

# Musical analysis on pirates of the caribbean: dead man's chest

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Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest was directed by Gore Verbinski and the music was composed by Hans Zimmer. Hans Zimmer is one of the most sought after film composers. He does an amazing job creating the score for this swashbuckling adventure.

The movie begins with the interrupted marriage of William Turner and Elizabeth Swann. The music's first role in this movie is to reflect emotion. In the opening scene, Elizabeth is kneeling at the altar where her wedding should have taken place. Rain is falling all around her and she is alone. Violins are playing a sad, slow melody. The viewer realizes that something awful has happened. Deeper strings start to play a fast marching beat and a male choir begins to sing. This signifies that the Royal Navy is approaching to arrest Will Turner and Elizabeth Swann. Lord Cutler Beckett had ordered the couple to be arrested and sentenced to death for aiding in Captain Jack Sparrow's escape in the previous movie. Lord Cutler Beckett will only lift the charges in exchange for Jack Sparrow's compass. William Turner is sent off to find Jack Sparrow. He is reluctant to leave his future bride behind in prison, but it is his only chance to free her.

Jack Sparrow is a cursed pirate. He has made a deal with Davy Jones, the captain of the Flying Dutchmen. If Davy Jones would raise the Black Pearl from the bottom of the ocean, Jack Sparrow had thirteen years to captain it. After thirteen years, Jack Sparrow must give Davy Jones his soul. It has been thirteen years, and Davy Jones wants to collect. Davy Jones can only go on land once every ten years, so Jack Sparrow knows that land is the place where he will be safest. He sails his ship to the nearest island.

Jack Sparrow has a very comedic leitmotif. He is constantly drunk and his theme is a drunken theme. The music sways and staggers like someone who is intoxicated, and the music has a count of three. The music really adds to the comedy that Jack Sparrow brings to the movie. Strings and a cello are used for this score, and they mimic his actions. This is also referred to as mickey-mousing. A perfect example of mickey-mousing is when Jack Sparrow walks down a flight of stairs and the music goes down the musical scale as he descends.

Will needs to find Jack so that he can save Elizabeth and himself from the death sentence. He investigates and follows clues to Jack's whereabouts until he finally finds Jack Sparrow's ship uninhabited on an island. Further investigation into the island leads to William being captured by a tribe of cannibals. The good news is that he has found Jack Sparrow. Jack Sparrow is serving as the leader of the cannibals. The bad news is that the cannibals are going to eventually sacrifice Jack Sparrow. After a few escape scenes involving a lot of running, William and Jack Sparrow manage to return to the Black Pearl.

The scenes involving the cannibals has music that creates the atmosphere of a cannibal island. Drums are very prominent throughout these scenes, along with humans yelling tribal chants. One scene that does not fit into this trend is a scene where William and the other crew members are trying to escape from a cage that is suspended in the air. The music plays against the action by playing a song one would expect to hear at a carnival during the escape.

The music plays against the action, creating comedy for a normally unpleasant situation.

After escaping from the cannibals, Jack Sparrow convinces Will Turner to climb aboard the Flying Dutchmen to try and receive the key that he has been searching for. If Will can find the key, Jack will give him the compass. William does not know about the deal that Jack has with Davy, and he does not know what he is getting himself into by boarding the ship. Davy Jones has a crew filled with undead crewmen, and Will is captured. The good thing about Will Turner being captured is the fact that he meets his long lost father, Bill Turner. Bill just happens to be a member of the crew.

The music on the Flying Dutchmen is very sinister. The pipe organ is prominent throughout the scenes that involve the ship. A male choir also sings frequently. The beat gives three counts, and it gives the viewer a very uneasy feeling. Random sustained notes are also played with the cello to create a sense of suspense and nervousness. The pipe organ is also sometimes source music while on the ship. Davy Jones frequently plays a menacing looking pipe organ while his crew is slaving on deck.

Elizabeth is not the type of girl that will sit around and wait for William to come and save her. Her father breaks her out of prison, and Elizabeth begins searching for Jack Sparrow and his compass. Elizabeth Swann finds her way to a bar in Tortuga, where she meets up with Jack Sparrow. This scene involves implied source music. Although the source of the music being heard on the screen is not seen, the viewer realizes that the music is being played in the bar. The tune is a fast, crazy tune that is played with an accordion and

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a fiddle. Accordions and fiddles are typical instruments that one would see in this type of saloon. Elizabeth also runs into an old friend at the bar, Commodore Norrington. Norrington wants to kill Jack Sparrow for making him lose his job. This leads to a bar fight. The source music gets louder and crazier during the fight. The fight is very wild and a lot of things are going on at one time. The music helps to add to the outrageous chaos.

The special thing about Jack Sparrow's compass is that it points to the thing that the person holding it wants the most. Jack Sparrow uses it to find the chest that he needs the key to open, even though he does not have the key yet. He arrives on the island where the chest is located and digs it up. Most of the music in this scene involves a fast paced melody played with strings and then short bursts of music from the cello and drums. It is an exciting time in the movie because Jack Sparrow has found the chest, and the music plays off of the excitement.

Will Turner shows up at the island with the key that he has stolen from Davy Jones. Inside the chest is Davy Jones's heart. The pirate legend is that Davy Jones was once in love with a woman. She betrayed him, and he could not tolerate the pain. He cut out his heart and put it in a chest. The only way to kill Davy Jones is to find his heart and stab it. Davy Jones has his own leitmotif. The theme is first introduced when it is being played on a music box that Davy Jones is holding. It continues to play in other scenes where Davy Jones is present. The melody is wishful and sad. A pipe organ is used for the melody.

There are three people standing around the chest with three different motives. Jack Sparrow wants to use the chest to bargain with Davy Jones. He will return the chest to Davy, if Davy will release Jack from his debt. William Turner wants the chest so that he can kill Davy Jones, thereby freeing his father from serving on the Flying Dutchmen. Norrington wants to steal the chest and take it back to Lord Cutler Beckett. Lord Cutler Beckett would then grant Norrington full clemency. The three begin sword fighting over the chest, and Davy Jones's crew arrives to steal the chest for Davy Jones. Elizabeth, Jack Sparrow, and Commodore Norrington are forced to work together to fight off Davy Jones's men. Elizabeth joins in the fight as well.

There is a lot of mickey-mousing in these scenes. The music starts when Jack pulls out his sword and points it at Will. It then quiets down and plays faintly in the background. When Will pulls out Elizabeth's sword on Jack, the music suddenly gets louder. A note is then held out as it fades. When Norrington pulls his sword out, the music suddenly gets louder again. Then all three of the guys have their swords pointed at each other. The music flows underneath the dialogue and adds to the suspense. When the pirates start their sword fight, the music picks up and gets louder. It has a very adventurous feel to it. There is a continuous melody with short bursts of music also playing. The instruments used are a full orchestra and drums.

Elizabeth is angry that the three men are acting so childish and fighting each other. There is a short pause in the music when Will tells Elizabeth to guard the chest. This creates an unspoken thought for Elizabeth. She pauses because she is shocked and angry that the guys are acting so juvenile. The

music quickly starts up again as Elizabeth starts her rant. The music plays off of her angry outburst. As she yells at the guys there are short bursts of music that go up the scale as she gets more and more frustrated. There is also a continuous melody playing with strings.

Elizabeth is not getting the men's attention by yelling at them. She decides to try a different approach by pretending to faint. When Elizabeth fakes passing out from the heat, the music mickey-mouses her falling. A note is held out and then runs down the musical scale as she falls, completely stopping when she hits the ground. After falling, she notices two other pirates running off with the chest. There is sudden note played with strings that helps convey what she is feeling. It is a sudden burst of realization that they are stealing the chest. She gets up off of the sand and runs after the two thieves.

Commodore Norrington has stolen the chest, and everyone else is back on the Black Pearl. Davy Jones has just sent a giant octopus, known as the Kraken, after Jack Sparrow. The Kraken is going to take down the whole ship, and everyone in it, until he gets Jack Sparrow. While everyone is abandoning ship, Elizabeth Swann tricks Jack Sparrow into staying on the ship by kissing him and then handcuffing him to the ship. As he is being handcuffed, a cello plays a deep melody. The melody gives off the feeling of betrayal. A full orchestra then joins the cello and continues the melody as Elizabeth abandons Jack Sparrow.

As Jack Sparrow wiggles out of the handcuffs, the Kraken appears behind him. The Kraken has his own leitmotif. Hans Zimmer uses pipe organs and <https://assignbuster.com/musical-analysis-on-pirates-of-the-caribbean-dead-mans-chest/>

heavy bass lines to give a shadowy, underwater feel. Jack Sparrow turns around and the two are now face to face. Jack Sparrow bravely faces the Kraken with his sword ready, but he is no match for the beast. Jack Sparrow is swallowed up into the mouth of the terrible monster. As Jack Sparrow is swallowed up, an orchestra plays and a male choir sings solemnly.

The movie ends with Commodore Norrington making his deal with Lord Beckett. Elizabeth is filled with guilt for sending Jack Sparrow to his death. Elizabeth, Will, and the rest of the crew are ready to sail to the end of the world to find Jack Sparrow. This may be how the movie ends, but not the story. The story continues on in the third movie, *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*.