the normally placid Master Robert Molyneux and his mate, Richard Pickersgill, on the evening of the 21st, came as something of a shock. Although neither was particularly bright, they'd performed with average competence and kept themselves out of trouble. So it was my guess that the boredom of routine and the close proximity to rising tensions within others must have had an effect.
Molyneux was big and gruff with hair like a wheat field in a hurricane. There was no doubt that his brain had been addled through frequent handshakes with the bottle in just about every ale-house in Europe, but to his credit, he at least answered to the correct name at muster. That made him fairly unique, because most of the men were so used to using aliases that at the start of the voyage, muster had been a parade of either the shameless, nameless, infamous or bogus. I recall that on the second morning out of England, several of the crew keen to keep their names away from the public ear had substituted the real roll with a fraud. As a result, the boatswain conducted muster something along these lines:

"Able Seaman Anderson?"
"Yes, Boatswain."
"Able Seaman Alexander the Great?"
"Aye aye."
"Gunner Bowles?"
"Here."
"Gunner Joan of Arc?"
"The voices, the voices, they're drivin' me mad."
"Master Molyneux?"
"Sir."
"Master's Mate Newton, Sir Isaac?"
"Aye."
"Sailmaker Pope Paul IV?"
"Bless you, me old son."
"Carpenter Satterley?"
"Piss off!"

"Carpenter's Mate Wren, Sir Christopher?"

"Me oath I am."

When I sought to discover who had initiated the scheme, Molyneux was quick to point the finger at his mate, Pickersgill. It was from that moment that the relationship between the two soured.

Like Molyneux, Richard Pickersgill was large. Dark-haired and granite-jawed, he was the youngest of four children born to a furnace maker and a ballet dancer, and everyone who saw his mother in action was enraptured. According to Pickersgill during an informal talk early in the voyage, his mother '... could lift the doors onto her Birmingham furnaces without the need of block and tackle. I got me strength from her and me dad taught me not to mince me words.' Gore later made the observation that it was a pity Richard's walk hadn't been given equal tutoring. However, the young mate was said to be a loyal and skilled observer, qualities apparently not missed by Lieutenant Hicks. Not long after we'd sailed from England, he visited my suite for a chat concerning those crew members who could be trusted and those who couldn't. The lieutenant took a note-pad from his vest pocket and began reading the accounts he had made of each of the men. He seemed a little nervous in my company so I told him to relax.
He thanked me, crossed his legs and sipped at his port. It wasn't long before mild apoplexy set in. As his eyes rolled back into his head, I seized his glass and flung the contents through the window, mentally noting to speak to the Victualling Board about its source of supply in relation to this particular ration. While cheapness was an important factor, it was generally known that the sweat-shops of Manchester have never been hailed as the home of fortified wine.

As his vision cleared, Hicks paused at the account of the mate, looked up at me and said, "If there's anyone on board who won't crack under strain, it's Richard Pickersgill."

I knew at once that Pickersgill would prove to be about as useful as a porcelain anchor.

The evening of the 21st was typical of many during that season in those southern latitudes and it reminded me of the imitative scribblings from the Literary Editor of The London Evening Post - cold as a critic's text but lacking the sting that takes one's breath away.
As Lieutenant Gore and I stood on the quarter-deck, through the owl-light we noticed Molyneux and Pickersgill in animated conversation at the bow. Molyneux then pointed towards a mountain to port about half a league off. It was hump-shaped and thickly covered with trees. A whisper-thin mist haloed the apex and high above, a million stars were just beginning to shimmer on the violet blanket.

Noticing Gore and me at the stern, Molyneux ran back. Pickersgill quickly followed.

"Captain," the master blurted out, the warm air from his mouth frosting in the chill. "See that thing over there? What are the chances we call it 'Mount Molyneux'?"

"About the same as the chances of you becoming next in line to the throne of France," his mate sneered. "I bloody seen it first, so it should be 'Mount Pickersgill'."

"Watch your language in front of the captain," Gore reprimanded. "You bloody saw it first, not seen."

Molyneux was having none of it. "He bloody didn't saw it first, he seed it second."

The conversation see-sawed like this until Gore proposed a compromise. "Why don't we name the mountain after both of you? I'll take a part of each of your last names and combine them."

"That sounds fair t' me," Molyneux said, barely able to suppress the self-important grin that turned his mouth into a half-moon.
"Me, too," Pickersgill agreed as he placed his arm around the master's shoulder. "This way we'll both make it into the history books."

Although it was nippy, Gore's chest rose with the hot air of the self-important. "Then it's settled. It shall henceforth be known as 'Mount Neuxspicker'."

Before I had a chance to overrule the 3rd lieutenant, Molyneux shouted, "Mount Nosepicker!" and kicked a slops bucket down the length of the deck and into the fore-mast.

Upon hearing the crash, the boatswain dashed up through the main hatch, his eyes wide in the gloom and his voice thunderous as he asked what was happening. He then saw me and fell silent. Impressed by his deference, I said that it was just a minor misunderstanding and then tried to lessen the tension by joking that it could easily be settled by the cat and a few days in the hold.

"The cat!" the master shouted into the cold, tea-black calmness. "Well, if I'm goin' t' be flogged, I might as well give youse all a decent excuse." With that, he lunged at Pickersgill's hair and dragged out oily, brown clumps.

Gore wrenched the two apart and the culprits hung their heads as the lieutenant acted to re-establish some degree of authority.

"Captain, may I suggest an alternative name for the feature?"
"I’m listening."

"What about Mount Dromedary? See the hump?"

The darkness hindered my vision, so I raised the 'scope, peered then acknowledged the camel shape.

"No, Banks' sister," Molyneux sniggered.

Unfortunately, Joseph, who had been taking in the evening air just at that moment, overheard the master's remark and demanded an apology.

"All right," Molyneux said, "I'm sorry... that your sister looks like a bleedin' camel."

Pickersgill's cheeks ballooned as he tried to contain his amusement, and then finally burst as Banks slipped on the slops that had been spilt earlier.

Recalling a previous encounter with the botanist, one in which I'd come off second-best, I felt like shouting, "Now who's the bloody idiot?", but it was not the time for settling old scores. I craved the satisfaction of dealing with this new one, so I immediately called for Sergeant Edgecumbe and a party of marines. Acting on my orders, the corps swiftly confined the master and his mate to the hold until the rising of the sun. Even though it was their first major offence, they needed a period of detention as punishment.

A short time later, as the 3rd lieutenant and I left the quarter-deck at the changing of the watch, Gore paused at the hatch. "Captain, so that those two louts can show Mr Banks they're sorry about what happened, why don't we make them sit in on one of his plant lectures?"
I pushed Gore aside, clambered down through the hatch and closed it firmly on his feet. "Their crime has been given the appropriate punishment," I called through the grating. "Adding hard labour isn't justified."

Under the laws relating to life at sea, I could have had the offenders flogged, but the scars of resentment and hostility would have remained long after any physical blemish had healed.

In hindsight, I should have had them beaten until they were as blue as the brine, because the following day they were at each other's throats again.

It's almost impossible to imagine that a misunderstood word could have led to a fierce brawl, but that was the reason for it, as told to me by the person who'd witnessed it, Sergeant Edgecumbe.

After Molyneux and his mate had been released from the hold following their detention, they went up on deck to check the hempen cable leading from the anchor to the main capstan. I'd sent Edgecumbe with them, just in case. Pickersgill noticed that a section of the cable was frayed, so he'd drawn Molyneux's attention to it. The master, still angered by the previous day's events, studied the cable and reluctantly nodded his head in agreement.

"It irks me to say this, Pickersgill," Molyneux apparently muttered, "but I agree with Lieutenant Hicks. You're alert."
Upon hearing this, young Pickersgill picked up the sodden cable and wrapped it around the master's throat. His huge, sun-bronzed hands twisted the rope till his knuckles whitened. "Don't you call me a lert!" he'd shouted. "If anyone on this ship's a friggin' lert, it's you!"

According to Edgecumbe, the half-choked master's face immediately resembled a pudding, with his eyes bulging like plums and his wet, yellow hair spreading across his forehead like custard. Fortunately, the mate was quick to come to his senses, and he released his grip. Molyneux was taking great gulps of air as Edgecumbe grabbed them both by the front of their shirts and dragged them down to my cabin.

"So there you 'ave it," the sergeant said, concluding his report. "Two grown men fightin' like dogs in a ditch."

"It wasn't my fault," Pickersgill said, his eyes arrowing into the mate. "He called me a filthy name. Reckons I'm a back door merchant."

Molyneux rubbed his throat. "Rubbish. All I said was you was alert."

"There he goes again! You're the only bloody rear admiral round here! Get out of me way, Edgecumbe! I'm goin' t' kick the bastard fair 'n square in the old testaments!"
It was as well that Edgecumbe had remained between them, for they showed all the restraint of friars at their first lunch after Lent. Banging my fists down on the desk, I stood up and pushed the chair back against the wall. For the next sixty seconds, I battered their ears with just about every Anglo-Saxon expletive I could think of. Just as my voice was becoming hoarse, I ordered the sergeant to take them up to the main deck, rip their shirts off and give each of them three strokes in front of the crew. The hope was that it would be a lesson to everyone.

My father had a saying about hopes and I've never forgotten a word of it. Even the rise and fall of his earth-deep voice. 'Lad,' he'd begin over a mug of ale in the kitchen after he'd come in from work, 'hopes are like stones. They can either be strong, endurin' foundations for a man's soul...' and here his voice would lower into a lament; close yet somehow distant '... or they can crumble into dust and blow thy spirit fair away'.

I can barely recall a day during this period at sea when the wind wasn't howling.

However, in defence of the men, it would be unfair not to acknowledge their confinement as being in large part responsible for their dispositions. Since leaving Nieuw Zeeland, they'd been forced to live and work within an arm's distance of one another. Given the discomfort, trouble seemed inevitable.
Nieuw Zeeland had given the men some release, but because excursions ashore usually involved gathering fresh provisions or surveying, activities otherwise known as 'work', the newness soon lost its allure. Eventually there came a time when the men never left the ship, much to the annoyance of the boatswain, and only occasionally when it was actually anchored.

The major problem simmering within the men, and which was making their present confinement even more unendurable, was related to a previous port of call.

Nearly twelve months earlier we'd stayed for a period in Otaheite, that fabled group of islands discovered by Samuel Wallis in June, 1767, and I'm sure that it was the memory of this paradise, and the panting after its pleasures, that were largely responsible for the present agitation.

According to Mr Gathrey, our coming upon it was like "bumpin' into an honest politician in th' House of Commons or meetin' a newspaper scribbler at nine in th' mornin' who was sober enough t' remember his own name; almost too bloody good t' be true."
When we first arrived, the men, made amiable by the natural grace of the natives, golden heat, moist, fertile soil, succulent fruits and the turquoise lagoons with their soft sands, built a fort, repaired the long-boat and collected water and fresh provisions. Those who were capable of performing minor calculations helped the scientific party observe the Transit of Venus, while those more interested in money matters engaged themselves in trading with the natives.

Given his wealth and commercial experience, Joseph Banks was the most active in this area. On one occasion a young man approached him at the gate of the fort. The young male presented a roll of cloth, a litter of hogs, two sacks of bananas, five small shrubs and a canoe. Joseph cast a dismissive glance over the lot then offered a snuff-box in return. Having dealt with the bullying botanist before, the native trader reluctantly took the trinket and then pointed in the direction of a distant female. Banks cupped his eyes and squinted in the glare, so the young trader clapped his hands and beckoned for his dusky companion to come forward. As she approached, Joseph's knees wilted. Standing no more than 30 inches from his sweating palms was a girl of exquisite beauty; long black hair, lithe brown limbs, bare breasts, chocolate-dark eyes and a smile sultry enough to turn granite into goo.

In line with both his custom and his character, the botanist came in low. "A specimen jar?"
This time the young trader shook his head.

"I see. A specimen jar and a pressed frog?"

No response.

"All right, but this is definitely my last offer. A jar, a flat frog and my Lincolnshire estates. Take it or leave it."

A fuzzy-haired nod of acceptance closed the transaction.

At this point I intervened. While I was aware that our island hosts were accommodating with regard to certain activities, namely the 'horizontal hula', to use Joseph's colourful term, I strongly believed that to barter for affection was unworthy of anyone who called himself a gentleman.

I grabbed Joseph's arm and dragged him into my tent. I then told him that trading for the delights of the flesh was contemptible and that he should give serious thought to setting a proper example to the men.

"How dare you!" he shouted. "My very presence is an example."

I looked around the tent for something solid to thump. The botanist's head was the obvious choice but I successfully fought the impulse. "Banks, your presence is an example, but it's a bloody embarrassing one! You posture from dawn till dusk and allow what's wobbling in your trousers to govern what's lolling on your shoulders."
Breathing deeply and quickly, I flung back the flap of the tent. The fragrance of frangipani drifted in, partially dissipating the bad air between us.

"I need a walk," I said. "Think carefully about what you intend doing and tell me when I get back. And keep in mind that you're supposed to be an English gentleman."

As I stooped through the opening, Briscoe, Banks' retainer, came in with some papers. Five minutes later I rejoined the botanist and sat on the edge of my bunk.

"What's it to be?"

The quietness that always accompanies deliberation was heavy in the tent.

"It wasn't easy," he said. "I had decided to press ahead, even going so far as to sign these papers that Briscoe brought transferring ownership of my estates. But then your words about being a man of position made me realise that I had certain responsibilities. So I won't be proceeding."

I shook Banks' limp hand. "That's heartening. Well done."

As we walked outside into the enveloping heat to tell the native trader, I added further approval of Joseph's decision by reminding him that everything his father had worked for was now not going to be squandered.

Like a cat after its master's canary, a knowing smile crept across the carpet of the botanist's face.
"Mr Cook," he said, shuffling through the papers, "I may be an English gentleman, but I'm not your typical 'Hooray Henry'. My estates were in no danger."

"But didn't you sign the deed of transfer?"

"Yes, here, on the last page. Take a look."

The still, small voice of my conscience was urging me not to look but the shout of my curiosity was more compelling. I turned hurriedly to the final page and there, on the bottom, was the flourished signature, 'William Shakespeare'.

Another impulse seized me, but this time I didn't bother fighting it. Grabbing Banks by the upper arm, I pulled him to me and hissed, "If you had just a little more charm, you'd have all the qualities of a Tyneside dock rat."

Apart from bartering and enjoying such amusements as 'Heiva', or public entertainment similar to a 'Punch and Judy' show, the men took part in sports such as swimming, wrestling and archery. Master's Mate Pickersgill was generally regarded as having the best eye, so a competition was organised by Gore to determine who amongst the crew could rightly be crowned champion Bowman. Large sums were wagered in favour of Pickersgill, but Master Molyneux and Banks were also considered to have a chance.
It had been another warm day, with an early shower thickening the humidity. As the sun blazed above and droplets hung at the tips of every palm frond on the island, a thousand murmuring spectators gathered around the half-mile perimeter of the arena. Silently, the archers took their positions. Molyneux was the first to compete. His lips were dry and his eyes were an intense blue. As he stood contemplating the task ahead, his thick fingers wriggled themselves into a state of suppleness. Exhaling strongly, he then stepped up to the mark, took aim, and fired. Two seconds later a roar went up from the crowd as the arrow deftly removed a South Sea mango from a tree almost 50 yards away. Molyneux stepped back, smiling with relief and confidence.

Pickersgill walked forward. "For someone who couldn't hit the floor if he fell out of bed, you done good. But just you watch this. The money's already in me pocket."

In the cauldron of the arena, the perspiring mate steadied himself by taking two deep breaths. All his concentration was focused on a banana tree 100 yards away. He then drew back the string and fired. Instantly, the spectators let out a howling chorus as Pickersgill peered around.

"Where'd the bloody thing go?" he screamed above the cacophony.
Molyneux stuck his mouth right next to the mate's ear and cupped his hands. "Nowhere," he shouted. "You forget to put the arrow in, Dead-Eye!"

Banks waited patiently for the deafening derision to stop. There wasn't the slightest hint of fear on his face as he stared defiantly at his rivals. Then, possessed of the arrogant confidence that is typical of all who are born to win, he strode out across the lush grass. The spectators were hushed as Joseph picked up his bow and loaded his arrow. He paused, smiled then looked around at the crowd. They were in the palm of his hand. The bow then came up slowly, his arm drew back and a quick 'ping' signalled the arrow's release. Almost instantly the missile thudded into a stalk of sugar cane 150 yards off. The stalk split in two and to the horror of the spectators, the arrow then re-emerged. Everyone immediately dropped flat to the ground and watched, panic-stricken, as it whistled around the arena, scattered a herd of hogs, knocked over the chief priest's camp fire which in turn set his hut alight then finally embedded itself in a canoe almost 200 yards away.

"I'll be buggered," Banks whispered to me and Gore. "Don't tell anyone, but see that hut over there about ten feet off and to the right? That's what I was aiming at."

All reserve was cast aside in the seconds that followed. Clapping and screaming erupted, as did the flames that quickly spread from the chief priest's hut to the one Joseph had indicated.
In an attitude of worshipful respect, the native spectators rushed forward, lifted the botanist high onto their shoulders and carried him away. Three days of feasting followed, and when the hand-fed, milk-bathed idler finally returned to the fort, he was full of himself.

"Men," he said, holding out his soft, white arms in an embarrassingly communal embrace, "they think I'm some sort of demigod, but I wouldn't expect your attitude towards me to change. The occasional boot-buff would be as much as I could ask."

His apparent joke caused us to chuckle, but ten minutes later, when I arrived at my tent, I saw that the joke had gone too far. There, neatly positioned beside the open flap, were Banks' dung-encrusted shoes. The joy I felt from hacking them to pieces with an axe was almost as great as that experienced when I told him what I'd done as we sailed away a short time later. And as the string of islands gradually dissolved into the shimmering blue waters, there wasn't one on board who didn't watch as the ship's broad, foaming wake steadily thinned into a single white line.

It was perhaps the recollection of Otaheite which inspired one of the earliest notes that I drew from the suggestion box.
On the 22nd following midday mess, I went below to examine the box's contents. It was a relief to find an easily-opened lid, so I had no trouble in removing the two papers. The first was a demand for two pounds, eight shillings and threepence from 'John Satterley, Esq' for 'Carpentry Services Above & Beyond The Call Of Duty' and the second was a request that appeared to have some merit;

'H.M.S. Endeavour
Sunday 22nd April
1770

Dear Mr Cook,

I have a complaint about the food Mr Thompson prepares. To put it in terms that one of your class will understand, it stinks. Those artichokes we took on board in Nieuw Zeeland are wearing very thin. We've had them boiled, stewed, mashed, dried and even raw. If the cook offers me another artichoke, I'm going to tell him to stuff it. As you're the man at the helm, might I propose a change of course. If it's forthcoming, you have my word that I'll name a species of insect after you.

Yours sincerely,

J. Banks Esq.'
Leaving aside Banks' attempted belittlement, I had to admit that I shared his feelings. Yet to be fair to John Thompson, or 'Cookie', as he was known to the men, he did try hard. Our provisions supplied by the Victualling Board in 1768 had seemed adequate and varied. Among them were 21,000 pounds of bread, 9,000 pounds of flour, 4,000 pieces of beef, 6,000 pieces of pork, 800 pounds of suet, 187 bushells of peas, 2,500 pounds of raisins and 7,860 pounds of sour krout. Added to these were 1,200 gallons of beer, 1,600 of spirits and 500 of vinegar. The vinegar possessed a bitter after-taste, but the more desperate among the ranks found it to their liking.

With all of the above, Cookie was able to keep us satisfied for a time following our departure from England. However, before a week had passed, the quality of sameness was becoming worryingly apparent.

In an effort to address Banks' complaint regarding the victuals, I made my way to the galley and, as expected, Cookie was hard at it. Not preparing food but hurling pots and pans in all directions. At first he refused to say what had made him so angry but I guessed that it related to the insults that had been thrown his way lately. After some discreet questions, and the mention of Banks' letter, my assumption was confirmed.
"Blimey, Cap'n, I can't do nothin' fancy with artichokes and most of the good stuff had been ate by the time we'd cleared the harbour at the start of the voyage, so if that perfumed grub-bottler writes one more word against me, I'm off."

I quickly pointed out that his choice of destinations was somewhat limited considering we were in the middle of the ocean, but his green eyes narrowed as he replied, "The toffs reckon I should go to blazes or buggery, so there's two places you can stick on the list."

"Take no notice of that lot," I said. "They're like balloons at a fair - bright distractions but light on substance." Then, as a bolster to his flagging confidence, I poured him an extra ration of beer and said encouragingly, "Cookie, you're really doing a fine job under extremely difficult circumstances, but the point is this. The men aren't complaining about the way you present the artichokes. It's just that it's always artichokes. Why don't I order the boatswain to organise a fishing party. With fresh fish on their plates, the grizzlers won't have a leg to stand on and we'll both get Banks off our backs."
Thompson agreed, and ten minutes later the boatswain was bellowing out the fishing order to a party of seamen at the stern of the ship. The catch was soon completed and delivered to the galley. An hour passed, and as dusk settled like golden dust upon the sails, the men were piped to their evening meal. As they filed past me, every grimy face beamed with anticipation.

"Enjoy the experience, lads," I said, heading atop, and as soon as I'd reached the poop, a loud "Hip hip hooray!" echoed through the ship and across the endless ocean.

Two minutes later an almighty din erupted below. I dashed through the hatch to the lower deck, only to find the crew, including the officers, holding Thompson upside down and forcing their meals down his throat.

"What's all this bloody fuss about!" I shouted above the riot.

"It's the friggin' fish!" yelled the boatswain as he mashed the contents of his plate into Thompson's thinning, black hair. "Cookie stuffed every one of 'em with stinkin' artichokes!"

As the appointed upholder of law, proper conduct and justice, there was only one thing I could say. However, I chose not to. The men needed to release their frustration, so recalling my mother's advice that a blind eye is sometimes more prudent than an opened mouth, I walked away.
As I stooped through the hatch and into the silence of a starry night, the helmsman whispered a greeting.

"Pleasant evenin', Captain." He then nudged the wheel lazily and the ship's massive bulk turned an easy degree to starboard, the timbers and rigging creaking like the joints of an old mariner. High in the sails the wind was humming. All I wanted at that moment was a space and time free of others, so I replied, "For some, Mr Clerke," and paced slowly forward. Reaching the bow, I gazed out across the limitless, rolling tides. Like the wind that pushed against my chest, thoughts of Elizabeth and the children pressed against my heart.

A fish leapt from the black water, its silver frozen for an instant in the tarnishing light of a crescent moon.

And then it happened; the unexpected that one could count on. A southerly blew up and the images altered. One minute calm, the next confusion. Wind lifting and howling; waves spitting their foam and force against my legs.

Cold and concerned about the power that was being unleashed, I wrapped the collar of my coat around my neck and staggered along the greasy deck towards the hatch.

"It's turned nasty mighty quick," Clerke said as he fought the wheel.
I nodded and stepped down into the safety of the companionway. Pausing at Lieutenant Gore's door, I knocked. Things were about to turn a lot nastier. When Gore finally stumbled out of bed and opened up, I said, "Go and tell Banks I want to see him about the letter he put into the box. This food business needs to be cleared up before someone gets killed. I'll be in my cabin."

A little while later, Gore burst into my room. I was drinking a cup of coffee at my desk while I took a break from charting.

"Captain," the lieutenant blurted out, "Mr Banks wasn't there, but I did find this. I think you should take a look!"

He was holding up a piece of paper so I told him to bring it to me. Almost ashen-faced in the glow of the lantern, Gore placed the paper on top of the chart. Beads of perspiration glimmered along his top lip. His trembling hands gripped the edge of the desk as the ship lurched. Curious as to the cause of his condition, I glanced down at the page. It contained several paragraphs obviously crafted by Joseph's own careful hand. The words, in the form of hurried scribblings, seared themselves forever into my consciousness:
'The captain is widely despised... despotic... contemptuous of greater intellects... won't listen to reason... frequent headaches... uncontrolled rages... lower class yet aspires to acceptance by his betters... nobody on board respects him and MUTINY seems to be only course of action... can I succeed? Needs careful plotting but I'm confident of outcome... if it fails then I will be criticised... they'll say I shouldn't have tried... I should have stuck to botany. Although I'm afraid, I won't let this fear govern my actions. If only there was someone else on board I could talk to... there isn't... but later someone might be willing to collaborate... check details, times, places events etc... but in this early stage I'll work alone and quietly...'

There it was. As plain as the nose on a spinster's face and twice as sharp. Joseph Banks, a supposed man of honour, was plotting my downfall.

"And see this bit," Gore emphasised as he swept his hand down towards a particular line. In so doing, he knocked the coffee cup and the dark brown liquid spilt and soaked into the paper.

"Now look what you've done!" I shouted as the evidence partially smudged.
In trying to minimise his blunder, Gore hurriedly wiped his sleeve across the paper but succeeded only in catching his buttons on the well of my charting ink. What remained of Banks' writing instantly dissolved into the large blob of black that spread across the page, the chart underneath and down the side of the desk.

"Now that you've ruined the proof," I said, "there's no way I can confront Banks! As if I didn't have enough on my plate already without this to deal with!"

Gore was trying to make amends by wiping the desk with his coat. "Leave it alone," I ordered, shoving him towards the door, "or you'll have the lantern over and the ship in flames. Now go back to your cabin and don't breathe a word of this to anyone. All I want you to do is keep a close eye on him and report any unusual behaviour."

"Then you'll be seeing a lot of me because everything he does is loopier than a reef-knot."

That was a prospect almost as bad as the mutiny, and it struck me fairly quickly that Gore's involvement could only make matters worse.

"On second thoughts," I said as I blotted the remaining ink from the desk-top, "forget the last order. Just go back to your cabin and keep your mouth shut. I'll handle Banks in my own way and in my own time."
The remaining days of April dragged themselves across the sand of my being like some groaning, beached turtle. The sun seemed to have given up its life, and when I stared through my porthole at night, the silent shell was as black as suspicion.

Not wanting to succumb to the mood, I set about occupying my time and mind on matters other than Banks' plan. Astronomy was a useful and enjoyable distraction, and so I began an intensive study of the heavens. Unfortunately, Charles Green, the ship's astronomer, heard about it and soon became my second shadow.

Like myself, Charles Green was the son of a Yorkshire farmer, and his dedication to the science of astronomy was well known. It therefore came as no surprise that he was chosen by The Royal Society to be my assistant in the task of observing the Transit of Venus at Otaheite in 1769.

Prior to his sailing with me, his professional accomplishments had been considerable, securing him a scientific reputation second-to-none and a place amongst the ranks of gentlemen. His first position of prestige occurred in 1761 when he was appointed to the Greenwich Observatory as assistant to the Astronomer Royal. Then in 1763 he sailed to Barbados with the Reverend Dr Nevil Maskelyne on one of the early evaluations of John Harrison's chronometer.
As a lunarite he lacked for nothing, but in the ordinary affairs of men and their associations, Charles was about as useful as a curate in a coal pit. His contempt for sailors as observers was often stated and he adopted a pedant’s attitude when called upon to instruct them in his science. Able Seaman Dozey felt the sting of his tongue during one such lesson.

On the 24th, as I stood on the poop marking Cape St George bearing West at a distance of almost twenty miles, the able seaman and Charles were within ear-shot on the main deck. It was close to 8 p.m. and the two were discussing the placements of various heavenly bodies.

"You’ve had a week to learn this," Green had commented, "so can you name the planets in their correct order going out from the sun?"

Even in the shadows, I could see Dozey’s brow furrowed in concentration. "I’ll try. Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Juniper, Nectarine, Plutarch! How’s that?"

"Sweet and Greek but a million miles from science. Here’s an easier question."

Green then indicated the moon and asked Dozey to explain its position and features. Fairly straight forward, I thought as I continued my watch. Dozey mulled the question over for a minute, rubbed his thumb across the stubble on his chin, pointed heavenward and said confidently, "Let’s just say it’s an illuminated object and probably not rectangular."
Charles let out a disdainful hiss, grabbed Dozey's head between his large hands, shook it violently and sneered, "Boy, what I'm holding here is a dull object and definitely empty! Find something useless to do below before I dump you overboard."

The shaken sailor glanced at me through the misted, salt-heavy air. He received neither reassurance nor reproof from my blank stare, so he simply picked at some non-existent fluff on his jacket then shuffled into the shadows.

When he'd disappeared through the hatch, I called Green to me.

A faint, autumn shower was just beginning to dampen the deck as the observer stepped carefully on to the poop.

"Charles," I said, buttoning my coat at the neck, "you were a bit harsh on the lad. He hasn't had the benefits of your sort of education, so try to be a little more patient with him in future."

The drizzle in Green's dark hair ran like silvery rivulets down his cheeks, neck and frilled shirt-front, causing the fabric to cling to his bulging stomach. "How can I be patient with someone who's got the brains of a crutched sheep?" he demanded.

"You're doing it again."
"All right, I'll take it back. He doesn't have the brains of a crutched sheep. Satisfied?"

I stamped my shoes heavily on the boards, dislodging the surface wetness from my trousers. Then, counting silently to ten, I pinched the material and ran my fingers down to the tops of my sodden shoes. The creases were back. "I may have failed with you," I said tersely, "but at least I've straightened these pants out. And while I can still wear them, even though they're wet, there's no bloody way I can wear you any longer tonight."

As he slipped his way across the deck and lifted up the hatch-cover, I shouted above the wet, wolf-howling wind, "Now I'm satisfied!"

Not all the causes for the tension amongst the crew were internal to the ship. The natives of the Southern Continent must also take some of the blame.

Our first encounter with them occurred during an expedition ashore on the 25th. Accompanying me were Banks, principally so that I could keep a close eye on him, Dr Daniel Solander and Tupia.

Dr Solander was the most capable naturalist in England. A Fellow of the Royal Society, Solander had left Sweden in 1759 and in 1763 was appointed to the British Museum on a salary close to sixty pounds a year.
Short, stocky and with a thick neck, his appearance was in no way engaging. Nor was his aloof bearing. Gore rightly summed it up as early as Otaheite when he said to me one day in the fort that Solander was about as popular as a headache on a honeymoon.

Tupia, a well-born chief *Tahowa*, or priest, of Otaheite, had expressed an interest in experiencing the English way of life, so after a lengthy family discussion, he nervously joined the *Endeavour*’s company when we sailed from Matavai Bay on the 13th of July, 1769. Like most of the natives on this island, he was clean, strong and friendly, and I was pleased to have him aboard because he possessed a sound knowledge of the Pacific region and its people.

So when my companions and I landed our yawl on the white, shell-covered shore on the 26th, I was hopeful that Tupia could initiate an understanding between ourselves and the natives. In brotherly fashion, he presented some nails and beads to several loitering in a camp some forty yards off the sand, and they seemed pleased. Their chief, lean and frizzy-haired, remained seated inside his bark hut, both to reinforce his superiority and to shelter from the afternoon humidity, so Tupia approached and started speaking to him. After a few unsuccessful syllables, the islander left the hut, came back to me and said in his Gathrey-tutored English, "No frigging lucky, Mr Crook. Chief pig-bloody-ignorant."

"At least you tried. And it’s Cook."
Dr Solander, intent on making some sort of mark, then stepped forward and offered his hand as a sign of peace. The chief, noticing the gold ring on Solander’s right index finger, eagerly gestured for it.

"Captain," the naturalist whispered, taken aback, "I can’t possibly hand the ring over to this heathen. It was given to me by my teacher, the great Carl Linnaeus, when I left Sweden."

"Hear me out," I replied, drawing him aside and walking a little way down the beach. "We all cherish things that are of sentimental value but now is not the time to be thinking of yourself in relation to the past. Now is the time to be considering the effect you could have on the future. If you give the ring, you could be presenting England with a new land and a grateful ally."

This appeal to Solander’s sense of history and duty was, I’d hoped, well-aimed, but the ring remained firmly on his finger. However, it was quickly given over when the chief produced his spear and aimed it at what Banks later called the naturalist’s more precious ‘family jewels’.

Having established some sort of tentative bond, we then accepted the chief’s invitation to eat with him. Seated in a circle around a central fire, we were offered berries, the cooked flesh of lizards and various winged insects as yet unclassified by even Linnaeus himself. Even though the food was foreign to our European palates, we tried as best we could to enjoy it.
"How are your lizards, Dr Solander?" I asked as Daniel popped one into his mouth.

"Well, the Blue-Tongue and the Goanna could do with some spice, perhaps a little coriander, but this Frill Neck is delicious. I wonder if there's any more? I say, Tupia, can I have another frill?"

Tupia smiled generously and wiggled the chief's eating stick up Daniel's trouser leg.

"I don't think that's quite what the doctor had in mind," Banks suggested patronizingly.

Concerned about his reluctance to fully join in the festivities, I leaned over and told him to tuck in.

He ignored my order and made his attitude even more obvious by refusing the chief's offer of a species of white grub. Fearful that his action might be viewed by our hosts as provocative, I grabbed the grub and stuffed it into my own mouth. Even though the wretched thing tasted vile, I chewed it quickly and swallowed. Almost at once it was clear that the chief still felt slighted because he let out some sort of primitive, growling noise, picked up one of the camp-fire rocks and hurled it towards Banks.
Acting instinctively, I immediately fired a musket load of small shot above the aggressors' heads. The camp-site cleared almost as quickly as the smoke, and the nearby woods echoed with the screams of fleeing, terrified heathens. Under the cover of the closing darkness, we then made our way back to the yawl.

As we rowed towards the Endeavour through a choppy, blue-black sea, Solander, puffing heavily between strokes, said, "So much for the new land and grateful ally you said I'd be presenting to England. I had a ring that no amount of money could buy, and now I've lost it."

"You've still got your renowned capacity for excruciating self-pity," Banks sneered as he pretended to row, "so shove a cork in it and keep paddling."

"You can both shove a cork in it!" I spat into the chilling air. From that moment on, the only noise heard was the regular slap of oar on water.

On board the ship twenty minutes later and relieved at finding themselves within the safe confines of my suite, Solander and Banks wasted no time, and displayed no reserve, in criticising one another. The thick, green baize that covered the floor went some way to absorbing the fury, but the clamour was nonetheless deafening. Solander, with the veins in his neck protruding, accused his colleague of endangering our lives by refusing to eat the grub.
Banks grabbed the brass scale from the plane table near the door and menacingly waved it in Solander's direction. "Then why didn't you eat it?" he demanded.

"Because I was leaving room for the smoked snake!"

"Smoked snake!" Banks shouted. "Nobody offered me smoked snake! Were you offered the snake, Captain?"

"Yes," I said with some hesitation, not wishing to inflame the situation further, "but I was more than happy just to pick at the hornets."

Banks banged the scale back onto the table, adjusted his brightly-coloured waistcoat, and complained, "Bloody typical! There we were, picnicking with the primitives and surrounded by inedible muck. Suddenly some snake appeared, probably more than you could shake a stick at, and was I told? No!"

As he stormed from my cabin, he turned, pointed a threatening finger at Solander and said, "If I wasn't such a gentleman, I'd invite you onto the deck and have Briscoe kick the tripe out of you." The door then slammed shut.
In the mahogany bookcase attached to the starboard wall, the library of navigation and natural history references shook violently, causing several to tumble onto the baize. As Solander stooped to retrieve them, he knocked over the lantern that was keeping the charts flattened on my desk. Splinters of glass showered the smoothly varnished top and came to rest along the parallel ruler and in the space between the dividers. The unmistakable smell of smouldering wool quickly filled the quarters, so I shoved him aside and stamped my boot down heavily. Fortunately, the damage was minimal.

Solander slumped into my chair and sighed with relief. "You put that out quickly."

"And you're going out just as fast," I said, dragging him up, opening the door and pushing him vigorously.

To get rid of the stench, I then opened the port-hole and sniffed deeply. A faint eucalyptus freshness drifted in, carried from the land by a steady westerly. I bent slowly, untied my shoe laces and flopped onto my bunk. And then it struck, like a hammer-blow to the head; I'd been so pre-occupied with settling this latest squabble that I'd forgotten about the treachery Banks was planning. The thought thumped at my temples. He hadn't yet made any obvious move so there was nothing I could do except wait.
It was this waiting, coupled with the concerns I felt about my own safety, which brought on an even stronger pain; home-sickness.

Nothing could replace the feeling of comfort I'd experienced in my cottage back here in Mile End. Not even the relative snugness of the Great Cabin in my ship.

The *Endeavour* had originally been a coal carrier called the *Earl of Pembroke*, and had been refitted at His Majesty’s Dockyard at Deptford in the early months of 1768. According to the commissioning committee of surveyors and master shipwrights, she was ideally suited for voyages of discovery, being a bark large enough for provisions, cannon and boats and yet small enough to be beached and repaired, should the need have arisen. She also had a shallow draft which enabled safe sailing near to land.

However, internal space was a constant problem. The civilians and officers were berthed aft under the poop with some degree of satisfaction, but the crew, more than 80, was a tangle of arms, legs and swinging hammocks competing for an individual patch of space above the stores on the lower deck. Any meagre nook that wasn’t occupied by a sailor housed either the cookeroom items, the carpenters’ essentials or the boatswain’s stores. All this and more squeezed inside a vessel just on 100 feet in length. It was like trying to stuff a giraffe into a snuff-box.
Yet for all her damp discomfort, the ship was, in most respects, dependably sound, and my suite had been something of a small haven.

However, autumn winds, cold waters and failing friendships brought with them the change in my mood. Whenever I lay my head down, thoughts of Elizabeth, our children and my cottage troubled me so much that I found it almost impossible to sleep.

Not that my dwelling in the hamlet of Mile End Old Town could in any way be regarded as extravagant. In fact, quite the reverse. Indeed, as I'm writing, I can even now hear the drunken revelling in the nearby Assembly Rooms, and the noxious fumes of the adjacent distillery are churning my stomach. Yet it’s my home; a safe harbour. Elizabeth brings me tea when I need refreshment and the chattering Boswell calls in and gossips when I’m desperate for diversion. At night I can sleep in a bed that doesn’t rise and during the day I can please myself regarding the company I keep.
However, the really precious moments are kept for
that hour following supper each evening. After the plates
have been cleared, I go into the sitting-room and wait
for my sons, Nathaniel and James. Before long there is a
soft knock on the door. It opens and there they stand,
white-haired and smiling. When I nod, they charge into my
arms and beg for tales of far-away places. As I speak, it
doesn't take long for the lilt of my voice to carry them
away. I then carry them to bed.

It was for a return to these boys and their mother
that I craved so often during the latter part of the
voyage.

And I also longed to be with my other children,
Joseph and Elizabeth.

Joseph had been born only days following my
departure, so I was never able to blow on his tummy till
he giggled or tickle his rolling chin or watch his eyes
move slowly around the new mystery of it all. In my heart
I had hoped for his baptism before the ship left, but
this wasn't to be, so I had none of these moments to take
with me as a blanket against the chill of missing.
Elizabeth, my only daughter, with hair and skin as pale as whispering, was twelve months old when I sailed. It had been a special year; a time of softening. I worried over the slightest sniffle, wondered what her thoughts were when she looked at me, encouraged when she tried to crawl and laughed when she couldn’t. Every morning I thanked God for her being and her continuing. During long nights away, when the sky was clear, the sea calm and the wind a hush through my hair, I used to recall how her tiny hand had gripped my finger. She would then reach up, pat my eyes and smile. The image of her smile lifted me during my three-year absence and I remember the excitement I felt at the thought of seeing her again when we finally anchored in the Downs at the end of the voyage.

If only I’d sailed a short time later and come home a little earlier.

Joseph died a month after I’d departed.

Elizabeth died three months before I returned.

There is no more to be said on these matters. We are all now at home in our harbours.
Another type of harbour, or rather, bay, was occupying my attention the day following our excursion ashore. We'd sailed close to it during the night, and it appeared that the area would permit an extended stay. It was the morning of the 26th. The weather was clear, with variable light airs between north-east and north-west. We stood off shore until 10 o'clock, then tacked. Mr Hicks ordered a sounding, so the pinnace put out. The lead and line indicated the water's depth to be more than 30 fathoms. No hindrance to safe navigation. Land was some two miles off, and because we were beating against a head wind, I called for another tack so as to manoeuvre closer in. At once the headsheets were eased off, the spanker hauled to wind'ard, the fore tack and sheet let go and the mainsail hauled up. As the ship swung across the wind, all the main and mizzen yards were hauled round, while the backed head-yards with their sails pressed the ship's head further until the main and mizzen yards were behind the wind. Finally, with the wind flowing into those sails, the foreyards were hauled round and the Endeavour gathered headway.

For once I was pleased with the men's efforts because they had shown what sailors should be; competent and co-operative. Seizing the all-too-rare opportunity for praise, I issued a loud and general 'Well done'.
Near to 11, we found ourselves a mile closer to land, and from this distance I could see the gradual change in the colour of the water. Under us, it was deep blue. Nearer the shore, it was a lighter blue, indicating a sandy bottom. The patches of green showed the presence of weed. The weed, in turn, suggested the probability of fish. Waves, with small heads of foam, followed one another onto the beach, their energies being swallowed by the sand. Standing back from the beach, like a regiment of the King's finest, was a profusion of pines and palms. Some of the palms were as high as sixty feet, and they were similar in many respects to those we had sighted in Otaheite a year earlier. Their tops swayed, pushed to and fro by the gentle insistence of a sou'easterly. In between the trees and spaced at regular intervals were clusters of small, brown shelters. I assumed that these were the natives', so I called Tupia to my side on the poop and asked him about them.

"They called frigging 'buckets'," he replied.

"Buckets! That's absurd. Buckets are things water comes in."
The boatswain, who'd been doing nothing in particular near the wheel, sauntered over. "Cap'n," he said, "as you know, I've been learnin' old Tup how to speak effluent English, so let me explain. He didn't say friggin' buckets. He said friggin' bark 'uts. And while we're gabbin' on about speakin' good, you just said water comes in buckets. It don't. It comes in friggin' holes in the hatches. Absolutely pisses in."

My cold stare in response was more effective than a hot-tempered dressing down. Gathrey grabbed Tupia's arm and the two quickly walked away.

A silence then settled on the sails and rigging. With just a hint of a wind brushing across my forehead, I gazed at the land. God had given to it a rare fruitfulness. Even the air was fecund, teeming with sea-birds that squawked above the masts then flapped away into faint specks long before they reached the horizon. It was the sort of moment that needed to be shared, so when I saw the back of a head emerge through the main hatch, I raised my hand and beckoned. When Banks stepped out, my arm dropped. There was no way I could welcome such a two-faced hypocrite, so I turned my back. As I did, it occurred to me that if I showed some sort of interest towards him, perhaps even kindness, then the ship's calculated destruction might at best be set aside or at worst delayed long enough for me to catch him out. Not only for my safety, but also the men's.
With a faint smile, I turned around and said, "Come stand beside me and see what the Lord has made. We should rejoice and be glad in it."

"Indeed we should," Joseph agreed as he joined me on the poop. With his spirit soaring, he opened his mouth widely and sang, "Oh for a thooooooousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer's praise, my greeeeeat Redeemer's praaaaaaise."

The jarring flatness of the hymn's rendition made me grateful to The Redeemer that He had supplied Banks with 999 fewer than the number requested.

Having sung himself almost hoarse, Joseph then reached for the pad and sketching equipment that he had brought from his cabin. When they were neatly arranged within easy reach, he propped himself against the starboard rail and started drawing the shore-line with its wide expanse of sand and trees just beyond.

"That's not too bad," I said, feigning interest as I looked over his shoulder, "but why have you placed the trees in the water?"

"Trees need water, so ipso facto, trees and water go together."

"True," I said, coming down off my tip-toes, "but not those trees and not that water."

Banks churishly erased the trees and repositioned them.
"That's better," I encouraged, "but they're not actually growing on the beach. If you look through the 'scope you'll see they're further back on the grassed area."

Banks raised the 'scope to his eye. "All right, you've made your point! Is there anything else you want to criticise?"

"Joseph," I said, trying to placate him, "I was suggesting, not criticising. And as you've asked, there are a couple of things. The native girl. I see you've drawn her in profile but there are two eyes showing instead of one. And she seems rather flat, almost geometric."

Banks placed the pad on the deck then sharpened his pencil with a small knife. The sun reflecting off the blade made me blink as he said, "For your information, I'm experimenting with a new form of expression. It's an attempt to find a type of internal truth that isn't obviously related to external appearance. It's a radical departure from sentimentality and emotionalism."

"That's interesting. It certainly seems well ahead of its time. Do you have a name for this new style?"

The botanist's answer was immediate. "Squarism."

"Squarism? That doesn't sound too bad but I must be honest. I don't think it'll ever amount to much as a movement."
"Why not?" Banks asked huffily. "Significant changes only occur when one man has a singular vision and a limitless capacity to endure."

"That's the problem. By definition, men of singular vision are one-eyed and therefore limited."

Banks plunged his knife into the deck. "Very pithy," he said as he stared at the trembling handle. "You're a man of many talents. When we return from the voyage, you must let me introduce you to the members of the Royal Society."

"Why?"

"You could present some lectures."

"On philosophy?"

"On a horse. You'll need to make a fast escape and most of those dodderers could do with a quick sprint. Now what was the other thing you wanted to mention?"

Conscious of my inferior social standing, I was reluctant to continue. However, to gain some degree of equal footing, I did. "It's only a minor point but it's valid. Those trees that fill the page. Are they palms?"

Banks raised his eyebrows contemptuously and said, "Of course. Do poplars have coconuts?"

"Now I understand. Squarism equals square coconuts. I'm almost afraid to ask this, Joseph, but here goes. If they're palm trees, why are they pink instead of green?"

"Green palms!" the botanist scoffed. "Now you're being totally ridiculous. Here, I'll prove it. Hold out your hands. Now tell me what you see."
A sense of defeat welled up. I bit my lip as I replied, "My palms."

"And what colour are they?"

At that moment, two or three yards off the port bow, a huge, silver-grey sting-ray glided just under the surface of the water. I deliberately kept my eyes fixed on its movement.

"Come on, Mr Cook, you've got to answer some time."

"They're pink."

"Pardon? I couldn't hear properly."

"I said my palms are pink! You may have scored a point just now but let me remind you that we play under my rules. Don't ever try to take advantage of our relationship again. You may not be one of the ratings, but if you attempt to humiliate me in future, or try anything else that might be seen as a direct threat to my authority, I'll treat you in exactly the same fashion as any other insubordinate."

Having reaffirmed my position, and hinted that his planned subversion was not the secret he'd imagined, I left him to his doodling and sought the 2nd lieutenant. I found him checking the soundness of the backstays supporting the top-masts. Because I was still smarting from my recent belittlement, I yelled at him to forget what he was doing and organise a fishing party in order to supply Cookie with fresh victuals.
Within twenty minutes, a dozen able seamen assembled on deck and cast their lines over the lee rail. For once they seemed content, most chatting or humming as they pulled in a swag of colourful fish. After an hour's work the deck was strewn with more than 80, the odd one still flipping and flopping around the sun-stiffened remainder.

By this time Banks had finished his sketching, so he joined Lieutenant Hicks and me as we inspected the catch. The botanist's curiosity regarding one particular species was aroused, so he said to Hicks as he nudged it with his shoe, "What are these called?"

Now Hicks was a man not easily tempted into sarcasm, but this was an opportunity too good to miss. "I'm surprised you don't recognise them," he said, glancing slyly in my direction. "They're called 'leather jackets'.'"

"Why the name 'leather jackets'?" Joseph asked as he picked one up and ran his finger over the spike on its back.

"Because," Hicks said, stifling a giggle, "they're all wet and thick-skinned, just like a particular gentleman aboard this ship."

"Solander!" Banks blurted out. "Highly risible."

The botanist, by now exhausted from watching all the work that had gone on around him, then went below to his cabin for a sleep.
There was a chuckle in my throat as I helped the men gather in their lines. When we’d finished, I noticed that the weed that had clung to them had stained my hands.

Within a minute I was standing beside Banks’ bed. With a couple of hefty thrusts, I shook the sleeper awake, shoved my hands into his face and said, "Take a good, long look, Joseph. What do you see?"

Banks rubbed his eyes, squinted in the dimness, and said, "I don’t know; your hands, palms. Let me go back to sleep."

"Later. Now tell me what colour they are."

He rolled over, his face towards the cabin wall. I quickly rolled him back.

"Come on, Banks, the colour?"

"Green," he said, his voice muffled by his pillow.

"I can’t hear you. Take that thing off your mouth."

"I said your palms are green!" he shouted, covering his frown of humiliation with a blanket.

Peeking under the covers, I said, with just the slightest tone of self-satisfaction, "Never play the game with the one who sets the rules. Now sleep tight and when you wake we’ll take a stroll up on the quarter-deck and continue our discussion about art. You have a rare gift."

I was tempted to add, "It’s a pity it’s not extinct" but decided that his wounded pride would heal faster without the addition of a salty remark.
As I was checking the workings of the windlass an hour later, Joseph staggered over to me, his unsteadiness the result of the side-to-side rolling as the ship cut through the water. I could see that he was sympathetic to my earlier suggestion regarding an art discussion.

"Nice beret."

"Thanks. If it was good enough for Rembrandt, it’s good enough for me. After all, what did he have that I haven’t?"

I chewed my lip pensively for a moment and replied, "An eye for detail, a capacity for draughting, an understanding of colour, an appreciation of form, a flair for design and balance, a knowledge of perspective, an aesthetic spirit and a reasoned philosophy regarding all things visible and invisible."

"There you go again, nit-picking. I’ll concede that he knew which side of the palette was up, but could he keep within the lines when he coloured in? And his stick-men! What a joke!"

For obvious reasons I was keen to steer the conversation away from comparisons of ability so I said, "Joseph, what’s your opinion of Mannerist art as reflected in the works of Michelangelo, Tintoretto and El Greco? Do you agree that they took the joy from painting with their crowded, discordant compositions and restless figures?"

"If you mean that none of them could draw a smile on his stick-men then, yes, you’re right."
The exotic was obviously lost on the botanist so I turned to an English painter who'd died only four years before we sailed.

"Like many people, I have the greatest respect for the works of William Hogarth. His wit and satire, clearly evident in 'A Rake's Progress' and 'Marriage a la Mode' exposed the fatuous indulgences in our society and brought him into opposition with the classicists such as Gainsborough and Reynolds. He was a formidable moralist and friend to the common people. Do you agree?"

Banks nodded vigorously. "Now there was a man who knew his sticks. Two for the arms, two for the legs, but always only one for the neck. What a master."

The afternoon heat was intense and there was no relieving breeze from the water. An albatross circled around the ship, imaging the one that was around my neck. I stared at Banks, uncertain as to what to say next. He stared back at me, unsure of why I was staring at him. A slight smile creased the corners of my mouth. A concerned frown crinkled the skin of Joseph's brow. My smile grew into a large grin and then I laughed. The more I stared the louder I laughed, and the louder I laughed, the more worried Joseph became.

"You're carrying on like a lunatic, Mr Cook. Have you gone mad?"

"No, but you will be. I'm laughing because the albatross has just scrawled its rather sticky signature on the top of your beret."

Just at that moment I noticed Dr Solander lurking behind the fore-mast at the bow of the ship, savouring his colleague's embarrassment and intent upon further eavesdropping. Remembering my intention to show Banks some degree of kindness, for a purpose more imperative than friendship, I apologised for finding humour in his misfortune and suggested we bury the hatchet.

Before he could respond, Solander sauntered by and sniggered, "And at the same time you should hatchet the beret."

The following morning during breakfast, I recounted this incident to the officers and we all laughed till our ribs almost cracked. I may not have won Banks over, but the memory of him standing there with his bare face hanging out beneath a beretful of bird-poop often lightened my concern during the weeks that followed.

When breakfast and laughter finished at roughly the same time, I went back to my cabin to check the suggestion box. There was only one piece of paper inside. It read:
'kapTin.,

i fiNk it wOOd BE a good ider if yOO
got to No yor mEN more beTter.?.

how aBout haveing CHats wiv twO or freE of US
at A tyme..! we cOoD drINk tee and eaT sum littLe caks
and we coOD tork aboUt our hoBBeys?. lyke in mY kase itS
breedin pet moUSes and helpin Out in the GAlleE;?

i MEsELf perSONL like REkon if yOO spend sum tYme
wiv us inFoRMal like yoo mYte be able two understAnd us
proper;:? becorse we Are human Beans, onest weE IS,. mr
g0re caLLs us vile transgressors or SUMfink butt hes a
stiNKin lier. we Dont put oN wimens drives. we Is All
noRMal men,. Strayt up:.

iF yoo giT too lyke us yoo mite Stop
yeLLIn at us eVRy day.!!; aNd maybeE yoo mitenot Git so
menY bad Hedakes and yOO mite stop lockin Yorself iN Yor
kabbin so vat yoo Dont see our orrible Little faeces lyke
wWhat yoo Allways say;;!?.

mErry criSMis kAptin? fRom yor freND!
(P!S ON - i Git a woBBly Tummy if i eat anyFink
wHat has ChokLit iN it?? - P!S OFF!))'
The writer's words, although penned by someone several planks shy of a complete hull, made me think that perhaps I'd been so busy carrying out the commission given to me by the Admiralty that I'd overlooked the nurturing of personal relationships; that my inadvertent neglect was, in fact, partly responsible for their deterioration.

I wasn't willing to concede the point, but for the sake of future harmony, I decided to follow up on the suggestion. The first step was to consult the muster roll. Having done so, I then ordered the boatswain to have two nominated crewmen meet me on the quarter-deck in ten minutes. His other task was to have Cookie send up some tea and oat cakes.

At the appointed time I went atop and eyed the two men chosen. They were standing on either side of the wheel, trousers stained and creased, shirt buttons pushed through the wrong holes and cheeks shadowed with stubble. When they saw me, they quickly tried to slick down their hair with one or two shots of spit. The feeling I got was that here were two wayward schoolboys expecting to be thrashed by the headmaster, so to put their minds at ease, I said, "It's good to see you, Midshipman Saunders, and you also, Able Seaman Matthews. Please, sit down."

Saunders stared with stunned amazement. He was participating in a naval revolution and his head was obviously spinning.
I pointed to the refreshments and said, "Tea, gentlemen?"

Saunders nodded. "Don't mind if I do. Shall I play 'mother'?"

"Just pour."

"Right. Say 'when', Sir."

"Now!"

The midshipman flapped his hands nervously, and as he picked up the pot and poured, I handed the oat cakes to Matthews. He reached out tentatively, withdrew his hand then said, "They ain't got no choklit in 'em, 'ave they?"

What a stroke of good fortune. "So it was you who thought up this scheme? Tell me about your family."

Matthews squinted as the glare reflecting off the water met his gaze. "Well, Sir, I'm the oldest of sixteen kids. Me old man's dead, no bleedin' wonder, and me muvver takes in washin', always at night and from uvver people's hangin' lines."

"And do you have any brothers in the armed services?"

Matthews shovelled in another oat cake and spluttered, "No, but me uncle served time for armed robbery a few years back. Does that make 'im a sailor or soldier?"
I took a sip of my tea, hoping that the warm sweetness might go some way towards lessening the tension that was just starting to throb at my temples. "No, it makes him a thug and a thief."

"But, Skipper, all of us on this tub is thugs and thieves but the navy signed us up."

This time I took a huge gulp of the tea. "I've heard enough, thank you, Matthews. Mr Saunders, let's hear something interesting from you."

Saunders crossed his legs. "Like what?"

"Your folks. Are they still living?"

"Yes, they've got a small cottage in Kent. In fact, my mum made a bit of a name for herself a few years back. She was disgusted with the way the area was becoming littered with all sorts of rubbish. None of the bigwigs gave a hoot about tidying the place up so mum, being fairly strong-minded, organised a band of women to do the job. The group was called 'Mothers Unite to Clean Kent' or 'MUCK' for short."

"It's jist as well she didn't organise a fathers' group," Matthews said with crumbs cascading down his shirt-front.

He then poured himself another cup of tea and asked, "Listen, doesn't anyone want to 'ear about me 'obbies? I brought one up t' show youse."

"What is it?" Saunders said, moving to the edge of his chair.
From his shirt pocket, and with immense pride, Thomas produced a dirty great grey rat with twenty-inch whiskers and teeth the size of Moses' tablets.

"How adorable," Saunders twittered. "A field-mouse. Have you given it a name?"

"Too right. It's 'Jimmy', jist like what the skipper's is."

"Well, I never," Saunders gushed. "You named him after the captain. That's beautiful. He's certainly got the captain's eyes. Where'd you find him?"

"Nowhere. I bred 'im, down in the 'old. And there's another forty."

Saunders was tapping his toes excitedly. "A family! Captain, did you hear that? We've got a family on board!"

As I was about to launch my boot into the rodent's rear, it leapt from Matthews' grimy hand and clamped its teeth firmly onto the midshipman's nose.

"Look, Captain," Saunders said, "he's playing with me. What a friendly little Jimmy you are. Oh, he's playing a bit harder now. Thomas, could you ask him not to bite so hard? Thomas, he's really digging in. Would you please take him away! Ouch! Look, I'm bleeding! YOOOWWWW! Call the friggin' doctor! Someone get a musket! Matthews, don't just sit there, get this vicious great bastard off me! EE0000000WWWW!"
The sight of Saunders rolling around the deck with the rat hanging off the end of his swollen conk caused me to convulse with stifled laughter. Breathing deeply to compose myself, I then told Matthews to get it off Saunders or else I was going to shove it in a cannon and blow it twenty miles out to sea.

Huffily, Matthews plucked the gnashing rodent from Saunders' nose and said with affection, "Who's been a naughty Jimmy, then? I'll give you one last tickle and it's back into me pocket. We can't 'ave you showin' off like that. Me friends will fink I 'aven't learnt you proper manners."

Saunders, by now returning to some sort of coherency, got up off the deck and steadied himself on the poop's rail. "Matthews," he snarled, feeling his nose gingerly, "everyone reckons you're an idiot but I know you've got a brain because I can hear the pea rattle every time you shake your head!"

The able seaman turned bright red, jumped up and shouted, "Was that an insult, Cap'n?"
There was no point in trying to retrieve the situation, so I stood to attention, even though the ship was listing, and replied, "Shut up. Trying to do anything positive around here is like trying to piss into a thimble in a hurricane. So you can both bugger off and Matthews, the minute you get below, get rid of those rats. If I see so much as a whisker when I inspect the hold later, you'll both be hauled up before the Admiralty when we return to England."

Sufficiently chastised, the two marched off.

As I stood on the poop surveying the tree-spiked hills to port, a sudden, strong wind came up, billowing the main topsail.

"Maintain a steady course north," I told the helmsman as I passed the wheel.

I may not have been getting very far with the men, but at least the ship was moving forward. That was the only thought that kept my spirit buoyant when the incident involving Able Seaman James Magra arose sometime close to the 28th of April. Having to deal with it meant that I couldn't fully concentrate on the more dire matter of Banks' plot, and it also caused the men to be even more suspicious of one another.
The *Endeavour* was anchored a few hundred yards from the shore, in the Latitude 34°10'S. A gentle nor'easterly was caressing the ship, drying the deck and rigging which had been drenched by a heavy downpour during the night. Lieutenant Hicks and I had just finished inspecting the magazine and were preparing to put out in the pinnace in order to sound the surrounding waters when Master's Mate Charles Clerke approached us. The droop in his mouth told me that he was about to batter my ears with another complaint. A familiar conversation in a foreign country. The gist of the gripe was that at an hour well past midnight, while he'd been "sleeping deep in the arms of Morpheus", someone had stolen his timepiece.

Hicks tut-tutted, shook his head and said something about going below to check the muster rolls.

A few minutes later he rejoined me atop, armed with what he thought was vital information. "Captain, we must have a stowaway on board because there's no 'Seaman Morpheus' listed on the rolls. And I've looked everywhere but he's definitely gone. So it's my guess that the swine must have done a bunk after he'd pinched Clerke's timepiece."

"You're a boring defective."

"Pardon?"

"I said you're a born detective."
During this conversation, I'd noticed that Clerke, tall as a tale from a Dublin drunkard and thin as a politician's promise, had been impatiently shifting from one foot to the other, and while Hicks mulled the whole thing over, the master's mate insisted that the matter be taken further as he believed that the thief was still on board. So did I.

With my temper aroused, because of yet another complaint that forced me to abandon essential seamanship, I ordered the pinnace to be relashed and told the boatswain to assemble the crew. When the men were finally lined up, I strode to the poop under a coal-smeared sky and stood to attention. There didn't seem any point in embroidering the crime by stressing the need for trust or appealing to a guilty conscience, so I simply mentioned the crime and demanded the culprit own up.

The sun beat with an almost audible pulse in the silence down the ranks. No-one moved. I watched and waited, and the seconds ticked heavily on. Eventually one of the men cracked his knuckles as a relief to the tension. This prompted others to shift slightly and before long there was general agitation as throats were cleared and feet shuffled. One or two perspiring heads then turned towards the centre of the deck, and soon every eye was fixed accusingly on the figure leaning on the mainmast, Able Seaman James Magra.

"What are youse all starin' at me f'r?" he said.
I wasn't surprised to see Magra accused in this way. Often drunk and belligerent, he was a rogue of the lowest order. Before the voyage, his life in London was blotted by shady incidents and seamy companions. He stole, went with harlots, lied to all and sundry, gambled on everything and fought in taverns. There wasn't a magistrate in the city who hadn't dealt with him, but always on a strict, cash-only basis, according to the boatswain. Rumours and innuendo aside, there was one fact no-one could dispute; James 'The Maggot' Magra was a good-for-nothing.

I looked the midshipman directly in the eye and coldly told him that I wanted the truth.

At the height of the tension I'd successfully created, Banks pushed his way through the ranks, whippet in tow, and said, "Truth's an interesting concept, Mr Cook. There are many types; theological, scientific, metaphysical, philosophical. I think it would help Magra if you were a bit more specific."

"Banks," I said, moving towards him. "You want specific truth? I'm going to throttle you."

"You're on your own, Magra," Banks said, stepping back hurriedly.

Totally abandoned, the midshipman effected a look of innocent outrage and replied, "T'weren't me that done it, Cap'n."
This look of innocence continued even as the small clock which he'd concealed in the back of his trousers started chiming eleven a.m.

As the final 'ding' echoed around the brine-bleached deck, he shot a quick glance over his shoulder and exclaimed, "Bugger me dead! How'd that get there? Straight up, someone's just lumbered me with this!"

Hicks then took over the inquiry, but none of his questions resulted in anything that a court would construe as a confession. I sensed that Magra, skilled at lying through his yellow teeth, was slowly slipping off the hook, so it was time for a more direct tack.

"Magra," I said in a deliberately cold tone, "how would you like to scrape the barnacles from the ship's hull while we're travelling at a rate of knots under full sail?"

"I was only lendin' it off him for a while," the 'Maggot' finally coughed up.

Following my finding of guilt, he was then paraded on deck under a crackling sun, stripped to the waist, bound to an upturned grating and flogged while Drummer Rossiter beat time to the four strokes. I then relieved him of any duty within the ship for seven days.

Later that afternoon, as Hicks and I were discussing the theft in the coolness of the Great Cabin, the lieutenant asked if I'd been serious about keel-hauling Magra under full sail.
Zachariah's eyes, blue and quizzical, half-closed as he awaited my reply, and his anticipation hung in the hollow like an uncertain hummingbird.

I sat forward in my chair, took a sip of coffee and confessed that I would have been a little more compassionate.

"In what way?"

I added a dash more sugar, stirred and, as if in a confessional, drew myself close to Zachariah. "I would've reduced sail."

Again Hicks got the soft-soap out. "You're a true commander. If anyone deserves to be the First Lord of the Admiralty, it's James Cook. How on earth John Montagu got the job is beyond me. I tell you, if there is a war with our American colonies, as seems inevitable, then England is in serious trouble. With Lord Sandwich in charge of our naval forces, I doubt that we could beat an egg with a wooden spoon."

"We couldn't even find an egg," I said, opening the door. "The conceited old fool uses every one laid as filling for those silly bread things he invented. Now I've just remembered something I've got to finish here so I want you and Gore to take the pinnace out."
It was the end of the month and therefore time to award the prize for the best suggestion, so I stepped outside to remove any last-minute deposits in the box. The diversion was welcome because it briefly took my mind off Banks. Although the pretender hadn’t yet shown his hand, my bones told me he would.

The box contained very little of interest. If I recall correctly, there was only a death threat against the entire crew signed by Cookie and a chain letter from Matthews stating that if it wasn’t passed on, ‘EvrY offisers Bigg FAT ArSe will berst iNto FLamEs the NEXt tyme theres a fuLL MOONE!;?.’

When I’d decided upon the winning suggestion, not because it was the best but rather because it was the least offensive, I ordered the boatswain to assemble the crew on the main deck for the prize-giving ceremony.

“And ask Mr Gore to come to me immediately. I feel a fever coming on so I want him to conduct the ceremony.”

Shortly after, as I discussed my choice and the reasons for it with the 3rd lieutenant on the poop, a rush of activity went on around us. Feet scurried up through hatches and arms hauled as the anchor was weighed and the main-sail lowered.

“Stow it!” was the general order.

“Stuff it!” was the usual response.
When the ship finally settled upon a slate-smooth sea, a sense of anticipation rippled through the ranks. This was a formal ceremony, so the 3rd lieutenant began the proceedings with what he considered to be an appropriate speech.

"Friends, Romans, countrymen. Lend me your ears."

A moment of frantic unbuttoning followed.

"Stop it! The word was 'ears', so will you all please pull up your trousers and turn back this way."

When the final rope belt was retied, Gore continued.

"The captain has gathered you here this afternoon to award the monthly prize to the fellow who made the best suggestion for improving morale. But first, let me explain how the decision was reached."

"How's about just tellin' us who won what," shouted a familiar voice from the centre of the ranks.

Several of the crew started cat-calling and whistling at Peckover, while one or two others standing beside the long-boat let out blurting noises. This blathering on deck was imaged by the tizz of terns that perched high and noisily along the foresail yard, and my enthusiasm for this occasion was rapidly waning. Impatience and fever were taking their toll but as captain I had to endure.

Wanting to end the proceedings as quickly as possible, I shoved Gore to one side and stepped to the front of the poop.
"Men," I said, steadying myself on the rail, "this month's winner is the person who suggested the practice of holding regular and informal chats."

With an unexpected surge, my fever worsened, causing my knees to buckle. Reluctantly, I asked Gore to again take over.


He then turned to me and said quietly, "What is it?"

From the corner of my mouth I whispered that it was a bottle of port.

Gore copied my action. "That's first prize? They'll kill us. What's second?"

"I don't know. I'm too ill to care. Ask Hicks."

The 3rd lieutenant turned to Hicks, who was standing behind me, and raised his eyebrows.

"Two of the same," Hicks said.

Gore swallowed and shifted uneasily. "Men," he said, weighing each word, "I'm going to keep it a surprise, but I can tell you it's an absolute bottler. Would the person responsible for making the suggestion please fall out and be recognised."

As soon as he'd finished the sentence, the entire crew fell out and fell over each other in the rush.
Summoning what remained of my flagging strength, I drew myself to attention and shouted, "Get back into ranks! For the next two weeks it's only a half ration of rum per day. And if there's any more of this unruliness, you'll be confined aboard ship for a month."

The men's silence indicated their compliance. As I continued to stare them down, my legs got the shakes. Hicks noticed my febrile unsteadiness, grabbed my arms and shouted for the surgeon.

Delirium overwhelmed me and I dropped. It was all too much. The pains. The questions. The answers. Never-ending. One after the other. War-drums in my head and words in my ears: BOOM! BOOM! Cap'n, Sir! Someone stole this, someone said that. Who did it? He did it! Hey diddle diddle, the ship's cat's done a piddle. It's raining, it's pouring, the captain is snoring.

"Don't wake him. He needs all the sleep he can get."

The voices had the opposite effect and my eyes wearily opened. Gore's face slowly came into focus. Hicks was standing next to him, looking down with concern.

"What time is it?" I whispered. "Where am I and what happened?"

"It's midnight," Hicks said, "and we're in your cabin. You passed out at the ceremony earlier. Is there anything you want?"

My eyes closed involuntarily. "The pleasure of your absence. Good night."
Eerie shadows from the flickering lamp moved across the ceiling, their cotillion in sympathy with the music and rhythm of my breathing. Just before unconsciousness again carried me off into its freeing oblivion, I heard the door close softly and, in my delirium, felt a strange and sudden fancy for Yorkshire pudding.

Thus ended the month of April, not with a bang but a whim.
Changing Currents

May 1770
At the start of May, I found myself mulling over the notion of what it is in a man's spirit that compels him to leave home and family and sail away for long periods. I'd never given it much thought before, but as the quarrels on board worsened, I began to regret my decision to lead the expedition.

It is well known that Alexander Dalrymple was considered the obvious choice as leader and principal observer. Dalrymple's credentials certainly stood him in good stead. He was a member of the honoured and ancient Dalrymple family of Scotland, holders of the earldom of Stair, and his life was a succession of achievements; a scholar, seafarer, humanitarian and Fellow of the Royal Society. Even I expected his appointment, considering that his privately published work, *An Historical Collection of the Several Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacifick Ocean*, had given substance to the existence of the Southern Continent and that it was the Royal Society itself which had petitioned the Admiralty for another ship to be sent south. So when, on the 25th of May, 1768, the Admiralty promoted me to 1st lieutenant and gave me, James Cook, a forty-year-old Whitby seaman unknown in society, command of the *Endeavour*, none was more surprised than I.
The early morning of May 1st, grey and cold as ingratitude, was in stark contrast to the conditions and vista experienced only a few hours earlier. The previous evening we'd sailed, fully-rigged, into a most commanding bay. Keen to investigate the region, I then initiated a familiar procedure; "Helm hard to port. Boatswain, brace back the square sails. Have the men stand by the windlass. Steady as she goes, wait till she's stopped... steady... now, let go the anchors!"

The gently blinking stars and the marble-still sea allowed a fitful sleep until the wind blew up close to 6.30 a.m. Joseph Banks had risen and gone ashore before the rest of us had woken, and just as I was emerging through the hatch after breakfast, the botanist returned to the ship with Herman Sporing, his sketch-maker. The chill of the early morning was gradually losing its edge as the sun's flush forced its way through the parting clouds. The warmth hadn't yet reached my spirit as I quizzed Banks about his unexplained absence. He mumbled something about going ashore and then gushed about the richness of the flora and fauna.

"Show the captain your sketches, Mr Sporing," he said finally, completely oblivious to the fact that his absence had caused a good deal of worry. I pushed the sketches away without looking and then reminded the botanist that whenever he left the ship, it was his duty to inform somebody.
"I did," Banks protested.

"Who?"

"Sporing."

There seemed little point in continuing the conversation, so I turned and surveyed all around. The region, with its deep anchorage, calm, blue waters and pleasant climate, created a sense of freedom from threat, and as we stood beside the mizzen-mast, with the breeze at our backs and our eyes upon the distant, tree-covered hills, Joseph was elated. He clapped his hands rapidly, like volleys from a line of muskets, and laughed like a lad as the echoes chased each other around the sweep of the bay.

"Only once before have I experienced such a feeling of freedom," he said, quickly adding that the area should be called Escape Bay after William Bay, the dissolute London magistrate.

He then went on to say that it was Bay who had concealed his name and released him from responsibility during three dishonourable breach-of-promise suits during 1765.

"I thanked the magistrate in the tavern at the celebrations after the third trial," Banks said, "and I told him that it would have been embarrassing had my scent reached the running noses of the press-hounds. The bloated old fool nodded knowingly, patted my hand and said, 'My pleasure, Joseph. You know the old saying - a friend in need is a friend in debt'."
"What was your response?"

"One appropriate to the legal fraternity; the price of a gin and the promise of another. So as we sat by the fire, I ordered a couple of drinks, mainly to become better acquainted with the serving girl, and when she placed the cups on the table, I was instantly taken with her big, blue eyes and the smell of burning pine logs in her hair. She flashed me a smile so I flashed back."

"Do you mean," I interrupted, "that the girl had pine logs burning in her hair?"

Joseph slapped his hand against the mast with an exaggerated flourish. "Yes, it did sound like that, but I meant that the smoke from the fire had permeated her hair."

I nodded my understanding and stiffened my legs as a swell lifted the anchored hull. Banks wrapped his arm around the mast for support, held up his index finger and said, "Now that you’ve raised the subject of writing, let me digress for a couple of minutes to tell you about a new technique I’m working on. In all the stories I’ve read, I’ve never seen one that depicts a person’s thoughts as they really occur. You know, a never-ending, chaotic flow. So in my future writing, I’m going to record thoughts as they literally flow out. I’ve called it the ‘Lake of Consciousness’ technique."

The ship slid into a small hollow between swells. As it rose, I suggested that a lake, being peaceful, contradicted the notion of chaotically flowing thoughts.
Another hollow and Banks braced himself. "What about 'Ocean of Consciousness'?"

A carnation-white cloud hung in the sky above us like an adornment upon a blue velvet jacket. Parrots and lorikeets screeched in the trees behind the beach.

"That's closer," I replied, licking the salt from my lips, "but the image of an ocean doesn't convey a concentrated flow. It's too expansive."

The botanist sniffed at the briney air. "'Hose-pipe of Consciousness'?"

"No. Too much botany and not enough poetry. What do you think of 'Stream of Consciousness'?"

"Not much. I'll come up with something later. Anyway, let me finish my story about old Willy Bay. As he guzzled the last of his gin, his parting words to me were, 'Banks, I've always maintained that the English system of justice is presided over by the best men money can buy'."

There was no way I could let the botanist's cavalier attitude towards the law's due process pass without comment, so I reprimanded him for his apparent complicity in the affair. I then imposed my authority, both moral and legal, over him by declaring that the region should be called Botany Bay because of the abundant variety of botanical species sketched by Sporing. Joseph appeared to take my reprimand with equanimity, but later in the day, as he and I were in the Great Cabin discussing certain flora, he made it obvious that he harboured resentment.
The specimen under discussion was a large and ubiquitous tree that gave off a pungent, yet pleasant, odour. It also yielded a large quantity of reddish gum. For that reason, and as a friendly suggestion, I proposed that it should be called the Gum Tree.

Banks' mouth twisted to a snarl and the atmosphere in front of his eyes iced as he replied, "Who's the renowned botanist and who's the sailor? You concentrate on steering this bucket of bolts and I'll name the plants."

The curtain on the cabin's window was half-drawn, enabling light to fall upon the desk and chair. Further away in the shadows, Banks and I stood no more than a contemptible sigh from each other, controlling our breathing as we tried to silently impose our respective wills. As captain, I was determined to win, but it quickly dawned on me that he might use my hardheadedness as the excuse needed to incite the crew to mutiny. Reluctantly I backed down and told him to call it whatever he wanted.

He immediately became insufferable. Grinning like some Sunday School bully who'd just thrashed the vicar's kitten, he flung the door of the cabin open, stood in the passageway and announced loudly, "Gum Tree be damned! Listen, everyone, I predict that in years to come, the Great Southern Continent will be famous for one thing - the 'Red-Sap Tree', so named by me this moment!"
It was obvious that Banks was desperate to sign his name on the canvas of natural history and to have it hung in the museum of men's minds. The opposite was, and is, the case for me. When I die, I will be satisfied with an uncrowded farewell in a quiet country church and the words, 'He was an honourable man who set to sea for King and country'.

I pray that day is long in coming, for I want so much to see my children grown.

I also pray that when that day comes, it comes as a feather and not as a falcon, because violent death is too cruel a fate.

For Forby Sutherland, the end came very early in the month, and although not violent, it was nonetheless painful. The able seaman died as a result of consumption and the general distress did little to lessen the tension.

When it became obvious that Sutherland was nearing his end, I ordered Banks and his 'gentlemanly' companions to leave the Great Cabin, in which they often worked and talked, and arranged for Sergeant Edgecumbe and four other marines to carry Sutherland to it. Surgeon Monkhouse attended him for several hours and then rested on the poop while Gore and I sat with the stricken seaman. We spoke for a long time about serious matters; good versus evil, repentance, salvation and the hope of eternal joy in the life to come.
Sutherland's breath grew weaker and more shallow, and his final words indicated a certain lack of stoicism.

"Captain," he gasped as he wrapped his thin arms tightly around my neck, "the thought of death has never troubled me but the actual dying's another matter altogether. I DON'T WANT TO GO!"

"If the poor bugger hadn't put so much effort into saying he didn't want to go," Gore whispered as he pressed the deceased's eyes shut, "he might've hung on a bit longer. So much for final wishes being respected."

After the customary medical examination, Surgeon Monkhouse pronounced 'life extinct'. Lieutenant Hicks, the officer attending the examination, was a little vague on this point.

"Sir," he said as we strolled sedately along the top deck at twilight, musing over life's brevity and gazing across the water at the purpling, distant mountains, "I'm not sure the surgeon said 'life extinct'. It sounded more like 'leave 'im, 'e stinks'. But it doesn't matter. Either way, Forby's stiff as a Stilton."

A passage from The Proverbs came to me; 'Leave the presence of a fool, for there you do not meet knowledge'.

"Hicks, I'm going below. You wouldn't know suffering if it thrashed you with the anchor cable."
The lieutenant stopped abruptly beside the main hatch, blocking my access, and said testily, "That's unfair. I am familiar with suffering."

"Undoubtedly," I said as I pushed past, "but only as the cause, never the recipient."

The following day, just as the sun was climbing into the sky, charging the heavens with life-renewing heat and light, Sutherland was buried ashore.

As the company was quietly leaving the burial site, Monkhouse approached me and Gore. The three of us stopped beneath the boughs of a River Oak, the dappled light sprinkling onto our heads like drops of water from a baptismal font. Birth and death together; promise and passing contained in the one melancholy moment.

"I regret not being with poor Sutherland when he died," Monkhouse whispered. "Was he peaceful at the end?"

"I'd say so," Gore interposed. "He wasn't moving."

In the interests of honest accounting, it is necessary for me to record that William Brougham Monkhouse, although literate and deserving of praise both as an observer and surgeon, was not without blemish. Before joining the _Endeavour_ expedition, the surgeon had known Banks. In 1766 they had sailed together on the thirty-two gun frigate _Niger_ to Newfoundland. They did so to prevent serious conflict between French fishermen and our own three years after the Treaty of Paris had been
signed at the end of the Seven Years War. It was on this expedition that Monkhouse had shown a fondness for the fortifier. He then carried it with him, in two barrels, when he joined the Endeavour. On a number of occasions during the voyage I counselled the surgeon concerning the evils of drink and then during the afternoon of May the 6th, after I'd seen him reel from his small and poorly aired cabin aft on the lower deck, I escorted him up to the poop and told him that unless he freed himself from the grip of the grog, he'd spend the rest of the voyage unproductive, green-faced and leaning over some rail.

"Remind me about this conversation in a few minutes," Monkhouse mumbled as he hastily leaned over the stern. It was unfortunate that at the precise moment the doctor threw up, a nor'easterly blew up, and a few seconds later an enraged Banks propelled his sour kraut-covered head through the opened window of the Great Cabin and shouted, "Monkhouse, you quack, if you're still on the deck when I reach it, you're a dead duck!"

The doctor was coherent enough to realise he was in trouble, so he fled towards the men's fo'c's'le below. He stayed there for an hour or so, expecting to be battered and bloodied, but when it became apparent that Banks' ill-temper had been constrained less by his high-mindedness and more by his low cowardice, Monkhouse at last felt free to emerge.
For the next two days, things ran smoothly, so I was able to schedule necessary business. This concerned itself with frequent visits ashore with the treacherous botanist and his colleague, Dr Solander. These visits were necessary in order to inspect the remarkable variety of plant and animal life that flourished in Botany Bay. Even though my mind was alert to any danger, the walking gave me a welcomed break from the tensions aboard ship.

During all my years at sea, I have been fortunate to see many exceptional places. Botany Bay was another, and in many ways the most unusual. Apart from many species of eucalypts set back from the beach, there was also the River Oak with its huge, straight trunk and branches thick as a thigh. High above, its canopy was green, and the earth beneath, a chess board of light and shadow, was moist and fertile. Pines and palms crowded along the shore, their fronds bowing and rising in the breeze. At the head of the harbour, dark mangroves hid frogs, crabs and crows.

All this vegetation provided shelter for an array of other birds such as parrots, lorikeets and cockatoos. On one occasion when we noisily approached such a gathering, the alarmed flock fled with a flourish and spread across the sky like an exploding rainbow. I envied the strength of this display.

Pelicans and water fowls browsed and fed along the shore, and on the sand and mud flats we relished the sight and taste of oysters, cockles and mussels.
Another sight relished by the men, Banks in particular, was the native women. Whether they were fossicking along the beach, digging amongst the trees or carrying wood to their camps and huts, they seemed oblivious to the fact that they were naked and open to view. I called them 'brazenly immodest'. Solander termed them 'naturally charming'. Banks was rendered almost speechless and kept dousing himself with sea water.

Not that it had much effect. I recall one day in particular; a stain in time that no amount of trinket-swapping could wipe away.

Solander, Banks, some waterers and I had gone ashore to collect fresh water and small life forms living on the rock platform. It was our final excursion before continuing up the coast, and after a morning's fruitful toil, the party climbed into the heavily laden long-boat and made ready the oars. Just as we were setting off, I noticed that Banks wasn't aboard. Being aware of the lurking dangers and of the botanist's ability to turn peace into problem without much effort, I told the waterers to stand by the boat while Solander and I searched him out.

We'd walked only a short distance from the beach when we came across Banks and a group of women sitting in the shade of a large tree. As usual, the women were naked, and Joseph was giving them each a shiny shilling and an even brighter smile.
Annoyed at being delayed, I strode over and asked what he was up to.

"I’m trying to persuade these lovely young things to let me paint them," he said, eyeing-off the most voluptuous of the subjects.

Solander was immediately taken aback. Standing over his colleague and plunging him into even darker shadow, he said, "What with? You didn’t bring your oils."

Banks, not taking his eyes off his intended prizes, replied, "They’re going to show me how to make some using various coloured clays."

"And what about brushes?" Solander pressed.

"Who needs brushes? I was going to finger-paint."

I was as curious as Daniel. "But you haven’t even brought a canvas."

Shaking his head impatiently, Joseph stood and dragged me to one side. "Mr Cook," he said, "I’m trying something radical here, so don’t interfere. When I told you I wanted to paint the girls, especially that big one, I meant that I actually wanted to put the paint on them."

"Their faces?"

"Eventually, but I’d have to work up to it. And if you and Solander don’t smother my genius with the wet blanket of your working-class outrage, I’ll let you watch."
I grabbed his arm and pulled him back to the circle of girls. "Give them each another shilling but you keep the smile. Let's call it payment for services rendered redundant."

When they had their money, I said, "Shoo," and waved them away with both hands. "And as for you, Joseph, I'll tell you what you can do with your fingers. Get back to the boat, wrap them around one of the oars and heave with all your genius."

When we eventually reached the ship, I gave the order to weigh anchor. Banks, standing jelly-legged beside me on the poop, took a final look at a group of girls fishing near the shore, let out a long, deep sigh then took to his bed with the glazed expression of one who had lost contact with the world as we know it.

Once again in the safety of my own suite, I was relieved that no mishap had overtaken me or my men. I was also confident that Banks' mutinous intent would remain dormant, considering his state of mind.

It was now the afternoon of the 7th and it seemed an appropriate time to check the suggestion box again. Just as I was emptying it, Lieutenant Hicks arrived carrying two mugs of steaming tea.

"I thought you could use a spot of refreshment," he said.
I commended him for his timing, opened the cabin door and told him to come in. Once inside and seated behind my desk, I asked Hicks to read the papers aloud. The lieutenant positioned a chair on the other side of the desk, scanned the first paper and said, "This has merit, but I doubt that it'll work. There isn't enough fuel on board to boil oil and I can't see the boatswain agreeing to get into the barrel in the first place."

I told Hicks to put it in the waste basket.

After fifteen minutes of listening, I called for my red-bearded servant, John Charlton, and asked him to empty the basket.

"Again, Sir? This is the fourth time."

"Don't remind him," Hicks insisted. "He's had heaps to contend with in this last quarter hour."

Charlton stooped his six-foot frame through the doorway, turned his face back inside and replied in a rich Highland burr, "Ah wouldna complain too much if ah were you, Carp'n. Poor wee Mr Green's had to put up wi' piles since last September when th' goat rammed him in th' khyber."

After Charlton had closed the door behind him, Hicks looked at me in a confused fashion and asked, "These Scots can certainly mangle the King's English. Can you understand him?"
I shook my head.

Hicks sought to have his suspicions confirmed.

"Because of his heavy Scottish accent?"

"No, because he was born and raised on the shores of Sandycove Harbour just outside Dublin."

Through the partly-opened window, a gentle nor'easterly brushed past my face and rustled the final suggestion in Hicks' fingers. He glanced at it then turned it towards the light filtering through the window.

"That's better," he said. "It starts off 'Dear Captain Cook. Before I give you me idea I want to tell you that Mr Hicks is biggest bastard in the navy.' Let me skip down to the nub of this thing. Here it is, 'talent-night'. It then mentions singing and acting. What do you think?"

It wasn't the type of activity which normally interested me, but I was seized by the notion that a night's entertainment might just be the tonic needed to lift the men's spirits. And more importantly, the resultant betterment might also provide a bulwark against any treachery Banks might seek to foster.

After a minute's thought, I nodded my assent and Hicks clapped his hands together like a small boy who'd just been told it was Christmas. He then asked me to fix a time for the event.
"Tonight after mess," I said, "and you can hold it on the lower deck. It'll be too cramped to house the entire crew at one time so I want two shows. There's a lot to do so get cracking."

There was a mood of expectancy on board for the remainder of the day as the men readied themselves for the night ahead. Chores were hurriedly completed, not one person grumbled, and so it seemed that my decision had been already vindicated.

When the appointed hour finally arrived, I gave the order to heave-to. The inlet I'd called Port Stephens, named after the only sailor on board brave enough to drink the stuff, was a mile to the west and when I excused the men on evening watch, Able Seaman Stephens smiled broadly and reported that all was well. His pleasure could barely be contained as he and the others jostled through the hatch, their laughter as full as the moon that shone above. The lights from the lower deck blazed through the opening, their brilliance thrusting and climbing all the way up the mainmast.

A head suddenly popped up through the hatch. "We're ready to start, Captain," Hicks said. "I've saved you a seat at the front."

The crewmen assigned to the second performance were stationed at various points along the upper deck and I told them to be patient and alert as I clambered down through the hatch.
Upon reaching the lower deck, I saw that it had been arranged as a small theatre. Aft was a stage constructed from planks and supported at each corner by a barrel. Hanging in front of the stage was a curtain made from a torn sail. A line of lamps just under the stage threw up a dazzle of light and the smoke from the lamps filled the room with a yellow fog. Through it I could see about 50 eager faces staring forward.

Presently onto the stage stepped my 2nd lieutenant. He held up his arms and the audience hushed.

"Good evening, Gentlemen and Gentlemen," he announced, bowing grandly, "and welcome to what I know will be an unforgettable evening. For your pleasure, H.M.S. Endeavour would like to present, as the opening attraction, Dr Daniel Solander performing a slightly abridged rendition of the soliloquy from William Shakespeare's immortal work 'Hamlet'. Come on lads, put your hands together. Lads, you're being silly. Now part them. That's right. Now together again, apart, faster, faster. That's the spirit!"

A howl of encouragement almost blew the ballast through the hull. With a theatrical flourish, Solander pushed both the curtain and Hicks aside and waited for silence. He then cleared his throat and slowly raised the skull he was holding until it was level with his widened eyes.

"Alas! Poor Yorick," he boomed. "I knew he wouldn't follow my advice and buy himself a decent toupee!"
The audience’s total silence was enough to send Solander scurrying into the shadows.

Hicks rushed back onto the stage. "Thank you very much, Dr Slander! And now, good sirs, our next artiste is a man who needs no introduction."

"Then don’t give him one!" Solander yelled jealously from behind the curtain.

"Right," Hicks responded. "Attraction number three. I’d like to give you a chap who...

"We don’t want him!" shouted the just-rejected number two.

"Number four it is then. Lads, I present Surgeon William Monkhouse singing that beautiful English ballad 'Get Off The Table, Mabel, The Money’s For The Rum'."

A quick roll from Drummer Rossiter was Monkhouse’s signal. A few seconds ticked by without anything happening so Rossiter thumped his drum again. I was becoming as impatient as the rest when Hicks reappeared and said, "Sorry, Doctor Monkhouse won’t be coming out. He’s polished off the rum and he’s flat out on the table. So while we’re waiting for the next performer to get ready, here’s one I’m sure you haven’t heard. There were these four Spanish zoo-keepers locked in a cage with a pack of gorillas. They were the ugliest things you’ve ever seen. Hair all over, dirty great hands and beady little eyes. And the gorillas weren’t much better. Anyway, Pedro... oh, you’re ready. Gentlemen, as
a tribute to one of our ship-mates who recently passed away, Observer Charles Green would like to do his sensitive impression of the late Forby Sutherland."

Slowly the curtain slid apart. In the middle of the stage was a coffin with a stiff arm hanging out. The curtain then quietly closed.

Up to this point, the show hadn't been the rollicking good time I'd hoped for, but it was still early and I was still optimistic. Stretching my legs to relieve a minor cramp, I then looked up and saw James Magra standing in the middle of the stage.

"Evenin' all," he announced. "I'm 'ere to astound youse with me bird calls. Ready? HEY, YOUSE BIRDS! Come on, there's no law against clappin'."

None of us bothered to, so the curtain closed quickly and ten seconds later the infuriating Hicks was back. "There's nothing like a good bird call," he said, "and I'm sure you'll agree that was nothing like one."

Much to my relief, it was at this point that Zachariah announced a short refreshment interval. Every man stood, most stretching their stiffened spines and massaging the backs of their legs. A moment or two later, John Thompson appeared straight from the galley. He was carrying a small tray filled with artichokes. Before he had a chance to step forward, several crewmen hoisted him across their shoulders and carried him straight back to the galley.
Apart from an opportunity to stretch our legs, the interval gave me and a number of others the chance to re-live the performances we'd seen.

"Wasn't Solander convincing," Charles Green commented. "I've never seen a more breath-taking 'Hamlet'."

"Then you should occasionally holiday abroad," Banks replied caustically. "They're scattered everywhere throughout the Prussian countryside."

"Beggin' the Gentlemen's pardons," Peckover said, pushing between me and Green, "but I couldn't help overhearin' what you be sayin' and I just like to add a word of compliment for good ol' Mr 'icks. He be doin' a mighty fine job up front."

Banks placed his arm around Peckover's shoulder and said, "I'll say this for you, Seaman Prickowner. You're a keen judge of mediocrity."

I could see the lieutenant waving eagerly at me, so I called for hush and told the men to sit down again. When the deck was relatively quiet, Zachariah tried his best to muster enthusiasm.

"Discerning patrons, may I introduce 'The Incredible Swami Orton and His Amazing Prestidigitations'! How about a round of applause?"
Two or three crewmen responded with minimal effort so Hicks tried a little harder.

"A round of ammunition?"

A slightly more spirited reaction.

"A round of drinks?"

The entire audience erupted with all the force and fury of a Cape Horn tempest. It became annoyingly excessive, so I instructed the boatswain to call the men to order. When they'd finally settled, my clerk, Richard Orton, strode into the middle of the stage with a sheet wrapped around his body and a small towel curled precariously on his head.

"Can I have a volunteer from the audience?" he asked.

Master Molyneux immediately stood up.

"Anyone will do," Orton persisted.

The master waved his arms frantically, but Orton continued to ignore him. "Oh, well," the Swami shrugged, "I'll just have to choose. How about that chap in the third row?"

A ferocity of forearms pushed Able Seaman Dozey forward.

"Good evening," Orton said as Dozey joined him on stage. "I'd like you to confirm for the audience the fact that we haven't met before."

Dozey looked directly at me. "He's wrong, Skipper. Me and him have been practisin' this trick all day."
"Very amusing. Now, total stranger," Orton moaned mystically as he held up a deck of cards, "I want you to choose one of these cards and commit it to memory. Then I want you to slip it back in the deck. I will then shuffle the deck and select the card you chose."

Dozey nodded his understanding and Orton fanned out the cards. "Choose any card. No, any one but that. Or that. Take the one near my finger. Not that finger! The one with the ring. Good grief, can't you do anything right? Take the card with the bloody big red cross on it!"

Like the rest of us, Lieutenant Gore's patience had run out. From his seat in the front, he shouted, "Orton, you've got all the skill of a one-armed juggler. Get off and take Dozey with you!"

Several of the audience took this as their cue to voice their own judgements, with expressions such as 'cut his throat, not the cards', 'Orton the Bloody Ordinary' and 'let's see the Swami swim' being common and seriously intended.
Realising that a nasty incident was in the making, the 2nd lieutenant rushed onto the stage and attempted to restore peace. He failed, so during a momentary lull in the cat-calling, I stood and told the men to shut up or else the show would stop there and then. I secretly hoped that they'd continue their uproar so that I could call the wretched thing off, but when they hushed almost immediately, I was obliged to let it continue. My nod to Hicks indicated as such.

"Thank you. Now comes the 'piss de assistants', as the French say. Would you please welcome Able Seaman Thomas Matthews and His Troupe of Performing Field-Mice! Take us out, Thomas!"

With a stuttering, uncertain movement, the curtain opened and there stood Matthews juggling three of the biggest rats ever seen outside the Paris sewer system. One after the other they circled in the air and one after the other they dropped to the floor.

"Kill the lights!" Hicks shouted in a state of sheer panic.

"Kill Matthews!" Gore screamed, jumping onto a chair.

Immediately the entire audience followed his example. From the stage, Matthews' voice pierced the darkness. "A standin' ovation! Gosh! I never expected nuffink like this!"
An eerie silence then fell upon the lower deck, punctuated at intervals by the sounds of rabid gnawing. Apparently convinced that the men were too preoccupied with their own safety to wreak any further havoc, Hicks stumbled his way back to the stage and said, "That's it. Have you all had fun? Mr Gore, can we have a light on the audience? That's better. Oh, there's no audience."

It came as no surprise that I cancelled the second show and ordered everyone to his cabin or hammock. Everyone except Zachariah Hicks. He was to wait for me on the quarter-deck. It was time for a talk.

When the men were settled, I went atop. The sky and sea merged into a vast, black cape wrapped loosely around the ship, allowing the water-cooled wind to bully its way along the deck and into my bones. Hicks was standing on the poop, rubbing his hands. As I approached, he stiffened. His mouth then opened, a puff of frosty air preceding the words he was about to utter. My hand went up and his mouth closed.

"Lieutenant," I said coldly, "tonight was a disaster. I'd trusted you to organise an evening that reflected English life at its best; Sunday on the village green with its vaulters, minstrels and morris-dancers. But what did I see? A pig-awful procession of bad acting, insults, insubordination and even violence. All that was missing were cock-fights and bear-baiting. I was hoping for fond memories and lasting goodwill. Fat chance!"
Throughout my harangue, Hicks stood motionless, his head bowed.

"It's no wonder you lack the courage to look me in the eye. If Gore were more trustworthy, I'd reduce you to 3rd lieutenant and promote him to 2nd. But that'd be like putting my left foot inside my right boot, just for the sake of a change. I'll continue to wear you till my patience gives out but any more slip-ups and you'll wish you'd never been born. Is that understood?"

He nodded.

I then headed for the hatch and my bed, ordering him to stand night-watch for the next two days so that he could reflect on his position.

It must have been close to three a.m. before the fog of sleep drifted from the water and filled my cabin.

For the next few days, with their variable light winds and clear weather, we continued our voyage. Our course was due north, and we maintained a distance of some two or three miles from land. In these warmer waters, dolphins often surfaced and swam beside the ship, their snouts playfully pushing through the swells. To port, the coast was a changeable, yet all the time, compelling, attraction. One day showed it to be a line of white sand with flat, stumpy trees behind, the next saw cliffs rising out of the emerald water like sunburnt icebergs. Never more obvious was the variety of Nature's handiwork, inspiring awe with the intake of every breath.
Sanguine as my mood appeared, the men knew only too well that I would not react well to any further provocation, so it wasn't surprising that the external calm carried itself into the *Endeavour*.

Given this truce, I allowed myself a day to inspect the ship without interruption. Considering she'd been at sea for almost two years, she was in a state of reasonably good repair. I could detect little fault with her masts, spars, standing and running rigging or her sails, and the caulking on the decks and upper works was sound. The lower hold, filled with barrels, casks and provisions, was dry, as were the carpenters' workshop, sail-lockers, pantries, cabins and magazines.

I was at ease with the ship and grateful that her refitting at Deptford had been so thorough, and just as I was beginning to feel that Banks' covert machinations might be rendered impotent, Fate stuck out its foot again and I tripped.

At near to 11 on the morning of May the 14th, as I was inspecting the deck which had been built in the hold to provide slinging room for the seamen's hammocks, Sergeant Edgecumbe and two other marines approached me. They had a problem with my clerk, Richard Orton.
Edgecumbe had been appointed spokesman and he wasted no time in establishing his position. "Sir," he said, stepping in front of the others, "last night in the carpenters' workshop, Orton showed a few of us a game he'd picked up from a traveller returned from the Americas in 1767. He called it 'poker'."

"Is it anything like the European game 'poque'?" I asked.

"If you play with five cards and are silly enough to bet your last sixpence, then it's the same."

I nodded and told the sergeant to get on with it.

"We're pretty sure the bugger cheated."

"How do you know?"

"He gave us five cards each."

"That's how many you're supposed to get."

"So why'd he give himself seven?"

"Perhaps he miscounted."

"The only thing he miscounted on was in thinkin' we couldn't count past five."

"That was probably the safest bet of the night."

"Excuse me?"

"I said you should feel safe letting this problem come to light."

"See," Edgecumbe said to his companions, "I told you the cap'n would understand. We want the swindlin' sod to give us our money back."
Having listened to this sorry tale, I had to be seen to be impartial and in total command. There were two reasons. First, I had authority over men whose moral fibre was well and truly moth-eaten, and unless I acted with conviction, our small society was in danger of coming apart at the seams. Second, if I failed to comply with naval regulations, Banks' mutinous intentions would be given fuel. I therefore resolved to administer immediate discipline to my clerk.

Rather than send for him, I determined to search him out myself. No delegation, no second-hand messages that might cause misunderstanding. Just the captain and the culprit. The news of the encounter would soon spread anyway.

He wasn't in his cabin or the mess so I went up to the main deck. A short but heavy rain storm had just stopped and the air was still and moist. Half a dozen gulls had settled on the spritsail-yard and they were watching the rain-flattened sea for the slightest movement of fish. On the shore-line about a mile away, just south of Cape Byron, thin, white lines curled upwards. The natives were re-lighting their fires that the rain had doused. It took little time for the smoke, drifting through the grey air like a spirit, to reach the ship.
I inhaled deeply and was pleased because it was a reminder of family life. Often I'd lit the fire at home. Elizabeth would then stitch, I would read and the boys would play. Elizabeth would occasionally look down at the boys, then across to me, and smile. I knew the contents of her heart by the contentment in her eyes. After a time the fire would fade, so I'd add another log. This was the pattern that gave my life its limited joy; my family and I, sitting together around the fire, not needing to speak.

Suddenly one of the gulls squawked as a fish darted and I was cruelly brought back to the ship and my purpose. As we moved through the water at a steady five knots, I stepped carefully across the slippery deck and looked towards the mizzen-mast. There he was, leaning against it in a stupor. He didn't see me coming, but he looked up wearily when I said, "Orton, you've let me down."

He started sobbing, a response that made my stomach churn, so I wasted no time in applying my saltiness to the weeping wound that wobbled in front of me. In the space of thirty seconds, I rattled off his deficiencies, the names of his enemies and the charges laid against him. After he'd slurringly admitted his guilt, I ordered him to repay those whom he'd cheated.
I assumed, incorrectly as it turned out, that this would placate his victims. It didn't, because two days later, while he was sleeping in his cabin during the middle watch, someone crept in and cut off a part of both his ears.

The culprit responsible for the knife attack remained at large until word eventually reached me that James Magra was somehow involved, so I summoned Hicks and Gore to my suite to discuss the matter. Both felt that the reasons for suspecting him were insubstantial. For the sake of justice, I listened as the 2nd lieutenant attempted to refute them.

"Let's consider the first reason," he said, rising from his chair with his hands clasped behind his back. "Magra can't account for his movements at the time of the assault. So what? John, can you account for yours?"

Gore was forceful in his own defence. "Absolutely. I was asleep."

"Any witnesses?" Hicks demanded, his interrogatory finger an exclamation mark.

"Only one. While I was out to it, I dreamt I was eating whelks on Blackpool Beach with the Archbishop of Canterbury. We then swapped hats and paddled with our trousers rolled up. He'll vouch for me."
A few seconds of strained silence elapsed before my patience finally snapped. "Let's forget this tripe and look at the facts. Zachariah, I'm prepared to admit that the evidence relating to Magra's whereabouts is open to conjecture, but surely the second reason for suspicion carries weight?"

Hicks' voice was reed-thin and reserved. "Perhaps."

My voice was wind-wild. "Perhaps! Eighty-three men clearly heard Magra say to Orton, 'You're a dirty cheat so one of these nights I'm going to cut off your ears', and yet you're still willing to defend him? I can't believe it! You're nothing but a boorish egotist who delights in the sound of his own voice."

"That's right. I'm a lawyer."

"You're a louse," Gore growled, unaware that he had confirmed, rather than corrected, Hicks' statement.

Rising from my chair, I curtly dismissed them both and told Hicks to send Magra down.

Following their departure, peace fluttered like a dove in the cabin. I closed my eyes and regulated my breathing. Then a loud rapping snapped me to attention. The door opened. It was Magra. He stood like a marble Grenadier in front of my desk and asked why I'd sent for him.

My response was an accusing stare.
Unnerved, the midshipman said, "I 'spose it's about the attack on Mr Orton. Honest, Cap'n, I never laid a finger on 'im."

As the ship lurched, he steadied himself on the corner of the desk. Through the open window, I could hear the boatswain barking out orders to the men on the main deck. I closed the window and his voice was no longer a distraction.

"Midshipman Magra," I said, tapping my finger on the desk in time with the rhythm of my words, "did you say to Orton, 'You're a dirty cheat so one of these nights I'm going to cut off your ears'?"

"No. What I said was 'It bleats and one of these nights its goin' to butt all our rears'. I were talkin' about the goat."

"That's ridiculous."

"I know, but it's the best I could come up with on such short notice."

The heat and tension inside the cabin were stifling, so I opened the window. Fresh air and the boatswain's voice from above again flooded in.

"Hey, Dozey! When I told you to stand by the spanker, I meant the sail on the aft side of the mizzen-mast. So would you stop smacking Observer Green with that bloody great plank and do what I told you!"
I slammed the window shut and stood directly in
front of Magra. Furious at being constantly at war with
almost everyone on board, the ball of my words exploded
from the cannon of my mouth.

"Up straight, no lies, you did it!"

His knees buckled under the force, and the recoil of
his reply was immediate.

"Yeah, but 'e made me do it. Durin' the game,
Orton said I didn't have enough nouse to put together a
two-piece jigsaw, so I just seen red and sweared in me
own mind to get even with 'im."

My eyes remained fixed on the reprobate as I
relieved him of all duties.

The midshipman produced a premature smile and said,
"Fair 'nough. I'll be goin' now then."

"Not quite yet," I replied as I strode to the
window, opened it and shouted for the boatswain to report
on the double. When he appeared a moment later, I ordered
him to escort Magra to the main deck.

"Don't go to all that bother," he interrupted. "I
can toddle off by meself."

"Maybe so, but I doubt you'll be willing to give
yourself ten lashes when you get there. Take him away, Mr
Gathrey, and see that it's done."
Ten minutes later, as I stood by the opened window with my eyes focused on the promontory I called Point Danger, the swish of the whip on warm, bare flesh cut the air. It was chilling. Above the hills that passed across the corner of the frame, clouds were gathering. Beneath the stern, the sea churned and was black. Winds began to howl their fury against ropes and canvas. The Endeavour was being driven into a storm.

I felt its early rumblings about an hour after concluding the meeting with Magra. Wanting to check on our provisions, I went below. Just as I was entering the hold, Joseph Banks emerged carrying several sheets of paper. When he saw me, his face reddened and he quickly stuffed the papers inside his waistcoat.

"What's that?" I asked casually.

Banks feigned confusion. "Where?"

"In your waistcoat."

"That's my shirt."

"What are those papers?"

"Oh, these," he said, stuffing them deeper into his waistcoat. "They're just some idle scribblings about the things I saw when we were anchored in Botany Bay."

"Making notes in the hold? A bit secretive, wouldn't you say? It's as if you've got something to hide."

A hollow laugh rang out. "That's absurd. I'm leaving."
I wasn't going to be put off. Here was my opportunity to catch Joseph in the process of organising the mutiny and I was determined to bring his scheme to light. "Can I see them?"

A frown appeared on Banks' forehead. He began to shuffle uneasily. "You wouldn't understand all the Latin names for the shrubs."

It would have been injudicious to accuse Banks of disloyalty without the evidence of his notes, so I demanded to see them.

Very slowly, Banks produced the papers. My eyes travelled at a similar pace down his face and shirt before finally coming to rest on the sheets. I took them and began reading;

'Botany Bay... Eucalyptus globulus... colourful parrots... native women... fresh water... naked... oysters... flat stomachs... stretches of white sand... curves of brown skin... legs... cowrie shells... thighs... bouncing and bending... finger-painting... perspiration running down between two of the firmest...'

This wasn't the self-incrimination I'd anticipated, so direct confrontation was out of the question. However, to indicate that I suspected him, I crumpled the papers inside my fist and handed the tight ball back with the words, "Consider your position carefully."
"I always do," he said as he scurried up the narrow steps, "because my back gives out if I choose the wrong one."

Before I had a chance to respond, he was gone.

Quietness now inhabited the hold. Beside me was a barrel that contained a provision covered by a greenish moss. As I was staring at it, Cookie came in and looked around. When he saw the barrel, he smiled. I decided to skip mess that evening, instead spending the time in my cabin scheduling the activities for the remainder of the month.

As a result of overhearing Dozey's misunderstanding of the word 'spanker', and in order to divert my thoughts away from Banks, I decided that the first activity should be a thorough reappraisal of the men's naval knowledge. After almost two years at sea, it was becoming apparent that their grasp of fundamentals was weakening. The problem needed to be corrected, so following the afternoon watch on the 22nd, I met with the boatswain in my cabin and told him to prepare a written examination.

"Make it a searching test, Mr Gathrey. In order to correct any deficiencies, I must first know where they lie."

"You'll catch most of the lazy buggers lyin' down in the hold," he said, standing to attention in front of the desk.
I took a deep breath and explained that I wanted a test of about ten questions on various masts, yards, rigging and sailing manoeuvres. It was to be done by the men after mess that night and the results brought to my cabin later for review.

It was close to midnight when Gathrey knocked on my door and announced he had the completed test papers. I was happy to call him in because it gave me a break from my charting.

"I've had a quick look," he said, placing the papers on top of the maps, "and considerin' the lateness of the hour, the men done pretty good."

Standing up to relieve the back strain from prolonged drawing, I asked if he'd encountered any problems.

"None to speak of. There was a minor kerfuffle when Matthews discovered that he hadn't brung a pencil so he lent one from Satterley. So then Satterley didn't have a pencil so he got one from Tupia. This left Tupia without one so he nicked Molyneux's."

"Apart from the pencils, were there any other difficulties?"

"Only the time it took 'em to finish. Five hours."

"Five hours! How many questions were there?"

"Ten."

"That's ridiculous. Either your questions were too involved or the men are appallingly slow writers. Which is it?"
Gathrey was quick to spring to both his and the men's defence. "Neither. There was only one pencil so they all had to take turns usin' it."

To relieve the tension building in my neck, I hunched my shoulders and rotated my head. "Was there any cheating?"

"Not much, although I did catch Pickersgill sneakin' a look at Sergeant Edgecumbe's answers so I told him to do the test by 'imself in the fo'c's'le."

"How did he fare?"

Gathrey shrugged his own shoulders and held his hands out sideways. "Buggered if I know. He's still wanderin' around the ship searchin' for it."

Feeling uneasy about Gathrey's earlier assessment, I again asked if the test had been thorough. The boatswain's fingers gripped the papers tightly and he said reassuringly, "Too right. Here, see for y'self."

He released his grasp, randomly extracted one of the papers and handed it to me.

"In order to save time, I read the questions out loud and the men writ 'em down and underlined 'em. Then they scribbled their answers beneath each one. When they was done, I got 'em to sign their names on the back of the sheet."
I congratulated Gathrey on a job well done, settled comfortably next to the lantern and, in the dim light, focused my tired eyes on the paper. The first element that impressed me was the neatness of the setting out.

'Naval Examination

H.M.S. Endeavour

22nd of May

In the Year 1770

**Question 1.** Name two things that are kept in the magazine?

Shot and powder are kept in the magazine.

**Question 2.** What is a 'hawser'?

A hawser is a heavy rope for mooring or hauling the ship.'

Two questions and two correct answers! This was a promising start and my eyes eagerly moved down.

**Question 3.** What does the term 'cast off' mean?

Cast off means the old vest Dr Solander gave to the clothing collection for Tupia.
**Question 4.** What is the 'quarter-deck' and where is it located?

The quarter-deck is the number of cards Mr Orton deals himself when we're playing poker and he keeps it up his sleeve.

**Question 5.** Who is responsible for the rigging?

Mr Orton is responsible for the rigging and if we catch the bugger at it again, we'll tear up his crooked cards and shove them down his throat.

**Question 6.** What is a 'crew'?

A crew is a type of haircut worn by the marines.

**Question 7.** Define the term 'fother'.

He married my mather, and before you say anything, the ceremony took place *before* I was born.

**Question 8.** Where is the 'mess'?

Try the quartermaster's cabin, if you can get the door open.

**Question 9.** Explain the word 'fathom'?

I've tried but I can't work it out.
Question 10. If you were an officer, under what circumstances would you expect to have your rank reduced?

I would only expect it after my monthly scrubbing with soap in a hot tub.'

Despondently, I asked whose paper it was. The boatswain gestured for me to turn it over. A faint signature was scribbled in the bottom, left-hand corner.

"John Thompson! I might have guessed. Judging by this, it's a miracle that he knows the difference between a pot and a pelican. I'd actually considered giving him a break away from the galley, for his own welfare, but for ours, he can stay."

Never had twenty-four hours seemed so long and never had Mile End seemed so far away. Much closer was the bunk in the corner of the cabin, its blankets almost beckoning. Out of sheer frustration and weariness, I held Thompson's paper over the lantern's flame and watched, mesmerised, as it fulminated. The sparks rose then cascaded onto the baize. A thousand small insects fluttered against the cabin window, attracted by the little lights flittering in the room.

Gathrey stamped out the sparks and asked what my plans were. When I replied that the papers in front of me would soon be behind me after a quick dash to the head, he nodded in agreement then left.
There seemed little purpose in scheduling any activity designed to increase the men's seafaring knowledge, so during the latter days of May I concentrated on more physical pursuits such as visits ashore. For the most part they were concerned with studying the indigenous fauna.

In the p.m. of the 24th, being anchored in the latitude of 23°52'South, Dr Solander requested that I, Lieutenant Gore and young Sydney Parkinson accompany him ashore to survey and sketch the local birds. I wasn't keen to leave the ship, desiring instead to remain aboard to keep an eye on Banks. However, the young Parkinson, eager to fulfil his draughting commission, kept on at me, so I reluctantly agreed to the trip.

Sydney Parkinson was a persuasive advocate for his profession. He'd been recommended for the great undertaking by Banks, having earlier been introduced to Joseph by the nurseryman, James Lee. Parkinson was well-suited to Banks' party, being amiable, handsome, talented beyond his years, articulate and diligent. His only flaw, according to Joseph, was that he was from Edinburgh.

"But don't think too harshly of the lad," Solander advised Banks early in the voyage. "The fact that he's from Edinburgh and not in Edinburgh indicates a degree of intelligence not readily discerned in the usual Scot."
Having acceded to Solander's wish, we made off in the yawl and were not long in landing. Parkinson gathered his paints and sketch pads, Solander gathered his telescope, while I instructed Gore to gather his wits and watch for any signs of trouble from the natives.

We then scaled a large hill. On reaching the summit, a breath-taking panorama stretched out below. For as far as the eye could see, hundreds of birds crammed the sky; gulls, cormorants, ducks and pelicans, all screeching and squawking. Suddenly, as if seized by a fit, Solander went rigid.

"Look down there," he whispered, staring at a group of trees near the base of the hill.

We hurriedly followed the line of his eyes and saw millions of truly wonderful butterflies smothering the foliage; velvet black wings turning blue near the edges, and underneath two vivid red spots.

"A flutter of lashes in the eye-blue sky," Parkinson pronounced poetically. A second later, and much to the lad's distress, a large bustard flew over and dumped its whitish waste on top of his black hair.

"Today's a bastard!" he yelled.

"What was that?" Solander asked.

"I said we should call this bay after the bustard."
"Then 'Bustard Bay' it is," I said, leading the party back down the hill. As we walked, the sun beat upon our backs and the humidity drenched our shirts. To minimise weariness, we moved slowly and after a time I became aware of an imperceptible change all around. No bird screeched, no insect droned, no animal rushed. The only challenges for my senses were the antiseptic smell of the bush and the under-breath of wind through grass.

I stopped and sat, lost in the whispering, and recalled with affection my early years spent with my family on Thomas Skottowe's farm at Great Ayton in Yorkshire, near the village of Marton.

My father had been made foreman to Skottowe when I was eight, and even though our cottage was usually peaceful, there were unhappy moments. Sometimes, when Father would sit after our evening meal and talk, his voice would quieten as he realised that his hopes for a life marked by distinction were now futile. It was from these infrequent times that I determined not to repeat my father's mistakes, so whenever I wasn't needed to labour or attend the Postage School at Ayton, I would wander over the cold Cleveland hills, an explorer within the continents of my own imaginings, travelling miles and years in a single afternoon. Even our farm's name, Airyholme, had a lightness that seemed to lift me away each time I whispered it.
I was hearing it again now, more than thirty years later, on this afternoon in a continent of my own finding, yet my imaginings had brought me back to Ayton. I couldn't help but smile, and it occurred to me that life's happiness, in significant measure, issues from one's recollections and their irony.

As I slowly awoke from my daydream, I began to sense a menace lingering in the shadows. Gore thought it was my imagination playing tricks, so he disappeared into a thicket to show that all was well. Five seconds later he emerged walking backwards with a native's spear prodding him in the stomach.

Twelve more natives quickly appeared, their dark faces adorned with red and yellow dyes, their eyes white and wide.

Solander muttered an unintelligible Swedish oath while Parkinson, displaying the spirit common to 'gentlemen', leapt behind a rock and made faint animal noises. I stood my ground and ordered Gore to stand his. Gore shouted that his was about a mile away and took off. He froze when a spear impaled his hat on a tree trunk.

Then young Parkinson, in a moment of inspired self-preservation, stood up, seized his paints and quickly applied stripes to each of our faces. We soon resembled our attackers, so the natives, in some sort of brotherly gesture, put down their weapons and welcomed us into their tribe.
We socialised for more than an hour, exchanging trinkets then ideas on how best to start a fire. The natives demonstrated their technique first, rotating a thin piece of hardwood against some balsa until it eventually ignited. To increase its intensity, one of them blew gently on the smouldering ashes.

Solander then showed his method. He struck a match and his shirt sleeve instantly caught alight, so he tore it off at the shoulder seam and stamped on it. He then blew vigorously on his arm to cool it.

"I don't think you presented civilization in the best light," Gore said as we sat down to eat. A type of 'yam' was passed around, and when one reached Parkinson, he said 'Yum' and popped it in his mouth. A few seconds later he muttered 'Yuck' and spat it out. The period between the yam's acceptance and the 'yum' had been friendly. Not so the pause following the 'yuck' and spit. Understandably, the natives took Parkinson's reaction to be an insult and so they reached for their spears. Shaking his head and wagging his finger, Gore then reached for his musket. To the native chief's credit, he quickly reached the conclusion that his fire-power wasn't equal to ours, so he, too, muttered 'Yuck' and spat his yam out. His tribesmen did the same, prompting Solander to do likewise.

"A bond of friendship's been formed," the naturalist said, and for the next five minutes he and the natives spat at each other.
We were then invited to watch a spirited dance where our hosts impersonated several indigenous animals. Sticks were beaten together as accompanying rhythm for a long, hollow, blowing instrument, and under the blazing sun, the chief wailed as his men spun around, their legs lifted in exaggerated fashion. Gore was so taken by the mood that he jumped up and joined in. He looked like some sort of disjointed stick-insect running across hot coals.

Unfortunately, he got carried away and unknowingly kicked the chief in the privates. Down the warrior went, eyes watering, hands clutching crotch, wailing louder than ever.

"Is that part of the dance?" Gore asked as he rejoined us in our small circle.

"If it is," Parkinson replied, "then I'm sitting this one out."

When the chief finally stopped rolling around in the dirt, he crawled over to his companions. I could hear guttural hisses and whispers rising into a sort of chant, and before I had a chance to warn my men, the natives were on us, punching, thumping and biting. In the ensuing melee, the chief fell against the musket, causing it to let loose several pellets into his backside. Down he went again, shrieking and clutching his rear like some baroness who'd just been goosed by the gardener.
It was the chance I'd been hoping for. Grabbing what I could of our equipment, I told everyone to head for the yawl. We ran for almost thirty minutes, looking over our shoulders, anticipating a spear in back. None came, and it was a tremendous relief to find ourselves rowing towards the ship with only minor abrasions.

Later that evening, after Parkinson had retired exhausted to his quarters, Hicks, I and a couple of midshipmen sat in the Great Cabin discussing the day's events.

Pouring a dollop of goat's milk into my coffee, I mentioned that Parkinson's quick thinking in relation to the paint showed a rare, life-saving ingenuity.

Hicks passed me the sugar and suggested that Parkinson should be rewarded with a nightshirt from the King when we returned to England. I thought he'd meant knighthood and said so.

"No," the lieutenant insisted. "Nightshirt it was. We've all seen him sleep-walking and none of us can stand his East-London habit of kipping in his vest and underdrawers."

As the others laughed, I smiled tiredly, finished my coffee then ordered everyone to bed.
At 6 the next morning, the sun's rays streamed in through the window, erasing the smudge of the night. I rose, washed, dressed then went below to supervise the crew's breakfast. It passed without incident, only because the men refused to eat it, and the swabbing of the decks was also carried out peacefully. Then later, after the dismissal of the morning watch, I decided to check the suggestion box. There was only one proposal. It read:

'Dear Captain,

Like you, I'm a Christian, but no-one else gives a fig for spiritual matters. Apart from all of them being real keen on sin. To make the men more God-fearing, could you please give some sermons and bible study?

But steer clear of the arm-waving, rash-healing, 'Pastor Jim' business that seems to be the fashion in the Americas just now. We're Englishmen, and nothing excites us. Straight and simple, that's the go.

God bless you, Captain.'

It was a positive and timely notion, giving me, as it were, the chance to kill two birds with one stone. The men's spiritual understanding could be developed, allowing them, when the time came, to choose between joining Banks' plotted treachery or submitting to my authority. With careful planning and execution, the odds could be stacked firmly in my favour.
I rejected the thought of giving the sermon myself, feeling that it would simply be another example of a captain lecturing his wayward crew. The effect would be contrary to the intent, so I decided that Surgeon Monkhouse and Quartermaster Evans should lead the service.

A day of preparation followed. Monkhouse and Evans were advised as to what I expected, and on the morning of the 27th, being in the Longitude 22°53'S. and becalmed, the boatswain had the crew assemble on the main deck.

As I stood at the bow, gazing over the lads' heads and beyond to the stern, Cape Manifold reared up at a distance of almost ten miles. Its greenly rolling hills confirmed a complex, Higher Goodness at work. Hence the name.

Surgeon Monkhouse was on the poop, watching for my signal. When he saw me nod, he took a step forward and said to the crew, "Good morning. Before I talk about how a personal relationship with the Lord can result in harmony with each other, Quartermaster Evans will lead us in a word of prayer."

Evans straightened, cleared his throat, and adopted a holier-than-thou expression. "Right, eyes closed and heads bowed. Almighty God in Heaven, we beseech Thee - Tupia, stop peekin' - to speak through Thy servant, Doctor Monkhouse, but please keep it short. Amen."

A loud 'Amen' echoed from the ranks.
Monkhouse opened his eyes and gazed around. Like me, he saw that a few of the men were missing, so he asked the boatswain to do a head count.

"Twenty-five short," Gathrey reported.

"Go and get them," Monkhouse ordered.

Biting my tongue, I watched as the reluctants filed up through the main hatch and joined the others in the ranks.

Monkhouse was keen to prove himself worthy of my trust, so he held up his bible and said, "The text for today is taken from Saint Matthew, chapter eighteen, verse twenty. Able Seaman Dozey will now come up and read the verse."

Dozey then pushed his way through the ranks and Monkhouse handed him the Scriptures as he stepped onto the poop. He read the verse, returned the bible to the doctor then jostled back to his position.

"You were supposed to read it aloud!" Monkhouse groaned. "Lads, it says, ‘For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them’. This means that God Himself is on deck with us."

Immediately an arm shot up in the middle of the ranks. "Beggin' the Doctor's pardon, but if God be on deck with us, then who be watchin' over 'eaven to make sure no undesirables sneak in and grog-on like?"
Monkhouse turned his head towards the smoke that was rising on the shore-line two leagues away and took a deep breath. Having regained his composure, he turned back and said, "Peckover, God is omnipresent."

"I knows that, so what I were askin' is can 'e be in two places at the same time?"

Evans shot a glance in my direction, noticed my frown, then called for quiet.

A sigh of gratitude preceded Monkhouse's words.

"Thank you, Quartermaster. Men, to enter Heaven, we must first repent of our sin. Who knows what that means?"

In order to be heard above the squawks of several mast-perching gulls, my clerk, Charles Orton, shouted, "It means to do the sin over and over again."

"Close," Monkhouse encouraged, "but you're confusing 'repenting' with 'repeating'."

Charles cupped what remained of his right ear and said, "I didn't hear a word of that. Would you mind repenting it?"

Even if I'd been on the shore two miles away, a wish that had fleetingly crossed my mind, I still would have heard the doctor's furious 'Shut up!' explode across the rippling water. But to his credit, he quickly apologised to the men and suggested that he, too, needed to repent. He then urged everyone to practise forgiveness by turning to someone and greeting him like a brother.
Peckover's arm went up again. "But what if we be orphans like, or only-children?"

Peals of ridiculing laughter swept through the ranks until Quartermaster Evans put an end to it by threatening to bring out the lash. Silence fell. Acting on his own initiative, a surprising yet welcomed development, Monkhouse then announced that a collection would be taken up in place of the sermon, adding, as a gentle reminder, that the Lord loved a cheerful giver.

As an example to follow, he took a sovereign from his pocket and deposited it into the quartermaster's hat. Evans then ventured into the ranks.

Two minutes later he returned and handed the hat to Monkhouse. The surgeon looked inside then back along the ranks. "Sinners," he said, "the hat's going around again so fill it up. And whoever took my coin, put it back."

When Evans returned, he simply shook his head. "Still no money?" his co-leader asked.

Leaning close, the quartermaster whispered in the doctor's ear and the two then faced me and the crew.

"Right," Monkhouse said, "who's got the bloody hat?"

When nobody admitted guilt, Monkhouse looked towards me for assistance. I could see that he was floundering so I told him to forget the collection and close the service with some hymns.

A brisk nor'easterly was beginning to blow. It would soon be time to set sail.
Monkhouse seemed desperate to make a better impression, so he quickly said, "Mister Evans, would you please lead us in the singing. Let that Welsh baritone of yours fill every nook in this ship. Men, the hymn is 'Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehova'. On the count of two."

"You would have to pick that one," Evans interrupted. "I don't know it."

The surgeon looked at me sheepishly. "Never mind. How about 'Rock of Ages'?"

Evans shook his head.

"'Jesus Wants Me For A Sunbeam'?"

"Sorry."

In desperation, Monkhouse pleaded, "Do you know anything you can lead us in?"

The chorister waved his finger in the air excitedly and said, "How about temptation?"

Without stopping to consider the effect his actions would have on the rest of the crew, Monkhouse grabbed the quartermaster round the throat and shouted, "If you're being deliberately provocative, then I promise that your rich baritone will soon become a soprano envied by every shrieking choir-boy in Christendom! Now think of something more appropriate and make it quick!"

Evans scratched his head for a second or two then replied, "All I know is a Welsh poem me Sunday School teacher taught me when I was a kid in Swansea."
Producing what appeared to be a relieved smile, the surgeon instructed him to carry on.

The quartermaster, suitably chastened, stood to attention, clasped his hairy hands reverently behind his back, filled his great lungs with air and said, "You'll all know this one. I'll give you the first verse and then you join in. Here goes. The boyo stood on the burnin' deck, his pocket full of crackers..."

A gnawing sense of dismay had been stalking my optimism from the moment the service started, and like a lion just released from its cage, I leapt forward and roared, "Boatswain, dismiss the men!"

Most of the hope I'd held about securing the crew's allegiance vanished with their dismissal. With a pounding head, I stood on the quarter-deck and surveyed the horizon. A blue line across a black day. To the west, clouds were building, their distant drizzle floating down like soot-dust. One or two spots of rain fell on my boots, making small, bleached circles in the dark polish. The air seemed to suddenly expand and chill. It was time to go.

"Mr Hicks, have the men stand by the windlass. I want the anchor up as soon as possible. Boatswain, make ready to get under way."

"Aye aye."
With the wind in the mainsail and the hull cresting wave after wave, the ship gathered speed, finally easing to a steady four knots. When I retired at midnight, the day’s events kept running through my mind, so I got up and took what Monkhouse called the ‘seaman’s cure’; three rums in three seconds.

The following morning, Mr Orton woke me with a cup of tea. I greeted him with half-opened eyes and asked if his hearing was better.

"It’s about six-thirty," he replied.

Remembering, albeit foggily, that another shore excursion had been scheduled, I swallowed the tea in one great gulp and told Orton to send the shore party to the cabin. Five minutes later he came back with a shoe and a pastry, so I simply wrote what I wanted on a piece of paper and gave it to him. Hicks, Pickersgill, Tupia and several marines arrived just as I finished dressing. Mr Banks, recruited so that I could keep a close watch on his activities, appeared several minutes later. Rather than apologising for his tardiness, he berated the others for being early. I let the incident pass without comment, choosing instead to remind everyone of the excursion’s purpose; to survey and chart the terrain north of several islands sighted the previous day. They’d all been lush
with tropical forests and ringed by sands as white as any English snow. All the colours of the rainbow could be seen in the feathers of the birds that nested in the trees, and the waters that lapped at the beaches graduated from light green in close to sapphire blue further out. I'd named the largest of these islands 'Great Keppel' after the distinguished English seaman, Admiral Augustus Keppel. A man supposedly gifted in matters of commerce, it was Keppel who observed after he and Sir George Pocock had led a successful expedition against Havana in 1762, 'This place will never be known for anything until the people stop smoking those noxious brown-leaf things.'

Cookie gave us a hearty breakfast of oatmeal and supplied the party with enough victuals to last the day; goat-cheese, oat-cakes, water and a small cask of beer. At nine on the dot, the marines, bearing arms in case of trouble, loaded the supplies into the long-boat and we set off.

After an hour's strenuous rowing we arrived, dragged the long-boat up onto the shore, secured it with rope and peg then unloaded the equipment. A rough path, apparently beaten down by the feet of the natives, could be seen winding through the scrub, so we followed it. It extended for a quarter of a mile and stopped at the base of a hill. From the top of the hill, the surrounding
countryside was clearly visible, so the theodolite was set up. After an hour's trouble-free surveying in heat that could blister hardwood, I told the men to refresh themselves at a nearby watering-hole.

Thankful, they dropped everything and dashed off. Hicks arrived first and stood at the edge of the hole.

"Let's do this properly," he said. "Trousers rolled up? Vests tucked in? Handkerchiefs tied at the corners and on the heads? Good. Come on, let's go! First one in gets a bottle of port!"

Nobody moved, including Hicks.

"Last one in gets a bottle of port?"

A mad rush followed and they all dived in as one, laughing and drinking the crystal water from cupped hands. After a few minutes of mucking about, Banks reminded everyone that he had won the archery contest back in Otaheite and then laid claim to being the best swimmer. Pickersgill protested, wagering a guinea that he was. "You can even nominate the stroke, Mr Banks," he challenged.

On watch a short distance away, I could see Banks mulling the matter over. He chose his words carefully.

"I'm not a strong over-armer, so would you be happy to watch me dog-paddle twice around the hole in less than thirty seconds?"
The instant Pickersgill nodded his acceptance, Banks picked up his whippet and threw it in. When the dog had completed two circuits, Banks dragged it out, grinned at Pickersgill then said, "Twenty-three seconds it took me dog to paddle the distance. Let's have the guinea."

In order to mediate on what had been an obvious swindle, I'd left my post and was heading towards the hole. Just as I reached it, a twig snapped and we all spun around.

"It's the Heathen," Private Dunster shouted as several black-skinned warriors bore down on us. To my surprise, I noticed that their leader was the same one who had been kicked in the privates by Gore several days earlier. He must have been following us up the coast, intent on revenge.

"Form two lines," I shouted. "Marines in front, the rest kneeling behind. I want a warning volley above their heads. If that doesn't stop them, shoot to kill."

Three muskets fired simultaneously, and when the smoke cleared, the natives had also. But not for long. They'd been hiding in a nearby thicket, and as the marines prepared to reload, they burst out with wild eyes and terrifying wails, hurling clubs, spears and rocks.
Dodging the missiles as best we could, we then regrouped behind the marines as they took aim. I gave the order to fire and Dunster let loose a volley that peppered the chief with enough shot to turn him into a salt-shaker. Screeching louder than the cockatoos that erupted from the tree-tops in panic, the wounded savage dropped to the ground like a sack of grain. At once, his tribesmen threw their remaining weapons aside, hoisted him onto their shoulders and fled into the scrub.

"We routed 'em good and proper," Dunster bellowed as he jumped up and down. Banks, obviously wanting some of the glory, then asked if anyone had seen him take on two of the savages bare-handed.

"No," Pickersgill said.

"You should've," Banks stated.

"We would've if you had've," Dunster declared, putting the botanist's feet of clay back firmly on the ground.

Fearing that our attackers might return in even greater numbers and with stouter determination, I told Dunster to be quiet, reload all the muskets and keep his eyes open. We then gathered up the surveying equipment and headed back to the long-boat.

Our caution was unnecessary because we arrived at the shore untroubled, the natives apparently having left the vicinity after the earlier clash.
There was a sense of relief among the lads as they loaded the boat and prepared to put out. They chatted incessantly, laughed and slapped each other on the back. It was good to see. In the same spirit, and just as the oars were raised, I praised them for meeting their test with courage. The effect was immediate. With a tremendous surge of pride, Dunster and Pickersgill plunged their oars into the water and pulled like they'd never pulled before. The other rowers quickly joined them, and with the golden sheen of twilight glowing on their faces, it wasn't long before the ship loomed up.

It was then that a dread seized me. Doing a quick head-count, I realised someone was missing. Tupia.

"Turn about," I ordered.

Although we were only an oar's-length from the Endeavour, Hicks immediately grabbed the tiller and swung us about. Then, just as the bow was pointing towards the shore, Tupia's hands emerged from the water and grabbed hold of the port-side rowlock.

"Natives steal me," he spluttered as he dragged himself in. "Wanted me to be new chief. Me run away. Me buggered."

When we finally managed to haul him onto the Endeavour's deck, he was in obvious need of medical attention, so I sent for the surgeon. Monkhouse arrived with Mr Gore a few minutes later and carried out a fairly cursory examination by lantern light.
"He's wet and tired," Monkhouse said, "but he'll be right tomorrow. Good night."

Gore immediately blocked the surgeon's path and held the lantern in front of his face. "You've had more years of medical learning than I've had cold dinners," the lieutenant fumed, "and that's the best you can come up with? You're a bloody charlatan!"

It was clear that Monkhouse was as drunk as a duke, so I told Gore to let him be.

"But, Sir," he persisted, "it's outrageous to say that Tupia's only tired. Look at him. He hasn't even got the strength to change his mind."

Monkhouse was wobbling from side to side and breathing heavily into the lantern, so I ordered Gore to take it away in case the fumes ignited and blew us all to pieces. As the light fell, the surgeon's anger rose.

"What would you know about medicine, Gore? You're the sort of person who thinks a case of cholera improves if it's left in the cellar for a year before decanting."

Just then, a swell rolled under the ship and we listed to port. A second later, a loud belch rumbled from Monkhouse and he listed to starboard. With as much dignity as he could muster, he jabbed his finger into Gore's chest and threatened to report his insolence to the Admiralty when we got home. He then stumbled his way along the deck, looking for the hatch. His feet found it, but his head insisted on going down first.
It was getting cold so I ordered Dunster and Pickersgill to carry Tupia to his hammock and cover him with blankets. Any deterioration or improvement in his condition was to be reported to me immediately. Stuffing my hands deeply into my coat pockets, I then went below to my cabin, leaving Gore to appoint the watch.

Mr Orton had been considerate enough to place a cup of steaming coffee on my desk. I sipped it with gratitude. The log needed to be filled in, and as I picked up my quill, my mind drifted to the quarrel between Gore and Monkhouse. Had I not been present, it may well have turned violent. The prospect was intolerable.

This distaste for violence had resulted from my period as master aboard the *Northumberland* at the end of the war against the French in North America. When Quebec capitulated in 1760, there was little for our sailors to do, and the smallest infraction often brought dire results; yardarm hangings, lengthy imprisonment and the ever-present lash. One sailor has stayed in my mind all these years; Edward Lovely. In the space of five months he received more than 600 strokes. Brutality disguised as justice administered by bullies. While I condoned the use of the lash while commanding the *Endeavour*, no-one could ever accuse me of over-stepping the mark. Banks may have been looking for reasons to topple me, but he wouldn't find any in the punishment book.
The sudden thought of Banks brought with it the need for fresh air, so I leaned back in my chair, reached up and opened the window. A gust rushed in and rustled through the log’s pages. Outside, the stars clustered and winked like fire-flies. About ten miles to the west, the hump that was Cape Townshend rose from the water like some huge, dark whale.

I was about to dip the nib into the ink-well when I heard a clear voice from the deck above.

"She’s a bit nippy."

It was Midshipman Jonathan Monkhouse, the surgeon’s younger brother. A second voice, Lieutenant Gore’s, was equally distinct.

"Yes, Midshipman. Anything to report?"

"No, Sir."

"You’re cold?"

"Yes, Sir."

"No coat?"

"No, Sir."

"I’ll have one sent up."

"Thank you."

"Jonathan, I’m curious about something. Is your brother vindictive?"

"What’s that mean?"

"Does he hold grudges?"

"No."

"So if he threatened to report someone, say an officer, he wouldn’t actually do it?"
"Are you the officer?"

"Yes."

"Forget it. He only blusters like that when he's been on the grog."

"Will he ever stop drinking?"

"Yes. The minute he stops breathing."

"So you think I'm safe?"

"Only if you keep healthy."

"Do you let him treat you?"

"Never. William couldn't recognise a temperature in a furnace."

"I'm glad we've had this talk. I feel much better."

"Don't mention it."

"I won't. Goodnight, Midshipman."

"I won't either. Goodnight, Lieutenant."

It was a disturbing conversation for two reasons. First, it showed Gore to be susceptible to intimidation, a weakness unacceptable in officers. Second, it focused clearly on the major problem blighting the voyage so far; if brothers had no respect for each other, heaven help the rest of the crew.

At close to 4 a.m., and being unable to sleep, I decided that Hicks should suffer likewise, so I dressed and went to his cabin. He was out like a snuffed candle.
I shook him awake violently and told him we were going to inspect the ship.

"But I'm half-asleep," he whined.

"As long as it's the half that talks, I don't mind."

Five minutes later, with Hicks holding the lantern, we made our way through the hushed ship to the storage vessels in the hold. Everything seemed in order, with no water evident in the coal for the galley, the carpenters' timber and the various casks and sacks. Further forward was the magazine. As we approached it, the sentry on duty, Private Wilshire, clicked his heels to attention and said, "Halt! Who goes there?"

Hicks gave our names and Wilshire told us to step forward. We did as ordered. When we were formally recognised, I asked the sentry if everything was ship-shape. He nodded, then added as an after-thought, "Why is everyone up so early?"

Hicks asked what he meant and Wilshire said that Joseph Banks and Charles Green were in the magazine checking on something.

I immediately told them both to be quiet, waved Wilshire away, put out the lantern then tip-toed to the door. Hicks followed. From inside, I could hear muffled voices. My hand slowly turned the latch and a fissure appeared, large enough for us to have a partial view without betraying our presence.
Joseph was standing next to one of the powder kegs, discussing the contents of a piece of paper with Green.

"Do you think it'll work, Charles?"

The observer's face was a cowardly yellow in the light of the covered lantern. He sounded hesitant. "I don't know and I'm not sure I want to get involved. What happens to me if I help and you fail?"

"I won't. Everything's down on paper."

To prove his point, he moved the lantern close to the paper and indicated a passage. "See how carefully I've detailed the central figure's failings. He's a jumped-up, working-class tyrant who's made it to captain by ingratiating himself with his betters."

"Yes, but you're taking on something that's outside your experience. No matter how well you've planned it, the unexpected can occur."

"That's why I've approached you. Up till now I've kept it hush-hush but I need someone else to check to see if I've missed anything. Cross all the Ts, etcetera."

Green still sounded unconvinced. "Why don't you talk to Hicks? He knows the way things are done in the navy."

"True," Banks conceded, "but Hicks has a big mouth. One word to him and my plot would be common knowledge within ten minutes. Any number of people could then claim to have thought of it and I'd miss out on the praise."
Suddenly the lantern flickered and a dark, conspiratorial silence filled the magazine. Green's silhouette shuffled slightly within the cramped quarters, his fingers pushing through his hair. "I need more time to think about it."

"Okay, but don't tell anyone about this. When the time's right, they'll all know."

Quietly closing the door, I grabbed Hicks' arm. We then stepped carefully around the stores and, in complete darkness, made our way back to my cabin.

When the door was safely locked behind us, I positioned a chair at the front of my desk for the lieutenant. After he'd slumped into it, I asked for his thoughts about what had just occurred.

Zachariah crossed his legs, clasped his hands behind his head and replied, "I don't like to say this, but I reckon he's trying to gain support for a plot against you."

As my fingers drummed a concerned tattoo on the top of the desk, my eyes stayed fixed on Zachariah. I then poured us both a rum and confirmed his suspicions.

Hicks uncrossed his legs, gulped down his measure and asked why I hadn't confronted the turncoats.

I rose from my chair and sat on the edge of the desk. "How could I? There was no direct mention of mutiny, no overt threat. Just a general discussion of me and my apparent shortcomings."
Hicks took my point and nodded his agreement. I then walked over to the window and gazed out. The shell of the sun was just appearing above the horizon; a new day was hatching. I tugged at the stubble on my chin, looked back at Zachariah and stated the facts. "Had we burst into the magazine and accused Banks, we would've been on very shaky ground. He'd have denied any so-called plot and it would simply be my word against his, if and when charges are brought. And considering his highly-placed friends, you can bet he'd walk out of the room a free man and I'd be left a laughing-stock with egg on my face."

"Probably only the shells, given the likelihood that Lord Sandwich would be presiding over the hearing."

I didn't appreciate the flippant remark, or the frequent liberties the lieutenant was taking with the rum, so I snatched the bottle away and told him to be serious. After a couple of minutes' silence, an idea took hold. We had to look for an opportunity to establish Banks' guilt that was weighted more in my favour. Solid evidence from an impeccable character was needed.

Hicks thought the plan was sound and suggested Robert Molyneux.

"Impeccable, not impeachable. No, I need someone else. Reach around the desk, get the muster-roll from the drawer and read out the names."

The early morning light now made the lantern redundant, so Hicks pushed it aside and placed the roll in the middle of the desk. His voice was matter-of-fact.
"Dozey, John."
"Keep going."
"Pickersgill, Richard."
"Pick another."
"Matthews, Thomas."
"Go on."
"Orton, Charles."
"He's deaf. Next."
"Sutherland, Forby."
"He's dead. Next."
"Monkhouse, William."
"He isn't, unfortunately. Next."
"Evans, Samuel. He's good in a crisis."
"No, he's good for a crisis. Next."

There was a pause as Hicks cast his eyes down the remainder of the list. His finger went back up a little way.

"What about Peckover?"

"Peckover! Good grief! Can't you just hear him? 'Beggin' the Cap'n's pardon, but would a wolf in sheep's clothin' be the same as mutiny dressed as lamb?' I'd rather have Black Beard."

Again Hicks' finger shifted up and down. "Beard, Black? Sorry, he's not listed."

"That's only because he doesn't want to get himself a bad name through association. Who's next?"
"We're running out of candidates, apart from Mr Gore."

"Let's keep him apart."

"That leaves the sailmaker, John Ravenhill."

It was as if rock had struck rock and sparked. Why hadn't I thought of old 'Sails' in the first place? He'd been at sea for most of his seventy years, and I'd never heard a bad word against him. His testimony would never be doubted.

Having determined that Ravenhill was the man for the job, I told Hicks to send him to me after breakfast. I also reminded the lieutenant of the need for secrecy. A word in the wrong ear, any ear for that matter, could be disastrous.

At precisely 9 a.m., the old sailmaker knocked on the door and announced himself.

When he entered, he looked about the cabin and said, "Very nice. Lots of books, a big desk, a couple of soft chairs. The Admiralty sure looks after its shining lights, and rightly so. Yours is a mighty tough job."

Pointing to one of the chairs he'd been admiring, I asked him to sit. He smiled, scratched his wirey, grey beard then settled his boney frame into the leather. In the light, the years of experience were deeply etched in the lines of his weather-beaten face.
I asked if he'd like some coffee. He said he'd prefer a neat rum. I said I'd prefer it if he didn't. He then suggested a compromise; some rum with a dash of coffee. I nodded. He winked. We were off to a promising start.

"John," I began, pulling my chair up next to his, "I can tell you're not one for messing about, so I'll get straight to the point. I need your help."

His mouth was wide open as I told him of the events surrounding Banks' plan for mutiny.

"Skipper," he whispered after hearing the tale, "boy and man I've been around ships, hearing stories that'd make stiffs sit up, but this is the worst. Banks, of all people! Are you sure about this? He's got some powerful friends. You mess with him without evidence and you could find yourself on some old scow dragging dead'ns from the Thames for the rest of your life."

The sailmaker stood up and cracked the knuckles of his fingers, one by one. He then twisted his wrists, and they too cracked. As he was about to manipulate his elbows, I said, "Stop that and sit down. I need your help to get the evidence."

Ravenhill sat forward, his wrinkled hands firmly clutching his knees. "I'm listening."
My throat was dry so I took a sip of coffee. Old ‘Sails’ swallowed his in one gulp then held out his cup for more. I poured until it was just about full, added a small measure of coffee and said, "For the next twelve hours I want you to follow Mr Banks and meticulously note every move he makes. If he speaks to someone, write down that person’s name. If you’re close enough to hear the conversation, record every word of it. When I finally bring charges against the wretch, I want a cart-load of irrefutable evidence. With it, you’ll be the man who stands next to me and points the accusing finger."

"There’s only one problem," Ravenhill said, looking at his hand. I glanced down. His disjointed finger was pointing directly at me.

"Permission to put it back into place?"

"Granted."

When I heard the crack, I looked again. This time the finger was pointing straight at him.

"Permission to try again?"

"Refused. Put it in your pocket."

"But, Skipper, I can’t go around like that. Pickersgill will think I’m pleased to see him."

"No-one will see you. You’ll be keeping yourself well hidden."

A surge of confidence infused the sailmaker’s body and his chest rose. "I’ll give it a go. With the Almighty at the tiller and us two at the rowlocks, I reckon we can do it."

His Christian outlook surprised me as no-one else on board apparently shared it, judging by the recent service. It was also refreshingly basic, because the last theological discussion I'd had with one of the crew had reflected an appalling lack of understanding. It occurred in Otaheite when Gathrey asked if the Book of Psalms gave instructions on how to shake coconuts loose without being hit on the head.

"Next time we have a service," I said as Ravenhill stood to leave, "I'll let you conduct it."

"When will that be?"

"I'll need to look at the barometer?"

"Why?"

"Because it'll indicate when Hell's frozen over. Let me have your report as soon as possible and may the Lord go with you."

Old 'Sails' opened the door then looked back. "I know He will, but how about an armed escort as well?"

As reassurance, I reminded Ravenhill that Banks was only interested in getting rid of me. He nodded uncertainly and closed the door.

In the silence that followed, the ship's timbers creaked their age, and from the wall clock, the seconds ticked louder and louder, gathering till they finally burst against my ear-drums like a volley from an ever-echoing musket.
The remainder of the day was spent in solitary charting, and at 9 p.m., a quiet yet insistent rapping on the door caused me to put the pencil down. I asked who it was.

The reply was a muffled whisper. "Ravenhill. I've got that thing you wanted."

When I opened the door, the trembling sailmaker glanced right and left over his shoulders then scurried in. From his jacket, he took several sheets of crumpled paper and handed them to me.

Being anxious to study his work, I took the sheets nearer the desk and asked if he'd met with any trouble.

Ravenhill walked stiffly over and stood next to me, wheezing like a set of untuned bag-pipes. "Nothing I couldn't handle," he said proudly. "I stuck with Mr Banks all day and every nasty, back-stabbing move he made is there. Any chance of one of those special coffees?"

I patted him on the back, an experience similar to stroking an emaciated cat, and told him to help himself.

"Thanks," he said, emptying the dregs of my cup into the saucer, "but I'll leave the coffee out, otherwise I'll be awake all night."

With the report firmly in my grip, I moved closer to the lantern. "If this contains the evidence I'm anticipating, then we'll both sleep like logs."

The flame flickered slightly as I settled the papers next to it. A hurried, though legible, hand had been at work and the notes were brief but to the point.
Report on activities of one J. Banks arising from certain alligations.

The alligator is one J. Cook.

6.15 a.m. Suspect joined officers and other gentlemen in mess for the breaking of fast.

6.18 a.m. Suspect joined officers and other gentlemen on poop-deck for the breaking of wind. Suspect spoke to Mr Hicks. Said 'I wish Thompson would serve something other than sour kraut'.

6.24 a.m. Suspect went below and brought up whippet. Tied it to mizzen-mast.

6.25 a.m. Suspect went below and brought up sour kraut. Returned to quarter-deck. Untied dog, waved stick in its face and then threw it overboard.

6.26 a.m. Mr Hicks went to suspect and said 'Why did you throw your dog overboard?'. The two exchanged words. Suspect said 'You're as bright as a total eclipse of the sun'. Mr Hicks said 'Solicit the services of a taxidermist' although not in those exact words.

7.02 a.m. Dog paddled back to ship and suspect walked it around quarter-deck. Took dog back to hold.

7.04 a.m. Suspect escorted back to quarter-deck by boatswain. Boatswain waved stick in suspect's face. Boatswain said 'Scrape that muck off your shoe with this and then chuck it in the water!'. Suspect followed boatswain's orders.
7.05 a.m. Boatswain said to suspect 'Why did you chuck your shoe in the water?' Both men exchanged words. Suspect said 'I hate you'. Boatswain said 'The feeling's mutual'. Suspect said 'That means we both hate you.' Suspect laughed. Boatswain didn’t.

7.07 a.m. Suspect approached me. Said 'Why are you hiding behind the fore-mast and why have you been staring at me for the past hour?'.

7.07 and a bit a.m. I said 'Who, me?'.

7.07 and a bit more a.m. Suspect said 'Yes, you'.

7.07 just going on 08 a.m. I said 'I just got here'.

7.08 on the dot a.m. Suspect said 'You're a lying old snoop who wouldn't know a cross-stitch from a camel's khyber!'. Suspect got cranky look on face.

7.08 etc a.m. Suspect raised fist.

7.08 etc etc my hand is sore from all this writing a.m. I ran away and hid in hold.

3.26 p.m. Came back to quarter-deck. Suspect was walking along deck wearing boatswain’s shoes. Suspect saw me and chased me down to hold. Locked me in.

3.26 and a bit p.m. Received bite on ankle from field-mouse.

8.43 p.m. Boatswain let me out of hold. I said 'Have you seen Mr Banks?'. Boatswain said 'He’s in his cabin. Have you seen my shoes?'.

8.43 and a bit p.m. I said 'Yes, thank you.'

8.44 p.m. Boatswain chased me back to hold and locked me in.
8.59 p.m. Escaped from hold when Mr Orton and two sailors
snuck in for game of 7-card poker.

9.00 p.m. Took report back to Captain Cook.

"You wasted twelve hours compiling this?" I asked.

Ravenhill was uncorking another rum bottle. "No,
fourteen," he mumbled, his eyes reddening.

My head was pounding. "Do you really expect that a
specially-convened hearing would consider this report as
admissible evidence? Ravenhill, it's evidence of only two
things; your incompetence and my poor judgement in
employing you. It's a cart-load, all right, but not of
evidence. I'm only sorry that we don't have a garden on
board! Now get out of my sight before I do something I
might regret. And if you breathe a word of this to
anyone, you'll be the one on the scow dragging bloaters
from the Thames."

To his credit, 'Sails' meekly apologised, drew
himself up next to my ear and whispered.

"No," I bellowed, "you can't have another special
coffee."
It had been a long and tiring day, so after Ravenhill's rickety frame rattled into the corridor, I put out the lantern, walked slowly over to my bunk, removed my uniform and stretched out. In the chrysalis of the cabin, all was cool and butterfly quiet. The light from the moon washed against the window and the frame cast a criss-cross shadow on the far wall. Apart from the slap of the water against the bow as the ship moved steadily forward, and the muffle of voices from the men on watch, there were no other noises. It felt good to be off my feet, and sleep, albeit light, came almost at once. Regrettably, the respite was short-lived because there was another knock at the door the second my eyes closed.

"Whoever it is, go away. Mr Gore is the officer on watch. See him."

No more than ten seconds passed before the tapping resumed.

"If that's you, Ravenhill, look out!"

"It's not 'Sails', Cap'n, it's me, Thompson."

The relaxation that I had momentarily enjoyed quickly turned to tension. I tried to keep my eyes closed but it was impossible, so I asked him what he wanted.

"I've got somethin' for you. Can I come in?"

"If you must," I replied curtly. "I suppose the sooner you do the sooner I'll be rid of you."
Like a footman entering his master's honeymoon suite just after the snuffing of the candle, the cook stepped inside. "Sorry for the disturbance," he whispered as he tiptoed towards the bunk, "but I noticed you weren't at mess tonight so I've taken the liberty of bringin' your food to you."

His kindness immediately placated my coldness. I fumbled for the lantern, lit it then thanked him for his thoughtfulness.

Now Thompson had a reputation for being rather eccentric but his appearance on this occasion placed him at the very top of England's strangest. As he stepped into the arc of light around the bunk, I saw with wall-clawing disbelief that he was wearing a linen head-dress that covered his neck and the sides of his face. If I hadn't heard about his ardency in Otaheite, I may have thought that he'd taken final vows.

"Thompson, have you gone completely insane? Why are you wearing that nun's garment?"

"Because it keeps my head warm these chilly nights. Care to try it on?"

"No! Just show me what's on the tray."

Thompson placed it on the table beside the bunk and said, "You'll like it. Master Molyneux took a hunting party ashore today and they came back with a wild pig. I've made it into something special."

"I don't want to hear a single crewman's name. Just tell me what you've brought."
"Your favourite. A delicious pork sausage."

By now the smell had reached my nose, bringing with it a degree of comfort. "Cookie, this is the only good thing to have come out of this day. It's been two years since I've tasted a sausage. Elizabeth prepared one the night before we left England. I'm grateful for both the treat and the memory it inspires."

Thompson handed me a knife and fork. "You deserve it because you've had a lot to put up with lately. Are you sure you won't try on the head-dress?"

All I wanted was a quiet meal, so I said emphatically, "No, just go and let me eat my sausage in peace."

And so ended the month of May, not with a wimple but a banger.
Washed Up

June 1770
During the first week of June, as the *Endeavour* continued her steady, northern course, much of our time was spent navigating through the islands, capes and bays that featured in this area of the coastline. It was an exercise fraught with danger. Constant soundings were necessary because one minute saw the water deep enough to proceed with safety, the next saw it barely covering a reef. In order to assist the helmsman in steering the least dangerous course, a lookout was permanently stationed, his loud and urgent calls of 'port' or 'starboard' never allowing us to relax.

As well as having to supervise the navigation, I was also responsible for charting. It was a hectic time, and I became so preoccupied with performing my duties and ensuring the men's safety that I neglected the state of my own health. This lapse was to have dire consequences, the most dreadful being the *Endeavour*'s running aground.

The train of events which eventually culminated in this catastrophe began on Friday the 8th. Heavy rain the previous night had abated by the time the sun rose, and high across the port-side hills arched a glorious rainbow. Later, at around noon, when we were in the Latitude 17°59'S. and about two leagues from shore, the officer on watch, John Gore, reported the sighting of two significant points of land, so I left my cabin and went atop.
A fresh breeze pushed at my face as I emerged through the hatch and the first feature immediately came into view. It was of moderate height, and because of its shape, I called it *Point Hillock*. A short distance from it, another headland jutted into the sea, and at its base, waves pounded themselves into sheets of spray and white foam. To this feature I gave the name *Iron Head*, in recognition of Gore’s involvement in its sighting. Between *Point Hillock* and *Iron Head*, the shore formed a large bay, with some of the greenest water ever seen lapping onto the whitest sand imaginable.

Gore cast his eyes around the fertile area then proposed that it be called *Halifax Bay* after George Montagu Dunk, the 2nd Earl of Halifax. He had been president of the Board of Trade for almost twelve years, and the lieutenant said, without any attempt at disguise, that the minor honour could rebound favourably on him if he ever left the navy and went into commerce.

Annoyed by his opportunism, I pointed out that he was displaying the sort of attitude commonly seen in Banks.

"Maybe so," he said, squaring his hat, "but who’s the wealthy landowner with powerful friends and who’s the debt-ridden 3rd lieutenant with no prospects?"
His words had sinister implications and I felt that Banks might have gained a cohort. Unwilling to give him further reason to betray me, I agreed with his name for the bay and went below. As I opened the cabin door, I sensed his presence lingering behind me like some odour from Nottingham's main sewer, the River Leen.

"I'm busy," I said, turning to face him.

Noticing my displeasure, he stepped back a discreet distance and replied, "Captain, about Mr Hicks. As you've probably heard..."

I was in no mood to suffer any more grizzlies, so I put my hand up, told him to solve the matter himself then closed the door in his face.

After recording the bay's name in the log and on the chart, there was further work to be done, external to the ship, so I sent for Mr Hicks and instructed him to lower the yawl. Fresh supplies were needed urgently, and here was an area worth investigating. Hicks was prompt in following the order, and with Carpenter Satterley and Able Seaman Antonio Ponto manning the oars, the four of us struck out for the shore. A sizeable chop and an enervating heat made the job of rowing all the more taxing.
Upon arrival, we dragged the yawl up onto the grass behind the beach, caught our breaths then looked around for any natives who might have been lurking in the encircling trees. There appeared to be none, but I did notice the small, round droppings of the marsupial that we had often seen on previous excursions. In many ways these brown, long-tailed creatures were unique, bearing their young in pouches and leaping about with tremendous vitality.

"These look like a 'roo's," I said, pointing to the droppings.

The lieutenant prodded at the deposits with the end of his boot and said, somewhat cryptically, "No, they're genuine."

After twenty seconds of bewildered thought the light finally dawned. "Lieutenant, I didn't mean a 'ruse' as in 'trick'. I meant a kangaroo's been here."

Relishing Hicks' misunderstanding, Ponto and Satterley looked at each other and sniggered.

I could see that Hicks was getting hot under the collar, physically as well as in attitude, so to avoid the inevitable intersecting of crossed words, I instructed the men to separate and reconnoitre.

"Mr Hicks, you go north, Satterley, you go south, I'll go west and Ponto, you stay and guard the yawl. We'll meet back here in two hours."
As the men headed in their respective directions, another thought occurred to me, so I called them back and said, "If you encounter any belligerent natives, try to win them over with trinkets. If that fails, remember to fire a warning shot above their heads. If they still want to fight after you've taken all necessary steps to preserve life, then you have my permission to take more drastic action."

"You mean run like 'ell," Satterley said as he lumbered off with a musket over each shoulder.

My survey through the low-lying scrub and dunes produced little in terms of provisions, there being nothing to the west apart from a few coconuts. So after the time specified, I returned to the beach to find Hicks and Satterley sitting on the sand. They were empty-handed.

"No water, no food, nothin'," the carpenter said, shaking his head.

His lack of fresh supplies was disappointing, but an even greater cause for concern was the fact that his muskets were missing. As I slumped down beside him, I asked for an explanation.

"I gave 'em to some natives I bumped into a little ways in."

Hicks was disbelieving. Before I could stop him, he grabbed Satterley's shoulders, shook for all he was worth and demanded to know the reason.
As if totally innocent, the carpenter held out his battered hands and replied, "I was followin' the cap'n's orders. He told us to be friendly so I presented 'em as gifts."

Like a cat on a rat, Zachariah pinned the struggling Satterley to the sand and growled, "Why didn't you give them something less dangerous, say some baubles?"

"Lost 'em."

"Bangles?"

"I ain't no girl."

"Bright shiny beads?"

"Only if you count sweat."

My voice was a thunder-clap. "Didn't you stop to consider that the heathens could charge down here and use those very same muskets against us?"

The carpenter's voice was an echo of mine. "I didn't stop to consider anythin'. I was too busy runnin' like 'ell! Straight up, it was the worst hour of me life!"

Not to be outdone, Lieutenant Hicks shoved his face directly in front of Satterley's and shouted, "But you just told me you'd only gone fifty yards inland before you met the savages. An hour to run back fifty yards? Impossible!"
At this stage, the only impossibility seemed to be louder shouting, but Satterley quickly proved that wrong. Thumping his knee with his knuckles and filling his lungs, he exploded indignantly, "Let's see you try boltin' with a wooden leg! Run, clunk, unplug it, run, clunk, unplug it again! Got the picture?"

The picture was indeed gloomy, made even bleaker by the fact that the rainbow had long since vanished. With twilight now approaching, I thought it best that we return to the ship, so I stood to issue the order. As I was about to speak, the fever that had gripped me in April again took hold and I stumbled. Hicks noticed my unsteadiness and asked if I was all right.

"No," I said, my head spinning, "so just give me a minute to compose myself."

The shadows from the trees lay themselves out along the width of the beach, and the air was sharp and chilled.

An hour later the yawl finally pulled in alongside the Endeavour, and Hicks and I climbed up the rope ladder leading to the main deck. Fatigued and wobbly, I paused to gather my breath then told the lieutenant that if I was forced to my bed, he would be in charge till I recovered. As I recall, he looked down at my feet and mumbled something about my boots being hard to fill. Then he stared at my head, said that my hat looked about the right size and asked if he could try it on.
Although feeling poorly, I was still able to voice a definite 'no'.

A shawl of disappointment hung over Zachariah's shoulders, but it was soon replaced by the mantle of a more sinister mood.

"Captain," he said as he gazed around the deck, "do you notice anything strange?"

I had, and there was good reason for our concern. The deck should have been busy with several men on evening watch, but there was none. Not a single soul. The only sound came from the night breeze as it pressured and moaned about the slack rigging, and the only detectable movement was the placid rocking of our ship as she lay at anchor. All around her was a lightless sky and ghosts of past dishonours.

"Mr Hicks," I whispered, "make a search below to see if there's anyone there."

Quickly stepping forward, Satterley pushed gently at the lieutenant's chest and said, "No. You stay 'ere and look after the cap'n. Ponto and me'll go."

Two minutes later they were back. Satterley's eyes were narrow in the dimness. "Quiet as tomb and just as cold. There ain't nobody down there. And it's bloody pitch black."

Ponto agreed with a nod of his head and added, "And it's bloody scary as well."
There was only one conclusion to be drawn and I instantly jumped to it. Leading Hicks away from the others so as not to be heard, I whispered, "This is Banks' doing. He's convinced the men that I'm a tyrant and they've all deserted. My friend, there are only four of us on this ship."

Hicks cast a quick glance back over his shoulder and said gravely, "Were only four. Satterley and his gutless mate have gone as well."

The situation was becoming blacker by the minute. In an attempt to banish the deleterious effects of the fever, I shook my head and slapped my cheeks lightly. It seemed to work. As I regained some sense of determination, I looked at the lieutenant to gauge his state of mind. His ashen face betrayed his concern. I would have none of it, not on my ship, and certainly not at this critical time. Standing erect, I reminded him that he was an officer in His Majesty's service.

The bolster had the desired effect. Hicks straightened himself up beside the wheel and asked what I had in mind.

By way of reassurance, I calmly said that we were going below to plan a course of action and that given the circumstances, two heads were better than one.

"They're not if they're on the end of a pike," Hicks mumbled as he followed me down the companionway.
As soon as we reached the bottom step and peered blindly into the darkness of what I took to be the lower deck, the full impact of our altered state struck. Instead of the voices that usually rang loud against the polished brass and timbers, and the hurried activity of almost one-hundred men, there was now only an uncanny, coal-black silence lurking. Under ordinary circumstances I would have rejoiced at the changes but these were extraordinary circumstances and the contrast was as welcome as a nightmare in a nursery.

The door to my cabin was only a short distance away, and with Hicks' hand firmly clutching my collar and his icy breath chilling my neck, I stumbled into the ominous gloom. Then, just as my heel came down upon the unseen board, a deafening shout shredded the silence.

"SURPRISE!"

At once, a dozen flames erupted brilliantly, and there, packed either along the length of the deck or emerging from cabins, hold or galley, was the crew, each man wearing the biggest smile imaginable. And hanging from a stretched rope across two outer beams was a sign that read: 'HAPPeE BirFDaY MR HICKs'.

As I grappled with my fevered thoughts, the truth of what was happening slowly filtered in, and a few seconds later I laughed with pure relief. The relief was contagious, and Hicks was almost doubled over beside me.
Able Seaman Ponto pushed his way forward. "We had you goin', eh, Cap'n?" he said, handing me a glass of beer.

I sipped at the warm brew, nodded then asked him who had arranged the celebration. Peering through the smoke from lanterns and tobacco-filled pipes, the seaman eventually caught sight of the person responsible and pointed.

"Tell Mr Gore to come here," I said.

On receiving the summons, Gore weaved his way through the throng and crushed up against me. Not wanting to deflate the light-hearted mood, I quietly asked him why he had organised the festivities without first seeking my permission.

"I tried to this morning," he said, "but you told me to work it out myself, remember?"

He was right, so I let the matter drop with the words, "Carry on, but let's keep it short. There's work to be done tomorrow."

Gore smiled, clapped his hands then shouted, "Three cheers for the captain! Hip hip."

"Hooray!"

"Hip hip."

"Hooray!"

"Hip hip."

"Hooray!"
As the final cheer died away, Mr Gathrey threw up his arms and bellowed, "Let's hear it for Mr Hicks. Come on, just like we practised. Ready? After two. One, two—hooray for Zachy, hooray at last, hooray for Zachy, he's a gunner's arsenal!"

When the din dropped, the boatswain looked at Charles Orton standing unsteadily by the beer barrel and loudly chastised him. "Hey, Orton, why didn't you cheer?"

"It's about one-thirty," my clerk slurred as he refilled his glass.

Hicks, who by this stage had embraced not only the spirit of the occasion but also every man attending it, finally found his way back to me and gushed, "Isn't life rich? Ten minutes ago I thought my time had come and yet here I am now with more friends than Mr Banks. I'm so happy I feel like a sixteen-year-old school girl."

On hearing Zachariah's words, Peckover spun around and said, "Beggin' the Lieutenant's pardon, but there be no school girls on the ship, so would there be anythin' else you might feel like?"

A sudden surge of anger engulfed me and I pushed Peckover away. Hicks, misjudging the cause, explained that the seaman had misunderstood.
"I realise that," I said. "It wasn't his comment, it was something you just mentioned."

"Me?"

"Yes, you."

"What?"

"Not what, who."

"Who?"

"Banks, but forget it. Enjoy your party and tell Mr Gore to meet me on the quarter-deck in two minutes."

Within the confined space, the heat, smoke and my fever were combining with potent effect, so I bustled to the hatch's steps and climbed up. Immediately, the fresh air soothed my eyes. From a distance of almost four miles and charged against the blackness of the night, the orange glow of several fires could be seen along the shore. Behind them, the hills were small, indistinct humps.

"I'm here," Gore said quietly.

I turned around, my anger still simmering, and asked why I hadn't seen Banks at the party.

"I invited him personally," Gore insisted as he leaned against the rail, "but he said he had more important matters to take care of."

"Where is he?"

"In his cabin with Charles Green."

"Any idea what they're up to?"
"Not exactly, but it's my guess it's got something to do with those notes I found back in April; the ones that outlined his intention to get rid of you."

I didn't need to have his plan blurted out for the men on watch to hear, so I told Gore to button his lip and go below to announce that the party would soon end.

I remained atop for a few more minutes, mulling over the botanist's snub. While joining in with the common class was obviously not an activity he favoured, signing up others for an uncommon crime was. It was now apparent that Green had been won over. As I stepped down through the hatch, the thought of who would be next to scribble his name came up.

On reaching the party, I looked around at all the faces. Which one betrayed sinister potential? Whose bright smile could turn dark, given the wrong sort of encouragement? The possibilities were as numerous as the persons, and rather than dwell on the matter, I decided to call a halt to the merriment.

"It's almost midnight," I announced, "and I'm not feeling as well as I should. Start cleaning this mess up because I want you all in your hammocks within thirty minutes."
Stepping forward, Quartermaster Evans thanked me for approving the party then asked if Mr Hicks could bring it to a close with a speech.

The lieutenant, obviously relishing another opportunity to grab centre stage, cleared a circle in the middle of the deck and said, "My pleasure. Captain Cook, Dr Solander, Mr Gore, gentlemen, able seamen, Tupia and marines. I'm overwhelmed by your regard and completely lost for words."

"Good," interrupted Solander, unsteady from too much grog, "now I can go to bed."

I was about to issue the order when Master Molyneux waved his arms like an orchestra conductor and shouted, "There's one final thing. Everybody, after me on the count of four; one, two, four - why was Zach born so beautiful, why was he born so smart, he's not a bag of wind like some, just a clever little fart!"

It was a rollicking send-off, loud and full as the singers but flat as the beer.

"Thirty minutes," I repeated, and the cleaning up began. When the floor was finally spotless, the men slung their hammocks and flopped in. After only a few minutes, snoring echoed along the deck. Although loud, it was somehow reassuring, and I tip-toed into my cabin with a sense of relief.
It didn't last long, for as soon as I settled into bed, the fever hit me like a ton of shot and my forehead nearly exploded.

On and off I slept, through hours filled with fearful images and voices drifting in and out.

When I finally came round, a blurred figure was standing beside my bunk, sponging my brow. He asked how I was feeling.

My eyes gradually refocused as I looked up. "Much better, now that the fever's lifted."

The surgeon smiled, drew back the curtain and opened the window. At once, moonglow and a cooling northerly filled the cabin, banishing the staleness of the past hours. Still relatively weak, I eased back the perspiration-soaked cover and tried to sit up.

Monkhouse placed his hands behind my back and told me to be less hasty. My spinning head proved he was right. After he'd propped me up, I asked what time it was. He lengthened the wick of the lantern and the room became familiar as the light spread out.

"It's about six p.m.," he whispered.

"And the day?"

"Sunday the 11th."
I ran my fingers over my chin, scratching at the stubble. The 11th. That meant I'd been asleep for three days. With the strain on my arms, I eased myself up a little higher and asked who'd been in charge.

"Mr Hicks," Monkhouse said in a hostile tone.

My body went limp and I slumped back. "And the ship's still in one piece?"

"Yes, but there's been a bit of strife."

The thought of having to listen to an endless litany of woe without sustenance was too much to bear, so I told Monkhouse to bring a bowl of soup and some bread to the cabin. He was to come back with Hicks after I'd eaten.

An hour later, the two men stood at the end of the bed. I didn't have the energy to waste words, so I kept my instructions brief.

"I want written reports from both of you concerning what's happened during the past three days. If I'm asleep when you've finished, wake me. Now go and do it."

The next thing I felt was Monkhouse's hand prodding at my shoulder. I opened my eyes and saw Hicks with him. Their reports were on my pillow. I asked Hicks the time and he said that it was close to 9.15 p.m.

"Go to bed," I said. "I want to read these in peace."

Hicks' was the first report studied. The most detailed feature of it was the heading;
Friday 9th June, 1770

Saturday 10th June, 1770
Wind lifting N.N.E. Briefly delegated captaining duties to Quartermaster Evans following suggestion for greater democracy. Official ceremony ashore. Goodwill dominated.

Sunday 11th June, 1770
Wrote full and frank report for Captain Cook.
There was a knock on the door and I put Hicks' report aside. Cookie poked his head around and peered in. When he saw that I was awake, he asked if I'd like a cup of tea. I nodded and he brought it in.

"Good to see you back on your feet," he said.

"I'm not, but I appreciate the sentiment. How did you get that lump on your forehead?"

"A coconut."

"That'll teach you to be more careful when you walk under trees. Put the tea near the lantern and close the door on your way out."

Smoothing the blankets around me, I reached for the tea and sipped. The warm sweetness tickled its way down my throat and settled in my stomach. Although I'd felt the sensation a thousand times before, this was the first time that I was fully conscious of it. The satisfaction was immense.

Monkhouse's report had fallen to the floor, so I put the empty cup back, leant out of bed and picked the papers up. As I began reading, I noticed a more comprehensive detailing had been supplied.
'SURGEON'S REPORT

H.M.S. ENDEAVOUR

June 11, 1770

The following is a report of events that occurred on June 9, 10 and 11. Due to Captain Cook's indisposition, 2nd Lieutenant Hicks assumed command.

**June 9: a.m.** Private John Bowles and Sailmaker Ravenhill came down with chronic dysentry. Lt Hicks had them isolated ashore in a makeshift infirmary. He placed the men under my care. Tupia also fell ill and joined the other two.

**June 9: p.m.** Lt Hicks visited infirmary. Asked me what treatment I was giving Bowles and Hicks. I said a dysentry potion to relieve the intestinal spasms and a small brush to scrub the infected rectal area. I said that both men's expressed aim was to continue serving King George when recovered. Lt Hicks then questioned Tupia about his illness. Tupia said he had a sore throat. Lt Hicks then asked Tupia about his aim. Tupia said, 'To serve Kinky George and to get to small brush before Mr Ravenmad and upset Bowels!'

Ravenhill threw the brush into Tupia's head. Bowles left his bed and rubbed his potion into Tupia's hair. Tupia screamed. I told the three infirmed to be quiet. Lt Hicks called me a 'medico of the mallard variety'.

I yelled at Lt Hicks. The three infirmed yelled at Lt Hicks. Lt Hicks yelled at the three infirmed.

Tupia threw a pillow and knocked down the tent pole. Tent collapsed. Lt Hicks knocked flat. Lt Hicks left infirmary.

**June 9: Late evening.** Infirmed returned to ship in yawl and isolated in hold.

**June 10: a.m.** Lt Hicks appeared on deck wearing Captain Cook's hat. Announced that someone had suggested the practice of greater democratic participation. Informed the crew that suggestion was to be adopted. Declared that Quartermaster Evans was to be promoted to captain for a short period under Lt Hicks' supervision.

**June 10: 1.30 p.m.** Official Occasion of Appointment held ashore. Carpenter Satterley had built partially-enclosed stage just back from beach. Crew lined up in front of stage.

**June 10: 2 p.m.** Evans escorted from ship in long-boat and waited behind pine tree until introduced. Lt Hicks walked onto the stage and said, 'This is a swearing-in ceremony for our captain designate, Mr Evans.'

Evans walked in and the crew started swearing at him. Evans announced that everyone was going to be lashed. Master Molyneux called Evans a despot. Seaman Peckover shouted back that Evans was a teetotaller. Molyneux punched Peckover in the nasopharynx region and yelled, 'The word was despot, not pisspot.'
Molyneux and Peckover screamed at each other like fish-hawkers at the Billingsgate market. Seaman Dozey threw a coconut at Cookie's head, causing a minor contusion. Cookie threw an artichoke at Tupia which resulted in major confusion. Tupia threw a tantrum. Sgt Edgecumbe fired a volley of shot into the air. Crew fell flat onto the stage. Stage collapsed. Lt Hicks knocked flat. Lt Hicks left ceremony.

**June 10: Late evening.** Crew returned to ship in long-boat and confined to quarters.

**June 11: a.m.** Captain Designate Evans appeared on deck wearing Captain Cook's hat. Sgt Edgecumbe was with him, lash in hand. Crew was quiet.

**June 11: Early evening.** Attended Captain Cook. The prognosis was positive. He ate a little food. We talked. He asked me to write this report. I left with Lt Hicks. Lt Hicks asked me not to write this report.

As I placed Monkhouse's report on top of Hicks', I almost heard myself groan under the weight of the contradictions. If Hicks' was factual, then all was well. If Monkhouse's contained the truth, which seemed likely given its final sentence, then Banks had any number of highwaymen to choose from when he finally decided to steal control of the *Endeavour*. And if that moment was imminent, what resistance could I put up, given my condition?
The time for languishing in bed was over, so I pushed off the blanket, put my feet on the floor and walked slowly over to the window. A brisk and salty sou’easterly stung my eyes, banishing the sleep and bringing my senses to life. All about, the sky glowed with an orange so warm and soft that I could almost taste its sweetness. And across the water to starboard, the moon’s clear reflection was a scribble of gold on blue. More contrasts and contradictions.

With a huge gulp, I took Nature’s breath into my lungs and once again considered whose report was more likely to be accurate.

Then, unexpectedly, help was provided. It came by way of the voices that filtered in from the main deck above the window. The first belonged to Quartermaster Evans, the captain designate.

"Evenin’, Lieutenant."

The voice that replied, “And good evening to you,” was Hicks’.

"Nice night, Lieutenant."

"Indeed, Mr Evans. Congratulations on the job you’ve done so far but can I make a couple of suggestions?"

“No. Go away or I’ll have you flogged."

“You can’t have me flogged!”

“Yes I can. You made me cap’n and a cap’n can have anyone flogged.”

“Evans, I’ll have you flogged for threatening to have me flogged!”
"Yeah? Then if you're threatenin' to have me flogged because I threatened to have you flogged, then I'll have you flickin'-well flogged for flamin' threatenin' to have me friggin'-well flogged! Is that clear?"

"What's clear is that you've flipped your lid. Now just shut up and listen. To avoid the danger of running into one of the islands, you'd better shorten sail and haul off shore east-north-east."

"I was goin' t'do that anyway."

"Good. When was the last time you ordered a sounding?"

"Ten minutes ago."

"And the depth of the water?"

"I don't know. Ask Ponto and Gathrey. They're out in the pinny about a hundred yards astern."

"That's 'pinnace', and why are they astern? What's the point in sounding water that we've already sailed over? They should be a hundred yards forward of the bow."

"They were, until we moved."

As I was silently berating myself for being too weak to go atop, I felt the vibrations of heavy footsteps and heard another voice. It was John Gore's.

"Evening, gentlemen. Any trouble, Mr Evans?"
"No, Mr Hicks was just congratulatin’ me on the job I’ve been doin’. You know, orderin’ soundin’s and takin’ lessons from Dozey on how to calculate our position."

"Which is?"

"Well, I’m standin’ here next to the wheel, you’re standin’ next to me with your big flat feet on top of mine and Mr Hicks is about an inch away from my throat with his bare face hangin’ out. How’s that for a sharp eye?"

"Just keep it focused on our course."

At Hicks’ mention of our course, I tried to move away from the window but my legs gave out. However, the notion that Monkhouse’s report was the more accurate was strengthening with each word that Hicks then uttered.

"And speaking of our course, that reminds me of the second suggestion I was going to make. You’d find it easier to control the ship if you took your hands out of your pockets and put them on the wheel. That’s it. Now turn it to port. No, that’s starboard. Don’t you know the difference between port and starboard?"

"Port’s right and starboard’s left, right?"

"No, port’s left and starboard’s right. Gore, am I right or wrong?"
"That depends on where you’re standing. If you’re looking from the stern to the bow, then port’s left and starboard’s right. Sorry, that’s wrong. Looking from the stern, starboard’s left and port’s right. But if I’m wrong, and port’s left looking from the stern, then that makes you right and Evans wrong. Evans, is that right?"

"I couldn’t have said it any friggin’ clearer meself."

I don’t know what Hicks did to Evans at that moment, but it was sufficiently energetic to make Gore cry out, "Leave him alone! You’re carrying on as if our lives depended on this."

"It might just bloody-well come to that. Evans, get your hands back on that wheel and turn it. Not so hard. That’s better, but less wrist. No, I said ‘less’, not ‘left’. Don’t jerk it! Steady, you’ve spun it too far! Turn it the other way, you stupid bugger!"

"Stop shoutin’! You’re confusin’ me! Which friggin’ way do you want me to turn it?"

"Start! No, hard to parboard, quick! Not that quick! Gore, get yourself out of the long-boat and grab this bloody wheel off him! Evans, get your feet off it!"

"They’re not my friggin’ feet!"

"Gore, will you stand up! Evans, turn it back! Look out, you’ll have us on those bloody rocks!"
"Bugger off, Hicks! The friggin' rocks are miles away!"

"Evans, you sharp-eyed moron, turn the bloody telescope around the other way!"

"Floggin' hell! Molyneux! Tack or heave-away or throw up or whatever but just get us out of here!"

The sound that followed was horrendous; a scraping so loud and long that it reverberated throughout the entire ship for more than a minute.

Monday the 11th of June, 1770. 10.54 p.m.

The Endeavour was stuck fast on a reef.

I was immobilised for only a few seconds before an energising fear stiffened my knees and braced my arms. With no time to dress properly, I simply pulled on my trousers, buttoned my coat and hurried as best I could from the cabin.

And then it struck me; a tide of human hysteria, washing backwards and forwards, and so lost to reason that it almost swept me off my feet. Hands pushing, legs kicking, feet running. Cowards trampling on thieves treading on idlers. Foul words renting the air; even fouler tempers raging in the clamminess. The ragtag and bob-tail that had shared my ship for the past two years now sharing in the headlong rush for self-preservation.
There was no point in trying to calm the rioters, so I squeezed back into my cabin and waited till the clamour had passed. When silence finally settled, I came out and made my way along the lower deck. From below, I could hear the sound of water as it gushed into the hold. It was a dreadful noise, cold and constant, thrusting against the planks as I stepped around the debris of strewn hammocks, shoes, cooking pots and smashed lanterns. Their oil spread across the timbers under my bare feet, anointing my soles and making sure steps impossible. Finally, after seconds that seemed like centuries, I reached the companionway, grabbed hold of the handrails and pulled myself up through the hatch.

And there it was again, the same rampage. Evans was sprawled beside the wheel, his legs tangled in the spokes and his hands in his pockets. As he tried to right himself, he screamed, "It's the cap'n's duty to go down with the ship so I friggin'-well quit!"

As my head swivelled from the bow to the stern, with my mind struggling to apprehend the chaos, Richard Orton fell in a heap at my feet. He looked up at me, begged for a fortifer then disappeared under an avalanche of whirling limbs.
Striding purposefully up onto the quarter-deck, I stood tall and waited. Along the deck, the ruckus continued, then Dozey caught my eye and stopped dead in his tracks. One or two others then noticed me, nudged several more, who in turn whispered and pointed, and before two minutes had passed, the entire crew was silent.

"Sergeant Edgecumbe," I said coldly. "Arrest any man who so much as blinks. If he resists, shoot him."

I was fully aware of the consequences inherent in the order, but at that moment there was only one thing on my mind; if our ship and our lives were to be saved, then co-operation was vital. And if the point of a musket was necessary to achieve that co-operation, then so be it.

Fortunately, nobody dissented, so I said, "Keep it that way and we just might survive the night." Buttoning my coat all the way to the collar, I then instructed Mr Gore to organise a pumping party. As the men assigned worked desperately in the hold to keep our stricken vessel afloat, I ordered Gathrey to lower the sails so that they couldn't drive the keel further along the coral.
"And when you've done that, hoist out the boats! I want the stream anchor slung beneath the long-boat and placed as far astern as you can. Then come back and take both bower's out on the longest possible cables. One to the starboard quarter and the other right astern. And take care to secure them. When the tide makes again, I want to be able to haul the ship off!"

"Aye aye, Captain!"

"Master Molyneux! Give me a sounding!"

"Under the larboard bow where the ship struck we've only got four feet!"

"Thank you. Master's Mate Pickersgill! Take Ponto and half a dozen others aloft on all three masts and send down the topgallant and topsail yards. When that's done, send down both the topgallant and topmasts and lash them in the water alongside. I want this ship stripped as far as she'll go!"

"Right, Sir!"

Through the long, moonlit night the men worked, pumping out the water and throwing overboard everything of weight; six guns, their carriages, iron and stone ballast, jars, stores, casks and hoops. It was arduous work, but at least it was honest.
As morning shed its encouraging warmth and light upon the waters surrounding the *Endeavour*, the full effect of the men's labours became glaringly apparent. Our once proud ship now sat like a hulk in water a foot less than when she had originally struck. No amount of heaving on all the anchors would move her and with land being more than twenty miles away, our circumstances looked desperate. Was it any wonder that I called the north point of land *Cape Tribulation*?

For a day we waited, exhausted and fearing the worst. Barely able to move a muscle, the men rested in the sun on the deck, occasionally stirring to sip water or nibble some meagre sustenance. Some prayed quietly under the glare of the cyclops sun, while one or two others hummed melodies that were a reminder of home. If they were to ever see it again, my experience, their work, Providence and a degree of luck would need to combine at just the right moment.

The imminent high water was the only chance the ship had of floating, and with the leaks in the hold increasing, the pumps could barely contain the flood. And if high water failed to shift her, then the inevitable would occur. The *Endeavour*, home to so many sailors for so many long and lonely months, would sink. And with her our hopes.
Under another clear evening sky, we held our breaths as the tide reached its peak. There was a slight rolling as the hull responded to the increase in water and then, like the burden of a condemned prisoner pardoned at the last moment, the *Endeavour* lifted free of her fate and floated. And with her our joy. However, it needed to be tempered because the task was only half done. The ship still needed to be pulled from the reef, but was the water deep enough? I was faced with a dilemma. Should I leave her where she lay, floating but in danger of being pushed back and smashed on the coral, or should I attempt to heave her off in waters that might still harbour hidden dangers?

"Master Molyneux! Give me a sounding!"

"Three and a half feet in the hold!"

I gave the only order possible.

"Heave her off!"

Slowly she began to inch her way forward, the cable on the stream anchor stretched tight and the muscles of the men working the windlass and capstan stretched even tighter.

"She’s off and floating!" shouted the boatswain ahead in the long-boat. "We’ve done it!"

At that moment, the men’s anxiety transformed itself into euphoria and they attended the pumps with renewed vigour and shouts of relief.
Such was their enthusiasm that by 8 the following morning, they'd gained considerably upon the leak. Masts and spars were then quickly rigged, and at close to 11, with a light breeze at E.S.E., the ship finally got under sail. As a last precaution, I had Midshipman Monkhouse fother the hull in order to block the leak as much as possible.

Like every other man who had worked so diligently for our recovery, I was completely exhausted. There was, however, an added factor specific to me; the responsibility of command. During the crisis, I had made decisions which, if incorrect, could have brought about catastrophe. Fortunately, they'd been sound, not only bringing about the ship's salvaging but also uniting the crew towards a positive, common purpose. Every man for himself had given way to all for one.

This was the *real* achievement.

For the next few days we continued gently under sail, edging in for the land. I was constantly on the quarter-deck, supervising the navigation and prompting the masthead lookouts to watch for a shelter where we could repair the damage.
Then, on the afternoon of June the 18th, we located a safe harbour. It was at the mouth of the waterway I named the Endeavour River, and here we warped the ship in and moored her alongside a steep beach. All the anchors, cables and hawsers were brought ashore and two tents erected, one for the sick, the other for the provisions. The emptying of the hold followed, and after a cannon had been slung from the main yard in order to keep her heeled to port at high water, the carpenters and I inspected the damage. Part of the sheathing from the larboard bow was lost, as was a section of the false keel, but the main leak was located on the floor timbers. It was here that the rocks had penetrated, cutting and tearing several holes. It was a chilling sight.

Then, upon closer inspection, I noticed something truly remarkable. A large piece of coral was lodged in the biggest of the holes. Was it Providence or luck? Only personal belief could supply the answer. However, one aspect that was obvious to all was the irony; the reef which had threatened our lives had also saved them.

I immediately ordered the crew to assemble within the perimeter of the camp and told them about the coral. Some clapped and cheered while others shook hands.
The same unity was evident during the next few days as they all worked feverishly towards the ship's rectification. This was all the more remarkable because, as punishment for their lack of discipline just prior to, and during, the calamity off Cape Tribulation, all liberties had ceased; no rum, beer or unauthorised movement.

Although I was busy organising each day's activities, a distracting uncertainty played at the back of my mind; when would Banks strike? The time was both right and wrong; right because I hadn't fully recovered from my fever, and could therefore offer less resistance than normal; wrong because I'd saved the men's lives.

Yet if that was my uncertainty, it was also Banks' dilemma. Should he strike now or wait, hoping for more trouble? The men were with me, but if more strife arose, then harsh punishment would descend, and a bitter seaman could easily turn to betrayal.

There was little I could do about the situation, so I simply kept the men fully occupied with work.

The 30th of the month saw me and Carpenter Satterley beside the Endeavour at low water. It was close to midnight, and the damaged section was ablaze with the light from more than a dozen lanterns. Behind us were tall trees, silhouettes against the wall of cold, ebony air. Their canopies sheltered possums whose eyes glowed like small embers.
The sight and mood were completely lost on Satterley, so I bent down beside him and saw that the repairs to the ship's bottom were almost complete.

"Most of it looks sound," I said, "but why have you jammed that cork into the largest hole?"

Satterley peered at his handiwork and replied, "It's the stopper I shoved in to keep the water out."

This was carpentry at its most incompetent and I told Satterley as much. He was crestfallen.

"Forget the self-pity," I continued, "and listen. The cork has to go. You've obviously wedged it in tightly so you'll need some sort of drilling tool. Have you got one?"

"I haven't, but Carpenter's Mate Hughes has. And he's had lots of experience with it."

"That's good because I don't want you anywhere near the hull from now on."

I then called for Hughes and he came promptly.

"What's up, Sir?"

"Most of that cork."

"What do you want me to do?"

"The job Satterley should have done. Before new planks can be nailed to this area, his own damage has to be rectified. Fetch your special boring tool and get that stopper out now."

And that was the way the month of June ended, not with a bung but a wimbler.
A Plot Writ Large
For almost two months we stayed at the mouth of the Endeavour River, repairing the ship and gathering fresh water and provisions; cockles, clams, fish, turtles and palm cabbages. Inland hunts gave us wild pigs and kangaroos. They also gave the men a sporting release from their routine labour.

We engaged the local natives only once during this period. The incident involved some minor pilfering of carpentry equipment which we got back in exchange for a small mirror and five of Banks' specimen jars. The natives were so pleased with their trinkets that they regularly supplied us with even more fresh food. They also showed Banks how to hunt kangaroos with a curved stick they called a 'boomerang', but the only things he succeeded in wounding were his upper-class pride and his reputation as a skilled marksman.

With friendliness dominating our encampment, I began to harbour hopes that the same mood might prevail during our voyage home.

So on the morning of August the 4th, with the ship finally repaired and fully stocked, I gave the order that every man had been waiting for: "Warp her out!"

A light air from the land saw us get under sail and we moved out gently. With a man ahead sounding and Pickersgill stationed in the masthead lookout, we eased our way through the shoals. This practice was maintained for several days, and just when I thought our passage to open sea was clear, calamity almost struck.
On the morning of the 16th, after charting our previous day's course, I came on deck and noticed Quartermaster Evans in the lookout attempting to find a safe channel through the reef that had earlier claimed us. We were three or four miles from the line of coral when, suddenly, the wind dropped and we were carried on a swell towards the jagged shelf. A mountainous surf was only a few hundred yards in front.

Lieutenant Hicks, almost panic-stricken at the helm, couldn't decide which course to steer, so he shouted to Evans, "Port or starboard?"

"That depends which way you're lookin'," Evans yelled down.

The words were chillingly familiar, and if I'd allowed the conversation to proceed as it had earlier, so, too, would have the ship. Neither disaster was going to happen again, I resolved, so I ordered Hicks to turn half a degree starboard. He swung the wheel in the nick of time and the Endeavour squeezed through a gap in the reef that had no more than two inches of clearance on either side.

Seven days later we rounded the northern extremity of land, Cape York, slipped free of the labyrinth through the passage I called the Endeavour Straight, and sailed west towards New Guinea.

A commission completed. History made. But only just.
As I stood on the quarter-deck under a sky as blue and wide as the water that deepened with every wave crested, I knew that the world was mine and that it could no longer surprise me.

Then, like Achilles, the heel of my certainty was wounded by the sharp realisation of something overlooked; the treacherous reef lurking in the waters of my own life.

And then I saw him, from the corner of my eye, talking with Charles Green and Able Seaman Matthews as the three of them huddled at the bow. Matthews had been reprimanded a week earlier for breeding more 'field-mice', so it came as no surprise to see Banks actively pursuing his company. As they whispered behind their hands, Green kept looking around to make sure they weren't being overheard.

Just as the ship slipped into a hollow between two large swells, Edgecumbe joined the group. He was armed with a musket.

With Cape York now a speck astern, I began to feel apprehensive. When Banks then pointed and started walking towards me with the burly sergeant only a step behind, my heart actually skipped a beat.
This was the encounter I'd been dreading, yet at that moment my fear left and a surge of furious energy flowed in. Not waiting to be kissed on the cheek in exchange for thirty pieces of silver, I threw back my shoulders and strode forward. We met in the centre of the deck. Face to face. In the furnace of the midday heat, Edgecumbe wilted under the intensity of my stare.

"So, Banks, the time has come. Do what you must."

He seemed hesitant. His courage was wanting.

"All right, you gutless snake, I'll make it easier for you. It was my decision to place Hicks in charge when I was forced to bed with fever. As a result, we almost lost our lives on the reef. I'll also concede that certain people have caused trouble. As these things occurred on my ship, I take full responsibility. If you now want to seize both, Edgecumbe will have to pull that trigger first."

Banks just stood there, weighing my words. He turned to Edgecumbe, then looked back at me.

"What are you talking about?"

His toying was intolerable. "Only children play games."

The botanist again looked at his accomplice and said, "Is this making any sense to you?"

Edgecumbe shook his head.
At that moment the sun could have disappeared without any appreciable loss of heat because I was boiling. Swinging my fist up, I thumped the mainmast and told Banks that his actions hadn't caught me by surprise because I'd had him pegged as a mutineer since April.

The botanist jumped back in fear and knocked Edgecumbe flat. "Me, a mutineer? That's ridiculous! Who put that idea into your head?"

I took a step nearer to the rouge and hissed between gritted teeth, "You did! Gore found your notes and showed me."

Banks held his head then threw up his hands. "The notes! Now I understand why you've been behaving so strangely!" He then smoothed the furrow from his brow and said, "Let's walk around the deck. There's something I need to tell you."

The Endeavour's bow rose and fell and drove on as we began our stroll.

"James," the botanist said as his feet moved in unison with mine, "the reason I was coming to talk to you was because the men wanted me to formally thank you for the wonderful job you did in saving our lives."

I walked on and said nothing.
"And let me assure you I haven’t been planning any overthrow. The paper you read that mentioned ‘mutiny’ and ‘plot’ was simply a summary I jotted down regarding the novel I’m writing. You know, characters and setting? Originally it was about a tyrannical captain at odds with his reasonable crew on a long sea voyage."


"It’s the truth. I’m putting a book together."

"Mr Banks," I said with undisguised contempt, "you couldn’t put Orton and a bottle of rum together with any measure of success. If this book business is true, then explain the part in your notes that said you were the only one who could carry it out successfully?"

"Who else could write my novel?"

"What about the time I saw you and Green in the magazine? Do you deny that you were asking him to check your plans to see that nothing was overlooked?"

Banks raised his eyebrows ruefully and said, "What sort of snake do you think I am?"

"For your sake, I’ll assume that was a rhetorical question, but I still want an answer to mine."

"I was simply asking Mr Green to collaborate with me on a few details, but he wasn’t keen because he could see the book becoming a critical disaster."
"And who said Green wasn't a natural observer?"
"What was that?"
"I said Green was by nature reserved."

Banks nodded. "He might see it differently now that I've changed the plot and main character. The captain's a fair-minded gentleman but his crew's pathetic. Once it's in print, it'll sell like buns in Chelsea."

I was still dubious. "You had Matthews' ear a while ago. What's his involvement?"

I fell in beside Banks as he started strolling again. "He's a reasonable writer himself, having done the 'Happy Birthday' sign for Hicks' party, so I asked him to run his quill through the odd spelling error."

"But you couldn't have seen the sign because you weren't at the party."

"That's right. I told Mr Gore I had something more important to do in my cabin. It was the book. You can't say no to the muse when she sits on your face."

"You're confused. It's 'shoulder', not 'face'."

"No, you're confused. I'm Joseph Banks, not John Bunyan."

Having nailed on most of the boards, the hull of Banks' story was now a more solid construction. However, it still needed two crucial planks to keep it from sinking. The first was Charles Green's explanation and I demanded to hear it.
Charles responded quickly to the botanist's beckoning hand and wasted no time in confirming the story.

The second was as tangible as wood itself. "If you are writing a book," I said, "go and fetch it."

"If it'll put your mind at ease," Banks replied as he stepped down through the hatch.

Five minutes later he returned with a bundle of papers and handed them to me. His eyes were wide with excited anticipation.

I read the title page: 'The Incredibly Young Man and the Sea. A Novel by Joseph Banks Esq. '

"It looks as if I've misjudged you," I confessed, "but let me skim through, just to make sure."

Banks buffed his boots on the backs of his trousers then smiled like a teacher's pet waiting to receive his report card.

I turned the title page over and his book was laid bare.
CHAPTER I

It was a dark and stormy night. The sea was as flat as a pancake and the waves splashed against the ship wetly.

Admiral Josephus Binks, the youngest admiral ever in the entire history of the British navy, stood proudly on the deck with 2nd Lieutenant Slackhips. Suddenly, Lieutenant Slackhips looked starboard and shouted, "Land ho!" Then the lookout asked, "Admiral Binks, when do you think FINK we will be leaving the dock to start our astonishing journey?"

Admiral Binks replied, "Lift up the anchor ANgka AnkEt WANKER MEtal FiNG and we'll start now."

Then the admiral went down to his cabin and started reading some DIFFYKILT duffelcoat HARD botany books because he'd been to Oxford University and he was a Fellow of the Royal Society.

A few months later, the ship sailed into an unbelievably calm harbour near Otaheite. While it was there, all the crewmen played fast and loose with the native girls but Admiral Binks didn't. He was saving himself for marriage.

It was incredibly dark when they finally left the harbour and when they reached open water it was amazingly rough. The sea's like that in that neck of the woods.
CHAPTER II

During breakfast some months later, a thick-head named Fourby Two died. No-one had seconds after that. Then some natives kidnapped the cook and held him for ransom. The crew raised twenty pounds and 3rd Lieutenant Gork said to the natives, "We'll double it if you keep him."

The natives didn't want the cook any more so Sergeant Edgehog shot two thousand of them because he loved a good fight FYIE FATE Fart. Admiral Binks was amazingly horrified and told Edgehog to throw down his arms but he threw down his musket instead.

CHAPTER III

After Admiral Binks had discovered a missing continent, a sailor named Quartermaster KWARTErMaStEr WATERMaRker whataBASTARD MiStEr Evans crashed the ship into a reef. Everyone got scared except the admiral. He took control and saved the men's lives. Then all the men had big GRoInS and they cheered because they loved Admiral Binks because he was fantastically brave.'
My eyes were still rapidly moving backwards and forwards as I looked up from the page. I paused before speaking, searching for the right words.

"Joseph, it's a real piece of work."

Banks smiled self-effacingly.

"And I see you've included the chaotic flow we talked about some months ago."

"You mean the 'Steam of Consciousness' technique?"

"It was 'Stream', but steam's more appropriate for this type of pot-boiler."

The heat was now scorching, so Banks took off his jacket and casually draped it over the windlass. "Of course, that's just the first draft, but the skeleton's there."

After months of holding my tongue, the temptation was too strong to resist.

"Then why don't you put it and yourself back in the cupboard till it's got five-hundred pages of real substance."
"That's a jolly good idea," he said, "but first I want to read what I've done to the crew. An artist's work has the power to change men's lives."

So near to 9 that night, with the crew crowded along the lantern-lit lower deck, Joseph read his piece of work aloud. I'd anticipated the response correctly, so I waited till he'd left, then said, "Listen carefully. If I have the slightest trouble from anyone between here and England, I'll ask Banks to read out more of his stuff."

Almost twelve months later, I wrote the final entry in the Endeavour's log;

THURSDAY 18th July 1771. Clear, serene weather. Sailed up the Thames in the a.m. Docked at Galleon's Reach. Pleased to report that since leaving Great Southern Continent, the entire crew has behaved in exemplary fashion, due solely to the work of Joseph Banks Esq.

James Cook
Captain
H.M.S. Endeavour

* * * * * * * *
Annotations
to Thesis
and Preliminary Work

Thesis Title: THE SECRET JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN COOK

Degree: DOCTOR OF CREATIVE ARTS

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

by

MARK McKIRDY M.C.A.

SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS

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The Origins of the Novel

As an undergraduate at the University of New England several years ago, my major studies were concerned with English and Australian History. It was during this period that I developed a passion for history and more specifically the voyages of Captain Cook.

Given the historical period, Cook's voyages were accomplishments of heroic stature. Inherent in them were many of the elements associated with stories of valour; adventure, danger, fear, success, failure, feelings of isolation and alienation and conflict and its resolution. I mention isolation because although Cook sailed with varying numbers during each of his three voyages, there must have been a gnawing sense of loneliness aboard his ships. Little or no reference is made of this by any of the journal keepers on these voyages, yet to be so far from England and families for such long periods must have weighed heavy after a time. It is fascinating to realise that the sense of duty within Cook and his crews to find and claim new territories for their King was so strong and enduring that it overpowered their inescapable sense of personal loss. Stated simply, they were men driven by duty and a surging need for adventure. The psychological aspects of the voyages would make an interesting study, yet this was not my purpose.

Being interested in history, writing, and specifically humorous writing, my purpose was to combine these interests in the preparation of my D.C.A. thesis, a
semi-fictionalised, first-person narrative of part of Captain Cook's first voyage. The title of this narrative is *An Uncertain Shore* (see AMENDMENT for title change to *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook* following examiner's report).

Captain Cook's first voyage took just on three years to complete. He sailed from England on July 30, 1768 and returned on July 12, 1771. From April 19, 1770 till mid-August 1770, he sailed up the east coast of Australia. This is the section of his journey on which I have concentrated, both for reasons of national interest and because a saga of unmanageable proportions would have resulted had I broadened the parameters of either time or geography.

**The Novel's Structure**

*An Uncertain Shore* is comprised of;

1) My 'Introduction', in which I explain when, where, and how I came by the manuscript;

2) Three separate sections headed 'April 1770', 'May 1770', 'June 1770' and 'A Plot Writ Large'.

**The Novel's Premise**

Briefly stated, *An Uncertain Shore* is a confession
by Cook, not only to his wife, Elizabeth, but also to himself and his fellow English people.

On Monday the 11th of June, 1770, Cook's ship, the *Endeavour*, ran aground on the *Endeavour Reef* off the coast of Queensland. In his original, authentic journal, Cook wrote that the cause of this disaster was in the main due to the inconstancy of unfamiliar waters. In his second account, Cook seeks to set the record straight, to come clean. As he explains in his introduction to *An Uncertain Shore*, unfamiliar waters had little to do with the disaster occurring. The principal reason why it occurred was that relationships aboard his ship had disintegrated to the point where chaos was the apparent order of things. Bickering, physical assaults and distrust were rife and calamity was inevitable. In order to regain Elizabeth's respect, and his own self-respect, Cook felt compelled to correct his earlier fabrication. Hence the second manuscript, the confession.

**Creative Intentions**

There were eight major creative intentions in the preparation of my D.C.A. thesis.

The first was to take a primary source, i.e. Cook's journal of his first voyage, and to reshape it into a sustained, largely humorous narrative using not only the journal but also research gathered from other sources.
The other sources were Joseph Banks' journal and several secondary publications (see bibliography).

The second intention was to incorporate certain data from those sources into appropriate places within the narrative. Considering the stature of the D.C.A. degree with its necessarily high level of scholarship, I had to become familiar with all the relevant data and ensure that the incorporated material reflected not only my appreciation of the doctorate's academic requirements but also the depth of my research necessary to meet those requirements. I found the process of incorporation rewarding in terms of knowledge gained and stimulating because it imposed a sense of editorial responsibility.

The third intention was to merge fact with fiction. Again, I had to keep in mind that my presentation required a high level of academic rigour, yet at the same time I had to ensure that the academic content did not stifle the relative creative freedom that the Creative Arts degree allows. The Creative Arts degree in writing is weighted more in favour of artistic expression, more than a Ph.D. in writing which demands greater restraint. Had I wanted to exercise restraint, I would have presented for the Ph.D. in Creative Arts. At times I felt that I should have, given the amount of research that I did, yet the challenge of balancing academic necessity with creative freedom has been stimulating not only as a
writer but also as a student.

The process of balancing fact and fiction has also been rewarding in terms of professional development through association. The academic staff of the university, and more specifically my supervisor who is also a professional writer, have been of benefit both academically and editorially. I feel my development as a writer has accelerated because of my association with the School of Creative Arts.

The fourth intention was to produce a balanced narrative that reflected several themes. Those themes, in varying significance, are the English class system with its dominant principles of money and position as being indicators of worth, the effects of isolation upon a relatively confined group of people, the results of stress upon those people, Cook's maintenance of an evangelical Christian faith during those periods of stress, the loneliness of the long-distance traveller, especially in relation to Cook, perceived power and actual power in the association between Cook and the 'gentlemen' aboard his ship, the effects of the abuse of alcohol and the deleterious impact upon relationships when misjudgement occurs.

In relation to the first theme, it is well known that in English society of those times, and perhaps even today, there were three distinct classes; upper, middle
and lower. This class system was reflected aboard the *Endeavour*. Firstly, there were the 'gentlemen', exemplified by Banks and Solander. Secondly, there were the naval officers and thirdly there were the 'people', that is, the crew and the 'gentlemen's' servants. So to ignore this structure as a theme would have been almost impossible. However, I have not placed an inordinate significance upon it in the work.

The themes cited suggest a tone of severity. Perhaps so, but *An Uncertain Shore* treats them, I hope, in a good-humoured way. That is not to suggest that these sombre themes have been minimised or trivialised by a humorous treatment. As a writer, I believe that humorous text is just as powerful and significant as serious. Woody Allen is just one writer whose work could never be classified as insignificant. Obsessive, neurotic perhaps, but never ineffectual. In my experience, it is just as difficult to sustain humorous prose as it is to sustain serious, perhaps even more difficult, so in some ways the task I set myself has been more burdensome. However, I have enjoyed the challenge and feel that my development as a writer has been enhanced by that challenge.

The fifth intention was to draw inferences about Cook's first voyage which were not alluded to in his original journal, and to then use these inferences in his development as one of the work's central characters. These inferences relate to the 'human' Cook, not the
'hero' Cook as he was later regarded. Cook the man, like other men, must have felt loneliness whilst separated for such long periods from his home and family. He was not born into the prestige of wealth or title as were some of the 'gentlemen' he took with him on his first voyage and his inferior social ranking, so clearly defined in English society of those times, must have had some effect upon his attitudes and relationships. Given his lower station in society, the fear of failure must have been with him constantly.

Then there was the pressure of command and the stresses associated with not only doing the 'proper' thing but also appearing to do the 'proper' thing; when to apply the lash, when to exercise compassion; would compassion be construed as weakness by a crew accustomed to the harshest treatment?

These inferences appear occasionally throughout the narrative and, unlike the general comic flow, they are deliberately serious in tone. They are always characterised by Cook's other 'voice', meditative and softer than his usual 'voice' of command. Cook's other 'voice' is explained in greater detail later in this paper.

The change in tone from comic to serious is an attempt to balance the work so that the reader may pause and ponder and also to present Cook as a more rounded character. He wasn't only a seaman of popular heroic proportions; he was a father of children he barely knew,
an almost estranged husband to a wife forced to rear children in a society rigidly dominated by the patriarch and a man in charge of others who were unshakable in their belief that they were his 'betters'.

James Cook, 1st Lieutenant, a naval man all the way down to his boot buckles and the public figure selected by the Royal Society to chart the Transit of Venus in Tahiti in June, 1769 and to then go in search of the Great Southern Continent, makes scant reference to his personal feelings or attitudes in his journal. It was the man hiding behind the hero whom I found fascinating. The hero was obvious but the man was hidden. He had to be drawn out.

Once again, balance had to be achieved because I did not want the tone of seriousness to dominate what is principally intended as a humorous work.

The sixth intention was to present the characters of Joseph Banks, Daniel Solander and several other 'gentlemen' of science and general society on board Cook's ship as different from their accepted historical personae.

Banks, especially, has several characteristics highlighted for comic embellishment. In An Uncertain Shore, he is not the intellectual that history presents, nor the acclaimed botanist nor the fluent, accomplished writer. He likes to think he is, but through the
satirisation of these features, Mr Banks Esq., appears as being quite the reverse.

The 'gentlemen' who accompanied Cook on his first voyage epitomised the most privileged section of the English class system, and with its accentuation of wealth and title as being measures of worth, it was another obvious target for satire. I found the attraction irresistible. Pretensions, be they the result of money, education, name or position, deserve to have their inherent shallowness exposed, if only for the self-serving reason that it makes those of us who are poorer, sillier and achingly anonymous feel better about ourselves. To me, satire is like group therapy only less crowded and much more fun. In An Uncertain Shore, a large measure of my fun was achieved at the expense of the 'gentlemen'.

The seventh intention was to create by the use of narrative a unity of time and sense of place.

The unity of time is that which usually occurs in narratives, although An Uncertain Shore is characterized not only by a steady progression of time and events but also by the infrequent use of recollection. This technique allows the reader to participate in the journey, to experience not only where the ship was but also where it had been.
By 'sense of place' I mean establishing what it must have been like to sail a refitted bark around the world in the 18th century; the structure of the ship, its size, cabins and fittings; the naval routine and the jargon associated with that routine; the smells of wet wood and canvas; the ever-present ocean with its swells and calms; the weather; the changing light; the impact and possible threat of an uncertain shore. It must have been an unforgettable experience for all those fortunate enough to have survived the journey.

I enjoyed attempting to create a unity of time and sense of place because it allowed me to experience, in small measure and of course, vicariously, that same journey. My affinity with the journey is all the stronger because I am fortunate enough to live only ten kilometres from the site where Cook first landed in Australia, Kurnell.

Cook's original journal was not, to say the least, a series of funny events arising from the interplay of a crew of comedians. In fact, laughs were at a premium. Therefore, to justify An Uncertain Shore's comic basis, the eighth intention was to present Cook's crew as buffoons, blackguards and insufferable incompetents while at the same time presenting Cook as a sort of straight man. Like all memorable comedy acts, An Uncertain Shore needed a straight man, and in Cook I had the ideal choice. It was essential to have him remain largely true
to his historical character, and in keeping Cook as a foil and contrast, when those infrequent serious passages are included, they do not seem out of place.

**Relevant Theories of Humour**

In the preparation of any humorous work it is helpful, but not altogether essential, if one understands what it is that makes people laugh. There is a large body of work concerned with theories of humour and it is appropriate that I mention those theories briefly because the techniques of humour employed in *An Uncertain Shore* are based upon what I believe are the most relevant and potent.

There are eight major theories of what makes people laugh.

1) **Biological, Instinct and Evolution Theories**

The element common to these theories is that laughter and potentials for humour are inherent to the nervous system. Early theorists such as Herbert Spencer, Charles Darwin, William McDougall and V.K.K. Menon suggest as evidence the proposition that laughter and humour serve utilitarian purposes in terms of bodily functions because they ‘restore homeostasis, stabilise blood pressure, oxygenate the blood massage vital organs, stimulate circulation facilitate digestion, relax the system and produce a feeling of well-being’. (1) McDougall also believed that laughter was instinctive. He
suggested that it evolved as an essential 'antidote to sympathetic tendencies'. (2) Without this antidote, that is, laughter arising from a sense of the ludicrous, the myriad of disasters confronting people might well have led to sympathetic depression so acute as to render the species extinct.

A number of theorists also postulated that what can be considered today as laughter and humour are really only 'vestiges of archaic, adaptive behaviours'. (3)

While there is some evidence to suggest that these theories may be valid, they were of little significance in the preparation of An Uncertain Shore.

2) Superiority Theories

As the name suggests, these theories hold that victory or triumph over others or circumstances is the basis for laughter. If, in comparison with others, we seem stronger, more intelligent, more able to cope with life's vicissitudes or physically more attractive, a feeling of elation occurs. The result of this elation is usually laughter.

Thomas Hobbs saw laughter in terms of a 'sudden glory arising from some sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity in others'. (4) Alexander Bain suggested that one of the causes of laughter is triumph over an enemy and that when the vanquishing activity is over a release is needed and 'that this is done by the spasmodic outburst of
laughter'. (5) Henri Bergson believed that laughter had a social function and he saw it as a 'punishment inflicted on unsocial people. Thus humiliation becomes a social corrective'. (6)

I believe this theory to be significant and it is reflected in many situations in *An Uncertain Shore*. One example is seen when Banks is sketching some flora and Cook asks him why he has coloured the palm trees pink, not green. Banks tells the captain to hold out his hands and Cook is forced to admit that palms are pink. Thus Cook is humiliated and Banks delights in the victory. However, a short time later the captain's hands become stained by green weed attached to a fishing line. He at once confronts Banks and forces the botanist to admit that palms are green. So ultimately, Cook triumphs over the botanist (pp. 97 to 101).

To me, the superiority theory forms the basis of satire and satire is a powerful tool for the humorist. It is evident in Cook's relationships with the 'gentlemen' and most of the crew members aboard the *Endeavour*. It may not produce the rollicking laughter associated with other theories but it does make us feel better about our own miserable lots.

3) Incongruity Theories

Incongruity theories suggest that humour potentials spring from disjointed couplings or situations, or
thoughts or circumstances that diverge from habitual customs.

Charles Darwin said that the most frequent cause of laughter is 'something incongruous or unaccountable' (7), while J.B. Baillie believed that a regulated society is a permanent situation for laughter because any deviation from such regulation or 'standards is incongruous'. (8)

I believe this theory to have some validity and it is applied in several situations in An Uncertain Shore. The most obvious application is in the presentation of Cook's crew, highlighted by the examination the captain orders to assess the men's seafaring knowledge (pp. 210 to 215). The bickering dullards responsible for the functioning of Cook's ship are not the competent naval men that they should be. This in itself creates the potential for other humour.

4) Surprise Theories

Surprise theories are closely allied to incongruity theories because they both involve the breaking up of routine thinking or acting.

Thomas Hobbs considered that surprise was essential to laughter. His 'sudden glory' theory emphasised that for an experience to be humorous, or providing laughter, it must necessarily contain some 'new or unexpected element'. (9) James Sully considered the 'laughable to be
a highly complex feeling, something of the child's joyous surprise at the new and unheard of'. (10)

A major strength of the surprise theory is the fact that when surprise is eliminated, as in the case of a joke being heard on previous occasions, there is an obvious decline in appreciation level and hence laughter.

I believe surprise is a strong element in many humorous experiences and An Uncertain Shore utilises surprise in many situations. One example of how surprise and incongruity are closely allied and utilised in An Uncertain Shore is seen when Banks uses a signature other than his own in a 'business' transaction (p.51).

5) Ambivalence Theories

Ambivalence theories stress the belief that laughter follows when an individual experiences incompatible emotions or feelings. This viewpoint has some similarities with incongruity theories although the major difference between the two lies in the fact that incongruity theories stress ideas or perceptions whereas ambivalence theories concentrate on feelings or emotions.

An example of this type of humour would be derision, which Descartes described as a kind of 'joy mixed with hostility'.(11) The ambivalence of joy mixed with hostility was a condition which derived from a person's perception of a minor flaw or evil in someone whom the perceiver believed deserved it. So hostility is felt towards the evil and joy is also experienced when it is
recognised in someone who deserved it. The result of this ambivalence of emotions, Descartes believed, leads to laughter. Max Eastman considered that the satisfaction gained in the appreciation of the humorous was the result of ambivalent feelings or impulses. He believed, for instance, that in jokes concerned with degradation, '... we feel superior to the person degraded, who is at the same time an object of our sympathy'. (12)

There are many examples of the utilization of the ambivalence theory in An Uncertain Shore, the flaws in the preening, self-important Banks being just one.

6) Release and Relief Theories

Release of excess tension or relief from strain or constraint are the bases of these theories.

Herbert Spencer believed that laughter resulted from nervous energy seeking an outlet. When the excess of nervous energy is released, we hear that 'vocal-respiratory phenomenon known as laughter'. (13) J.C. Gregory believed that the simplest form of laughter is the 'sheer, unsophisticated laughter of pure relief' (14) such as that of children freed from tension, or candidates for higher degrees who finally submit their completed theses for examination or the laughter from soldiers who have just witnessed the hand of a comrade being blown off. The soldiers' laughter, Gregory believed, resulted from the relief felt by those on whom the disaster did not fall. While I have never witnessed
this hilarious situation myself, never having been to war, I nonetheless believe release and relief theories to be significant in understanding what makes people laugh.

As an example of this theory's application, Cook experiences immense release from tension on page 199, and his relief causes him to laugh.

7) Configurational Theories

These theories contend that 'humour is experienced when elements originally perceived as unrelated suddenly fall into place'. (15)

There is a definite similarity between incongruity and configurational theories in that both recognise that knowing and perceiving are significant in the humorous experience. However, the main difference between the two lies in the emergent point of the humour. Incongruity theories stress that it is the perception of disjointedness which somehow amuses. In configurational theories it is the falling into place that causes amusement.

Maier believed that when we are presented with information, we order it in certain ways. When we are presented with a humorous situation, our ordering leads us in a certain direction, but when that situation terminates in a way which is different from that which we expected, we are surprised. The surprise of the 'unexpected configuration' (16) leads to laughter.

To me, Maier's theory is largely restating the surprise
theory, and any vigorous use of the configurational theory in *An Uncertain Shore* was considered too analytical, although one example from the thesis shows its application. It is found on page 53 and arises when Banks confesses to an undeserved archery win.

8) Psychoanalytical Theory

The most significant work substantiating this theory was presented by Sigmund Freud in his book, *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, published in 1905. It is outside the scope of this paper to study Freud’s analyses in detail, so one example will suffice. The first joke Freud analyses was a quote from Heinrich Heine: ‘... I sat beside Salomon Rothschild and he treated me quite as his equal - quite famillionairely’. (17) Freud concludes that the newly coined word, ‘famillionairely’, being a combination of ‘familiar’ and ‘millionaire’, and also a condensation, causes laughter. ‘This composite word, ‘famillionaire’, which is unintelligible at first but is immediately understood in its context and recognised as being full of meaning, is the vehicle of the joke’s laughter-compelling effect’. (18)

For some peculiar reason, I did not experience this laughter-compelling effect which Freud obviously relished, and so my interest in the psychoanalytic theory, as a calculated device, was not great. As indicated, I believe that one can become too analytical
when trying to understand what makes people laugh. That is not to say that Freud’s theory is invalid. For me, other theories are more compelling.

It is apparent, even from this brief presentation of the theories of humour, that many have points of similarity. Having researched the work done in this area, I am familiar with the analyses of why something may be considered humorous, but in writing *An Uncertain Shore* I was more concerned with the creation of smiles, smirks, giggles or guffaws through an instinctive approach rather than a deep analysis of the process or structure that may have led to any of those reactions.

I am also aware that humour is subjective and that one person’s laugh may be another’s lament.

In *An Uncertain Shore*, the main techniques used in an attempt to create humour were satire, one-liners, word play, pun, parody and farce.
Footnotes Relating to Theories of Humour

1. The Psychology of Humour, p. 5.
7. An Anatomy of Laughter, p. 34.
15. The Psychology of Humour, p. 11.
17. Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious, p. 16.
Process of Writing; Preliminary Work

*An Uncertain Shore*, the narrative and final submission for the D.C.A., developed from a preliminary work entitled *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook*. A complete copy of the preliminary work follows this account of it.

*The Secret Journal of Captain Cook* purports to be, as does *An Uncertain Shore*, the newly-discovered account Cook wrote as an explanation of what really occurred in the antipodean section of his first voyage. I used the same format used by Cook, that is a diary of daily events, but exaggerated the verbosity and syntactical difficulty that was apparent in Cook's authentic journal.

I emulated both the format and style in order to create a sense of sameness, and each diary entry begins with similar introductory comments about the weather or ship's position. Some introductions have been altered for comic effect, and as one reads each complete entry, it is apparent that authenticity was never seriously proposed.

As a result of my disregard for authenticity, the characters I involve on any given day are not necessarily those mentioned by Cook on that same day in his journal.

Unlike *An Uncertain Shore*, which makes no contemporary references, *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook* makes great play of them. If I were to be analytical, it could be argued that comic contemporary references in a work purporting to be 18th century reflect the surprise, incongruity and perhaps even
configurational theories of humour. In practice, what I tried to do in *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook* was locate key words within Cook's original journal and use those words as triggers to create humour in my journal. For example, in Cook's authentic journal, dated Saturday, 28th (April, 1770), and in relation to an excursion ashore while anchored in Botany Bay, the captain wrote:

"... Being now not above 2 miles from shore, Mr Banks, Dr Solander, Tupia and myself put off in the yawl, and pull'd in for the land to a place where we saw 4 or 5 of the natives, who took to the woods as we approached the shore..."

In my reinterpretation of this day's events, I wrote:

"...Thus we put off in the yawl and made for the place where we saw a collection of natives engaged in play. As we approached, the natives took to the woods, a course of action which surprised Dr Solander who considered that a 9-iron would have been sufficient to reach the green..."

So by using the word *woods* as the trigger in that particular entry by Cook, I was able to create a contemporary reference and, I hope, create humour through surprise.
In the vast majority of entries, I was able to find trigger words but when this was not possible, I either fabricated a day's events or omitted that day's events from my diary.

**Purposes in Creating the Preliminary Work**

There were four purposes in creating *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook*.

The first was to acquaint myself with Cook's authentic journal in order to gain an appreciation of the the men who took part in the voyage and the voyage itself. Even though my final work, the narrative, is written in a much simpler style, I nevertheless felt obliged to understand how Cook constructed language in order to choose to either emulate it or adopt a different style. I chose the latter in the narrative.

The second reason was much more self-indulgent. After months of serious research and days and nights of caffeine-supported scholarship, I simply wanted to have a bit of fun, both as a means of personal release and as a preparation for the final narrative. Creating sustained humour, or at least attempting to, requires a lot of unfunny labour, and I needed to establish the mood within myself. So in one sense, *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook* was a warm up for the narrative, much like the
comedian who gets the audience laughing just prior to the Tonight Show host appearing.

The third, and perhaps most significant reason for creating the Journal was to try to produce a work suitable for broadcasting on radio. The diary seemed an ideal form for this purpose because it can be performed as a serial with several entries being read during each broadcast. I believe that hearing the text enhances its humour. I had envisaged the reader to be an actor who could affect a Yorkshire accent. Sound effects such as gulls squawking, wind blowing and waves crashing were also to be dubbed in.

I achieved a measure of success with this aim. As a result of a publicity interview with a Brisbane radio station regarding 'Rare Species', my fourth book, written as part of my Master’s in Creative Arts and published by Bantam in 1988, I was encouraged to submit a sample of the Journal to the station for appraisal. After due consideration by the station’s management, I was made a firm offer, but due to the tardiness of my then agent, the station did not receive the complete work by the agreed date and they accepted other material offered by an independent producer.

I have been unable to seek any alternative broadcaster for the Journal due to my teaching and doctoral commitments. I will pursue the matter of
broadcast for the work when the doctoral commitments have been completed.

A less pressing aim, but nevertheless one which I was keen to pursue in relation to the *Journal* was to have it form the basis of a theatrical work to be produced in conjunction with the theatre, music and art staffs within the School of Creative Arts.

Following is the proposal which I submitted to the School in relation to this project.
Proposal for Theatrical Work Based Upon

The Secret Journal of Captain Cook

Proposer: Mark McKirdy  D.C.A. Candidate  1988

Tentative Title: An Evening With James Cook

Similar in style and intimacy to the work of Barry Humphries, An Evening... will feature as its basis selected readings from The Secret Journal of Captain Cook performed by an actor in the role of Cook.

Interspersed with the readings will be apparently ad lib asides of a philosophical nature, e.g. "The ardent feminist's view of marriage; Bigamy is having one husband too many. Monogamy is the same thing", and jokes, e.g. "King George was playing a game of golf at St Andrew's, and after he sliced his drive into a portable commode at the side of the fairway, he said to his caddy, 'How should have I played that shot?' 'Under an assumed name,' came the respectful reply."

At appropriate intervals between readings, the lead actor will sing a number of original songs and perhaps dance with a small cast. Supporting players would be a better way of putting it. A small cast would inhibit free movement.

The actor presenting as Cook should have a comedian's sense of timing, the ability to impersonate a Yorkshire accent, a reasonable singing voice and passable dancing skills. If Anthony Newley is unavailable, then
perhaps either the Vice-Chancellor or a suitable undergraduate could be cast.

While the readings are being performed, sound effects such as waves, wind and gulls should be heard softly.

The set should have a nautical theme.

For the show to reach fruition, a co-operative effort involving me, the theatre staff and students and the music staff and students is necessary. I can write the lyrics for the songs but as I possess Van Gogh's ear for music, that aspect of the show would need to be created by others. The theatre staff would be involved with the show's casting and direction, and the art staff could be involved with the design of the set.

I would like to see a proper theatre as the venue although I am happy to be guided by those skilled in theatre production. I also realise that cost may prohibit such a venue being possible, although I would expect the audience to pay. And pay they will if the show turns out to be a flop. However, I'm confident that the show will succeed, given the resources available within the School of Creative Arts.
The Cast

Apart from the lead, Captain Cook, the show should feature Joseph 'Of Course I'll Respect You In The Morning' Banks, Lieutenant Hicks, Tupia and several others who feature prominently in the Journal.

A small group of sailors, among them some "Hello, sailor" 'types', and lusty wenches could comprise both the singing and dancing choruses.

One method of introducing and featuring Banks, Hicks, Tupia and the others would be to have them sing appropriate songs at various intervals. This would leave Cook free to deliver his readings without the interruption of attention to others. When he reads, the spotlight, with its lunar, lonely-at-sea image, should be on him alone, similar to the performance of a stand-up, but dead-pan, comic.

For the show to be sustained, a duration of no longer than one and a half hours would seem appropriate.

Although there is an element of levity within this proposal, it is suggested for serious consideration. I would welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively with the staff and students from the various disciplines with the School, and feel sure that a measure of success could be achieved.
Unfortunately, for several reasons, the proposal was never taken up. It appears that the staffs from the other disciplines had commitments upon their time which precluded involvement. However, my enthusiasm for the project remains, and an opportunity for the show's production may arise. I hope so, although I must speak to the Vice-Chancellor's agent regarding his future availability.

Following is the complete copy of *The Secret Journal of Captain Cook*. 
The Secret Journal of Captain Cook

The Voyage of the Endeavour

in the Antipodes 1770
On a day recently previous I experienced an incident which has caused me much restlessness of mind and spirit. After we had set sail from New Zealand many leagues past, I perchance bumped into Francis Drake, an occurrence giving rise to mild consternation as the famed destroyer of the Spanish Armada departed this life 174 years ago.

As Drake passed astern of the *Endeavour* he enquired, "How goeth it, Jimmy, old son?"

"Not too bad, Frank," I replied. "You can read all about it in my official journal upon my return to England."

"Oh," bemoaned Drake, "if your journal is liken unto the style and content of old Abe Tasman's, then the reading of it will be full dreary and hardly worth the sodding effort, me old china."

His words struck deep into my heart, and following immediate perusal of my official journal which I have recorded with much diligence to date and which is exceeding heavy going in the reading thereof, I have decided to keep a secondary journal.

Into this journal will be placed many and diverse entries, all of which will record in a more personal way the forthcoming encounters in these antipodean latitudes. The ship's company will be concentrated upon, and their
interpersonal relationships will be detailed in the manner of Samuel Pepys' Diary or a Bergman film adapted from some turgid Swedish novel.

And verily I state and make this undertaking that because of the journal's commitment to honest accounting, it will be for mine eyes only. Unless, of course, I am promised a pretty farthing by Citizen Murdoch for serialization rights in one of his tabloids.

In the event of this happening, I will append to the journal at its conclusion a glossary. It will list, betwixt its A and its Z, any words specific to navigation or other fields of science which I feel may be unfamiliar to the lay-reader. Accompanying each of these words will be a sufficiency of explanation, so that any confusion or enraged 'Letters To The Editor' can be avoided.

Let's face it, who wants controversy at my time of life? I simply want to return to England when this voyage is done, reacquaint myself with Mrs Cook and finally acquire for us both a little shoppe in the High Street wherein we shall rent out videos.

James Cook

Captain & Diarist
April 1770
Thursday 19th April: At 6 in the a.m. Joseph Banks, Lieutenant Hicks and I encountered land for the first time since leaving New Zealand. The southernmost tip of land I judged to be in the latitude of 38°0'S., and I named it 'Point Hicks' because at that point Hicks crashed the ship into it. The Lieutenant then made off to the mess for a celebratory toddy.

The water on which we had settled was calm and crystalline, and before the clock's small hand had moved to the 7, Lieutenant Hicks reappeared on deck attired in designer bathers and inflated implements whose dual purpose was to maximise both the crew's mirth and Hicks' buoyancy. By now firmly in the grip of the grog, the Lieutenant seemed as if transported on the wings of ecstasy and he spoke rapturously about Oysters Kilpatrick and a smooth bottom.

I think it would be wise if I locked my cabin door tonight.
Friday 20th April: About 3 leagues from land and in the latitude 36° 51'S. The country had a promising aspect and I felt that a fast-food franchise would flourish under such conditions. Banks agreed, although he expressed a loathing for a gastronomic construction he called 'the mountainous Mac'.

"It's the pickles," he fumed. "Vile-tasting, malodorous and causative of dyspepsia. And besides, I can never remember the jingle... two all-purpose brief panties, special horse on an open sesame... oh, forget it!"
Saturday 21st April: We brought to until 4 in the a.m. thence we made sail again having 90 fathoms under us and 5 leagues from land. Midshipman Magra advised that we'd all be in deep water if ever metrication were to be introduced. Magra believes that he has the gift of prescience although I consider his condition to be the result of one too many snifters and a debilitating addiction to amateur theatre.
**Sunday 22nd April:** We navigated along shore N.N.E. and were in such close proximity to land as to distinguish a gathering of people upon the beach. Two or three licked at what appeared to be some sort of iced confection attached to a small stick while the remainder shouted, "Surf’s up!" and took to the breakers on flat implements resembling pointed mess tables without supports.

The people were of a colour darker than that exhibited by the natives of Otaheite, and I am excited by the prospect that after a few days in these sunny climes I will at last achieve the tan for which I have long been desirous.
Tuesday 24th April: In the latitude of 35°38'S. and strong wind. As a result, Dr Solander suggested this a.m. that the crew be placed on a legume-low diet for the remainder of the voyage.
Wednesday 25th April: By noon we were 3 or 4 leagues from land and in the latitude of 34° 22' West. Since noon of yesterday our course and distance sailed is North by East 865,000 miles. Good grief! I was aware of a following breeze but 865,000 miles seems a trifle excessive! I must get the navigator to check out his figures.

Throughout our day's run we saw the smoke of fires in several places near the beach. Tupia said that barbecues were popular in this vicinity but I dismissed his notion because I knew, beyond equivocation, that the meat workers were on strike.

I then asked Banks, who had been fishing from the stern, if he knew how to bait a hook, and he said, "No, but I can always get Hicks furious when I take the elastic out of his bathers."

I listened to his reply with patient courtesy and on the morrow I plan to express my affection by using him as the worm when we troll for sharks.
Thursday 26th April: At, or about, or very close to 4 and 20 in the p.m., it fell little wind and we were in the latitude of 34° 10' West. In this latitude were some rocky structures which rose perpendicularly from the sea to a great height. Banks identified these structures as 'cliffs'.

That reminds me; I must make ready the fishing tackle.

After the Moon had risen to its fullest extent, Dr Solander and Charles Green struck out in the yawl towards land in search of a little night life. Solander was dressed to the nines and Green appeared resplendent in his rented tux. Each had taken 200 guineas.

Alas, the revellers returned before the clock's small hand reached 8, their funds having been exhausted all too soon. I quizzed them as to what had depleted their finances with such alacrity and Solander solemnly advised that they had not taken into account a cover charge or the pay-off for the Maitre d' in order that they might secure a table in close proximity to both the cabaret floor and the chorus girls' dressing room.

Crestfallen, the two men then consoled themselves by dancing away the night on deck under a full Moon. Green led, and it was a sight which softened even this old salt's heart. I was even more moved, if such depth of emotion were possible, when Solander allowed me to cut in.
**Friday 27th April:** Variable light airs between N.E. and N.W. and weather conducive to further tanning. In the p.m. we stood off shore until 3 of the clock at which hour we tacked, being in 50 fathom water about 2 miles from land.

At 3 and 15 of the clock a native in a canoe paddled along side and beckoned for the ship's cook. 'Cookie', as the marines call him, came atop and the native enquired as to whether or not he would be interested in a job lot of Tupperware at a discount price. Cookie smiled, winked an opportunistic wink at me, and offered the native one farthing and Lieutenant Hicks' water-wings. The native showed his opinion of this arrangement by quickly thrusting up two fingers in the shape of a 'V'.

I assumed this gesture was a request for two farthings but Cookie thought otherwise and dumped a 400-pound load of suet over the hapless vendor. The scuffle that ensued gave rise to my order of "All hands on deck!", and verily was I heartened to discover that a limp wrist, a glass eye, 3 wooden legs and Magra's dentures were present as well.

Fearing an early demise, the native broke off and was gone in a thrice, a vessel not as well-balanced as the canoe in which he came but nevertheless just as speedy.
Saturday 28th April: Anchored about 2 miles from land. Mr Banks, having been confined aboard ship for many days, felt the need to stretch his legs so my clerk, Mr Orton, attached him to the rack for several minutes. Banks was well pleased with the result and now at a height in excess of 10 feet, he suggested that we both, along with Dr Solander and Tupia, remove ourselves to shore. Thus we put off in a yawl and made for the place where we saw a collection of natives engaged in play. As we approached, the native took to the woods, a course of action which surprised Dr Solander who considered that a 9-iron would have been sufficient to reach the green. Solander advised the natives of his judgement and their resultant action, in which they force-fed him a reptile of some 5 feet in length and penalised him a stroke, suggested a mild displeasure at being offered unsolicited advice.

Near to 4 and 30 in the p.m. we returned to the Endeavour in an attitude of relaxation after having sunbathed on the shore. My bronzing is proceeding apace and I will suggest to Banks that on any future beach excursions he should dispense with both the block-out and his vest. This will ensure an even tan.
Sunday 29th April: Ashore again in an attempt to make contact with the natives. Tupia, Banks and I took with us some nails and beads but these trinkets were summarily rejected in favour of Dr Solander's navy-issue boxer shorts. Solander showed a boisterous reluctance to part with them in the first instance, but was finally persuaded by his innate fraternal compassion and a colony of vampire bats being inserted into his vest.

The natives, thus fearing no threat to their person, smiled broadly and I observed teeth of impeccable structure and unblemished whiteness. "What dentistry!" I mused as I proffered my hand in greeting. My joy was unbounded when, in reciprocation of my gesture, I felt my Mason's grip returned with knowing affection.

We returned to the Endeavour in a happy frame of mind, the indigenous peoples having made a deep and lasting impression on Solander. I was able to remove the boomerang from Daniel's forehead but the impression lasted the best part of a week.
Monday 30th April: In the p.m. I dispatched the wooders and waterers to the watering place found yesterday. They took with them casks for the filling of and two of the wooders acted as lookouts in the event of a native assault. At once, several ebony-skinned warriors came boldly up to within 50 yards of our people and made a stand. They then attached to this stand a sign which read 'Lemonade - 100 Guineas per glass. Free admission to the 1771 Canoe Show for all purchasers'.

Towards 2 and 40 of the clock I acquainted myself with a small cove on the north side of the bay and after the usual salutations, I asked the little fellow if he knew of any place where I might obtain a decent steak. He indicated in the direction of an establishment known locally as the 'Black Stump Bar & Grill'. Regrettably, however, upon reaching this darkened tree-base, I was assaulted by a multitude of large, orange ants and driven back before I could place my order.

Intrepidly I explored the north side further but met with nothing remarkable except a spivish salesman from Lloyd's who offered me marine insurance at highly attractive rates. He was persistent in his patter until a dozen or so orange ants inserted into his shirt finally convinced him that I already possessed adequate cover.
May 1770
Tuesday 1st May: Forby Sutherland, consumptive seaman, last night succumbed to his mortality. As he lay panting in my arms, his final words expressed a profound philosophy. "Jimmy, old son," he whispered, "death is like life only completely different. There's only one thing troubling me. I'm perturbed by the notion that after Dr Solander has pronounced life extinct and you've all buried me, I'll wake up six fathoms under and be caught without an aqualung."

Having thus spake, Sutherland departed this life, and due to his inconsideration in not leaving a forwarding address, I am perplexed as to where to send his luggage.

This morning several of us went ashore to the watering place where daily is seen a gathering of natives. None was in attendance so here we left our gifts of cloth, beads, looking-glasses, nails and an application form for an American Express card. We then made an excursion into the country which we found diversified with Woods and Marshes. There was an obvious dearth of Wongs, Grazianis and Khans, although I am of the mind that this may all change when multicultural restaurants offering more than the unpalatable English stodge gain favour.
Wednesday 2nd May: Shortly after the sun had lifted above the horizon, I sent the 3rd Lieutenant, Mr Gore, up to the place I have called 'Mornay' to dredge for oysters. Unfortunately, I failed to notice the lemons and small sections of buttered bread which he had smuggled about his person, and after an absence of some four hours, he returned to the ship bloated but empty-handed.

What distressed me even more was the fact that he put it all on Diners Club and signed my name.

In the p.m. the wind was at S.E. with rain, and these conditions prevented me from making an excursion ashore. So instead I went below and baked for the men a quantity of iced cup-cakes which were consumed with gusto. This 'gusto', we have discovered, is an indigenous brew of honest colour, slightly pretentious bouquet and possessive of a bitter after-taste. But at 2 shillings and 5 pence a barrel, who's going to voice a complaint?

Later over dinner, from which all those who had partaken of my cakes were strangely absent, I discussed with Banks the subject of viticulture, whereupon Joseph made the extraordinary boast that after years of experience, he could now correctly identify the wine-maker and both the year and place of production simply by reading the label on the bottle.

I sense that more trolling may be necessary.
Friday 4th May: My heart is burdened with worries concerning Banks. He has collected many fine and interesting botanical samples in this place I have called ‘Botany Bay’, but after one excursion ashore recently he returned with a plant of potent efficacy. Usually a man of abstemious temperament, Banks has now taken to spending most of the day in his cabin smoking copious quantities of this strange herb. When he emerges for meals, he is given to imitating various kinds of flightless bird and has been sighted by Midshipman Magra keeping intimate association with a large crustacean Joseph refers to as ‘my beloved Letitia’. There is a mood of unease amongst the crew and the men are beginning to ask questions such as ‘What’s Banks got that the rest of us haven’t?’ and ‘Does Cookie have a recipe for Lobster Thermidor?’. 

I have recommended to Banks that he avail himself of one or two sessions with Dr Solander but as he refuses to treat anyone not covered by health insurance, I fear the worst.
Saturday 5th May: Following a hearty breaking of fast, a party of marines and I engaged our attentions upon further explorations.

On leaving the ship we headed due east and before the clock’s hands had signalled the passing of an hour, we found ourselves in an exclusive suburb.

Chic boutiques and aromatic delicatessens abounded, and on every avenue there trotted oodles of pampered poodles.

Swept away by the ambience, and also by a street cleaner who sneered at the cut of our pantaloons, we shopped with no concern for budget and lastly partook of coffee alfresco before returning to the ship.

Later in the p.m. and in front of the other crewmen, the marines and I paraded in a diversity of garments which included long johns by Levi and gaiters by Gucci. The bulk of the audience seemed well-disposed to our choice of apparel but Banks, displaying exceeding envy, leapt up on to the catwalk in his tattered breaches and lurex waistcoat and shouted, "Clothes do not maketh the man!"

"Rightly spoke," riposted Dr Solander, "but the man who maketh yours will never maketh a name for himself on Savile Row."

Much giggling ensued and Banks slunk off to his cabin for another smoke.
**Sunday 6th May:** As recounted in a previous entry, this Botany Bay (which I named after William Bay, my mother’s chiropractor who keeps rooms in Yorkshire) abounds with a diversity of flora. There also abounds much wildlife, with loud music, dancing and gay bars operating well into the hours of darkness.

The natives in these environs are brazenly immodest, and no sort or cut of cloth has ever been seen upon any of them. Lieutenant Hicks concludes, quite rightly, that they must save a veritable fortune on dry-cleaning costs.

Having seen everything this place afforded, in the a.m. I gave the order to weigh anchor and Able Seaman Parker reported that it tipped the scales at over 300 pounds.

Shortly we put to sea and by 12 and 30 of the clock we were about 2 miles from land and abreast of a harbour wherein there appeared safe anchorage. I have called this harbour ‘Port Jackson’ on account of Drinks Steward Jackson threatening to thrash me with a flagon of the company’s medal-winning Quinta Malvedos if his name failed to register somewhere in these jottings.
Monday 7th May: We experienced little wind southerly and the weather all about was serene and pleasant. Observer Green, a zealot of fitness, was eager to break in his new Reeboks so he suggested another excursion ashore. I replied in the affirmative, myself having been latterly persuaded to aerobics and the Pritikin Diet, but having sighted several natives in an attitude of truculence, I advised as to the need for weaponry.

Within the hour we had put to in the yawl, myself equipped with a musket and Hicks brandishing several blades and a copy of Chaucher's 'Canterbury Tales' designed to be read aloud in case all else failed.

As we neared our verdant spot the natives fled and so we settled into a picnicking mode without impediment. Alas, just as I was about to bite into my salmon quiche, I was again set upon by the orange ants that had made an unprovoked assault on my person during an earlier excursion. Both Hicks and Green were likewise attacked and, stripped to the flesh by the ants' giant pincers, we were forced to abandon our buffet and make haste away.

On the ship a short while later, Cookie was sore aroused and chastised us with the words, "What's the point in my slaving away in a hot galley all day if you guys can't put up with a few little insects on a picnic?"
Tuesday 8th May: Variable breezes and skies vacant of cloud. Our situation in the early p.m. was nearly the same as yesterday except that today we were boarded by a gathering of people smoking cigars and attired in loud sports jackets and Bermuda shorts. A number of the menfolk appeared even more obtrusive. It transpired through enquiry that these people were tourists from the Americas who had mistook our vessel for a floating restaurant. So Cookie, not wishing to appear inhospitable and sensing an opportunity to clean up on the tips, provided for them each an appetizer followed by fries and Budweiser in plenteous proportions.

Much conviviality was apparent throughout the luncheon and afterwards our guests, seeming well satisfied, took a few snaps, promised to tell their friends about us, bade their farewells and then adjourned to their carriage waiting ashore.

Alas for Cookie, not one of the tourists tipped.

"Schmucks, all of them schmucks!" he was heard to mutter as he emptied the cigar-filled ashtrays to starboard.
**Wednesday 9th May:** All day the weather has been serene but my spirit has been sore agitated. In the a.m., during study of the ship's muster-roll, I discovered that Dr Solander's speciality is not medicine. Like Banks, except for his larger nose, Solander is, in fact, a naturalist. This explains why, when I complained to him of bunions, he anaesthetised me with pesticide, removed by appendix through my left ear and then trimmed my eyebrows with hedge-cutters.

Is it, therefore, little wonder that his receptionist's diary has so few appointments pencilled in?
**Thursday 10th May:** In the latitude of $33^\circ 2'$ South 2 leagues from land. At near to 10 of the clock in the forenoon Marine Private Gibson was much troubled and requested an audience, so I gave to 12 other marines front row seats and instructed them to supply an ovation only upon seeing me holding aloft the applause sign.

After the ship's band had tuned up, Gibson made his entrance into my cabin in the manner of a music-hall artiste sore afflicted with opening night nerves. At once he unburdened himself.

"C-C-C-Captain," he began, "the voyage undertaken to date has allowed me abundant time for introspection. Before embarking, my life in London was something of which I am little proud. I was a dabbler in opiates, a dealer in debauchery, a drunkard, a dissembler and a wastrel much given to hanging around with Grade 2 civil servants. But latterly in these balmy latitudes the winds of change have come upon my soul and I have resolved to seek respectability. From this day on I vow to dissociate myself from anyone even remotely connected with Flexitime."

With that the band struck up 'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow' and our singing was unbridled. As Gibson left in a state of neophytic elation, I gave him a pat on the back and the other marines, on seeing the sign aloft, gave him a standing ovation.
Sunday 13th May: In the p.m. we stood inshore with the wind lifting from the N.N.E. and Midshipman Monkhouse lurking near an open window at the Y.W.C.A.

At near to 5 of the clock, Able Seaman Dozey, on watch atop, glimpsed a collection of bathers stroking vigorously for the ship. Fearing the bathers to be footballers, a species persuaded to intemperance on long flights and tropical cruises, Dozey summoned me from below. I arrived on deck just as the bathers were boarding and Dozey's fears were confirmed when the pack's leader removed his muzzle and growled, "Anything round and in leather we'll score with; anything flat and in tweed we'll leave for the polo players to date. You'll find that we've booked eight double cabins so open the bar and fire the boilers."

"There are no old ladies employed on this vessel," I corrected sternly. "Let me see your tickets."

Upon close inspection, I was relieved to discover a prevailing confusion at work.

"Methinks ye boobheads have been tackled once too often," I averred. "These tickets indicate nine nights' safe passage aboard P & O's Island Princess, not His Majesty's barque the Endeavour."

At once the interlopers decamped astern, cheered off warmly by the Boatswain's shout of "You morons couldn't win a one-ticket chook raffle!"
Monday 14th May: Following this morning's muster, Banks expressed a desire to go ashore with Able Seaman Antonio Ponto to investigate local soil quality. After returning to the ship, Banks and Ponto disappeared below. Mr Gore happened upon the two men deep in conversation and he reported his overhearings to me. Gore detailed that he had heard Ponto mention Banks' potent herb and how it would flourish in the local environs. The words 'Carmine 'The Snake' Musumeci', 'colonial bag-men' and 'the Mob always gargles after garlic' were frequently upon the lips of musician Ponto (I say musician because the swarthy seaman is never without his violin case) and talk of 'loot in abundance' was liberal in its repetition.

According to Gore, Banks' tone and demeanour then became decidedly tremulous when Ponto made reference to Joseph being fitted for a leaden waist-jacket if he attempted to 'skim a portion of the profits' or 'welch on the deal'.

I suspected that the ingenuous botanist may have become unwittingly involved with an organisation of malefactors, so to save Joseph from the restrictions to his snorkelling imposed by cement boots, I had Ponto incarcerated in the brig and upon our return to England he will suffer under the rigours of either lengthy penal servitude or 15 minutes solitary confinement with an empathizing social worker.
Tuesday 15th May: Freshening gales at S.W., N.W., W.S.W. and S.S.W., which left Observer Green spinning like a top for 12 hours. By the time the winds had calmed, Green had bored himself through the top deck, my cabin, a batch of Cookie's rock cakes and the ship's keel.

He was last sighted being employed by members of the Royal Geological Society who were engaged upon drilling for oil some 80 leagues off shore.
Wednesday 16th May: A morning composed of life's good news and bad. We experienced fresh breezes at 10 and stale buns for elevenses. So after a dose of salts all round, I ordered Master Molyneux to make sail. This he did with much dexterity, and upon finding himself in possession of a quantity of canvas off-cuts, he set to and ran up for me an attractive backless gown with matching handbag.

I now rue my decision to appear in the officers' mess clothed in my new ensemble, not because of the envy it inspired but rather because Hicks has now embraced the notion that he, to the exclusion of all others, should partner me at our forthcoming Debutantes' Ball.

Midshipman Magra is sore miffed with this development because I had promised him the first waltz.

Alas, a captain's lot is not a happy one, especially this lot of lead-footed Lotharios with which I have been lumbered.

If bickering and moodiness persist, I will cancel the ball and institute a moratorium on dating.

Oh, how I long for the days of my wallflower youth.
Thursday 17th May: At noon with the sun at full intensity we steered along shore N. by E. at a distance of about 3 leagues off. We continued this course till sunset when we encountered a wide sweep of enclosed water. This area I named 'Morton Bay', not, as the scuttle-butt would have it, after Lord Morton of the Royal Society but rather because Gunner Morton, grave afflicted with fleas and matted hair, spent 2 hours baying at it.

The discomforted, yelping wretch was finally quietened after I disengaged Mr Gore's wooden leg and projected it overboard. Morton bounded into the brine, fetched the termite-riddled support, returned it to my feet and then retired below to doze loyally at the end of Mr Orton's bunk.
Friday 18th May: At 10 and 30 of the clock in the p.m. we lost sight of land on all 4 points of the compass so we reduced sail not knowing which way to steer.

Observer Green then suggested that we should utilize his extensive knowledge of heavenly bodies and navigate by the stars. So after intense scrutiny of the afternoon tabloid's astrological column, Green advised that we should steer N.E. for 9 million miles and then make a sharp left. The officers believed Green's advice to be sound, but as my map clearly illustrated that all traffic flowing into Green's designated junction was to proceed right, I boldly overruled our observer.

My orders then were that we should heave to and wait upon the advice of the Navigable Routes and Mariners Association. On hearing this decree, Hicks' countenance paled and he issued forth with a profusion of apologies after he'd confessed that he'd neglected to renew our membership back in Port Jackson.

Green's defence of the Lieutenant was somewhat reserved. "You're a blithering half-wit," he heckled, "and I bet your sign is Aries."

With a dignity born of breeding, Hicks responded by poking out his tongue and chanting, "Sticks and stones may breaketh my bones but names will never hurt me."

Without a moment's hesitation, the entire company then produced a diversity of clubs and rocks and set about giving substance to Hicks' poetic proposition.
Saturday 19th May: The rising of the sun brought with it darkening potentialities.

Cookie, having just completed a stock-take of stores with the intention of introducing nouvelle cuisine, despondently informed me that our victuals were parlous poor in both quantity and quality. Fearful of an outbreak of scurvy and suspecting the demise of the blue-plate special, I enquired, "Does this mean the sourkraut's off?"

"Aye, Captain", Cookie replied, "Gunner Fritz has indeed left the ship in a foul temper again and has vowed to remain ashore until I either add battered bratwurst as an entree or remove the surcharge on weekends."
Sunday 20th May: At noon or thereabouts we were by observation in the latitude of 24° 21'South.

A short time later Cookie again expressed his concern regarding our diminishing food stocks. A solution needed to be found so I quickly devised a plan for replenishment. It was a plan exceeding simple in its execution.

I ordered the Boatswain to distribute rods and reels amongst the men for the catching of fish, and when each line had been baited I intoned, "Gentlemen, our very lives depend upon your success as anglers during the hours of labour which lie ahead. I advise that you seek the deepest waters, so raise your rods, put your backs into it and let's have a long cast."

In response to my order there at once appeared on deck 2 leading actors, 5 supporting thespians, 17 bit players, 300 extras, the director, sundry technicians, a rather unsteady grip and a team of on-location caterers.

Fortunately, the caterers possessed victuals in bountiful supply so after the director had called, "Verily I sayeth that's a wrap!" the 2 crews were able to sup sumptuous together whilst viewing the rushes.

I now rejoice because the men are a picture of good health and the cameraman was able to insinuate my best side into every scene in which I appeared.

I await the reviews with no mean measure of confidence.
Monday 21st May: In these antipodean latitudes are to be seen a multitude of natural wonders which gladden one’s eye. Bird-life especially abounds. For these few hours past we have glimpsed several indigenous attractions as much at home on land as in the water.

Banks contends that today’s sighting is the first we have made and that the species exhibits a remarkable similarity to ‘Sula Leucogaster Plotus’, or, more commonly, the ‘Brown Booby’.

Dr Solander has weighed the evidence on both sides and is convinced that these wonders are, in fact, Brown Boobies, but is adamant that we have previously sighted them bouncing along the shores of Botany Bay and frolicking unfettered upon the sands of Bondi Beach.

Tupia also recalls these earlier sightings with much fervour. I suspect that an extra measure of bromide in his tea may be in order.
**Tuesday 22nd May**: At a time when both hands of the clock were stationed on the 2, Banks drew my attention to a type of water-snake lying under our vessel's stern. Upon noticing something of the mongoose with regard to Banks' facial features, the snake made haste away, and when it reached the shore it slithered off to fraternize with its cold-blooded, soil-based relative known as the 'landlord'.

Later, the persistent problem of our meagre rations emerged, so I again called for the rods and reels. Fish were bagged in only modest numbers but we did catch a supply of snake and edible seaweed sufficient to sink a ship. I have ordered the crew to commence refloating procedures as soon as the surrounding waters are free from any herpetological harassment.
Saturday 26th May: Being only 2 leagues from land, in the a.m. I ventured ashore to trade with the natives. In return for beads, buttons, pots, combs and 40,000 guineas, I was given the thumbs down, several blurts and a copy of 'Variety' wherein there appeared the review of the film recently recorded upon the Endeavour. Excitedly I scanned the text, searching for my name, and whilst Green, Monkhouse, Tupia and Banks received write-ups flattering in both appraisal and length, I was not mentioned until the final 2 lines.

I suspect that the reviewer was not persuaded to method acting as his comments would seem to indicate:

'James Cook, cinematic master of the crooked grin (ham on wry), delivers lines like a confused postman delivers letters.'
Sunday 27th May: At noon we were in the latitude of 22° 43’S., and in this vicinity were seen many islands. The largest of these islands I have called 'Great Keppel Island' after Admiral Keppel who said to me prior to sailing from England, "Jim, if you're ever up Queensland way, make it your business to seek relaxation upon the premier resort in the area. Just mention my name to the manager and he'll see to it that you have a great time."

So we stood off this paradise in 20 fathom water and beheld upon the shore much volley-balling and a Miss Beach Girl Quest that caused Monkhouse to break out in a cold sweat even though the temperature was well in excess of 100 degrees.

What refreshments this island afforded for shipping I knew not, but again in need of victual replenishment and with little time to spare, I sent Master Molyneux ashore with 2 boats to ascertain from the inhabitants if they could supply to us a sufficiency of hot and cold Seafood Platters to go. Molyneux returned with only 3 calamari rings, a bill for 3000 guineas and a note from the manager which read: 'This is all you'll get. The name 'Admiral Keppel' is mud around here because the last time he occupied one of our bungalows he made off with the guest towels.'
Monday 28th May: At the rising of the sun, Mr Gore, Master's Mate Pickersgill, a party of marines and I went ashore to survey and chart the terrain north of the islands sighted yesterday. As the Master's Mate was making ready the theodolite, a number of natives appeared brandishing clubs and spears. Without warning they charged Pickersgill and carried him off to their campsite. They returned several minutes later and boldly attempted to charge Mr Gore, whereupon I shouted, "Wait up, ye brigands! I didn't mind that ye charged Pickersgill but I must insist that ye pay cash for Gore!"

The natives' leader seemed sore put out that I dared to question his credit rating, and in an attitude of belligerent vexatiousness he flung 2 pennies at my feet and demanded a receipt. I acceded to the leader's demand and Gore was then led away shouting, "Tuppence!!?? And you've got the hide to call yourself an entrepreneur, Captain!"

An hour later the captives returned to the safety of our survey with an account of their escape full daring in its enactment.

"Sir," Pickersgill puffed, "we secured our freedom by threatening to discuss New Age philosophy. You should have seen the heathens run!"
**Tuesday 29th May:** With little water aboard, in the a.m. I dispatched the waterers ashore to seek out fresh supplies. I suspected reprisals following yesterday's incident so I advised the party to be vigilant.

A short time later the waterers returned to the ship with filled casks and untroubled expressions, whereupon I cleansed my dentures and enquired as to whether or not they had encountered any resistance.

"Only a minor skirmish," replied Able Seaman Dawson. "As we were cutting through the dense scrub, we met with an aged Japanese soldier who refused to believe that the war was over. When we insisted that it was, he shouted 'Blitish dog bleaths!', and retreated into the thicket. We immediately commenced a search for him but could only find a small, cultivated paddy and a big, uncouth taffy who contended that an Irish university was a 'contradiction in terms, boyo'."

In the evening the officers joined me in my cabin and we sang several shanties. The Welshman's resonant baritone was a valued addition to the choral cacophony, although we could have done without his constant head-butting of Choir Master Hicks.
Wednesday 30th May: Agreeable climatic conditions in the a.m., so Solander and I resolved that a little bush-walking was in order. Upon reaching the shore, we equipped ourselves with maps, compasses, sundry weapons and Sony Walkmans and struck out along an ill-defined path in a southerly direction.

After pushing forward intrepidly for more than 3 hours, we came upon a rivulet offering pristine refreshment. We slaked our thirsts in the manner of a wharfie at a wine-tasting and then, well-satisfied, slept for two hours. When we awoke our facial tans were mightily advanced so we happily returned to the ship, whereupon Banks mistook us for natives and promptly demanded a shoe-shine.
June 1770
Sunday 3rd June: Gales at S.E. with straining sails and a boat ahead sounding. At first our soundings were very irregular, being from 9 to 3 fathom, but afterwards regular from 9 to 11 fathom.

In like fashion, Midshipman Magra spent the day in the head straining, at first irregular from 9 of the clock till 3, but afterwards regular from 9 to 11 in the evening. He could supply no cause to his former condition, but he ascribed his latter success to proper diet, exercise and a quick perusal of Voltaire's 'Candide'.

I have recommended Magra's regime to the rest of the crew and the ship's librarian has accessioned an additional 40 copies of 'Candide' into Solander's medical register.
Wednesday 6th June: At 2 of the clock in the p.m. our
course and distance sailed since the same time yesterday
was W.N.W. 28 miles. Later in the afternoon, during the
crew’s siesta period, Tupia complained to the
Quartermaster about his bunking conditions.

"My hammock too small," he protested, "and me
haven’t slept for three days."

"But you’ve slept soundly for the past three
nights," the Quartermaster said.

"That not count," Tupia replied indignantly,
"because me wasn’t awake to appreciate it. Anyway, don’t
make little fuss. Me want more comfortable mattress."

The two men then remonstrated for 15 minutes,
whereupon the Quartermaster succumbed to his impatient
temperament and threw the demanding layabout into the
ocean.

"Me ask for softer mattress, not water-bed!" Tupia
spluttered as he set about catching 40 winks, 40 waves, a
cod and a cold.
Thursday 7th June: Light airs from the East and heavy arias from Able Seaman Antonio Ponto in the brig. Fearful of mutiny and, even worse, an encore, I sent Lieutenant Hicks below to quell the din. Within 20 minutes he returned with reddened eyes.

"Ye seem strangely upset, Hicks," I said. "For what reason?"

Hicks swallowed hard, then soft, then something he called 'sunny-side up' and replied, "I've just had a very unnerving experience, Captain. When I confronted Ponto with your message to shut up, he said that he'd see to it that a contract was put out on your head. So I told him that you wouldn't want it because your hat looked silly enough. He then kicked me."

"That's appalling. He actually kicked you down in the brig?"

"No, just a bit lower. That's why my eyes are watering."
Friday 8th June: Following muster and the breaking of fast, Sailmaker Ravenhill presented to the company a tutorial on the craft of sewing. He approached his subject with a degree of light-heartedness and he had the men in stitches throughout his discourse.

Mr Orton shone when the crochet needles were produced but Midshipman Monkhouse appeared to be all thumbs, a digital abnormality which, in contrast, allowed him to hitch rides with consumate dexterity.

As he grappled with the pinking shears, in the process severing Ravenhill's braces and future cordial relations, Monkhouse cried out in despair, "I prefer sowing wild oats!", and threw his arms in the air.

Seizing upon the opportunity for further adulation, Mr Orton grabbed the spiralling limbs and deftly reattached them to the Midshipman's shoulders with the words, "Knit one, purl two."

An hour later the class separated, along with Monkhouse's arms, so he went on watch to try to pull himself together.
Saturday 9th June: The ship's marines woke early to a smooth sea but rough whiskers, so they attended to their ablutions with much muttering and languid lathering.

"I can't abide shaving," Private Gibson growled as he scraped away his 5 o'clock shadow.

Immediately in its place there appeared the silhouette of Cyrano de Bergerac nosing around the dressing-rooms at the Folies Bergere close to midnight.

"I am delirious, Gibson!" bellowed an incredulous Corporal Truslove. "Have you seen the construction upon your face?"

"No, I haven't," snorted Gibson, "but I have seen how yours is constructed and that's enough to tell me that you've got a head start in this evening's Mr Ugly contest."

True words, for the Corporal was indeed the clear, head-and-shoulders winner of the Mr Ugly contest.
Monday 11th June: A day of catastrophe! Shortly before 11 in the a.m., the ship struck a coral reef and held fast. Upon noticing our predicament, I immediately ordered our sails to be taken in, and when this had been done Mr Gore requested the same treatment for his baggy trousers.

For the welfare of all on board, it then became imperative that the ship be lightened, and to this purpose we at once went to work. I went a short distance by water-taxi to work as a char-lady at the Maritime Museum (I served not only cold tea but also as a bad example) while Mr Banks, possessing the highest qualifications gained during years of schooling, was completely unemployable.

When we all returned to the scene of the disaster later in the p.m., we found that the ship's circumstances had changed not one whit. Matters soon worsened when the vessel began to take on water, so I broke out 2 pumps and ordered Hicks to attend to them. With a fleetness of step and a dedication to the task at hand, Hicks then grabbed the pumps and laced them to his feet.

"These pumps are just the sort of shoes I'll need to make it as a professional ballroom dancer," he announced. "I'm hot to trot!"

The toe-tapper then swept me up and we began a slow quick-step which culminated in a combined score of -7 from the 12-man judging panel.
Tuesday 12th June: Not one on board slept last night owing to our dire straits and today the men laboured at the capstan and windlass. For six long hours they toiled, and just as Old Father Time was about to call us to our watery graves (and I must talk to the ship’s padre about his well-meaning, but premature, attempts to drum up business), the ship floated and we hove her off into 10 fathom seas.

"Hooray!" the crew shouted and gay abandon touched everyone on board (I must also talk to Able Seaman Abandon regarding this queer habit).

Much relieved by these events, I sent the longboat to take up the stream anchor and cable which we had jettisoned yesterday. The anchor was retrieved but the cable was lost amongst the rocks, which was a shame because it was the one transmitted by His Majesty to Monkhouse congratulating the Midshipman on attaining his 200th year in the navy.
Wednesday 13th June: With all the misfortunes latterly experienced, my wishes for a tanned physique have been kept in abeyance. So today as we looked for safe anchorage in which we could repair our vessel, I stripped off my vest, lay upon a towel and baked under a blazing sun. My sponge turned out just so-so but my bombe Alaska was an instant hit with Tupia when it exploded and caked his loincloth in ice-cream and meringue.

As the sun was setting, Dr Solander appeared on deck and glanced with concern at several blemishes on my skin. "That mole upon your back may appear benign now, Captain," he said solemnly, "but if you let too much sun get to it, it could turn nasty."

Aware that I had availed myself of the sun's bronzing rays for an inordinate length of time, I heeded Solander's advice and returned the mole to its cage, whereupon the parched, rodent-like insectivore turned nasty and bit me.

As a result of this incident, I will publish an edict to the effect that no pets will be allowed on board. Magra's gila monster can stay because it reminds me so much of Her Royal Highness and home, but Orton's goat will have to go.

No ifs or butts will be tolerated regarding this matter.
Thursday 14th June: My edict in respect of the keeping of pets has caused considerable distress to one of my officers.

Unbeknownst to me, while we had been anchored in Botany Bay some weeks past, Master's Mate Charles Clerke had stealthily insinuated a cow into his bunking quarters. When this fact was brought to my attention this a.m., I summoned Clerke to my suite, confronted him with my knowledge and instructed him to take the animal ashore.

Charles wept bitterly, an unfathomable bond of affection having been established betwixt man and beast, and pleaded with me to reconsider. I remained resolute, and when I finally pointed out to him that his early morning milk-run was adversely affecting his other duties, Clerke consented to the cow's removal.

"It's for the best, Charles," I said gently, giving the distraught officer a generous pat on the back.

In view of the fact that the bran-bloated bovine had just deposited the very same pat upon my navigation charts, I assumed that Clerke would have appreciated my gesture. However, his expletive indicated otherwise.

I must also here record that I was unable to appreciate the gesture Clerke offered in my direction as he stormed from my cabin. Considering that we have been involved in no skirmishes of late, his 'V' for victory seemed somewhat eccentric.
Saturday 16th June: In the a.m. we experienced cloudy weather with attendant showers. I was more inclined towards a bath but the washroom attendant advised me that a shower was less wasteful of our water reserves, so I hopped in with and my soap-on-a-rope and washed the men right out of my hair.
Sunday 17th June: Today we located a harbour into which we will steer our stricken vessel for repair. My heart is pleased at this development for I feel that the pacification accompanying safe anchorage will do much to alleviate the dissension that has latterly arisen amongst several of the crew.

In the forenoon this disharmony was apparent when an argument issued forth on deck between Observer Green and Master's Mate Pickersgill.

Green contended that Pickersgill's acne was liken unto the craters reported upon the face of Mars. Pickersgill riposted by calling Green an observer who 'couldn't recognise a star in an opening night galaxy', whereupon the 2 combatants stood toe to toe and began trading blows.

It rapidly transpired that Pickersgill got the better of Green when the Mate traded only 3 of his blows for 17 of Green's with 2 front row tickets for the fights thrown in as a bonus.

Green seemed pleased with his swaps and I observed in Pickersgill similar feelings when he smiled and whispered to me, "There's one born every minute, eh, Captain?"

"Indeed there is, you swindling insect," I agreed, trading an insult of mine for the 700 of his that quickly followed.
Monday 18th June: At first light this morning we steered the ship into the harbour we located yesterday. When she was safely moored alongside the beach on the southern side, I ordered Able Seaman Dozey to go ashore, prepare for me a campsite and fire and to then pitch my tent.

When I crossed to the land some 30 minutes later I happily discovered that Dozey had followed my instructions to the letter by firstly starting for me a campfire and then secondly by pitching my tent into it.

"Dozey," I announced with no stint of praise, "you are a cut above the ordinary seaman and I most certainly detect officer material," whereupon the arsonist guiltily removed Lieutenant Hicks' muslin pinafore and pitched that into the fire as well.

As a result of these developments, it would seem that tonight I am destined to bed down under an open canopy and upon Mother Nature's mattress (I trust that the old girl has had it re-sprung otherwise it will be fair murder on my haemorrhoidal propensities). I further suspect that, for the sake of warmth, Mr Orton's goat will be my bunk-mate. Undoubtedly, the problem of foul breath will arise, especially if the babied billy insists on snuggling up close, so I will endeavour to minimise the misery by ensuring that I gargle long and hard before retiring.
Tuesday 19th June: In the p.m. we transported all the provisions and sick ashore. None of the 8 or 9 afflicted was dangerously ill, except for Tupia who had been rendered comatose after breaking into Solander's medical supplies and overdosing on 112 pages of 'Candide' in one reading.

"Just how serious is Tupia's condition?" I enquired. Solander sighed deeply and replied, "Our friend is not merely sick, Captain. His condition is extremely critical."

"Extremely critical?" I gasped.

"Yes," Solander confirmed. "Ever since Tupia has come under my care, he has done nothing but complain about the food, criticize the Night Nurse's hair-do, carry on about having no visitors and generally find fault with everything and everyone."

"Upon my word!" I exclaimed. "That is critical! Pray tell, what was the Night Nurse's reaction to Tupia's carping?"

"One of abject despondency," Solander said. "Sister Monkhouse had paid a veritable fortune for his perm and to then have it ridiculed in front of Midwife Magra, well, I'm shocked... stunned... what more can I say?... I'm at a loss for words... I'm speechless..."

"You will be in a moment, you gabbling, feather-brained quack," I interrupted, thrusting an opened copy of 'Candide' into Solander's hands.
Wednesday 20th June: All last night I tossed and turned and not one wink of sleep was visited upon my writhing consciousness. I ascribed the cause of my restlessness to the guilt I felt in relation to Tupia's lack of hospice visitors, so this a.m. I set about to remedy the situation.

At 9 of the clock I went to the infirmary and sought from Dr Solander his advice regarding visitations for Tupia.

"He is very weak, Captain," Solander advised, "so I must insist that his visiting hours be strictly limited. If you want to see him, and it will do his spirit a power of good if you do, then I suggest the hour between 3 and 4 this p.m. as the most appropriate time."

"An excellent suggestion," I said, feeling the burden of guilt lift from my shoulders. "This afternoon it is. Just stick him in a wheelchair and tell him to visit me in my cabin at 2 minutes to 4 and I'll ensure that I'm there. In the meantime, give him my best wishes and tell me that he is constantly in everyone's thoughts."

I then went happily back to my suite and immediately recalled that since Tupia had joined the crew, everyone had constantly thought of him as being a source of major irritation.
Thursday 21st June: The men and I are keen to have the *Endeavour* made sea-worthy again, so near to 10 in the a.m. I had the Blacksmith's forge set up and instructed the Armourer and his mate to make nails and plates for the ship's repairing thereof.

The nails were produced without impediment but the forged plates needed further attention because the King's head etched into both the 3-pound and 7-pound plates bore a striking resemblance to an indigenous creature Banks calls a 'kangaroo'.

"The Armourer got the nose right," Joseph advised upon viewing the plates, "but the pointed ears are a dead give-away. Everyone knows that His Majesty has 2 ears, not the 6 herein etched."

I agreed with Banks' studied conclusion and at once ordered the Armourer to forge new plates. Within a few short hours the new plates, intricately etched with only 2 pointed ears, were completed and after close inspection, Banks smiled, rubbed his hands together and whispered, "These are beautiful, Captain. I guarantee that you wouldn't find a more perfect pair of hands anywhere else in the English-speaking world and Pennsylvania. But you can forget the plates. They're rubbish. Only a complete idiot would be fooled by them."

Hicks had been wrong. Not even Dozey bid for them at the auction.
Friday 22nd June: In order to examine the ship's leak without encumbrance to easy movement, in the a.m. I called for the hold to be emptied and in response the men removed the cannons, powder and ball. The cannons and powder were deposited ashore with little fuss, but the relocation of the ball caused considerable distress to the Debutantes who had just made their entrances accompanied by both their partners and the jealous jibes from the rejected suitors.

Midshipman Magra was the most vocal of the spurned, and he articulated his pique by shouting, "You'll be sorry that you chose Hicks as your dancing partner, Captain. The lumbering great log has got 2 left feet!"

At once I had the ship's podiatrist assess Magra's claim and after examination, the corn-curer confirmed that the Lieutenant did, in fact, have 2 left feet.

This explains why, during rehearsals for the ball, Hicks tripped not only the light fantastic but also the band leader, my chaperon and everybody else on the dance-floor.
Saturday 23rd June: Again a shortage of victuals was apparent, so near to noon I sent Mr Gore and several of the marines into the country to shoot pigeons sufficient for a crew-sized pie.

Gore returned empty-handed at 3 of the clock in the afternoon and reported that although he'd had no luck shooting pigeons, he had cleaned up when he and the marines had shot craps, a game of chance concerned with the rolling of dice.

Vexed by Mr Gore's seeming indifference to our food shortage, I asked sternly, "But were there any pigeons about?"

"Plenty in the game," the 3rd Lieutenant replied, "but very few in the air, and anyway, we couldn't shoot them because our guns weren't loaded."

"Maybe so," I responded, "but I bet your dice were."

At 4 and 15 of the clock the Boatswain and I inspected the ship's leak and found a number of planks to be irreparably damaged. So I ordered new planks to be cut and instructed the Carpenters to begin work in the late evening. They performed well and were followed by another vocal group calling themselves the Beach Boys who hammered out several numbers during the midnight show.
Monday 25th June: Following first light this a.m. the men continued labouring towards the ship's repair.

Tragically, however, Corporal Truslove was struck across the chest by a misdirected plank and was rushed to the infirmary.

Upon arrival, Sister Monkhouse took his temperature, advised him that it would be returned not as a whole but by degrees and then ordered the Corporal to wait upon Dr Solander. Solander ordered a cocktail and when Truslove brought it without delay, the good doctor gave him a generous tip. "Never draw to an inside straight," he said unbegrudgingly, "especially if Mr Gore's dealing with his sleeves rolled down."

"Thanks for the advice," Truslove responded, pouring the cocktail over Solander's head.

"Ahhh," Solander sighed in satisfaction, "just what the doctor ordered!"
Saturday 30th June: In the a.m. we experienced fair weather from the West and the worst fare from Cookie thus far weathered. He had decided that our diet contained too much starch and sugar, so to balance it he served a high-fibre, high-cholesterol breakfast - a pair of socks cut to resemble several rashers of bacon.
July 1770
Sunday 1st July: Old Father Time, the ship’s padre, visited my tent after this morning’s service and reported that Midshipmen Monkhouse and Magra were conspicuous by their absence.

"They are getting into very bad habits," Father Time said. "They missed a very important message today because my sermon related to the three great theological imperatives - repentance, salvation and making a vow of silence compulsory for all church secretaries."

"Father," I said, "I can understand your concern and I will make it my business to ensure that the truants attend all future services."

To this end I have left instructions that Monkhouse and Magra are to report to me as soon as they return to our campsite. I will speak sternly to them regarding their church duties, and if they don’t promise to correct their habits, I will then confine them to the sewing room until their immodest garments have been lowered at least 6 inches.
Saturday 7th July: At the rising of the sun, Mr Banks and Tupia made an excursion into the country to examine the local fauna.

At precisely noon, Banks burst into my tent and exclaimed, "Captain, a most tragic event has occurred!"

"Calm yourself," I said, offering Joseph a toddy of rum and a copy of 'Candide', "and tell me what has happened."

"Well," Banks continued, taking in the rum and 25 pages of 'Candide' in one gulp, "as I was observing several rodents this morning, similar in every respect to our own politicians back in England, a venomous black snake slithered up to Tupia and sank its fangs deeply into his foot."

"The poor devil," I said, distraught. "Did death result?"

"I'm afraid so," Banks advised tearfully. "Blood-poisoning set in at once and within forty seconds the snake had expired."

"And what of Tupia?" I enquired.

"Oh, he's fine," Banks replied, "except that now he sheds his skin every 5 minutes. I've studied my references but I can't determine what type of snake he is."

"An adder?" I proposed.

"Why, thank you, Sir," Joseph slurred, "I don't mind if I do. I'm sure one more toddy won't deplete my brain cells to any greater extent."
Sunday 8th July: For breakfast this a.m. Cookie offered us rolled oats, but we declined the offer because Gunner Oats threatened to haul us before a court martial if we dared to lay even so much as a spoonful of sugar on him.

To defuse this tense situation, I sent Oats and some of the crew to catch some fish for victual replenishment, while to the rest I gave leave to go into the country and catch the local rodeo.

Sadly, no such recreation was taken advantage of by Tupia who had earlier taken leave of his senses by eloping with Magra’s gila monster.
Tuesday 10th July: While most of the crew worked upon the ship's correction this p.m., Master Molyneux, the Boatswain and Mr Orton went out to sea 3 leagues in separate boats to try to catch some turtles.

At 4 of the clock Orton returned and advised that while many turtles had been sighted, none had been caught.

"But Molyneux and the Boatswain refuse to come back, Captain," Orton continued, "due mainly to their obstinacy and also because one of the turtles seized upon their legs and is, at this very moment, dragging them at a rate of knots towards the East Indias."

"Oh, well," I replied, "the turtle may not be in the soup but poor old Molyneux and the Boatswain certainly are."
**Wednesday 11th July:** As the men and I arranged ourselves at the mess table this evening, several natives approached our campsite and gazed upon us with alarm. This larm is an optical instrument similar in most respects to our own telescope, except that it has 4 hairy legs permanently attached instead of the optional tripod of our instrument.

On seeing us in return regarding them with a curious eye, the natives dropped their larm and fled. Able Seaman Dozey immediately grasped the larm and examined it closely, whereupon the incensed instrument bit him on the nose and scurried after the natives as fast as its 4 hairy legs could carry it.

"I think I've made a spectacle of myself again," the befuddled Dozey mumbled as he stumbled around, glass-eyed.
Friday 13th July: A day for celebration!

At near to 4 of the clock in the p.m., Master Molyneux and the Boatswain struggled ashore, their legs still gripped by the turtle that had spirited them away some time ago.

"Let me be the first to welcome you back," I said elatedly to the exhausted swimmers. "You must have endured all the tortures of the Inquisition during your attachment to the iron-jawed beast."

"You're not wrong," the Boatswain confirmed bitterly. "It's been sheer hell! For the past 3 days the poor turtle and I have had to listen to Molyneux exercise his tongue on such subjects as Monet and why it's best never to lend it to media moguls, is the River Seine or is it as loopy as Monkhouse? and why patisseries serving expensive tarts should be more particular about their clientele. The final straw came when Molyneux suggested to the turtle that it should try his bouillabaisse, not as a welcome guest but as the main ingredient."

At once the turtle released its grip and returned to the ocean at a pace akin to the speed of light.

"I was only trying to make polite conversation," Molyneux stated, picking himself up, dusting himself off and starting all over again.
Saturday 14th July: The ship's rectification is near to completion, so this a.m. I ordered the crew to air the spare sails and Mr Green's socks. The sails were spread out upon the ground while the socks were hung from the uppermost bough of a giant tree, an arrangement giving rise to mild perturbation within Green as he was still wearing them at the time.
**Sunday 15th July:** On this Sabbath as I was rising for muster, Midshipman Magra, the prescient one, charged into my tent in a state of agitation.

"Captain!" he exclaimed, "last night I experienced a vision that has left my head sore and my heart profoundly troubled."

"May peace be upon you, worried friend," I consoled, "and pray tell me of your dream."

"Well, Sir," Magra continued, "unto my somnolent senses was delivered an image in which I saw the King and the Prince of Wales riding shirtless from a bingo hall in a hansom cab. The cab then crashed into a busload of shutter-snapping tourists from Colorado."

"Aspen?" I queried.

"No thanks, my headache's nearly gone now," Magra advised, "but in my dream the collision left His Majesty severely injured."

"And what of the Heir Apparent?" I anxiously interposed.

"There was none apparent," Magra said solemnly, "because the King had lost his toupee as well as his shirt."

"Are you sure you won't take anything for your headache?" I quizzed, returning it to the Midshipman's cranium by way of the repeated application of my forearm to his forehead.
Monday 16th July: Latterly the men have been asking for fresh meat, so near to noon I gave instructions to Mr Gore and Private Gibson to go into the country and hunt for us a beast on which we could dine.

Both men took with them small arms, principally because the only clean, out-and-about shirts they had left were short-sleeved, and without delay set off in pursuit of our luncheon.

An hour later the pair returned with a razor-tusked boar in a sack.

"Domestic or wild?" Banks asked.

"Well, let's just say it wasn't very happy about it," Gore replied.

Cookie then removed the object of our drooling to the galley and set about marinating portions in a mouth-watering syrup of figs.

"The men have been slow to appreciate my culinary skills, Captain," Cookie said wickedly, "but I guarantee they'll be moved by this treat."
Tuesday 17th July: In anticipation of shortly putting to sea, this a.m. I sent the waterers to fill casks at a nearby watering place.

By way of protection, I ordered Lieutenant Hicks and a party of marines to accompany the waterers in case of an assault by the natives. As the party was nearing the watering place, Hicks espied several natives brandishing rudimentary weapons.

"They are with clubs," Hicks commented to Private Gibson. "Their scarves show that they support the F.A. Cup winners, Manchester United."

"So what course of action do you propose?" Gibson asked nervously.

"Well," Hicks replied, "I'm an Everton man myself, so I suggest we prepare ourselves to fight. Gibson, I want you to take up the rear position... no, no, you idiot... straighten yourself up... what I meant was for you to fall in behind the other marines."

With valour befitting his rank, the Private at once retreated to the rear and fell in a cowardly heap.

"I passed 'English Romantic Verse' at Reform School!" Gibson shouted as the natives crept closer, "so if you take another step I'll recite one of Alexander Pope's poems."

Upon hearing this unpitying threat, the natives then decamped into the thicket.

"Phew, that was a close shave," Gibson sighed as he rinsed off his cut-throat razor.
**Wednesday 18th July:** With itchy feet born of our stationary circumstances and communal showers, in the a.m. Dr Solander and I took a turn into the woods near our campsite.

Shortly we met with 4 natives who came up to us without showing the slightest signs of fear, although they did show to us several finger signals indicating a certain hostility.

As my companion and I placated the heathens by allowing them to try on my hat, we were visited by others of their kind who became even more familiar, requesting both a dance from me and Dr Solander’s telephone number. As his was a silent listing, he kept his mouth shut and instead revealed Banks’ star sign.

Having thus enjoyed a period of warm fellowship, due in no small measure to our trousers having been set alight by our newly-found friends, Solander and I returned to the campsite at near to 4 in the p.m., whereupon we found 2 of the natives who had earlier tried on my hat now trying on my full wardrobe.

"I think they’d look better in your clothes, Captain," Solander commented as the muscular mannequins staggered off under the weight of the large, mahogany cabinet.
Friday 20th July: In the a.m. we experienced strong breezes at S.E. and at noon flooding showers were visited upon our entire surrounds.

An hour later Noah floated by and yelled, "Hey, Cook! Have you seen a very old dove lately? My sons reckon it's a homing pigeon but it's been gone for nearly two thousand years so what would those schnooks know! And me, with hydrophobia no less! What some fathers have to put up with!"

"It went that way," I said, indicating East, "so batten down the hatches and keep going."

"That's easy for you to say," Noah huffed, "but I've got two of every kind of wild beast here in my tub and the air-conditioning's not working!"

Having thus spake, the moralizing mariner then brought the Ark up on to the beach and set a course designed to take it to the very heart of this vast continent.

"Mount Ararat's in the opposite direction," I offered with sincere concern.

"Been there, done that," Noah responded wearily, "so this time it's 'Ayers Rock'. Shem! Ham! Japheth! I won't tell you again! Stop the elephant races and get back to your ornithology books!"
Saturday 21st July: As I now anticipate an imminent departure, and our vegetable supply is lower than a divorce lawyer's reputation, this a.m. I sent Petty Officer Basil into the legume-laden countryside to dig up for us some greens.

Unhappily he returned being pursued by an irate golfer whose sport had been disrupted by the appearance of Basil's shovel in the region of the cup on the 9th. "If I had known that you were putting for birdie," Basil offered in mitigation, "then I would have dug up the practice green instead."

His comment aroused in me a feeling of antipathy, so in response to it I attempted to drive Basil as close to the horizon as possible.

It was the only time in my entire golfing career that I had been confident in the face of such a formidable water-carry.
Monday 23rd July: All day we experienced variable weather which, so long as it continues, will restrict us to port. I am not greatly troubled by this circumstance because I am virtually teetotal nowadays, except for special occasions such as mornings and evenings, but my clerk, Mr Orton, is heartily sick of anything sweet and fortified.

"I want no more of this Portuguese syrup," he slurred to Drinks Steward Jackson in the officers' club at sunrise, "so bring me a double of anything Scottish that'll knock my head off."

Within the minute Jackson returned with 2 soccer fans from Edinburgh who wasted no time in complying with Orton's demand.
Tuesday 24th July: Latterly Joseph Banks has been undivided in his attentions upon matters mathematical, not botanical.

"He's trying to calculate the number of days that we have been stationed ashore," Lieutenant Hicks said to me as Banks sauntered by this a.m. with his head wedged between the parallel wires of an abacus. "His idiosyncrasies may be a little worrying but you couldn't question his loyalty."

"A true sentiment," I confirmed as Banks fainted in front of me. "I can certainly count on Joseph."

At once, or definitely not longer than 7 hours later, I removed the abacus from Banks' cranium and instructed Hicks to administer the kiss-of-life.

"Not me, you slobbering oaf!" I spluttered. "Joseph's the one who's blue!"

"Well, I can't do anything for his sadness," Hicks admitted. "That's a malady that only Dr Solander's self-awareness classes can rectify."

At the mention of the words 'self-awareness classes', Banks turned white and slipped into a deeper coma. I feel it will be many weeks before the boto-mathematician is again well enough to attempt to calculate the square roots of box shrubs.
Wednesday 29th July: Being a stern, yet just, man, this morning I resolved to release Antonio Ponto from the brig on account of his good behaviour in giving to me 5000 pounds in small, unmarked bills.

"I don't really care about the money," I said to the convict just prior to his release. "My principal concern is that you develop into a worthy citizen. To this end I want you to go and make something of yourself."

Taking my words to heart, Ponto then seized a knife, balsa wood and glue and made himself into a model prisoner.
Friday 27th July: I had hoped that the ship's repair would have been completed today, but my hopes were dashed this a.m. when Shop Steward Gore declared a black-ban on Tupia. This resulted in prolonged striking, principally to the region of Gore's ears.

Aware of my disappointment, Able Seaman Dawson entered my tent an hour before noon and said, "Take cheer unto your sorrowing soul, Captain. Our chef has prepared for you a delicious morning tea."

Upon receiving Dawson's words, I smiled gratefully and asked, "A sumptuous snack? Are you sure?"

"Yes, Sir," Dawson confirmed. "I have just come from the kitchen where I saw Cookie's date-loaf."

"Well tell her to get back to work!" I blustered. "Where does she think she is - on the beach in some exotic harbour?!!"
Sunday 29th July: Although the weather was calm today, an incident occurred which ruffled the still waters of our co-operative harbouring.

At near to 4 of the clock in the p.m., Joseph Banks annoyed the ship's cat to the point of cruelty by throwing to it Mr Orton's hairpiece and at the same time say 'squeak'.

Being fond of animals, as my kindness towards the men will attest, I summoned Banks to my tent and severely chastised him.

"But the flea-ridden feline clawed me first," he affirmed in defence of his actions.

"Where abouts?" I questioned.

"In the head," Joseph replied.

"Well, you shouldn't have been in the ship's toilet in the first place," I reproved. "You know that it should not be used while we are stationary."

Having thus corrected the culprit, I dismissed him, picked up the cat and gave it a gentle stroke.

Fortunately, Dr Solander was able to treat its apoplectic condition with alacrity, a medication similar to a laxative in that they both produce the desired effect very quickly.
Tuesday 31st July: There was not a cloud in the sky today but our master chef managed to create a storm when he imposed strict dress rules for the mess. Near to the dining area he posted a sign at noon which read: 'Unkempt patrons will be asked to leave the establishment'.

As a test to Cookie’s determination, Able Seaman Dozey entered the mess unshaven and was somewhat taken aback when he was promptly shown the door. "I’d like to see the towel dispenser in the men’s room, too," Dozey said, whereupon he was given a guided tour of the eatery before being seated.

He then ate everything on the menu, mainly because Cookie hadn’t bothered to wipe it off, and as he left he said, "Charge it to my account."

"What account?" Cookie demanded.

"On account of I haven’t got any money, bat-breath."

Bedlam then ran amok through the mess, and if he ever does it again I will reduce his rank from Sergeant to Corporal before he knows what’s hit him. For now I am content with the knowledge that he was hit with Cookie’s rolling-pin and a hefty bill for damages.
August 1770
**Wednesday 1st August:** An inspection of the ship's hull early today revealed that several of the planks were in a state of decay owing to the fact that a little sap had been left on them.

"Ah, huh," I said with relief. "So that's where Cabin-Boy Small has been all this time. I thought that he had skipped ship after I'd ordered him to scrape the barnacles just after we'd up-anchored in Botany Bay."

"Well, up your own anchor, Captain," the coral-covered youth spluttered as he crawled ashore.

"Small," I announced with fatherly affection, "it does my heart a power of good to see you again. Now come and rest."

Having thus spake, I escorted the stripling to the infirmary and ordered him to bed.

"Before you sleep," I said quietly, "there's just one thing I'd like to know - did you scrape the bottom?"

"Only when the ship sailed over reefs at low tide," Small sighed, cuddling the Cabbage Patch Squid that had been a birthday present from Davy Jones.

Later in the evening, Lieutenant Hicks said to me, "I was very concerned about Small's absence, but now that he has returned safely to us we will all be able to sleep tight."

"All except Orton," I corrected. "He has sworn off the demon grog and retires each night with a clear head."
Friday 3rd August: We are only one day removed from the ship's complete rectification, and providing the winds are favourable on the morrow, I feel confident that we will at last take our leave of this harbour.

Mr Gore expressed a desire to take everything else that we could lay our hands on, but I persuaded him against the notion of pilfering from the natives by disclosing that they had nailed down all their valuables with carpentry equipment which they had pilfered from us.
Saturday 4th August: Following muster this a.m., I announced to the crew that as our ship was now sea-worthy, we would begin our long voyage to the East Indies as soon as the sails billowed. Not an hour passed before the breeze lifted.

"We’re off," the Boatswain shouted joyfully. "To your stations, lads!"

"But I don’t want to go by train!" Lieutenant Hicks protested. "I’d rather stay on board with Captain Cook!"

"Hicks," I responded, "you may stay with me. You are a loyal officer who has served me well, although in future I would ask that you ensure that Mr Gore doesn’t help himself to my after-dinner mints when you bring the coffee and port."

Hicks smiled gratefully, adjusted his bow-tie, wiped the soup stains from his shirt and said, "I’ll keep an eye on him, Captain. 'You Can Count On Me' is my middle name, which explains why I haven’t spoken to my parents since the christening."

At about 9 in the a.m., as the wind blew and the rain belted, we got under sail, having no umbrellas to speak of, and so here endeth the keeping of my secondary journal.

If this doesn’t move Samuel Pepys off the top of the best-selling list then my name isn’t

James Cook

Captain & Diarist
From The _Endeavour_

Sunday 5th August

In the Year 1770

Attached hereto and following is the glossary of which I bespake (bespake?... that's a funny-looking word) earlier.

**Anchor**
A metallic object, heavy in its construction and attached to a chain. Midshipman Magra was much given to wearing this around his neck as a stylish adornment.

**Barque**
The noise emitted by Gunner Morton whenever he fetched Mr Gore’s wooden leg.

**Bespake**
The funny-looking word of which I bespake earlier.

**Branch**
A small, out-of-town subsidiary of the Bank of England. (Note: The Botany Bay branch refused to cash my cheque even though the manager was full flattering in his appraisal of my honest countenance.)
Brunch

A small, out-of-town meal sought after one had slept through muster and the breaking of fast.

Drown

That which Mr Orton did to his sorrows every evening in the Recreation Room.

Duty, Dedication to

The small tax loyalty levied by Customs Officers onto divers products purchased ashore.

Eel

An aquatic pet kept by Corporal Achilles.

Guns, Big

An affectionate term used by Midshipman Monkhouse to describe the most senior members of the Navy Board.

Guns, Small Bore

A derisive term used by Midshipman Monkhouse to describe Mr Cecil Guns, the shortest astrologer ever to draw up a chart for the 1st Lord of the Admiralty.
Hook, Line & Sinker  The legal firm which represented Private Gibson's wife at the estranged couple's 'ex parte' divorce proceedings.

Jump Ship  A recreation enjoyed by the Officers after the Boatswain had confiscated their skipping-rope.

Land Ho  The Chinese property developer from whom I acquired a 49% holding in Time-Share vacations on Great Keppel Island.

Log, The Ship's  A derisive term used by Master Molyneux to describe Able Seaman Dozey.

Press Gang  The horde of reporters who met us with pencils and hangovers upon our arrival at Botany Bay.

Sea Shanty  See 'Shanty, Sea'.

Shanty, Sea  See 'Sea Shanty'.

Twister, Tongue  See 'Sea Shanty' & 'Shanty, Sea'.
Wake

That which Lieutenant Hicks would not do until a heart-starter and the morning paper had been brought to his cabin by the Purser.

Yawl

A word introduced by Joseph Banks when he shouted to us after we had left him stranded on an island, "Yawl come back and see me sometime, y' hear now."
Process of Writing; The Narrative

Towards the end of 1988, after I had finished *The Secret Journal*, I continued researching Cook, his journeys and those who accompanied him, and in September, 1988, I began writing *An Uncertain Shore*. Like most novels of any significant length, *An Uncertain Shore* developed through the repeated process of writing, editing and rewriting.

Problems Encountered During Development

A problem with the early draft of the work was my decision to use language and syntax more appropriate to the 18th century than to today. I had deliberately chosen a more difficult style in order to reflect those times, but in so doing, a clear understanding of the text was made difficult. Many sentences contained too much information, and in trying to understand and assimilate this information, some of the humour was being lost.

After discussions with my academic supervisor and others, I decided to abandon the emphasis on complex sentences and words. Even though the work purported to Cook’s, it was in fact mine and should therefore reflect contemporary language to a larger degree. Having decided to adopt a less pompous style, I found the process of writing more pleasurable.

Another problem I experienced during the work’s early drafts was in the presentation of Cook himself. Under the earlier heading of 'Creative Intentions', I
stated that one of them was to present Cook as the sort of straight man, both for the purposes of authenticity and as a foil for his crew's buffoonery. The difficulty encountered here was in sustaining Cook's straight man character. The constant emphasis on humour meant that I was often drawn into the trap of trying to manufacture it in every situation. It was the process which seduced me away from my purpose, and frequently Cook became as much a figure of fun as were his crewmen. This meant that the serious, meditative passages concerned with the captain became inappropriate and any credibility they may have had quickly disappeared. They no longer strengthened the work through balance, they diminished it through inappropriateness. To restore the work's balance and to be consistent to my original intention, I had to constantly ensure, by rewriting and restraining my natural impulse towards the humorous, that Cook remained at arm's-length from any involvement in the ridiculous. That is not to divorce him from any participation in humorous situations, but generally speaking those situations are inspired by others and not the result of any incompetence or foolishness on his part.

Having said that, I must point out that there is one incident which is amplified and developed throughout the work which does reflect a certain degree of foolishness upon Cook. I did this deliberately, both to link the work and to create opportunities for other humour. That incident relates to an apparent plot to overthrow Cook.
It has its origins early in the work, is referred to at intervals throughout and finds its resolution near the end.

An early aspect of the work which has remained constant throughout concerns the two 'voices' of Cook.

At those times when Cook is speaking as the captain, establishing his position of command, his 'voice' is formal, proper. However, whenever he is speaking as a father or husband or recollecting his childhood, I have tried to soften his 'voice', to make it more personal. These instances mentioned are the balancing passages in the work, based upon, and expressing, varying levels of emotion. It seemed appropriate that Cook's 'voice' during these passages should be softer, more tranquil. It is the human being speaking, not the hero.

To stir reactions or evince responses in any reader, I believe a writer should appeal to the reader's senses. I have tried to do this in An Uncertain Shore. As the work progressed, and my appreciation of the ship's structure and geographical positions developed, I was able to introduce certain sensory appeals; the constant taste of salt, the depression felt at the sight of a coal-smeared sky or the elation experienced when a party of men was enveloped by millions of butterflies on an excursion ashore near the Barrier Reef, the pungent smells of gum trees, the gradations of blue-green
apparent in the varying water depths, the sounds of flapping sails or creaking timbers.

In order to crystallise my thoughts on the work's development and to encourage criticism of it, in June, 1989, I presented a paper at a weekend seminar arranged by the School of Creative Arts. The paper was entitled 'Historical Fiction' and related to my thesis as it was then. Amongst other things, I discussed the problems associated with research, humour and language. Some of the parts quoted from *An Uncertain Shore* as it was then have been altered in the final submission, so I have deleted those quotations from the copy of the paper which follows. I simply indicate that a quotation was read and where that quotation can now be found in the final submission.

The paper presented at the weekend seminar was much longer than the condensed copy.
Historical Fiction

Paper Presented at Post-Graduate Seminar

Saturday 10 June, 1989

Today I'll be talking about historical fiction as it relates to my major work for the D.C.A.

My thesis is a humorous novel based upon Captain Cook's first voyage from 1768 to 1771. The novel concentrates on the Australian section of his voyage from about mid April 1770 to the end of June. The book is based primarily upon Cook's authentic journal of the voyage, and the writings of Joseph Banks, and purports to be a sort of confession.

In mid June the Endeavour ran aground on a reef near Cape Tribulation on the Queensland coast. In Cook's authentic journal he stated that the major cause for this disaster was the inconstancy of unfamiliar waters. My thesis, entitled An Uncertain Shore, is supposedly Cook's attempt to set the record straight. It wasn't the waters which caused his ship to run aground. It was the fact that he had almost 100 men on board who were constantly at each other's throats and other vital organs. They were so busy fighting, stealing, shirking and fornicating in every port into which they called that they had little time for their duties at sea. In fact, they barely had time to catch their breaths.
Cook feels that he needs to set the record straight because he is an honest man, he wants to be a good example to his children and because his wife Elizabeth refuses to wash his socks until he does. The two of them fight constantly during the months following his return to his house at Mile End and so he feels he must win back her respect. It's a sort of Confession to Elizabeth.

The book features most of the characters mentioned in Cook's authentic journal.

In writing the book, I was faced with three major problems:

1) I knew nothing about sailing. All I knew was that boats had blunt ends and pointed ends and that members of the navy minced around saying "Hello sailor" to anyone in tight trousers. I also knew that some navy personnel had beards and tattoos, but I must admit that I've never been attracted to this type of girl. So given this ignorance, I obviously needed to do a lot of research.

2) The second problem was that Cook's journals don't provide too many laughs, so any humour had to be manufactured from either real events or events created that would allow for the introduction of humour.
3) The third problem was how authentic to the times should I make the language.

1) Research Problems

The first was its quantity. There is so much it was difficult to know where to start. I read biographies of Banks and as much as I could find on Cook and other officers and seamen. Beaglehole's writings were valuable for these details. I had to also research ships and their structure and fittings, navigation, nautical terms, the daily routine of life at sea during those times and the different personnel aboard the Endeavour and their various duties. I also had to research English society of the times with special reference to the class structures because the Endeavour had aboard several people who might be regarded as 'gentlemen'. Then I had to cull the research and incorporate it in places that were appropriate to the flow of the novel. Most biographical details on crew members and the 'gentlemen' have been mentioned when each is introduced into the story. The biographical details are all true, except where I've lied through my teeth. And because the biographies tended to be dry, I lightened them by introducing humorous details (quotation read regarding Banks).
So in one sense the book is fiction and in another it is fact.

When it came to Cook my task in relation to research was a little more difficult because there are not a lot of biographical details available. He was a very private man, so many of my observations about Cook, apart from those on public record, were based on supposition. What were his feelings on life, on the role of commander, his success or failure as a husband? Did he hold religious beliefs, and if so, how profound were they? What were his attitudes towards the 'gentlemen' on board, considering his own origins were relatively humble?

I am enjoying this part of the writing because it allows me to develop Cook as a more rounded, sympathetic character.

Now in relation to writing about Cook and his supposed feelings on certain personal matters, I have restrained my natural impulse or inclination towards the humorous.

In an early part of the book, where Cook talks about his reasons for 'coming clean', he discusses his marital problems and his desire to eliminate them. Although these problems are a fabrication, designed principally to introduce the book's premise and justify its being, I have not included humour.
Later on in the work, where Cook talks about missing his family and the strain his three-year absence must have placed on his wife and children, again I have deliberately avoided humour. In fact, whenever Cook reminisces about his childhood or his present family, or thinks about his future or considers his religious beliefs, no humour is introduced. It did not seem appropriate to do so and would have been inconsistent with my aim of distinguishing Cook from his fellow-travellers. The complete lack of humour also provides the reader with a contrast, a jolt, as it were. These events somehow seem even more significant and tragic because they are treated without the humour which is evident in other parts (quotation read of Cook's recollection of childhood).

2) The Problem of Humour

Through talking with Ron (my academic supervisor) and a few others, it seemed that several sorts were appropriate. At the start of the book, the humour is largely satire. As it develops, humour through word-play, farce, parody and the one-liner is seen and by the time the ship eventually runs aground, high farce is evident.

Much of the humour results from the way the characters are presented, not only between themselves but also in their interaction with the natives ashore. I have tried to make Cook seem always put upon and frustrated by
those around him. He retains his dignity while his fellow-travellers are constantly losing theirs. Again, this strengthens the aspect of contrast. The intellectual Banks is sent up as are all those supposed 'gentlemen' on board - Observer Green, Daniel Solander and, to a lesser extent, Herman Sporing. The crew, also, is a significant cause of frustration for Cook.

So in essence, Cook is in charge of a boatload of people who tend to be as thick as a blacksmith's sandwich, and it is a constant strain. Even the committee of surveyors and master shipwrights who selected the *Endeavour* as the boat to undertake the voyage are presented as having little staying power in the intellectual marathon of life (quotation read regarding shipwrights - reference later deleted altogether).

3) The Problem of Language

I originally felt that the narrative should be as authentic in its language as Cook's original journal. So I wrote the early drafts with a lot of confounding adjectives, complicated sentences and fairly heavy images. Through talking with Ron and others, it was apparent that the authenticity of the language was making the book relatively unreadable or at least difficult in parts. As an unfortunate result, a lot of the fun was being lost. So I decided to make the language evoke a sense of the times without being foreign to the
contemporary reader. The book, after all is a fraud, although it purports to be real, and so there had to be some inconsistencies, apart from the humour.

How The Book is Sustained

Cook's original journal was sustained by the fact that it was a diary. One day's events followed another's, and it was unified because this format was maintained. As with other diaries, Cook's is in the present with very little reference to past events.

My thesis, being a narrative based on Cook's journal and other sources, is sustained and unified by two major elements.

The first is a regular looking back as well as a regular sense of the present. This gives the reader a sense of the journey - where the ship had been and where it is at a particular point.

The other element that sustains and unifies it is tension.

There are two types of tension which I've assumed must have been present on the voyage and which I've developed.

1) Internal
2) External
1) Internal to the ship there are interpersonal tensions between certain crew members. These were inevitable, considering that nearly 100 men had to work, eat and sleep on a ship that was just on 100 feet in length. It was no GE 2. Cook's original journal mentions fights, thefts and general disruptions to the easy flow of associations. It was my task in writing to embellish the most appropriate of these for comic effect and to add many more.

Here are some brief examples of interpersonal tensions.

a) There are the constant battles between Master Molyneux and his mate, Richard Pickersgill. These arise because on one occasion, Molyneux and Pickersgill sight a mountain at the same time. Molyneux wants it called Mount Molyneux and Pickersgill wants it named after him. They fight and 3rd Lieutenant Gore proposes a compromise. He suggests taking a part from each of their last names and combining them. Everyone is delighted.

From 'Molyneux' Gore takes neux and from the mate he takes Picker. Unfortunately, the mountain comes out sounding very much like Mount Nosepicker and nobody is delighted. Gore tries to settle the matter by proposing that the feature be called Mount Dromedary because of the hump, and when Molyneux agrees that it does resemble Banks' sister, the discord continues.
After this dispute, and with a view to ending hostilities, Molyneux praises Pickersgill by saying that he is alert. Pickersgill says, "Don't you call me a lert! I can't help the way I walk. If anyone's a lert, it's you!" (dialogue altered in final submission).

More fights erupt and the bitterness between these two surfaces at regular intervals.

b) There are language problems between Cook and the native, Tupia, who joined the Endeavour when she sailed from Tahiti a year earlier.

c) Observer Green's attitude towards the men didn't add much to the easy flow of relationships. Green was appointed by the Royal Society to be the observer for the Transit of Venus in Tahiti. He was a pedant and the men were plodders, and Green had no patience with them in relation to instructing them in his science.

It was less difficult to develop tension in this area because one of the men on board was named Able Seaman Dozey, so I simply put these two together and watched the sparks fly (quotation read relating to Green instructing Dozey).

d) There were problems of professional jealousy between Banks and Solander (quotation read relating to meal with natives).
And there were others but time doesn't permit me to go into them.

As well as the interpersonal tensions that occurred within the ship, there were tensions within each man himself as a result of being confined aboard a small ship for three years and through being away from his own society, his loved ones and from morsels like jellied eels.

The tension also developed because of the crew's recollections of certain places visited, e.g. Tahiti. It seems reasonable to assume that on cold and lonely nights at sea, with only the ship's goat to look at, certain crew members must have recalled the pleasures of Tahiti with a longing in their hearts and a leaping of their hormones.

2) External to the ship were the natives as the principal cause of tension, and I've given you an example of that with its relation to Tupia's forgetfulness and professional jealousies.
After the presentation of this paper, my academic supervisor went on sabbatical. I must stress that these two events were in no way connected, and my new supervisor was able to provide fresh insights into the work.

One problem he noticed was that in some instances, a repetitive sentence structure made the humour predictable. The punch line was being telegraphed. Therefore, some rewriting was necessary in order to eliminate this possibility.

In one or two other sections he considered that the verbal preparation was too long for the payoff. Overcooking the cake, as it were. Again I rewrote to tighten the humour.

While *An Uncertain Shore* is a first person narrative, in its later development I tried to vary the sense of sameness by allowing Cook's 'I' voice to step aside at times and to drop into an implied third person narrative.

It was also in this later stage that I strengthened the linking humour associated with the ship's goat, the suggestion box, the port and the artichokes.

After I had met with my alternate supervisor and discussed the work's later progress, he left for Paris. Again, I hasten to add that these two events were in no way connected. At least I like to think that they weren't.

As the book progressed, I deliberately introduced a
number of mini-climaxes, in much the same fashion as Cook’s original voyage. One example of this intention is seen in the talent night held aboard the ship. This event can be found in the ‘May’ section of the narrative. The talent night episode is a parody of the worst sort of music hall entertainment, and is designed to show the crew at its abysmal worst. However, the format of the talent night aboard the *Endeavour* is more closely related to vaudeville rather than the earlier music hall entertainment and this is perhaps one of the few times where I have introduced an event or activity with its roots located in the not-so-distant past. The reason I allowed the crew this slight licence in regard to the parody was because vaudeville, or more specifically, dreadful vaudeville, is loaded with comic possibilities; the m.c. with old gags, a loud voice and even ‘louder’ clothes who has to struggle to keep the audience in check, audience interaction with both the m.c. and the performers, the put-down from the stage, the one-liner, the dreadful sight acts, the ham at his worst who doesn’t know when to quit.

I wanted this example of parody to be a significant illustration of the crew’s buffoonery and also telling in terms of the captain’s frustration. There were good reasons for his constant headaches.

Much editing and rewriting was done in relation to this episode, and although it is relatively long, I believe it is tight.
An *Uncertain Shore*’s denouement is the catastrophe upon the reef near *Cape Tribulation*. Shortly following, certain tensions between Banks and Cook are resolved, the ship sails out through the reef after having been repaired and finally anchors back in English waters some months later.

By this stage, my original supervisor had returned from sabbatical and I presented the final submission to him. Some time later I tried to contact him and was told that he had just undergone heart surgery.

No doubt pure coincidence, but that thought didn’t lessen the sense of isolation that I now experienced. It was ironic that Cook and I had travelled for so long together and that now, at the end, I was alone and Cook was back with those whom he held dear.

Fortunately, my isolation soon passed because my supervisor quickly regained his robust health. However, I’m reluctant to present for any further degrees offered by the School of Creative Arts. Coincidences notwithstanding, the staff’s recent defections and indispositions would seem to validate my hesitation.

**Historical Research Relating to the Narrative**

Even though *An Uncertain Shore* is, to a large extent, fictional, it is nevertheless based upon extensive historical research. This was necessary, firstly because the D.C.A. requires a high level of
scholarship and secondly in order that the themes presented in the work could reflect both the physical setting of the journey and the historical period during which it was completed.

For information concerning physical setting, Beaglehole's writings were comprehensive. His editorial comments contained within The Journals of Captain James Cook and The Life of Captain James Cook gave a detailed description of the Endeavour, her refitting at Deptford just prior to sailing, the stores she carried, her armaments and a full list of her personnel and where they were housed. Other publications, such as Villiers' Captain Cook: The Seamen's Seaman, Knightly's Captain Cook and the Voyage of the Endeavour and Cordingly's Capt. James Cook, Navigator, also provided this information for the purposes of cross-reference. As with most research, cross-referencing was a necessary practice.

For the ship's fittings, Beaglehole was again useful but Villiers' work was a little more comprehensive and pleasurably readable.

In relation to the day-to-day routine aboard the ship, a number of publications were researched, with O'Brian's biography of Joseph Banks being particularly useful.

In relation to the physical settings external to the ship, both Cook's and Banks' journals were researched, although most of the other sources mentioned in the
bibliography contained some geographical description.

With regard to the personnel aboard the Endurance, Beaglehole's reproduction of the ship's muster roll, found in The Journals of Captain James Cook, Volume 1, was the basis for my research. Hughes' reproduction of the muster roll in her book, James Cook, was also useful because it listed on the same page the men who died during the voyage and when death occurred. I was then able to confirm these details by cross-referencing Hughes' notes with Beaglehole's more comprehensive writings. His were more comprehensive because in most cases they ascribed a cause to an individual's death.

Having established who was aboard when the ship originally set sail, and if and when an individual disappeared through either death or desertion, I then sought out as much biographical information as possible, not only from Beaglehole, but also from other sources.

With regard to Cook, his childhood, education, early naval experience, marriage and family, all of Beaglehole's works cited in the bibliography were comprehensive, as were Knight's, Fanning's, Villiers', Cordingly's, Barrow's and Badger's. Although it provided no information relating to Cook's Endeavour voyage, chapter six of Monsarrat's novel, The Master Mariner, did contain some surprising and highly readable insights into Cook's character.

Beaglehole again supplied valuable information relating to the officers, some of the able seamen and all
of the scientific party aboard the *Endeavour*, while the biographies of Lyte, O'Brian and Carter were extensively researched in regard to Joseph Banks.

Beaglehole's annotations within *The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks, Volume 1*, contained pertinent information regarding the relationship between the 'gentleman' botanist and the lower-stationed captain. Like most of Beaglehole's writing, the annotations were highly readable.

For further biographical details on Master's Mate Richard Pickersgill, I consulted Holmes' work.

Having acquainted myself with the life of Cook, Banks, Solander, the officers and the most significant amongst the *Endeavour*'s crew, I was then able to select and include details which I regarded as relevant and to embellish other details, flaws or idiosyncrasies for comic effect. So in terms of characterisation, certain licence has been taken with Banks, Solander and the other 'gentlemen' of science, most of the officers, a large bulk of the crew and several other key naval and government figures responsible for Cook's commission.

No such licence has been taken with Cook himself. In every source researched, Cook is presented as being uncomplicated, dour, exacting, indefatigable, reliable, a strong disciplinarian and a writer of some reluctance. According to Beaglehole, some of the language Banks used in the construction of his own journal was unashamedly reproduced in the early part of the captain's. But this
was more as a result of Cook’s respect of Banks’ facility with words through education rather than a desire to simply plagiarise. And once Cook had become familiar with the practice of journal-keeping, very little ‘borrowing’ was done.

So the historical Cook, apart from some minor differences, was maintained throughout my narrative, the reasons having been explained earlier in this paper.

For a general appreciation of nautical and shipping terminology, the glossary included in Knight’s publication was of benefit, as were the definitions contained in the *Oxford Companion to Ships and the Sea*.

The Technical Appendix in Villiers’ *Captain Cook: The Seamen’s Seaman* provided valuable notes and illustrations regarding sails and rigging aboard the *Endeavour*. It also provided a summary of the techniques Cook would have used in sailing a bark of the *Endeavour’s* size.

For a general appreciation of English society of the times, Beaglehole’s annotations were beneficial, as were the biographies of Joseph Banks.

Trevelyan’s *History of England* provided useful details of political and economic conditions extant during the reign of George III but the most readable and instructive reference regarding social stratification was Williams’ *Life in Georgian England*, with its three sections headed ‘Upper-Class Life’, ‘Middle-Class Life’ and ‘Lower-Class Life’.
In the section headed 'April' in *An Uncertain Shore*, there is a conversation between Banks and Cook relating to art and specific painters. Those painters mentioned in this passage were researched in Janson's *The Picture History of Painting* and Gombrich's *The Story of Art*.

**Research Through Interview**

During the course of *An Uncertain Shore*’s development, I conducted interviews with four people.

The first was an interview on November 25, 1988 with Peter Manz, Lieutenant and Duty Staff Officer, H.M.A.S. Kuttabul.

This interview was principally concerned with the way in which distance at sea was calculated in Cook’s time. Lieutenant Manz also calculated for me the distance between ‘Point Hicks’, where land was first sighted, and ‘Cape Tribulation’, where the *Endeavour* ran aground. This distance is mentioned on page 25 of the narrative.

The second interview was on August 18, 1989 with Robert Cunningham, Commander, R.F.D., R.A.N.R.

Commander Cunningham answered many questions I asked relating to naval protocol, ranking, jargon, fittings aboard ships of Cook’s time and sea-worthiness of certain vessels.
The third interview was conducted on 12 October, 1989 with John Lancaster, A.M., Captain (Retired), R.A.N., Administrator of the Guides, Archives and Records for the Endeavour Replica Project, sponsored by the Bond Corporation.

Captain Lancaster was able to describe the *Endeavour*'s structure in greater detail than was available from other sources researched; the location of the ship's 'heads', the galley and the fuel used by the cook. He was also able to confirm certain details relating to mess and bunking arrangements for the crew, the location of the animals and the lighting aboard the ship. Captain Lancaster was also well versed in naval history and protocol, knowledge which he was not reluctant to share. As a final assistance, he kindly suggested other sources suitable for research.

The fourth interview was conducted on 8 April, 1990 with Mr Clinton King, Sailing Instructor at the Pacific Sailing School at Rushcutter's Bay, Sydney.

Through investigation, I learnt that Mr King had been the boatswain aboard the S/V *Svanen*, one of the "Tall Ships" that sailed into Sydney during the Bicentennial celebrations. He'd also had seven years' experience sailing square-rigged vessels prior to this voyage.

With Mr King's assistance, I was able to confirm many details relating to the physical layout of
square-rigged vessels similar to Cook's, certain sailing manoeuvres, the type of language and jargon Cook would have used when ordering those manoeuvres and the number of men needed to execute them.

The various manoeuvres are described at intervals throughout the narrative.

Research Relating to Theories of Humour

In respect of the theories quoted earlier in this paper, all the research was culled from the publications mentioned in the bibliography.
AMENDMENT

Following the submission of my thesis, one of the external examiners required the major work to be revised. One suggestion made was that the name of the work should be changed to 'The Secret Journal of Captain Cook'. This was done. The revised thesis was then resubmitted for examination and accepted. The following report to the examiner details the other changes made.
THE SECRET JOURNAL OF CAPTAIN COOK

CANDIDATE'S REPORT ON THESIS REVISION

GENERAL COMMENTS

The work is now 100 pages less than it was. Most of that 100 pages was unnecessary dialogue. I was at first reluctant to prune so much because I'd put so much effort into creating it. However, once I started culling/ editing/ deleting those parts which were 'silly' rather than funny, repetitive, irrelevant, overstated, over-reaching for humour, superficial or clumsily written, I became happy with the notion that 'less is more'. Not substance, because many incidents have been developed and more straight passages included. However, those elements that weakened the content have been significantly lessened.

As a result of rigorous editing and restructuring, I believe the work is significantly improved in the following areas;

(1) a more clearly defined 1st person technique;

(2) non-essential dialogue eliminated;

(3) remaining dialogue severely tightened;

(4) Cook's character is more direct; he is an eye-witness rather than someone to whom verbal reports are given;

(5) the theme of Banks' apparent mutiny is of greater significance;
(6) conflict between Cook and Banks is more developed and sustained;

(7) internal and external incidents are developed to a crisis point or climax; scenes are built up; elimination of much 'silly' humour and almost complete elimination of 'anal' inclination;

(8) most incidents are related, thus unifying the text to a greater extent;

(9) more 'straight' descriptive passages;

(10) humour highlighted by the inclusion of more serious passages;

(11) The beginning and the end are unified by the use of a log entry; the ending has also been tightened and is more effective.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS

These refer to the 11 points listed above.

(1) A more clearly defined 1st person technique has been achieved by concentrating on points 2, 3 and 4.

(2) Non-essential dialogue, which was glaringly apparent in the original work, has been eliminated during several redraftings. This gives the text a clearer, cleaner style and moves the story forward without unnecessary distraction.
(3) The dialogue which was left in, or added to strengthen the work, has been severely pruned. Thus the work is cleaner, tighter and more focused.

(4A) The character of Cook is more direct. He now 'speaks' less often and when he does 'speak' he says less. He now frequently chooses to use reported speech rather than the actual words; e.g. Section 2, p.134 'I told the sergeant to get on with it' rather than, 'I said to Edgcumbe, "Get on with it, Sergeant."' This gives the work pace. The words he uses are simpler as is his sentence construction. Contractions give a colloquial sense to his language without reducing it to the mundane. He refers to people by name less often (overdone in original work) and in turn, others often drop the 'Sir' or 'Captain' when talking to him. This aids the flow.

(4B) Cook now makes fewer 'speeches'. While he retains his authority, he appears less pompous; he doesn't labour the point. The result is a less laboured reading.

(4C) Cook now largely refrains from insults. In the original work, this had the effect of constantly reinforcing the notion that his crew was irredeemably stupid. They do start out that way, but because of the revisions, the crew becomes a little more inclined to do the right thing a little more often. The salvaging and repairing of the ship in Sections 3 and 4 show this.
However, several of the crew needed to sustain their 'stupidity' in order for the ship to run aground (Section 3, pp.212-216). On the few occasions when Cook does insult, he's able to vent his frustration yet avoid hurting feelings by pretending to have said something else;

* e.g. Section 1, p.96 - Hicks is doing a bad job investigating a theft and Cook is unimpressed:

"You're a boring defective."

"Pardon?"

"I said you're a born detective."

* e.g. Section 4, p.233 - Banks mentions that his 'novel' is regarded poorly by Observer Green and that he was reluctant to become involved with it. Cook makes the comment;

"And who said Green wasn't a natural observer?"

"What was that?"

"I said Green was by nature reserved."

(4D) Cook is now also much less inclined to self-indulgent musings which had the effect of halting the story rather than moving it forward. He still does, on occasions, look back, but each of these times occupies far less space in the text. And because they don't 'ramble', they are more poignant. He is also no longer overtly Christian, thus giving him the freedom to utter
the odd expletive; e.g. Section 1, p.14 'bastard'; p.24 'prick'. Although these are insults, they are the result of provocation and are appropriate in context.

(4E) Cook is now an eye-witness to the events, or an eye-witness through infrequent, yet direct, written reports. This restructuring eliminated the confusing process of establishing what occurred through others verbally reporting it and then having Cook write down what they said;

* e.g. Section 2, pp.124-131 is Cook's eye-witness account of the 'Talent Night', now scheduled for two performances in order to more realistically accommodate a stage and the entire crew. This episode has been severely edited and now runs for 7 pages, not the original 21.

* e.g. in the original work, Cook was verbally advised as to what had happened while he'd been in bed with fever for three days. It took Cook almost 10 pages to retell what he'd been told. It was confusing and detracted from a clear, 1st person technique. In the revised work, Cook simply asks for written reports from Surgeon Monkhouse and Lieutenant Hicks (Section 3, pp.207-211). These reports add tonal and stylistic variety because the surgeon's is medically slanted while Hicks' is simply brief. They also move the story forward because their contradictions demand future resolution.
Other written reports, such as Gathrey's test of the men's seafaring knowledge (Section 2, pp. 146-148) and Ravenhill's account of Banks' movements (Section 2, pp. 183-184) also add stylistic variety and unexpected humour, springing as they do, from formal, serious activities.

(5 & 6) Banks' supposed plan for mutiny is now introduced early in Section 1, p.61, not Section 2 as originally written. It now resurfaces regularly throughout the remaining sections, and is a constant, sustained tension. It causes Cook to make incorrect assumptions (he believes the crew has deserted in Section 3, p.198 but a surprise party is the reality), and when these assumptions prove to be incorrect, humour results from the juxtaposition of seriousness and relieved surprise. The party is no longer held in the captain's cabin, too 'silly' considering its size, so it has been relocated to the lower deck area (Section 3, pp.199-204).

The class differences are also now more evident in the edited work. This results in more tension between Banks and Cook; e.g. Section 1, pp.49-51 (Banks' bartering in Otaheite) and pp.80-88 (art discussion), and Section 2, pp.118-120 (Banks' lustful urges and Cook's reaction).

All these tensions help move the story forward and demand resolution. This resolution occurs swiftly in Section 4.
Nearly all of the internal incidents build to a crisis point and are then resolved. This has been achieved through tighter dialogue and Cook's clearer characterisation. They also achieve a unity because of a connecting thread;
* e.g. Section 2, p.139 mentions Seaman Dozey smacking Observer Green with a plank. This is connected to the earlier incident in Section 1, p.64 where Green chastises Dozey for his lack of astronomical knowledge.
* e.g. Section 4, p.237 shows Cook discussing Banks' 'novel'. This is connected to an earlier conversation in Section 2, p.111 in which Cook and Banks discuss the 'Flow of Consciousness' technique.

Removal of distracting 'silliness' has also allowed the incidents to be more clearly focused; e.g. in Section 1 of the original work, Lt Gore crossed his legs while standing. In Section 2, Dr Solander paddled a canoe while it was still on the beach. Both these incidents presented the people as being too silly and detracted from the more solid humour.

In order to eliminate the superficial parts of some of the landing pieces, all are now tighter, developed and build to a climax. Also, most relate in some way to each other;
* e.g. Section 2, p.166 describes Banks winning a swimming contest. It is here that a reference is made to
Banks' earlier archery victory on Otaheite in Section 1, p.53.
* e.g. Section 4, p.227 mentions Banks' attempts at throwing a boomerang. It is here that Banks' earlier archery win is shown to be undeserved.
* e.g. Section 2, p.154 describes an encounter with some natives during which their chief is wounded. The same chief reappears later in Section 2, p.167 and is again wounded.

These, and other incidents related through the appearance of the same crewmen or the repetition of procedure (surveying, collecting food etc) help unify the work.

(9 & 10) There are many more descriptive passages;
* e.g. Section 2, p.131 'The sky and sea merged into a vast, black cape wrapped loosely around the ship, allowing the water-cooled wind to bully its way along the deck and into my bones'.
* e.g. Section 3, p.224 'Behind us were tall trees, silhouettes against the wall of cold, ebony air. Their canopies sheltered possums whose eyes glowed like small embers'.

The humour is now more clearly realised because of the tightening of serious passages; e.g. Section 1, pp.75-76 (the death of Cook's children); Section 2, pp. 151-152 (Cook recollecting his childhood).
The beginning and ending of the book have now been restructured. The opening paragraph is a short extract Cook quotes from his log. It is dated 'THURSDAY 19th APRIL 1770' and signals the start of the antipodean voyage. The closing paragraph of the book is another extract. It is dated 'THURSDAY 18th JULY 1771' and indicates the day on which the Endeavour docked back in England. These dates are authentic and I was amazed at the coincidences of the same weekdays and almost the identical day of the month. So I used this technique both to add authenticity to what is, after all, a naval account, and to unite the book. It now ends as it starts.

The book's climax, the ship's running aground, is now much stronger. It is tighter and more clearly focused because the seriousness is treated as such and much of the crew's distracting 'silliness' has been eliminated.

The resolution of the mutiny theme is also much tighter and Banks' 'novel' in Section 4 has been edited from its original 5 pages to only 2. I considered it unnecessary to mention Cook's sense of relief as it's the obvious reaction.

So that's where the book effectively ends.

The final page now contains everything that the original work needed many more to cover (which it did poorly because it was superficial) and the resolution is not diluted by being dragged out or diverted into an unnecessary account of the voyage home.
The final paragraph, almost a mirror image of the opening paragraph, also gives Cook the victory over Banks. It is neat, tight, funny, ironic and structurally authentic.
Historical Research


Knight, Captain F. *Captain Cook & the Voyage of the Endeavour 1768-1771*; Thomas Nelson, Australia, 1968.


Ruhen, O. *Opening the Oceans*; Nautical Press, Sydney, no date.


Theories of Humour


