

Syrus swings. She plunges the lance into Daphne.

Daphne shrieks- it sounds like a distant firework launch. She throws her hands to her pierced side.

The lance shatters into a thousand stars that shoot past Syrus like shrapnel.

Daphne bows closer into herself, cradling the wound. She sinks, leaving behind her a smear of black void. She falls lower and lower finally breaching where the water's surface meets the sky.

The ocean bubbles where she passes.

Syrus is frozen in her attack stance. Only the subtle movement of the silhouette betrays her heavy breathing. Her image fades into the night- stars drifting away. She drops her head down to her chest before fading entirely.

The camera fades to the title card:

PIRE'S REACH

The text is bold against a moving background of pink seawater and foam.

EXT. MID-LEVEL OCEAN - DUSK

Two mermaids swim side by side through a turbulent, navy sea. They cling close to rock pillars that pierce to the surface. The sea batters the pillars, threatening to knock them over.

THE PLAYER controls SAOIRSE, a Summer Maid with ruby scales glittered along a long articulated tail. The tail ends in a flowing fin like a betta fish. Her ears are long and elf-like, they twitch and rotate towards the other mermaid as she swims. Saoirse's torso is small but muscular. Her eyes are reptilian with a red iris and a black pupil that dilates and responds to the light. Her hair is a flowing blonde with faint red stains from the middle to her ends. She ties it loosely in three parts like low pigtails with a central grouping at the top.

THE PLAYER swims next to ALORA, a Siren with a dusty navy shark-like tail and a large, hooked, dorsal fin protruding from her back. Alora's dark hair is sliced into three parts- the top cut short like a mohawk, mimicking a fin, and the two sides longer, cascading down to her shoulders. Her eyes are yellow with large inky pupils.

Alora is taller than Saoirse, but Alora's tail is much less articulated, only bending in a few places and dense with swimming muscles. Where Saoirse could glide across land similar to a snake, Alora struggles, her tail only capable of pushing forward like a seal.

Alora powers towards the surface and pokes her head above the water. She flips forward leaving her tail floating like a buoy and submerging her head back under. She smiles, gesturing Saoirse upwards.

Saoirse eyes the aggressive waves warily.

SAOIRSE

I'm gonna pop a scale over here-

ALORA

(jokingly)
What? Can't keep up anymore, your
loveliness?

Alora falls back into the sea. She rolls her eyes playfully at Saoirse before she bolts away. Alora's thick shark skin slices through the water.

Saoirse whips her tail with difficulty- her ribbon tail catching on Alora's wake.

Saoirse sighs, THE PLAYER is prompted to **accelerate**. Saoirse catches up with Alora. Both pop their heads out of the water.

EXT. STORM'S RESPITE SURFACE - DUSK

Waves bob along the choppy surface, the dense clouds rush along the eerie gray sky like stampeding cattle.

Alora nods excitedly. She gestures to a ship on the horizon.

The birch wood ship is wedged between two rock pillars. Intense dark waves slap at its sides. The frame of the boat is bloated and wide. Its trio of masts are each adorned with a faded and ill-maintained royal blue sail accented with shimmering gold frills around the edges.

The ship is ragged- a mixture of time and recent collision have left the ship two bad waves away from total wreckage.

Groups of Sirens ride in on rushing waves. They scale the ship like spiders, their tails thrashing with excitement.

ALORA
They call that one *The Whimpering Whale*.

SAOIRSE
Ew, that's a terrible name.

ALORA
(laughing) I know! Here, just a little further and we can see better.

Alora leaps out of the water like a dolphin towards the ship.

PLAYER leaps as well.

Camera stays watching the surface.

SAOIRSE
(mid jump)

I thought...

SPLASH!

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
(mid jump)

This ship..

SPLASH!

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
(mid jump)

I've seen it..

SPLASH!

SAOIRSE (CONT'D)
(mid jump)

Before?

SPLASH!

The mermaids stop just shy of the boat. They sink down so just their heads bob above the water. The ship is in a panic. Sailors run up to the top deck. They fling bucket-loads of water over the side. They run back down to the lower deck. Alora speaks in a near whisper.

ALORA

Oh I'm sure you have, its been
sailing through Storms for months
now. Of its own volition, mind you!
We got sick and tired of it.

A siren torpedos towards the deck propelled by an incoming wave. She snaps at a sailor, catches his foot and plunges back into the sea with the sailor.

SAOIRSE

Maybe they're sick of you.

Alora gasps dramatically. She swings her arms inward in a delicate motion to protect her heart.

ALORA

I'm a treasure!

Saoirse laughs and shoves her away. Alora smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WHIMPERING WHALE

The entire deck is in chaos. The camera glides from bow to stern. At the bow a siren grapples up to the deck, her tail flicking side to side.

In mid deck- a sailor has a siren in a headlock. The trapped siren lurches to the side, taking the sailor down with her. She death-rolls like a crocodile.

At the helm, a siren yanks the wheel off of its axel. He drives it through the helmsman and shoves the helmsman off of the deck. The siren dives in after him.

The camera pans downward towards the Captain's Quarters.

INT. THE WHIMPERING WHALE CAPTAIN'S QUARTERS

CAPTAIN HARDTACK, a large grizzly man in a coat with ten too many medals on it, sits cowering on the floor. His coat, once a brilliant blue, is faded and riddled with stains. The floor has collected enough water to push in and out of the fractured hull like a tide-pool.

CAPTAIN HARDTACK

My ship.. My ship.. First of its
class to... weather the storm

He laughs, his eyes wide. The FIRST MATE barrels through the door, dragging LARKINEON behind him by her jacket collar. Lark is a young sailor with dark hair slicked back with wax. Her face is littered with scars and her jacket is no different. The front of the jacket is marked with a long slash- sewn back together by hand. Lark struggles, her polished boots squeaking and splashing along the floor.

FIRST MATE

Captain! I found the little rat
before she skittered off the ship.

LARK

Half the crew is overboard sir! We
need you out on the helm! Both of
you!

The Captain stands - he leers down at Lark

CAPTAIN HARDTACK

Tell me Larkineon, was it you who
gave the order to redirect course?
Do you believe you are better
suited to chart MY voyages?

A sailor yells from outside. Then, a meaty SPLASH. A loud chorus of person-being-eaten-alive noises ensue.

The PLAYER is given a choice-

Knee Hardtack in the groin OR Escape from the First Mate

Player must **complete a short puzzle** for either option- Player is presented with three empty slots on the right side of the screen and a collection of six picture cards. Each picture card shows a monochrome wood carving print of the described action. Gold accents adorn each corner of the cards. Correct cards must be chosen and placed in appropriate chronological slot.

Knee Hardtack: Player correctly submits:

Card 1: Plant feet on ground.

Card 2: Wind up kick.

Card 3: Follow through with kick

Escape: Player correctly submits:

Card 1: Pull arms out of jacket sleeves

Card 2: Duck