



# ***BRISTOL SURPRISE***

WRITTEN BY  
GAUDET MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS  
MIDDLETOWN, RHODE ISLAND

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AS "CAPTURED" BY  
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## TO THE AUTHORS

so many ideas

so little time

The bones of this story grew out of a creative writing workshop on November 12, 2015 at the Gaudet Middle School. All of the story line ideas originated within the group, though the scribe has taken some creative liberties to make the story easier to follow.



# CHARACTERS



Oliver  
4 pirates

# PROLOGUE



Oliver, captain of the schooner *Surprise*, is sailing a cargo of rum from Newport to Bristol. Just off Rose Island, the schooner is boarded by a gang of pirates who want to steal his rum. Our story begins with our hero tied up and tossed down below.

## BULKHEAD

*A dividing wall between compartments in a ship.*

“DANG, PIRATES AGAIN,” OLIVER TELLS *Surprise*. “And we’re on a schedule... how are we going to deliver the rum on time now?”

When there’s no one else around, he often finds himself talking to the old schooner.

Wiggling enough slack in the lines tying his hands together, he manages to grab the knife he carries in his cargo shorts and cuts himself free. Call themselves pirates? They can’t even tie a decent square knot.

Now, how can he get his schooner back? Maybe a diversion? Dusting off his Red Sox T-shirt, Oliver peers into the corners of the gloomy cabin. Cases of rum surround him. Grabbing a bottle out of the nearest one, he scrambles out of the cabin and hides behind the bulkhead.

He can hear the pirates on deck, cackling. “Easiest capture ever!” one says. “But where are we going?”

“Not sure,” says another. “Once we get north of the Newport Bridge I don’t know these waters. And lookee at all those cursed rocks.”

“They’re everywhere,” says the first voice. “We’d better get that boy back up on deck. Pirate Pete, get down there and haul him up. And be quick about it.”

Sure enough the smallest pirate soon stumbles down the companionway. Man, what a stink. Don’t pirates know about showers?

Knocking politely on the door of the cabin where Oliver is supposed to be, he pushes it open...

Oliver lifts the rum bottle and smashes Pirate Pete over the head. He crumples against the door frame, without even making too much noise.

Oliver drags the body around behind the bulkhead, out of sight. There’s a sword in a scabbard that might be useful, so Oliver slides it out and lays it down on the decking.

There are still four pirates on deck, too many for him to fight all at once. Hopefully another will soon come looking for Pete. “We just have to be patient,” he whispers to *Surprise*.

It feels like an hour, but it’s probably only a few minutes later when the other pirate asks, “Where’s that Pete got to?” Oliver hears what sounds like a

slap on a shoulder or head. “Joey, get down there and look for him. Better take Danny with you.”

Two more smelly pirates clomp down the ladder and head into the cabin. “Pete? Where are you?”

As soon as they are both inside, Oliver jumps out from his hiding place, pulls the door shut, and turns the key in the lock. “Hah, gotcha,” he mutters. The two pirates start pounding on the inside of the door. It only needs to hold for a few minutes...

Grabbing Pete’s sword, he climbs back up the companionway ladder. The last pirate, obviously the skipper, is looking aft, so Oliver scurries back to the stern rail and raises his sword. “En garde!” he says, wondering if that’s the proper term.

With both hands he can just lift the sword.

The pirate is probably a much better swordfighter than Oliver, but he is too surprised to draw his own weapon. Oliver forces the pirate overboard at sword point and watches the pirate drop into the water below.

Dropping the sword (man, that thing was heavy), he heaves a huge sigh of relief. He won’t be late delivering the cargo after all.

“Nice job, Surprise,” Oliver says to his schooner as he takes over the wheel again. “What do you say we make tracks for Bristol?”



Olympic sailor Carol Newman Cronin has published three novels: *Oliver's Surprise*, *Cape Cod Surprise*, and *Game of Sails*. Her story-writing workshops teach creative writing skills in a fun interactive setting.



[www.carolnewmancronin.com](http://www.carolnewmancronin.com)



## ***BOARDED BY 4 FEARSOME PIRATES... AND ONLY OLIVER CAN SAVE SURPRISE***

Sailing from Newport to Bristol, Oliver finds himself held captive by four evil pirates. Follow along as he struggles to save his favorite schooner and her valuable cargo.

**“Sneaking in learning while they’re having fun is one of the best ways to reach kids.”**

**–Maureen McKinnon, *Paralympic Gold Medalist***

Based on the books *Oliver’s Surprise* and *Cape Cod Surprise* by Carol Newman Cronin, with original ideas from a group of Gaudet Middle School students.

For more information  
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**[www.carolnewmancronin.com](http://www.carolnewmancronin.com)**

Carol Newman Cronin crowned a lifetime of competitive achievement by winning two races at the 2004 Olympics. She grew up in Woods Hole, MA, and now lives in Jamestown, RI. *Bristol Surprise* is her latest collaborative work.

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