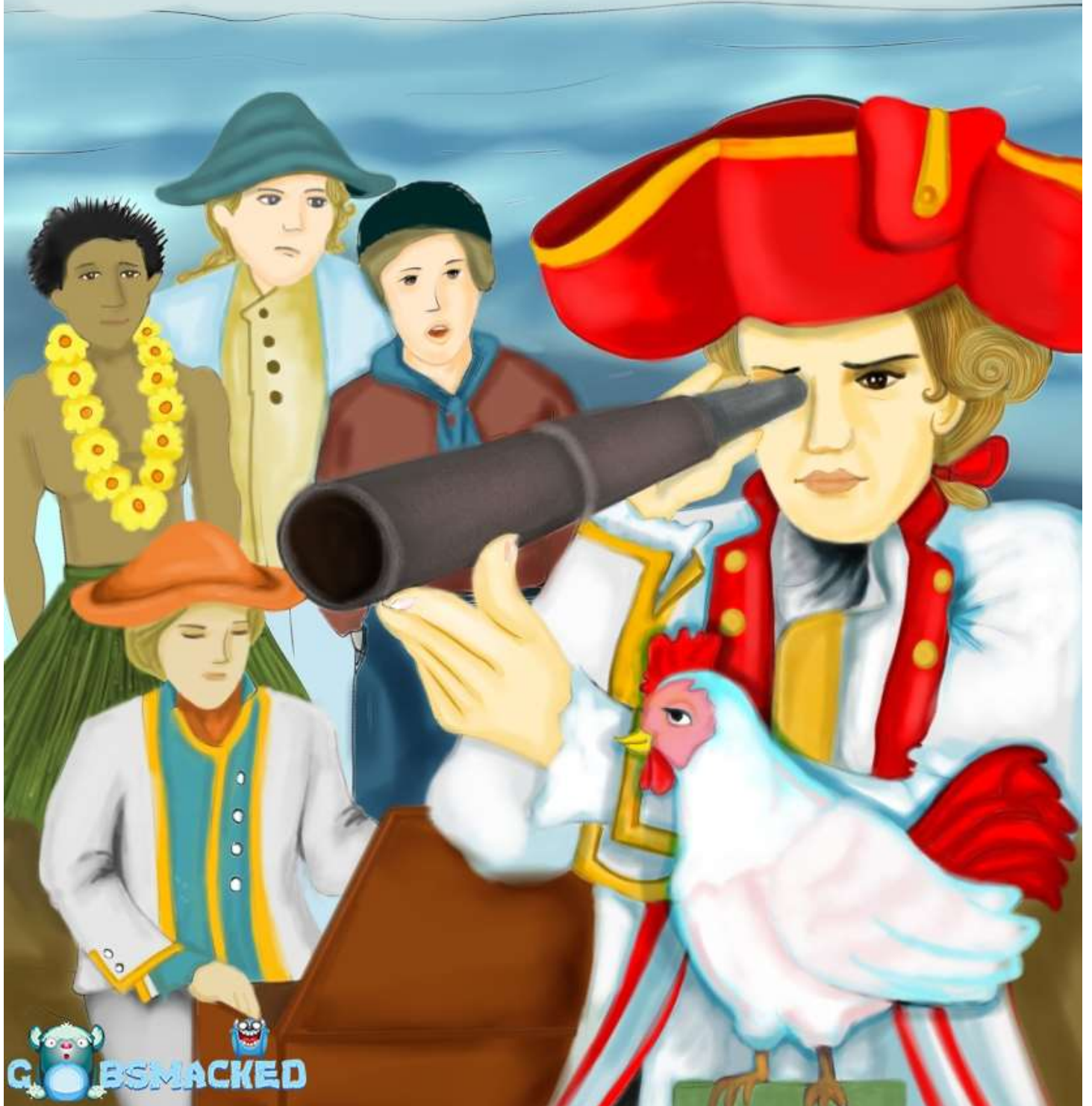


CAPTAIN SHMOOK and his Chook



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Captain Shmook & his Chook

Content Details

Ages:

4 – 13 years

Themes:

1. Exploration & Discovery

At its core, this is a classic **voyage of exploration** — setting sail into the unknown in search of knowledge, adventure, and new lands. It echoes the spirit of discovery that drove real historical expeditions like Cook's, but with a cheeky, irreverent spin.

2. Teamwork in the Face of Chaos

The crew survives Kraken attacks, pirates, scurvy, storms, and more — all because they (**mostly**) stick together. Even in absurd situations, teamwork is what gets them through. It reinforces the idea that collaboration is key to survival and success.

3. Science vs. Stupidity

Observing the **transit of Venus** is their noble scientific purpose, but it's continually threatened by blunders, broken equipment, and goofy decisions. This sets up a comic theme of **serious science clashing with chaotic reality**.

4. Human Folly

Nearly everything that goes wrong is because of **human error** — from forgetting to pack food to dancing too long at a farewell party. It highlights how ambition is often undone by forgetfulness, distraction, or just plain silliness.

Key Competencies:

Thinking
Using Language, symbols and texts
Managing self

Values:

Innovation, inquiry and curiosity
Diversity
Equity
Community and participation

5. Survival & Adaptability

Whether it's escaping scurvy or dodging pirates, the crew must constantly **adapt and improvise**. This theme of resilience under pressure adds both tension and comedy, especially when "solutions" like sauerkraut become central plot points.

6. Clash of Cultures

The encounters with the Tahitians, Sauerkrautians, and eventually the Maori reflect a theme of **cross-cultural collision**, though told humorously. It pokes fun at colonial ignorance while still acknowledging the crew's outsider status.

7. Luck vs. Leadership

Captain Shmook is brave and bold, but half the crew's successes come from **dumb luck** rather than clever planning. This theme playfully questions how much of history's "great moments" were due to skill... and how much to sheer chance.

8. Nature & the Unpredictable World

From storms to seagulls to poisonous plants, **nature is wild and unforgiving** in this world. The theme of man vs. nature is constant — and often, nature wins in the funniest ways.

Relating to others
Participating and contributing

Ecological Sustainability
Integrity
Respect

Learning Areas:

Learning Languages
History
Cultural Studies

The Arts
Official Languages

Principles:

High Expectations
Cultural Diversity
Inclusion
Learning to learn
Community engagement
Coherence
Future focus

Main Characters

Captain Shmook: The dashing, the daring: Captaaaain Shmook!

Fantam the Bantam: (*Talks from offstage*) Captain Shmook's cocky Bantam rooster. Fantam is not a parrot but has learned to talk like one in spite of the fact that Fantam is indeed, a chicken.

Mate the First Mate: Knows how to curse (and empty a purse) but has your back in any sort of pinch.

Dr. Solander: Called Sullen Solander by friends, due to a melancholy tendency to see the darker side of things, even if they particularly bright.

Spring: Sullen Solander's polar opposite. Spring puts a SPRING into *anything*!

Green the Wizard: While Green enjoys dabbling in magic and long walks along the beach, this Wizard's favourite pastime is stargazing, though Green's a bit of a klutz with his equipment.

Botanist Banks: Blatantly batty for botanicals.

Tupaia: The rapping stowaway from Tahiti who just wants to see the world (and also ends up as the expedition interpreter).

Helga: The Norse Cook. Everyone thought it was bad luck to have a woman on the ship in those days. The truth is, no one except Captain Shmook really knows Helga was a woman, and Captain Shmook doesn't believe in such things as luck. And, "what the crew don't know, won't hurt 'em" he says. With her thick accent and powerful forearms, she can whip up a dish out of any kind of fish.

Plot Summary

Shmook and his Chook is a daring adaptation to the swashbuckling tale of Captain Cook's discovery of New Zealand while aboard The Endeavour. The adventure begins when Captain Shmook receives the rather fantastical orders to set sail for Tahiti at once. But it's not a tropical holiday that this crew have in mind. Their trip is of a slightly more scientific nature.

It's full speed ahead for Tahiti to make it in time to observe the transit of Venus around the sun - an event observable only once every 243 years! This kind of data *gather-ige* would blow the top of any astronomer worth their salt and Wizard Green is no exception. A stargazer by trade, he's been waiting for an opportunity like this his entire life. With desire as their compass and the spirit of adventure filling their sails, Captain Shmook and our merrily boisterous crew set out from Mother England for the wild and uncharted seas of the south-east. If they're to conquer the obstacles along the way, Shmook and the crew will need to use their finest teamwork ever. With trusty First Mate - Mate, Sullen Solander and the blatantly batty Botanist Banks, you can be

certain that there's never a dull moment to be had on this particular mission.

All too soon, the first test is upon them as the terrifying Kraken of the sea attack. Working together, they eventually manage to rid themselves of the beasties, and not a moment too soon. It's a race against the clock as our crew head for Tahiti as quickly as their sails will carry them. But not all of the Tahitians on the island are convinced that these strange looking people are friends... especially that Wizard Green who looks as clumsy as an ostrich with an earache, why, he's even broken his own equipment, and for a breathless moment, it seems as if the observation of the transit will never happen. In the final moments, the blundering wizard pulls it together just in time and the transit is a raging success.

But it's not long after the transit that the fog rolls in. With his many years as a seasoned sailor, Mate the First Mate can feel the changing weather twitching in his left nostril and he knows it's time to set sail while they can. Even with the weather changing fast, the Tahitians still want to send the crew off in style with their exotic coconut shaker dance. But they've lingered now too long, and the fog is getting thicker and thicker. Soon they can't see anything at all. The crew are going to need all the smarts they've got to find their way aboard the Endeavour and head for open seas once more.

Unbeknownst to the crew, as they leave Tahiti behind them, there is a stowaway on board. Desperate to join the adventure, Tupaia of the Tahitian tribe has sneaked onto the ship. Helga, the Norse Cook is first to spot the hunky looking Tahitian, developing an instant mega-crush on the poor fellow. But now is not the time for a blossoming romance. There's a second lot of orders to be read, and new lands to discover. But before they can get very far, the Paddling Plunder Pirates swim in to besiege the Endeavour.

But luck is on our crew's side and they manage to slip away leaving the pirates to tread water in their wake. Before they can catch their breath, disaster strikes again. Far from Tahitian shores, our fun loving crew discover a fatal error has been made. Because of their scramble to swiftly set sail, they have forgotten to re-stock the ship with fresh fruit and vegetables leaving them totally vulnerable to every sailor's worst nightmare... scurvy!

With a click of Lady Luck's heels, our crew happen to sail by the land of Sauerkrautia, a country made entirely out of sauerkraut. Packed with vitamin C, it's the arch enemy of the dreaded scurvy. Here at Sauerkrautia, they attempt to restock their ship with the precious Sauerkraut. But alas, they won't be leaving with any of this vital veg - not if the local Sauerkrautians have anything to say about it anyway. Escaping Sauerkrautia just barely by the threads of their knickers, our helpless crew sail straight into a violent storm. Miraculously they survive the storm and with so many near misses to their name, all hands on deck can't help but celebrate their good fortune.

But they've started the celebrations much too early. Ignoring the Captain's orders, Solander becomes deathly ill with scurvy, having chosen to forgo the vitamin rich sauerkraut on board. Moments before the crew try to force feed him some of the life saving vegetable a flock of seagulls swoop in, picking the ship clean of any trace of sauerkraut and all the other food stores as well. With Solander on his death bed and the rest of the crew beginning to succumb to starvation, things are looking grim.

But it's no time for kicking the bucket just yet. Spotting land on the horizon, our motley crew summon every last bit of energy and manage to get the ship to shore. The animals aboard the ship are giddy with glee as they are released into their new habitat after months of confinement. You see, hoping to breed livestock in these new lands, our clever captain Shmook brought along an astonishing assortment of Animalia. Amongst the assortment are sheep, but alas, this will not be the moment in history that sheep begin their royal lives in New Zealand. For mere moments after their release, our hungry woolly friends fall upon a poisonous plant, and promptly drop dead. But the adventure isn't over just yet and it's not long before a Maori tribe have found the wretched crew washed up on their shores. With their wild display of strength and power, they've got our crew's legs feeling weak as jelly and wondering if their fantastic voyage has finally run short on luck...

Excerpt of the Script

Scene 1 Fare Thee Well Mother England

A group of English Villagers have gathered to wish the travellers well on their voyage. Shmook's wife is there and obviously pregnant. Crowd wanders about the background chatting and wishing Captain Shmook and his crew well.

♪ ♪ Gobsmacked Opening

CURTAINS OPEN

♪ ♪ Strangers Hornpipe

♪ ♪ Portside Music

Green the Wizard comes rushing out in a flurry with armfuls of maps, telescopes and the like. Trips over self and drops everything, then trips over the fallen items and lands in a mess on the floor.

Green the Wizard: (*scuffles about the ground trying to collect his things*) Oh my stars! Oh my moons! Great rotating solar systems!

Mate the First Mate: (*bends down to help pick things up*) Alright there old greenbeard?

Green the Wizard: My precious equipment! My one of a kind telescope! Bless my dreary dimpled mind!

Shmook's Wife: (*clutching Shmook's arm and waving the other arm about*) Oh Shmookums darling... tishn't right, tishn't fair! (*Breaks into sobs*).

Captain Shmook: (*pats her arm awkwardly*) Come now dear. You always knew you married an adventurer.

Shmook's Wife: (*nagging voice*) I know, I know... But did it have to be just before Esmaranda was born?

Fantam the Bantam: (*squawks*) Sail away! Sail away!

Captain Shmook: (*coughs awkwardly then pats her tummy*) Ahh... Thank you Fantam... Well dear, you know I never could resist the call of the sea. And what with these secret orders and all? This voyage has my name all over it!

English Villager 1: (*aged voice*) That's the truth! Why, I still remember when you were in diapers... climbing tables chasing rabbits and getting up to all *kinds* of mischief before you could even walk!

English Villager 2: (*longingly*) Oh, you'll see such *wonderful* things (*gestures widely with hand*) out there on the wild open seas.

English Villager 3: We wish you well, but just remember you have folk back here at home too wishing and waiting for the day you return.

English Villager 4: So don't do anything too *dangerous*.

English Villager 5: We need you back in one piece after all!

English Villager 6: That's right! You'll have a brand new baby daughter to meet!

English Villager 7: Oh please keep everyone safe dear Captain, I beg you! I *must* taste my daughter Helga's cooking just *one* more time before I die!

Dr. Solander: (*pacing up and down the front of the stage*) Oh dear... Oh dear! The sea will surely claim our souls! The boat, the boat, I'm just certain she'll go belly up!

Mate the First Mate: Oh rest your quivering kidneys and trembling tripes! (*Knocks on the ship*) I swear she be fast, Sullen Solander. On my monkey's Uncle, I swear it!

Sporing: Come now Solander! I just *know* this is going to be a *marvellous* voyage! I can feel it in my bones old fellow! (*Elbows Solander good naturedly*).

Dr. Solander: Only if the mast holds up... and even if it does, we'll probably be eaten by sea creatures... that's *if* the scurvy doesn't get us first...

Helga: Scurvy? Vot be scurvy, you nattering bat?

Botanist Banks: (*informatively*) Ahh yes. Scurvy. Deficiency of vitamin C. A common affliction of those at sea... I'm almost certain I have a herb for that (*shuffles through his bag*).

Captain Shmook: (*takes a step away from his wife with one hand held out towards the boat. She clutches his other hand still*) Come now my men! The time has come for us to set sail into the sunset of adventure!

Helga: (*runs to the side of the stage and collects a hessian sack*) Vait!!! My radishes!!!

Botanist Banks: (*looks into sack*) Hmm... Radishes... This particular variety can have rather *furry* leaves.

Dr. Solander: Radishes give me gas... (*farts*).

Fantam the Bantam: (*squawks*) Radishes! Radishes!

Everyone gets on the ship

♪♪ *Departure Day*

Shmook's wife stands at the front of the crowd waving her hanky till the end of the scene.

Crew Together: (*waving*) Goodbye! So-long! Fare-thee-well Mother England!

Exit stage Left, wing 1 – English Townsfolk (English Townsfolk wait in Waiting Room)

Scene 2 Disaster Strikes! Attack of the Kraken!

Captain Shmook is holding binoculars and Mate the First Mate is at the wheel and the others are doing assorted ship things such as looking out to sea, swabbing the deck etc. Everyone is in good spirits... except Solander of course. He is glumly staring out to sea with his head between his hands. Crew sings little ditty. "Yo Ho its off to Sea" To the tune of Heigh Ho from Snow White.

All: (*except Solander who watches on glumly*) Yo Ho! Yo Ho! It's out to Sea we go! (*Whistling part from Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*) Yo Ho, YO ho. Yo ho. Yo HO, Yo ho, We'll sail fast not slow (*whistle again*) Yo ho, Yo ho! Yo ho, Yo ho!

Fantam the Bantam: (*squawks and drags out words slowly*) Yooo Hooo! Yoooo Hoooo!

Mate the First Mate: Yo Cap'n! We be heading for fine seas I presume?

Captain Shmook: Aye! Steady as she goes my men! Set our course due east.

All: Aye Aye Captain!!

Dr. Solander: (*staring out to sea worriedly*) I feel we may end our sorry lives at the bottom of the sea, trapped in Davey Jones locker. There's a terrifying assortment of sea monsters out there that might attack at any time... or a white squall could hit... and we'll probably be ravaged by pirates.

Mate the First Mate: Holey Gumbaloo! Beards and whiskers! I just don't understand why you even bothered to come Sullen Solander?

Captain Shmook: Come now Solander! She be a fine ship! A good solid lady.

Fantam the Bantam: A fine ship, a fine ship (*squawks*).

Sporing: (*uber cheerfully*) I say! What *shall* we call this maiden for her voyage?

Mate the First Mate: Be she not named the Endeavour already?

Captain Shmook: (*matter of factly*) **She be...**

Sporing: (*said quickly enough to notice it rhymes with 'She Be'*) **I see...**

Mate the First Mate: (*also rhyming. Said sarcastically like, 'I told you so'*) **Said ME!!** (*Points to self with both hands*).

Green the Wizard: This be a sacred voyage (*rustles in his bag and pulls out an envelope*). Now, to the enchanted order.

Dr. Solander: Enchanted? I don't like the sound of *that!*

Captain Shmook: (*gestures to Green*) Well then, no time like the present, read away my sage-d compadre.

Green the Wizard: (*holds the paper inches from his eyes*) It says...(holds it back and gasps) Oh! Well bless my sainted Aunty May. It says, that we be bound for Tahiti... (*breathless with excitement*) to observe the transit of Venus!

Sporing: Why how *entirely, splendiferously* delightful!

Captain Shmook: Ah mee hearties! The spirit of adventure be upon us all!

Botanist Banks: I wonder what kind of plant specimens we'll discover.

Dr. Solander: (*mutters under breath*) Something poisonous no doubt.

Green the Wizard: (*still reading*) Oh *yes!* This will do nicely indeed... If we get there in time, we should be able to get an accurate reading of the size of the solar system and the *precise* distance between the sun and the earth!

Helga: Trrruly?

Green the Wizard: Oh wondrous indeed! A rarity. It happens only once every 243 years! Most mystical I do declare!

Captain Shmook: Even our fathers, fathers, fathers would not have seen such a thing.

Helga: (*thoughtfully*) I vander if there would be any interesting ingredients on Venus? Speaking of ingredients, there's a lovely radish stew recipe I've been just dying to try (*wanders off to go make stew*).

Helga is cooking up an enormous pile of radishes. Sporing is cheerfully helping her and they are singing the 'Yo Ho' ditty together while they work. The ship is sailing smoothly. But what is it that stirs in the water's depths...

Mate the First Mate: Clear skies all round Capt'n.

Captain Shmook: Aye. Steady as she goes.

Helga: (*brings out a dish with something questionable on it*) Ok, time is for eating now!

Dr. Solander: (*plucks at a radish, stares at it and groans*) Not radishes again!

Helga: (*shakes a radish in his face*) Ya, ya! Zis one eez good for you!

Sporing: (*wearing a pretty frilly apron, follows Helga out with another dish*) Oh come now Solander! I just know you'll love this batch!

Botanist Banks: (*inspecting a radish*) Mmm... yes... of the genus *Raphanus* I presume. The sweetest variety of radish... delicious with just the tiniest *whisper* of cracked pepper.

Green the Wizard: (*strokes beard thoughtfully*) I used to know the most marvellous spell made with radishes.

Enter down the audience aisles – The Kraken (The Kraken have been waiting at the top of the aisles ready to walk down)

♪ ♪ Kraken Short Sound Effect

Dr. Solander: *(anxiously looking about)* Did anyone hear that!?

Captain Shmook: What sound do you hear good fellow?

All stop and cup their hands to their ears to listen. Everything is quiet though.

Mate the First Mate: Buttons and tops Solander! Pull your ears out of your cotton man!

Sporing: Now now, he's just hearing things because he's a wee bit nervous. Isn't that right Solander?

♪ ♪ Kraken Short Sound Effect

Bubbling and sucking sounds intensify. All the crew freezes while the Kraken walk up onto the stage. All Kraken speak with a dark, hissing voice.

Kraken 1: Look what we've found!

Kraken 2: It's a *precious* ship!

Kraken 3: With a *precious* cargo...

Kraken 4: It's *my... precious!*

Kraken 5: Let's take it down with all the tasty treats inside!

Kraken 6: Sink it to the bottom of the seas *precious!*

Kraken 7: Because we're the *nastiest* beasties in all the sea.

Kraken 8: The *soul* shaking! The *fear* raking! The *boot* quaking!

All Kraken: THE KRrrrrAKEN!

Kraken 9: *(giving order like a commander)* All Kraken prepare to move in... Attach your tentacles and *suck!*

Dr. Solander: *(sombre, woeful voice)* What terrifying creature stalks us from the underworld?

All Kraken: ATTACK!

Green the Wizard: *(in shrill warning tones)* The Kraken! The Kraken is upon us!

♪ ♪ Attack of the Kraken

The entire crew fights off the kraken. They are left with tentacles!

Lights on ship and blackout on the main stage