

A PIRATE ADVENTURE

CHAPTER 2



The Red Calypso

A month passed, and Jason was getting stronger. It wasn't taking him as long to do his daily chores aboard the *New Hope*. He worked out a system to get them done more quickly. This gave him a little extra time each day to explore and learn about the other parts of the ship. He learned to climb the ropes, unfurl the sails, and many of the other responsibilities of a sailor.

Most of all he liked to climb high onto the highest yard arm and sit with the wind blowing in his hair as he searched the horizon for signs of land. Sometimes he would sit after dark and look at the stars. He had watched the captain use his sextant to find where they were. Jason wanted to learn how to use the device, but he was too shy to ask.

The weather on the trip had been excellent, but on this day the sky began to turn black and the wind began to get stronger. The captain ordered for all of the men to stow the sails away and to batten down the hatches to the hold. Anything that might move needed to be tied down with a rope. The crew knew that they were going to be in the middle of a big storm. They had been through this before, so they knew exactly what needed to be done.

All of the men went to their bunks and tied themselves to their hammocks. This way they wouldn't be thrown from side to side when the ship rolled from the large waves.

Jason crawled into his sleeping spot and held on tightly. He was scared. Water was leaking from above and everything in the galley was smashing together, making a noise so loud Jason had to cover his ears. It was pitch black in the galley.

The *New Hope* creaked and groaned as the waves smashed into the sides of the ship.

It was late morning before the storm settled down. When the sky cleared the sun beamed through the cracks revealing that the day was going to be clear.

Jason crawled out of his small space and went onto the deck. He rubbed his eyes while he looked up at the bright sun, visibly tired from a lack of sleep.

“Ship ahoy!” yelled the lookout from the crow’s nest atop the center mast.

Everyone jumped. Jason went to the side of the ship and looked out onto the horizon. In the distance he saw a huge red ship with white sails. It was the *Red Calypso* and Captain Horatio! He was on his way to take the ship.

Jason yelled out, but everyone was already preparing the ship for battle. The crew put the cannons into place, gun powder barrels were brought up from the hold, and cannonballs were stacked next to the cannons. Jason went below to help.

When he looked out of the portals, used for the cannons, he could see the *Red Calypso* approaching. There was the same activity on their deck as they prepared to capture the New Hope. The *Red Calypso* was faster than the *New Hope* so there was no escape. They would have to fight.

Once everything was in place for the impending battle, silence filled the air on the New Hope. The crew knew the legend of the *Red Calypso*. It would not be easy to defend against the weapons Captain Horatio had on his ship, and he was ready to use them.

The big red ship was gaining on the New Hope. The captain was on the bridge looking back at the pirate ship using his scope.

“Hard to the starboard,” the captain yelled out, as he ordered the helmsman to turn the ship. “Prepare the cannons on the port side to fire on my command!”

The helmsman turned the wheel as fast as he could. The ship came around turning

to the right so that the *Red Calypso* was coming directly at the side of the *New Hope*.

“Fire!” the captain ordered and then a volley of shots rang out making the ship lean to the side. The sound and smell of gun powder filled the air.

“Reload and fire as quickly as you can!” the captain yelled again.

The cannons sent out another round of cannonballs at the red ship.

The cannonballs ripped through the sails on the approaching ship. The main sail came crashing down when a cannonball hit the base of the forward mast.

The crew of the *Red Calypso* was running all over the deck trying to avoid the cannon balls as they dropped out of the sky.

“Fire!” the captain ordered and the white smoke billowed out of the side of the ship again.

The *Red Calypso* began to turn so that her cannons could return fire.

“Hard to the port! Unfurl the main sail. Give me all the speed you can muster!” the captain gave out the orders, as he watched the *Red Calypso* try to maneuver into attack position.

By the time the *Red Calypso* turned to fire its cannons at the *New Hope*, the *New Hope* had turned back to the left to go the other direction and was putting distance between it and the damaged ship.

The three rounds of cannon fire had done a lot of damage to the *Red Calypso*, but the *Red Calypso* had not fired once. Many of her white sails were badly torn and there was a fire on the deck. The *New Hope* pulled away and headed to the closest port they could find. It would not be long before the *Red Calypso* was going to chase them again.

The captain’s strategy had worked. The *Red Calypso* expected the *New Hope* to draw alongside and fire their cannons at each other side-by-side. The *New Hope’s* captain used another tactic to escape. He knew that if they had gone side-by-side with the *Red Calypso*, the *New Hope* would have lost.

The *New Hope* sailed away as the crew looked at the burning ship in the distance. They were one of the few ships to ever survive the *Red Calypso’s* attempt to capture. The

captain knew the next time they encountered the *Red Calypso* they wouldn't be so lucky.

The ship headed to the nearest harbor. It would take a day to get there, so the captain ordered all of the sailors to remain alert. If the *Red Calypso* appeared, they would have to prepare for a big fight. A fight they would probably lose.

Darkness fell and the stars came out. The sky was clear and the wind was at the back of the ship so the ship moved up and down as she cruised toward the harbor where they would be safe. The moon was so big it felt like one could reach up and grab it. The crew was resting on the deck enjoying some peace and quiet when from above a loud voice yelled out, "Ship Ahoy! Ship Ahoy!"

The crew scrambled from their resting places and gazed at the approaching *Red Calypso* behind the ship. In the distance the orange glow of fire lit up the sky. Even though the *Red Calypso* was still burning, she was chasing them.

Jason climbed up the ropes to where he could get a better look at the *Red Calypso* as she followed behind. She wasn't getting closer very fast, but she was gaining on the New Hope. The captain was giving orders to the crew to prepare for the battle. He was looking for ways to make the ship go faster. The crew began throwing things over the side of the ship into the water to make the ship lighter.

Jason came up with an idea. He climbed down from the mast and ran to the captain.

"Captain, I have an idea that might help slow down the *Red Calypso*!" Jason said, while breathing hard. "If we put some gunpowder into those boxes on the deck, and put a long fuse on it, we might be able to do some damage to the *Red Calypso* once she comes upon them. If nothing else it will be a distraction to them and it might slow them down a little so we can get some distance between us."

At first the captain ignored the young man. He was busy making sure that everything possible was being done to save the ship.

The captain noticed Jason on the bridge. "What is he doing here, get him off my bridge. I have too many things to do than to listen to him!" the captain ordered.

“Sir, I think you should listen to his idea. I think he has a good plan,” the first mate said to the captain.

“OK, make it quick. We don’t have much time,” the captain said, as he turned toward Jason .

Jason was now nervous and began, “Well, um... I was saying that...”

“Speak up!” the captain exclaimed looking straight at Jason. “We don’t have much time.”

“Well, I was thinking that if we put some gunpowder into those boxes we are throwing into the sea, and put a long fuse on it, we might be able to do some damage to the *Red Calypso* once she comes upon them. If nothing else it will be a distraction to them and it might slow them down a little,” Jason repeated what he had said before.

The captain looked surprised, “Now that’s not a bad idea.”

Then walking to the railing of the bridge he addressed the men who were throwing the boxes over the side of the ship, “Stop throwing things into the water!”

He then turned to the first mate, “Give them the instructions on what we are going to do. Make it quick we don’t have a lot of time before they are on us.”

The first mate went down to the deck and began to instruct the sailors on what they needed to do. The men sealed the boxes so they wouldn’t leak and then filled them with gunpowder.

There were about twenty boxes. They placed them into the lifeboats and lowered them slowly down the side of the ship. It was very tricky since lifeboats are usually only lowered while the ship is not moving.

The fuses were lit and then the boxes were dropped slowly into the water one at a time on both sides of the ship. The dim glow of the fuses followed behind in the wake of the ship.

Once all of the boxes were in the water the lifeboats were pulled back onto the ship. Now it was a matter of waiting until the boxes exploded to see what the result would be.

The orange glow of the *Red Calypso* followed behind and the light of the fuses disappeared into the night.

Suddenly the first of the boxes exploded and the sky lit up like lightning; then another. The *Red Calypso* was in the glow of the explosions. The next one went off and it appeared that the *Red Calypso* was close enough to the explosion to feel the effects. Then four or five of the boxes went up in flames. The *Red Calypso* was caught in the middle of the surprise and began to slow down. The *New Hope* pulled away. She would now make it safely to the harbor.

In the distance the final boxes blew up, again lighting the sky with the outline of the *Red Calypso* now burning brighter than before.

The captain of the *New Hope* watched from the stern of the ship with his long looking glass in amazement at what had just happened.

“Get that young man up here now!” the captain ordered his officer.

“Aye, Sir, right away,” the officer responded and then turned to find Jason.

The officer found Jason on the deck of the ship looking back at the *Red Calypso* with the other sailors.

“The captain wants to see you right now,” the officer told Jason as he pulled on his sleeve to come with him.

Jason climbed the stairs to the bridge where the captain was waiting for him.

“That was an amazing idea, son. I have never thought of that before. If you hadn’t come up with that idea, the *Red Calypso* would have certainly captured our ship, and we would have lost all of our cargo. You are a hero to all of us.”

He then turned to the crew of the *New Hope* and addressed them, “Jason Wellington is responsible for the idea for the boxes we set on the water. I am promoting him to seaman second class. He is an important member of this crew!”

Jason was shocked. He was no longer a cabin boy. He was a seaman second class. That meant he could move out of the galley and into a bunk. He would begin to train as a real sailor. He might even learn to use the sextant which uses the stars to find out where

they are on the map.

Jason found his new berth and put his things under his hammock. One of the men came up to him and greeted him.

“Aren’t you the man who said you knew my father?” Jason remembered the sailor when he first arrived.

“Yes, I am. I forgot what I promised you. By the way, my name is Garold Lawson.”

“Come over to the table and I will tell you about your father,” the sailor directed Jason. “Your father was one of the best friends I have ever had. I would venture to guess that just about anyone who knew him would say the same thing. He was a hard worker, just like you.

“We were on the *Northern Star* out of Cransbury Shore when the *Red Calypso* seemed to come out of nowhere and locked onto our ship. We didn’t get off a single cannon shot.

“The pirates boarded our ship and took what they could from the hold. Then they selected 20 men and took them as hostages. Your father was one of the twenty.

“Stories have been told that these hostages are put to hard labor on the ship. If they choose to join the crew, they receive special privileges. If they don’t, they die of starvation.

“I’m not sure if your father is still alive. It was over five years ago that he was taken,” the sailor explained to Jason.

“Thank you for telling me the story. I’m happy to meet someone who knew my father so well,” Jason said to Garold, and then he went to his hammock.

Jason lie down on his bed and fell asleep knowing about his father’s story and that he might still be alive.

The *New Hope* sailed toward the harbor. A few hours later, at dawn, the *New Hope* entered the safety of the bay beside a fishing village. The ship dropped its anchor and the men prepared to go ashore to get supplies and some time off of the ship.

Beautiful palm trees that swayed in the wind surrounded the harbor. The sand on the beach was white and looked very inviting. The water was calm and blue. The village on the shore was small and looked like a painting his father had purchased on one of his voyages that hung in his house. It was early in the morning, but there was a lot of activity around the village.

Along the beach there were many small fishing boats. The fishermen were preparing for the day's work. They had their nets pulled up onto the beach and were rolling them up to place them into the small boats.

The crew invited Jason to join them. The small lifeboats were lowered to the water below and the men used the long oars to row the boats toward the shore.

The smell of freshly cooked food filled the air. The sailors were ready for a meal other than biscuits and dried beef.

When they got to the beach the villagers came to welcome them. Young children ran around singing a song and the older women brought food. They were excited to see these strangers. It was exactly how Jason had dreamed it would be. Jason and the crew relaxed on the beach and drank coconut milk. They laughed with the children and spent time napping. The village was very inviting and it was tempting to stay. The people were so friendly and the food was so good.

Late in the afternoon the fishing boats began to return. They had had a good day of fishing. The boats were full of fish. The first mate and the cook selected several different kinds of fish to take back to the ship. It would be nice to have fresh fish for at least a few meals.

The men were about to prepare for the trip back to the ship when they were startled by the sound of a cannon firing. They turned to look out at the harbor and to their surprise they saw the white smoke from a cannon rise slowly from the New Hope. The men had to hurry. That meant that there was something wrong. The men could only imagine, but the thing that came to mind first was the *Red Calypso* was coming.

VOCABULARY (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. stern _____ | a. device to find a location |
| 2. stronger _____ | b. tale, hero |
| 3. yard arm _____ | c. unfold, releasing the sails |
| 4. sextant _____ | d. back of the ship |
| 5. crow's nest _____ | e. more strength |
| 6. legend _____ | f. orders, directions |
| 7. starboard _____ | g. what a sail is attached to |
| 8. unfurl _____ | h. box high above the ship |
| 9. instructions _____ | i. not easy, risky |
| 10. tricky _____ | j. right side of a ship |

TRUE OR FALSE

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Captain Horatio was the captain of the <i>New Hope</i> . | T / F |
| 2. The <i>New Hope</i> was a merchant ship. | T / F |
| 3. Jason was afraid of being on a sailing ship. | T / F |
| 4. Jason had many chores to do. | T / F |
| 5. Jason was washed off the ship during the storm. | T / F |
| 6. Jason was whipped for not doing his work. | T / F |
| 7. Jason liked to climb the ropes above the ship. | T / F |
| 8. The <i>Red Calypso</i> was destroyed. | T / F |
| 9. The captain of the <i>New Hope</i> fooled the <i>Red Calypso</i> . | T / F |
| 10. Jason liked to eat fish. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. What was Jason's idea to stop the *Red Calypso*? _____
 - a) throw stones at the ship
 - b) surrender the *New Hope*
 - c) put gunpowder in the boxes
 - d) sink the *New Hope*

2. Who captured Jason's father? _____
 - a) Captain Hook
 - b) Captain Horatio
 - c) Captain Sparrow
 - d) Captain Horner

3. What kind of food did the crew normally eat? _____
 - a) biscuits and rice
 - b) biscuits and gravy
 - c) biscuits and cookies
 - d) biscuits and dried beef

4. What did the sailors hear when the *Red Calypso* was seen? _____
 - a) Land Ho!
 - b) Ship Ahoy!
 - c) Ship Ho!
 - d) I see a big ship!

COMPREHENSION: (*Write a complete sentence to answer the question.*)

1. What was the name of the pirate ship?

2. How long was the *New Hope* at sea?

3. What did Jason like to do when his work was done?

4. How long did the storm last?

5. What did the sailor tell Jason about his father?

6. Where was the *New Hope* going?

7. Why was the crew of the *New Hope* afraid?

8. What was in the boxes the crew of the *New Hope* put into the sea?

9. How many times did the *New Hope* fire her cannons?

10. What rank was Jason promoted to?
