

the Garrison of *St. Joseph*, named *Dioniz*, and at our Arrival they told us very strange News.

They assured us that all *Louisiana* was evacuated by the *French*; that a large *French* Ship came to *False Alarm*. *Ship Island*, and had embarked there the Commandant, the Director, and all the Officers; that after their Departure, the Savages had killed all the Inhabitants and Soldiers that were left, except a small Number who had saved themselves in two Sloops; that being in Want of Provisions, they were gone to the Bay of *St. Joseph*; that those who arrived first were well received, but that they would not permit the others to land, for Fear lest so many *French* being together, they should be tempted to make themselves Masters of this Post, which we formerly possessed.

All this Story had so little Probability, that I could not possibly believe it; but it was told with so many Circumstances, and coming from People who had so little Interest to impose upon us, and who being but at seven Leagues from *St. Joseph*, might have News from thence every Day, that it seemed hard to think it should be without any Foundation. The greatest Part of our People were struck with it; and I found in myself that these general Conternations are communicated to the Heart, in Spite of our Understanding, and that it is as impossible not to feel some Fear in the midst of People who are seized with it, as not to be afflicted with those that weep. I did not in the least believe what they had just told us, and yet I could not be easy.

In the mean Time our Company, in Spite of their Despair, finding Plenty of Provisions, and the Servants of the *Sieur Dioniz* very obliging, feasted all the rest of the Night. In the Morning our Guides took Leave of us, according to their Orders. We had no further Need of them; for besides that we could not miss our Way to *St. Joseph*, we met with at the House of *M. Dioniz* a *Frenchman*, a Soldier in his Company, and an old Deserter from *Maubile*, who was heartily tired of the *Spanish* Service, among whom he was often almost starved, as he said, though they paid him well: So we easily engaged him to go with us to *St. Joseph*, and from thence to *Louisiana*, supposing he could get his Discharge.

We arrived about Five in the Afternoon at *St. Joseph*, where we were perfectly well received by the Governor. We found there two great Boats of the *Biloxi*, with four *French* Officers, who were come to reclaim some Deserters, but they did not find them here. We had seen them the 24th, being *Whit-Sunday*, in a Bark that was under Sail, and which passed pretty near us. It is very probable that they had touched at *St. Joseph*; and to give