

FADE IN:

Slowly zooming in on a weathered map of the old South, focusing on South Carolina. In the corner, the map is dated: 1843. Names of towns and cities come into focus the closer the map becomes: Savannah, Augusta, Columbia, leading toward Charleston.

Just off the South Carolina coastline, SULLIVAN'S ISLAND becomes visible. The zoom continues incredibly close to the map to an uncharted section of wilderness, a short distance North of the island, upon the mainland.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FORREST - NIGHT

Pools of moonlight fall on ancient oak trees covered in Spanish moss, casting eerie shadows and illuminating patches of sweet myrtle and palmetto.

Pushing through the thick underbrush of the maritime forest, the sound of voices and spade against dirt can be heard as a faint glow of orange light begins playing on the leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE - NIGHT

Slowly arriving at the source, three men are seen in the light of three lanterns beneath the branches of an extremely large tulip tree, some 20 paces from the trunk. A large hole, 6 ft. wide and 7 ft. deep, has been dug.

In the bottom of the hole, WILLIAM LEGRAND (early 30's with a thick Cajun accent) is frantically digging and muttering out loud, wild-eyed and covered in sweat.

The other two men, Legrand's slave JUPITER (50's, of Gullah descent) and the DOCTOR (40's, Old Southern accent), stand at the mouth of the hole, weary and dirty from digging, watching as Legrand feverishly digs and plead with him to stop.

LEGRAND

It's here... It's here!! I know it is!

DOCTOR

Legrand.

LEGRAND

I can feel it in my bones!

DOCTOR
Legrand, stop.

LEGRAND
We just have to keep digging!

DOCTOR
Legrand!!

Legrand stops digging and looks up at the Doctor, breathing heavily.

DOCTOR
The game is up. I wanted to believe you, truly I did. But it's time you face the facts. There is nothing here.

LEGRAND
(to himself)
But... but I followed all the steps...

DOCTOR
The only thing you need to follow is my advice. Implicitly; as that of your physician. You are unwell my friend, and you had better take some precaution.

JUPITER
Maybe him right, Suh. Maybe we go on back home.

Jupiter reaches down and offers Legrand his hand. Legrand's entire demeanor slowly changes as he accepts defeat. Taking Jupiter's hand, he climbs out of the hole, much to the Doctor's relief.

DOCTOR
Now you're showing proper judgment.

Legrand composes himself.

LEGRAND
I must offer you my sincerest apologies, Doctor. For dragging you out here and wasting you time.

DOCTOR
And without explanation, I might add.

LEGRAND

Indeed. You have been a good sport.

Legrand brushes himself off and puts on his coat, while Jupiter starts gathering their things and preparing to leave.

DOCTOR

I do expect a detailed account on the journey home, however.

LEGRAND

Indebted to you. As always, Doctor, I am in your debt.

DOCTOR

Well, not all your debts can be paid with stories, mind you. Though, I suppose they're pretty much all you have left.

Legrand stops and a change comes over him. He looks at the Doctor, then at Jupiter.

LEGRAND

Left... Left!!!

Legrand, suddenly overcome with rage, strides over to Jupiter and grabs him roughly by the collar. Jupiter falls to his knees.

LEGRAND

You scoundrel!

Legrand slaps Jupiter across the face.

DOCTOR

Legrand!

LEGRAND

(To Jupiter)

You infernal black villain! Tell me this instant, which is your left eye?!

JUPITER

Oh, Massa Will! Ain't dis my lef' eye for sartain?!

Jupiter points at his right eye.

LEGRAND

Ah ha! I knew it! you see?! The game's not up yet!

Legrand lets go of Jupiter, picks up the shovel, and quickly walks toward the tree trunk. He stops a few yards away, bends down and moves a small pebble four inches to the right, walks to the tree, and puts his back to the trunk.

DOCTOR
What are you doing?!

LEGRAND
We must try again.

Legrand begins pacing away from the tree in a direct line with the pebble, counting out loud.

LEGRAND
1-2-3-4-5...

DOCTOR
Try it again?

LEGRAND
10-11-12-13...

DOCTOR
Have you lost your mind?!

LEGRAND
17-18-19-20!

Legrand stops pacing a few yards away from the hole they have just been digging.

DOCTOR
I demand an explanation, Sir!

LEGRAND
And you shall have one.

Legrand raises the shovel and begins digging a second hole.

LEGRAND
Here now is your detailed account, Doctor, which, by the end, will be paid in full. I guarantee it!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY (FLASHBACK)

LEGRAND (V.O.)
As I said yesterday, I discovered it, on the coast of the main land, about a mile Eastward of the island...

LEGRAND and JUPITER walk along the shoreline. Jupiter carries a scattergun in one hand and three marsh hens on a string in the other. Legrand meanders to and fro on the beach, stopping frequently to pick up various sea shells and study them.

As he is walking, a sudden FLASH of golden light reflects off something half buried in the sand just ahead. His curiosity piqued, he quickly makes his way over to the object.

A shiny, golden object lies half buried in the sand at Legrand's feet. He bends down and begins clearing the sand from around the object with his finger, becoming more excited with every passing second.

LEGRAND

Jupiter!

JUPITER

Comin' Suh.

Jupiter quickly obeys his master. When he arrives, he finds Legrand crouching over a small hole, freshly dug in the sand, in the middle of which lies a golden object, gleaming in the sunlight.

JUPITER

Good Lawd, Suh! What you done found now?

LEGRAND

Well, my friend... that... is gold!!

In the sand lies a scarabaeus of pure gold, about the size of a large hickory-nut. Upon its head, a great horn rises to a sharp and sudden point.

Legrand stoops to pick the beetle up and as he does, pricks his finger on the horn. He lets out a painful cry and drops it back into the sand.

A fresh drop of blood slides down his finger from a small puncture wound. Legrand puts his finger in his mouth and sucks the blood off.

JUPITER

You ok, suh?! Dat dam bug done bit the hell outta yo finguh!!

LEGRAND

Oh, come now. Gold doesn't bite

JUPITER

Dats how dey bites, Suh. Ise heerd
bout dem gool-bugs fore dis.

LEGRAND

If I had a piece of gold for each of
your native superstitions, my family
fortune would be reinstated in no
time.

Legrand bends to pick the beetle up again but Jupiter stops
him.

JUPITER

Hole on a minute, Suh!

Jupiter spots a scrap of paper lying half buried in the sand
with one corner exposed. He picks it up, wraps the beetle in
it, and hands it to Legrand.

JUPITER

Here massa, now da damn ting cain't
bite yous no mo.

LEGRAND

Thank you Jupe.

JUPITER

Whatchoo gone do wit it, Suh?

Legrand takes a moment and considers the question.

LEGRAND

Well, after settling a few
outstanding accounts, perhaps we can
afford to eat something other than
marsh hen for a change.

The two men smile at each other and Legrand puts the bundle
in his pocket.

LEGRAND

Speaking of which, I'm getting
hungry. Let's go home.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HUT - NIGHT

Legrand and Jupiter emerge from the forest on a trail, a few
hundred feet from their hut just as evening falls; Jupiter
in front and Legrand lagging a few feet behind, slightly
winded.

JUPITER
You alright, Suh?

LEGRAND
I'm sorry... I'm... I'm feeling a
little dizzy.

JUPITER
We almos' dere, Suh. Not much fudder
now. You'll feel betta once you get
some hot food in...

Jupiter stop walking, suddenly alert, and points at the
small dwelling.

JUPITER
Look!

A healthy plume of smoke swiftly rises from the chimney and
the orange glow of firelight emanates softly through the
windows.

JUPITER
Aint neither of us start no fire fo
we lef dis mo'nin, Suh.

The two men exchange glances and cautiously begin creeping
up to the hut. Legrand peers through the window and sees a
figure seated in a chair by the fire; Only the top of his
head is visible over the back of the chair. Legrand nods in
acknowledgment to Jupiter who slips a new cartridge into the
scattergun.

They move around to the front door. Legrand takes the knob
in one hand and silently counts to three with the other:
1-2-3!!!

Legrand bursts through the door; Jupiter on his heels aiming
the scattergun directly at the intruder's head.

LEGRAND
Who goes there!?!

Startled, the intruder jumps up from the chair and spins
around on his heels, revealing his face.

LEGRAND
Doctor?!

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE - NIGHT

The Doctor and Jupiter stand beside the hole, which is now a few feet deep, listening to Legrand.

LEGRAND

And to think, had you not waited for us, we should never have found ourselves in the current situation!!! What a stroke of luck!

DOCTOR

My dear fellow! This situation is neither lucky nor any fault of mine!

LEGRAND

Jupiter, you dig for a while.

Legrand stops digging and hands the shovel to Jupiter. The two men exchange places and Jupiter begins digging.

LEGRAND

Are you a man who believes in coincidence, Doctor?

DOCTOR

I can't say as I am.

LEGRAND

No. I should think not. You have been educated to know nothing of the theory of probabilities.

DOCTOR

My records simply indicated it had been a month since my last visit and knowing there are no physicians upon the island.. I waited.. that is all.

LEGRAND

Au contraire. You are more involved than you know.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HUT - NIGHT

Jupiter is busy preparing dinner on the table as the marsh hens cook over the fire. The Doctor finishes giving Legrand an examination as they sit beside the flames and warm themselves.

DOCTOR

You seem to have a slight fever, but nothing a night of good rest won't cure.

LEGRAND

Thank you, Doctor. You know, it's a very strange coincidence that you should pay us a visit on this night of all others.

DOCTOR

Because you are feeling poorly?

LEGRAND

Because I was visited by another old acquaintance earlier this afternoon.

DOCTOR

Oh? And who might that be?

LEGRAND

Fortune...

Legrand pulls the gold bug, still wrapped in paper, out of his pocket and hands it to the Doctor. The Doctor stops his examination and takes the bundle from Legrand.

The Doctor slowly unwraps the bundle and gasps. The gold bug glimmers in the fire light as he picks it up and examines it more closely.

LEGRAND

Extraordinary, wouldn't you say?

DOCTOR

Indeed! I have never seen anything like it before. Where did you get this?

LEGRAND

I found it on the coastline, about a mile Eastward of the island. Must be worth a pretty penny, no?

DOCTOR

Good! Perhaps you can afford to start paying me from now on.

The Doctor smiles at Legrand, claps him on the back, and hands him the bundle.

As he reaches for it, the Doctor notices the puncture wound on Legrand's finger tip, which is now swollen and red.

DOCTOR

Good Heavens, Man! What the devil happened to your finger?!

He hastily places the bundle on the hearth, unknowingly close to the flames, to inspect the wound.

JUPITER

Dats where de bug bite him, Suh.

DOCTOR

It bit you?!

LEGRAND

No. I pricked my finger upon the horn when I first found it.

DOCTOR

Well, either way, its becoming infected; which explains the fever. Here, try some of this.

The Doctor begins rummaging through his bag for some medication.

As he does, Legrand looks down at the gold bug and watches it glimmer by the fire. To his astonishment, on the corner closest to the flames, the rough outline of a hand-drawn skull slowly becomes visible upon the paper.

LEGRAND (V.O.)

Here indeed was a mystery which I felt impossible to explain! I arose at once, and put it away, until I should be alone.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HUT - NIGHT

LEGRAND (V.O.)

(Continuous)

When you had gone, and when Jupiter was asleep, I retrieved the parchment and began a more methodical investigation.

After checking to make sure Jupiter is sleeping, Legrand retrieves the parchment from his writing desk drawer, heads straight for the fireplace, and throws a new log onto the fire.

LEGRAND (V.O.)

(Continuous)

Heat had been the agent in bringing the death's head to light, so I immediately kindled the fire and subjected every portion of the

parchment to the flames.

Legrand holds the parchment up to the flames. With a small amount of persistence, a crudely drawn map of Sullivan's Island and surrounding coastline with an X upon the mainland, a hand written text, and a small sketch of a goat, slowly appears upon the parchment. The text reads:

LEGRAND (V.O.)

A good glass in the devil's seat
 --twenty-one degrees and thirteen
 minutes --northeast and by north
 --main branch seventh limb east side
 --shoot from the left eye of the
 death's-head --a bee-line from the
 tree through the shot twenty strides
 out.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE - NIGHT

The hole is now a few feet deeper as Jupiter continues to dig.

LEGRAND

It was then that I established a connexion. There was a piece of treasure lying on a sea-coast, not far from a parchment with a map, a riddle, the pirate's emblem, and what I at first thought to be a goat depicted in invisible ink upon it!

DOCTOR

A Goat?! I am afraid I see no connexion whatsoever between pirates and goats, Legrand.

LEGRAND

Not a goat, Doctor. A kid.

DOCTOR

Well, a kid then; pretty much the same thing.

JUPITER

I'm all worn out, Suh.

Jupiter climbs out of the hole and exchanges places with the Doctor. The Doctor begins to dig.

LEGRAND

Pretty much, but not altogether. You have heard the many stories about the infamous pirate Captain Kidd and the treasure he buried somewhere along the Atlantic coast, have you not?

DOCTOR

To be certain, everyone has heard these rumors.

LEGRAND

But, have you ever heard of any treasure being unearthed?

The Doctor stops digging and looks at Legrand in silence.

LEGRAND

Neither have I! I took it for granted, therefore, that it still remains buried. I felt a hope, nearly amounting to certainty, that the parchment involved a lost record of the place of deposit!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HUT - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Legrand tosses and turns, sweating in his bed in a fevered dream. His skin is pale and clammy.

LEGRAND (V.O.)

There was nothing to be done until morning but wait, and suffering under such excitement, it was the longest night of my life. As soon as the sun's first rays crept over the horizon, I leaped out of bed and began my pursuit.

Legrand jumps out of bed, hastily gets dressed, and packs a small bag with some food, a telescope, and the map. He then finds a piece of paper and quickly pens a small note. Going over to Jupiter's bed, Legrand roughly shakes it, waking the servant and scaring him greatly.

LEGRAND

Wake up! Wake up you sloth! I am leaving!

JUPITER

Massa Will?! What de matter, Suh?!

LEGRAND

You are to take this note to the
Doctor in Charleston, immediately!

Legrand abruptly turns around without any further explanation and walks out the front door, slamming it behind him.

JUPITER

Massa Will!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DOCTOR'S HOUSE - DAY

Jupiter knocks on the door of the Doctor's Charleston home and waits for an answer. After a few moments, the door opens and the Doctor emerges.

JUPITER

Monin, Suh.

DOCTOR

Jupiter?! What are you doing in
Charleston? Where is Legrand?

JUPITER

Massa Will ain't here, Suh. Him wake
me up early dis monin and send me
here to give ya dis...

Jupiter produces Legrand's note and hands it to the Doctor.
The note reads:

LEGRAND (V.O.)

Doctor - I wish to see you tonight,
upon business of the highest
importance. I have something to tell
you, yet scarcely know how to tell
it, or wether I should tell it at
all. -William Legrand

DOCTOR

What is the meaning of this
Jupiter?!

JUPITER

To speak de troof, Suh, Massa Will
not so berry well as mought be. Him
look berry sick and it's all cum ob
de bug.

DOCTOR

Very sick, Jupiter! Why didn't you

say so at once?

The Doctor immediately gathers his medical bag and leaves with Jupiter.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HUT - DAY

Jupiter and the Doctor arrive at the hut. When they enter, they find Legrand seated at the table waiting for them. His face is pale with deep-set, glaring eyes and a maniacal smile.

LEGRAND

At last! You are here!

DOCTOR

I came at once... Jupiter says you are unwell.

LEGRAND

Unwell?! Nothing could be further from the truth!

DOCTOR

What do you mean? Your note...

LEGRAND

That is not why I sent for you. I sent for you that I might have your counsel and assistance in furthering the views of Fate, and of the bug...

Legrand produces the gold bug and sets it on the table in front of him.

LEGRAND

It is to make my fortune and reinstate me in my family possessions!

DOCTOR

I don't understand.

LEGRAND

You will see. We are going on an expedition upon the mainland. We shall start immediately and be back, at all events, by sunrise.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE - NIGHT

The hole is a few feet deeper as the Doctor continues to dig.

DOCTOR

Yes, yes! That was hours ago and still you keep me deliberately in the dark!

The Doctor stops digging and wipes his brow. He is sweating profusely and his skin is pale.

LEGRAND

Are you alright, Doctor?

DOCTOR

Yes... I'm... I'm just feeling a little dizzy.

LEGRAND

Here, give it to me.

The Doctor hands Legrand the shovel, the two men exchange places, and Legrand begins digging.

LEGRAND

Upon which detail do you require more light?

DOCTOR

Upon the riddle, for God's sake! You have said nothing of its meaning! What is all that jargon about glasses in Devil's seats?

LEGRAND

Ah! The riddle. Yes. I must confess, the meaning of "the Devil's seat" left me also in the dark; for a while. However, the "good glass", I knew, must be a telescope, for the word 'glass' is rarely employed by seamen in any other sense.

DOCTOR

Your logic is sound, but how did you proceed?

LEGRAND

I followed the map.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY (BEGIN FLASHBACK)

Legrand cuts and hacks through the thick maritime underbrush with a machete, struggling through vines and stumbling over rocks as he makes his way deeper into the forest.

LEGRAND (V.O.)
 Crude though it was, the shape of Sullivan's Island and surrounding coastline were unmistakable. The point indicated was about four miles north of the Island; so, very early this morning, I went into the hills; and after much toil, found what I was looking for.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DEVIL'S SEAT - DAY

Legrand stumbles into a small clearing at the base of an irregular assemblage of cliffs and rocks, remarkable in both height and appearance. After clambering to the top, he sees a narrow ledge with a niche in the cliff just above, giving it a rude resemblance to a chair. Two rocks thrust outward on either side of the seat, resembling two great horns.

LEGRAND (V.O.)
 Here, no doubt was the "Devil's seat"!

Legrand slowly approaches the chair and sits down.

LEGRAND (V.O.)
 "Twenty-one degrees and thirteen minutes, northeast and by north" were obviously directions for leveling the glass, which I proceeded to follow.

Legrand cautiously points the telescope up and down, until he spies an opening in the foliage of a very large tulip tree that overtops it's fellows.

In the center of the rift, a white, out-of-focus spot upon one of the branches can be seen. Adjusting the telescope, he makes it out to be a human skull.

LEGRAND (V.O.)
 And now I seemed to grasp the full secret of the riddle. The phrase "main branch, seventh limb, east side" referred to the location of the skull, "shoot from the left eye

of the death's-head" meant to drop an object through the left eye of the skull, and I believe "a bee-line from the tree through the shot twenty strides out" is self-explanatory.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE - EVENING

Legrand and the Doctor stand at the base of the tulip tree gazing intently up into the branches, the sound of Jupiter grunting is heard, but no site of him can be seen. After a few moments, Jupiter's voice calls down to the men below.

JUPITER

How much fudder I's got for go?

LEGRAND

Look down the trunk and count the limbs below you on this side. How many have you passed?

JUPITER

Done pass six big limb 'pon dis side.

LEGRAND

Then go one limb higher.

DOCTOR

Legrand, what are you about?! He is too old to be climbing trees!

Legrand ignores the Doctor and after a few moments Jupiter's voice is heard again.

JUPITER

Seben!

LEGRAND

Excellent! Now, I want you to work your way as far out on that limb as possible. If you see anything strange, let me know.

DOCTOR

I must insist you stop this at once! Are you trying to kill him?!

LEGRAND

Calm yourself, Doctor. There is nothing to fear.

DOCTOR

You are surely going mad.

Legrand turns and smiles deviously at the Doctor. A few moments go by before Jupiter's voice is heard.

JUPITER

Soon be to de end, Massa Wi..
O-o-o-o-oh! Lor-gol-a-marcy!What is
dis here pon de tree?!

LEGRAND

Well! What is it?!

JUPITER

Somebody bin lef him head up de
tree! 'Pon my life, Suh, it's a
skull!

DOCTOR

A skull?! What kind of game are you
playing, Legrand?

CUT TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE BRANCH - EVENING

Jupiter straddles the limb and stares at the skull in fear. Legrand's excited voice calls up to him from below.

LEGRAND

Now, Jupiter, do exactly as I tell
you. Do you hear? Take the
scarabaeus, put it through the left
eye socket and lower it down as far
as the string will reach.

Jupiter reaches into his pocket and pulls out the gold bug which is tied to the end of a very long string. He starts doing what he was told but stops short, confused.

JUPITER

Which one de lef eye, Suh?

LEGRAND

Curse your stupidity! Do you not
know your right from your left?!

Jupiter hesitates as he tries to decide which is his left and right. After a few moments, he makes a guess.

JUPITER

Nebber mind! I got de lef' eye now.
Look out below, here him come!

Jupiter mistakenly puts the gold bug through the right eye and slowly begins lowering it down by the string.

CUT TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE - EVENING

Legrand and the Doctor watch the gold bug slowly descend from the canopy and glisten in the last rays of the setting sun.

LEGRAND

Come on. Come on. Come on! Come on!

The closer it gets to the ground, the more excited Legrand becomes. In a near panicked frenzy of excitement, Legrand springs into action the very instant it touches the earth, dashing over and replacing it with a small pebble to mark its exact location.

LEGRAND

At last! We are nearly there!

DOCTOR

Nearly where, Legrand?! What is the meaning of all this?!

LEGRAND

We shall see! Here! Hold onto this...

Legrand quickly slips the gold bug from the string and tosses it to the Doctor. He immediately picks up the shovel and begins pacing from the tree through the spot marked by the stone; counting out loud.

LEGRAND

1-2-3-4-5...

As he does, the Doctor looks down at the gold bug in his palm. As he looks closer, a fresh trail of blood suddenly runs down his finger.

The Doctor looks at Legrand to see if he noticed, but Legrand is absorbed in his pacing. He looks up into the tree and is startled to see Jupiter staring down at him.

The Doctor quickly puts the bug in his pocket, wraps his finger in a handkerchief, and turns to watch Legrand as if nothing happened.

LEGRAND

...17-18-19-20!! Here! This! This is the spot!!

Legrand looks at the Doctor, raises his shovel, and brings it down with great force.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT TO:

EXT. TULIP TREE - NIGHT

The shovel sinks into the bottom of the second hole, which is now about six feet deep, and the muffled thud of wood is heard.

Legrand stops digging, and the three men look at each other in excitement.

LEGRAND

Jupiter!

JUPITER

Comin' Suh.

Jupiter jumps into the hole and begins helping Legrand clear away the remaining dirt surrounding the object. After a few moments, they step back and look at what they've just uncovered.

A wooden chest, three and a half feet long, three feet broad, and two and a half feet deep, with great iron rings as handles, lies half-buried in the bottom of the hole; a corroded lock fastens the lid shut.

Legrand throws the shovel out of the hole.

LEGRAND

Quick! Take hold of that side!

Legrand points to one end of the chest as he himself goes to the other. Taking hold of the iron rings, the two men lift the chest and prepare to push it out of the hole.

The Doctor leans over and pulls the chest as Legrand and Jupiter push it over the rim. They all collapse around the chest, breathing heavily; exhausted.

JUPITER

Good Lawd, Suh. What you done found now?

LEGRAND

Well my simple friend...

Legrand reaches over and picks up the shovel.

LEGRAND

that...

Legrand breaks the lock with the shovel.

LEGRAND

Is Gold!!!

He throws open the lid and all three men gasp. A treasure of incalculable value lay gleaming before them in the rays of the lanterns: thousands of golden coins, ear rings, chains, rings, crucifixes, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires, and opals. Legrand begins laughing hysterically and plunges both hands into the confused heap of gold and jewels.

LEGRAND

You see... You see?!!

The Doctor and Jupiter stare with their mouths open, stupefied by the site of the treasure as Legrand continues to revel in his vindication.

LEGRAND

I told you I could feel it!! I told you it was here!! Quick, Jupiter! Get the sacks!

JUPITER

Yes, Suh.

Jupiter picks himself up and heads for their packs lying at the base of the tree trunk. Legrand turns his attention to the Doctor.

LEGRAND

Well, Doctor, what do you think of my story? Do you still think me mad?

The Doctor looks at Legrand in silence.

LEGRAND

Whats the matter? Having trouble facing the facts?

DOCTOR

In truth, Legrand, had I not been party to such absurd proceedings myself, I would never have believed you.

Jupiter arrives with a couple of stout cloth sacks and holds one open for Legrand, who begins filling it with treasure.

LEGRAND

Well, that is to be expected. You see, there are two basic types of people: Those who doubt and those who choose to believe. I fall in the latter category whereas you only believe once you've been proven wrong.

DOCTOR

I only believe what I can see with my own eyes, Legrand.

LEGRAND

And now that you have seen...

DOCTOR

I believe there is a certain method to your madness.

LEGRAND

You stand beside a mountain of evidence to the contrary, yet still you think me mad?!

DOCTOR

A mind disposed to lunacy is easily led away by phantasy, so it was certainly reasonable for me to believe you had become infected by the stories of buried treasure, and that this phantasy received confirmation when you found the scarabaeus. However, though my eyes can hardly believe it, this is no phantasy. Your methods have proven true. Your fortune has been reinstated. Your debts can be paid. Your name has been cleared. All that you sought is now yours. And yet the fever has not broken. It rages still within your veins. Oh yes, I can see the greed, the lust... the madness.

LEGRAND

Greed?! Lust?! Madness?! Doctor, if I am mad then it is certainly because of you!!

Legrand tops the sack off with one last handful and motions for Jupiter to grab a new sack. Jupiter puts the first sack down and holds the second one open as Legrand continues transferring the treasure.

DOCTOR

What are you talking about? I've done nothing but help you. Against my better judgment I have indulged you at every turn!

LEGRAND

No! You have opposed me at every turn! You have doubted me; you have questioned me. Had I headed your judgment, we wouldn't even be here!

DOCTOR

Without me, none of this would have happened, Legrand. You said so yourself.

LEGRAND

Is that what I said, Doctor? Perhaps if you use proper judgment you will recall I only said you were involved.

DOCTOR

My involvement is what led you to discover the map!

LEGRAND

That's just it. I discovered it! Me! I found the Devil's seat! I cracked the riddle! And I found the treasure!

DOCTOR

Aided by myself upon several pivotal occasions. I came calling. I waited for you. I caused the death's head to appear. I revealed Jupiter's blunder. I've helped you dig not one, but two holes, in the middle of the night, with no explanation, all the while you owe me a considerable sum of money! In fact, Legrand, you are completely indebted to me!

LEGRAND

And I suppose you think that entitles you to an equal portion?

DOCTOR

Yes. Half.

Legrand tops the second sack off with one last handful and looks at the Doctor.

LEGRAND

It appears the madness is spreading.

Jupiter takes both full sacks, carries them to the tree trunk, and begins tying them up.

The Doctor picks up the last sack and holds it open for Legrand to begin filling.

LEGRAND

Perhaps you're right, Doctor. After all, You did cause the death's head to appear. Maybe you do deserve an equal portion. But wait! Had Jupiter not found the parchment, you would never have laid it upon the hearth. Therefor, logic demands our equal portion be in thirds; not halves.

DOCTOR

Surely, you are not suggesting we share a third of this fortune with a slave!

LEGRAND

And why not?

DOCTOR

Do you take me for a fool?!

LEGRAND

He is just as involved as you.

DOCTOR

A servant's involvement entitles him to nothing.

Legrand stops filling the sack and looks the Doctor directly in the eyes.

LEGRAND

Precisely!

DOCTOR

I am a skilled physician! He is the slave! My services come at a price! A price you have been unable to pay!

LEGRAND

I told you all my accounts would be paid in full, did I not?

Legrand reaches into the chest and grabs a fist full of treasure.

LEGRAND

One handful is enough to settle the
debt!

Legrand throws the handful at the Doctor and hits him in the chest with it.

LEGRAND

Here! Two handfuls is more than you
deserve!

Legrand takes another handful and flings it at the Doctor's face.

The Doctor shields himself with his hands, and drops the sack. Its contents spill on the ground, revealing a jewel encrusted dagger.

DOCTOR

An entire chest of gold is more than
you deserve! You'll squander it like
you did the first fortune you
inherited!

The Doctor points his finger directly at Legrand. Legrand notices the wound on the Doctor's finger.

LEGRAND

What happened to you finger?

JUPITER

Dats where de bug bite him, Suh.

LEGRAND

It bit you?!

Legrand and the Doctor lock eyes.

The Doctor looks down at the dagger, then back at Legrand.

A moment passes.

With a wild cry, Legrand suddenly swings the shovel directly at the Doctors head.

The Doctor ducks, grabbing the dagger in the same motion and buries it to the hilt in Legrand's stomach.

JUPITER

No!!!

Jupiter comes running at the Doctor.

The Doctor takes the shovel from Legrand, pivots, and

swings; knocking Jupiter out.

The Doctor turns his attention back to Legrand who has fallen to the ground with the dagger still inside him.

DOCTOR

You fool! Look what you have done!
Your lust of gold has caused your
own demise.

LEGRAND

We share the same fate, Doctor. We
have both been bitten by the gold
bug.

The Doctor pulls the gold bug from his pocket and tosses it at Legrand.

DOCTOR

Fate? Fate has seen fit to bestow
the fortune upon me. And led you to
the grave.

As the Doctor raises the shovel above his head to deliver the final blow, it is suddenly wrenched from his hands.

Surprised, the Doctor turns around to find Jupiter standing behind him brandishing the shovel; blood running down his face.

DOCTOR

Now, wait a minute Jupiter...

The shovel blade comes smashing down on the Doctors head and he slumps to his knees.

As his body goes into shock, blood begins pouring down his face. His body collapses and falls into the hole; Dead.

Jupiter drops the shovel and stumbles to his master's side.

LEGRAND

Jupiter.

JUPITER

Oh, Massa Will.

Legrand reaches down to remove the dagger from his stomach. Jupiter grabs his hand and stops him.

JUPITER

Don't.

LEGRAND

I must.

JUPITER
You'll bleed out.

LEGRAND
Yes. And with it goes this accursed
infection.

Jupiter releases Legrand's hand.

Legrand slowly pulls the dagger from his stomach and drops
it in the dirt beside him.

LEGRAND
Forgive me, my friend. I did not
know that riches would put our lives
in fragments and lead me into the
dungeons of harshness and stupidity.

JUPITER
Nebermind all dat now. You're free.

LEGRAND
But at what cost?

Jupiter looks at his master as tears stream down his face.

LEGRAND
What I thought was glory is naught
but an eternal inferno. Gold leads
into gold, then into restlessness
and finally into crushing misery.

Legrand breathes his last and dies in Jupiter's arms.

Jupiter begins singing a traditional Gullah song, lamenting
the death of his master.

FADE OUT

THE END

