

SMEE

Why didn't you say so? *Presto Scott!*

(SMEE lifts the Union Jack to reveal CAPTAIN SCOTT, trussed like a chicken with a gag in his mouth.)

ASTER

What? Robbie!

(to SMEE)

How dare you, sir? Release this man!

(Instead, SMEE strips ASTER of His Lordship's coat.)

SMEE

I'll take the key to that treasure trunk o' yours.

ASTER

You'll have to kill me first.

SMEE

(eyeing his two prisoners)

We were going to kill you second, but I'm flexible.

STACHE

(from off)

A-choo!

(Immediate terror.)

PIRATE ALF

He's coming aft!

SANCHEZ

In a nasty mood!

PIRATE BOY

A foul and nasty mood!

ASTER

What are you playing at?

SMEE

"Pirates," sir. *The Wasp* is now a pirate ship. Yer British crew's in chains below!

ASTER

There've been no pirates in these parts for a hundred years!

SMEE

We've been keeping a very low profile.

ASTER

And you're the Captain, I suppose?

SMEE

I, sir?

ASTER

Aye, sir. You, sir.

SMEE

No, sir. Not Smee, sir.

ASTER

Smee, sir?

SMEE

That's me, sir. But no Captain I, sir.

ASTER

You lie, sir.

SMEE

Oh no, sir. The devil himself's in charge hereabouts.

ASTER

The devil, you say.

SMEE

The Prince of Darkness. Our Satanic Supervisor. Foul and Nasty with the Cloven Hoof.

ASTER

And how would one identify him in a crowd?

#7 *Enter Stache*

SMEE

By his legendary cookie-duster, that's how!

ASTER

Whiskers?

SMEE

By his celebrated mouth-brow, that's how!

ASTER

Well, does he have a name?

SMEE

The pirate captain they call... BLACK STACHE!

(The PIRATES shriek and bemoan the hearing of this terrible name. And suddenly, there he stands - THE BLACK STACHE, carrying a bucket... into which he pukes and spits.)

STACHE

(waving cordially to ASTER)

Hallo.

(The PIRATES shriek again and bemoan what might happen next. STACHE continues, winsomely.)

Oh, to be in England, now that April's there,
But whoever's not in England gets to see my facial hair.

(to ASTER)

Now, you're likely wondering: Can the fellow before you be entirely evil? Can no compassion un-crease this furrowed brow?

SMEE

Brow.

STACHE

Brow. Well, fret not, *mon frère* - I'm a romantic! There's a poet in these pirate veins, and so I plug into the muse.

(holds his hand out to SMEE for a manicure)

But what to do? Which style to use? Iambic? Box office poison. Haiku? Samurai-don't-think-so!

(suddenly vicious to SMEE)

Mind the cuticle, Smeel!

(Eureka!)

Hoopah! Got it!

(a steely glare at ASTER)

A pirate with scads of panache
Wants the key to the trunk with the cash.
Now, here's some advice
Tho' I seem to be nice -
I'LL CUT YOU!!! Slit you up one side 'n' down the other so ye can watch yer own stomach flop around on the deck.

(STACHE)

(holds a straight razor to ASTER's throat, but ASTER doesn't flinch)

I say, Smee—you did explain to my lord that I'm a bloodthirsty outlaw?

SMEE

Aye, Cap'n. But he still wouldn't give up the key!

STACHE

We haven't got all night, Smee. People have paid for nannies and parking. Stand aside. I'll have to do it myself, or I'm not— I'm not—

(heartbroken)

WHAT AM I??

PIRATES

BLACK STACHE!!

STACHE

They refer, of course, to THIS!

(The PIRATES gasp!)

The trademark nose-brush of every man, woman, and child in me family, dating right back to the amoeba. Yet, for us, the face foliage has been, oh, so much more than a lawn on the lip, sir. 'Tis what we are, and why we are it. And when everyone else got out of the pirate business, The Stache stuck it out, knowing one day my ship would come in. This is the day. This is the ship.

(menacingly)

Now, cough up that key, My Lord.

END

ASTER

Not a chance, you spam-faced tool bag.

(STACHE throws a tantrum at this insult, then recovers.)

STACHE

(to SMEE)

Why, is that My Lord's coat you're holding?

(SMEE helps STACHE on with Aster's coat.)

SMEE

Looks to be about your size, Cap'n.

STACHE

What the well-dressed "tool bag" is wearing this season.