



***LUIS  
SENARENS***

***THE GALLEON'S  
GOLD; OR,  
FRANK READE,  
JR.'S DEEP  
SEA SEARCH***

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# **The Galleon's Gold; or, Frank Reade, Jr.'s Deep Sea Search**

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# **CHAPTER I.**

## **THE SUNKEN TREASURE.**

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The clipper ship Aurelian, one of the few survivors of the old West India trade, had sighted Sandy Hook, and was making New York harbor after a remarkable voyage from Belize.

Captain Hartley, her master, was eagerly watching the approaches to the harbor with his deck glass.

By his side stood a man of distinguished appearance.

He was tall, sinewy, and would have been considered handsome were it not for the yellow hue of skin which all travelers in tropical climes are bound to acquire.

Cecil Clifford had traveled the world over. His hobby was archæology, and as he was a man of large means and a member of many historical and scientific societies, he was able to pursue his researches to any extent.

He was the only passenger aboard the Aurelian, and was returning to New York from Honduras with a thrilling purpose in view.

What this purpose was only he and Captain Hartley knew.

"I only hope that Mr. Parker received our cable from Havana, and will be at the wharf to meet us," remarked Captain Hartley.

"So do I," agreed Clifford. "Is it not possible that he will come down to meet us in a tug?"

The captain shook his head with a wry face.

"Humph!" he said; "you do not know Gilbert Parker. He is the most penurious man in America. Do you think he would

put out the money to employ a tug? Depend upon it—never!”

“Yet our cablegram may excite his cupidity. Did you not specify that it was a matter of moment, involving perhaps millions?”

“I did, but I do not fancy he would heed that. He is a very close, snug man of business, this Gilbert Parker. The Aurelian is all the property he owns in the world and every cent of profit she turns him in from her voyages he with miserly proclivity stores away.”

Cecil Clifford’s face wore a determined expression.

“Very well,” he said, resolutely. “If Mr. Parker does not see fit to lend the Aurelian for my purpose, I will buy, charter or build a vessel of my own!”

Captain Hartley turned eagerly about.

“If you do that,” he said with some excitement, “why may I not enter your service?”

“And leave Parker?”

The captain snapped his fingers.

“The old skinflint has no love for me and vice versa,” he said. “I have sailed the Aurelian for him eight years and made a mint of money for him. Yet he would not yield me a bit of sympathy or help were I in trouble or distress. You cannot blame me!”

“Under such circumstances, no,” replied Clifford. “And Hartley, it shall be so. You stand by me and I will by you.”

“It is agreed.”

They gripped hands.

“You have faith in our enterprise?”

“I have.”

At this moment the first mate called down from the ship's bridge:

"There is a small tug over yonder making signals to us, skipper!"

Hartley started forward.

"A tug!" he cried. "Answer them at once! Can it be possible that it is Parker coming to meet us?"

"By Jove, I hope that is true!" cried Clifford heartily.

"If so," said the captain, "he has very radically departed from all previous custom."

The tug which had signaled the Aurelian now drew momentarily nearer.

Soon she was within hailing distance, and among her company the angular form of the owner of the Aurelian was seen.

The ship lay to and the tug ran alongside. The owner came up the gangway somewhat hastily.

"Ah, Hartley!" he said, in a brusque sort of way, "you have brought my ship home safely once more!"

"I think I may claim that, Mr. Parker," replied the captain.

"Has the voyage been successful?"

"The best yet made!"

"Ah! that is good," declared Parker, rubbing his dry little hands while his eyes glittered like beads. "You are very shrewd, Hartley, and I will admit, faithful. I have gone to some expense to come out here and meet you. That I will charge to the deficit account. I am anxious to know the meaning of your cablegram!"

"You shall know it at once!" replied the captain. "Come into the cabin. But first, allow me, Mr. Parker, my friend,

Cecil Clifford."

Parker bowed in a perfunctory way, and Clifford said

"Very much pleased!"

Then a few moments later they were seated in the cabin at a big table spread with charts.

Hartley opened the conversation.

"I will first tell you a bit of a story, Mr. Parker," he said; "it will help to explain matters."

"Proceed!" said Parker, stiffly.

"As I must first inform you," continued the captain, "Mr. Clifford here is an antiquarian and traveler. He was some few weeks ago engaged in exploring the interior of Honduras. In the mountains he found the ruined city of an ancient race. In exploring the ruins he found a secret chamber which was completely walled up, save for one small opening large enough to put a hand through.

"In this secret chamber there was a skeleton enclosed in fragments of armor, such as was worn by the soldiers of Spain in the sixteenth century.

"Here was a mystery, and he at once set himself at work to solve it. His first assumption was that it was the remains of one of the early Spanish invaders, who had been made a prisoner by the natives and shut up here to starve to death.

"And upon the walls of the death cell he found the following scratched in barely legible characters into the stone:

"I, Don Cristobal Mendoza, am thrown into this dungeon to starve by the heathen, curses upon them! Curses upon the fortune which placed me in their power.

“Here I am doomed to die, while my ship, the Donna Veneta, lies fathoms deep in the ocean, off this cursed coast, with all my great fortune aboard.

“Woe is the day I left sunny Spain with my princely holdings, to set up a kingdom in this land of deception and disappointment. Buried at the bottom of the sea is my noble ship and millions of pesos, while I am to die in this fearful hole. Jesus pity! Save my soul!”

“Then followed a diagram which was rudely drawn to show the spot where the Donna Veneta went down. The whole coast map of Honduras was shown, and so comprehensive was it that a skipper familiar with the waters should be able to sail directly to it.

“No latitude or longitude was given, only approximate distances, but this was deemed enough.”

The diagram was briefly discussed. All the while Parker had listened with a cat-like gleam in his eyes.

“Well, Mr. Parker,” said Hartley, finally, “what do you think of it? Is not that treasure worth recovering?”

“Recovering!” exclaimed the miser, squeakily; “how can it be recovered? How can you recover anything from such a depth in the sea as that?”

“Pshaw! There are hundreds of divers who will go down to the wreck.”

“If they can find it.”

“You are incredulous!”

“What do you want of me? Is this your reason for calling me out here at such trouble and expense?” cried the miser, angrily. “What a bit of moonshine! You are a fool, Hartley. I gave you credit for more sense. What folly to think that you



could recover such a treasure. Why, it is absurd—very absurd, sir!”

For a moment Hartley’s face was black. Hot words were on his tongue, but he only said, in a steely way:

“Then you have no faith in this project?”

“None whatever!”

“You will not lend the Aurelian to this scheme on promise of an equal division?”

“Never!”

The miser spoke decidedly; Hartley arose quickly to his feet. He was very resolute and very angry.

“Then, Mr. Parker,” he said, “you may look for a new captain. I am out of your employ this moment.”

Parker gave a violent start.

“What!” he cried, “have I not always paid you well?”

“Never without reluctance.”

“Then you mean to leave me?”

“I do.”

“What will you do? You have no ship nor enough of money to carry out your hare-brained enterprise.”

“But my friend, Mr. Clifford, has,” replied Hartley, coolly.

The miser turned and regarded Clifford almost insolently.

“Yes,” said the traveler, with assumed nonchalance. “You have chosen to throw away your golden opportunity, Mr. Parker. We are not sorry, however, to exclude you from our enterprise. It is true that I have money enough to build, buy or charter any kind of a vessel we may desire to accomplish our purpose.”

The miser looked keenly at Clifford and then stammered:

“But—I—I will reconsider——”

“No, you won’t,” said Clifford emphatically. “We are alone in this enterprise, sir. You are excluded!”

The miser said no more. But he chuckled much under his breath. The Aurelian a few hours later was at her wharf.

Then Captain Hartley and the distinguished traveler took their leave of the vessel. The captain took the portfolio in which he had kept the copy of Don Cristobal’s story, among other effects.

Both proceeded at once to a hotel. Neither were disconcerted by the decision of Parker.

“The Aurelian is a good vessel,” said Hartley, “but there are others, Clifford. I am not sorry to leave the old curmudgeon out of it.”

“Nor I,” agreed Clifford; “but now, my dear friend, let us at once get down to business.”

# **CHAPTER II. THE YOUNG INVENTOR.**

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Clifford's plan was to buy diving suits, and at once look up men used to descending into the greatest depths of the sea.

But these were not easily found. Neither were they at once successful in finding the right sort of a sailing craft for their purpose.

While thus somewhat perplexed a curious incident occurred which completely changed their plans.

Clifford chanced to pick up a newspaper and read a large heading:

"A Wonderful Invention!

"Frank Reade, Jr., the young inventor, once more to the fore. This time it is a famous submarine boat which is a complete success, and with which the wonderful young man intends to sail around the world under water. The problem of deep-sea navigation solved. The naval and marine world in general much interested."

More followed of a descriptive nature, and Clifford read every line. Then he drew a deep breath.

He arose and put on his hat.

"Hartley," he said, "come with me."

The manner of the great traveler impressed the captain. He looked up in surprise and asked:

"Where?"

"I am going to Readestown."

"To Readestown?"

"Yes."

"What for?"

"To see Frank Reade, Jr."

"What——"

"Ask no questions until we get there. Then you will understand all. Come along!"

Hartley knew there was no use in trying to argue the point. It was always best to give Clifford his own way. So he followed him.

Readestown was a neat little town on a river leading down to the sea. It was chiefly noted for the family of great inventors, the Reades, who had founded the place.

Frank Reade, Jr., himself, sat in his private office at the machine works looking over some plans.

He was a tall, handsome youth, with a certain bearing which distinguished him wherever he went.

Suddenly the door opened and a woolly head appeared in the space between the door and the frame.

A negro, black as a coal and with gleaming ivories, stood there.

"Well, Pomp," said Frank, looking up, "what is it?"

"Suah, sah, two gentlemen as wants fo' to see yo', sah. Dey won't take no, sah!"

Frank took the cards handed him and glanced at the names.

"Joseph Hartley—Cecil Clifford.

"New York City."

"I don't know them," he said. "What is their business?"

"Berry important, sah, so dey say. Kain't tell no mo'."

"Show them in."

"A'right, sah."

Pomp disappeared, but he had no sooner vanished than a shock of red hair and a genial Irish mug appeared in the spot he had left.

"Shure, Misther Frank, ivery bit av the sthores is aboard the boat, sor."

"Good for you, Barney O'Shea!" replied the young inventor. "Everything is then in readiness for the start."

"Yis, sor."

"Very well, that will do."

The red hair and grinning mug then vanished.

Barney and Pomp were Frank Reade, Jr.'s faithful body servants. They had been long in his employ.

Steps were heard outside a few moments later, and two men entered.

Captain Hartley and Cecil Clifford shook hands with Frank Reade, Jr. In a very few moments they were the warmest of friends, so instinctive was the sympathetic tie between kindred souls.

"We understand you have perfected a submarine boat, Mr. Reade," said Clifford.

"That is true," replied Frank.

"That is a wonderful triumph. We congratulate you."

"Thank you."

"Do you intend starting for a deep-sea cruise very soon?"

"In a very few days."

"Have you an object in view beyond simple exploration?"

"Nothing special."

Clifford and the captain exchanged glances. Then the former said: