

ADVENTURES of the
**Steampunk
Pirates**

Rise of
the Slippery
Sea Monster



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Chapter 1

In which our heroes,
the Steampunk Pirates, steal
a big pile of the king's gold.

It had been another successful raid for the Steampunk Pirates. They had boarded the transporter ship and forced the sailors to their knees with their hands behind their heads.

Gadge used the bayonet attachment on his left arm to push the ship's commander to the tip of an extremely wobbly plank.

First Mate Mainspring emerged from the hold with a large wooden chest.

"What cargo have we here then?" asked Captain Clockheart.

"**Click**, it's heavy enough. **Tick**, whatever it is." The clockwork first mate dropped the chest.

"Put that chest back, you copper-bottomed cads," cried the ship's commander.

"Copper bottomed? These backsides be made of iron. Ain't that so, Lexi?" Captain Clockheart slapped Quartermaster Lexi's behind.

"We are indeed made from iron, yes," said Lexi primly. "And please don't do that, Captain."

"I don't care what you're made of, you metal menaces! I order you to return that chest," yelled the commander.

"Following orders ain't exactly one of our strong points, laddie." Gadge stamped his foot on the plank. The other pirates howled with laughter as the commander tried to keep his balance.

Captain Clockheart prised the chest open with his cutlass. "Ah, pump my pistons! A chest full of golden delights!"

"This should help considerably in our quest to replace our rusting parts," said Lexi.

"That gold does not belong to you," protested the commander.

"**Click**, it does now," said First Mate Mainspring. "**Tick**, Mr Pumps, Loose-screw, Tin-pot Paddy and Rust-knuckles. Tock, load this gold on to the *Leaky Battery*."

Quartermaster Lexi lifted out one of the gold bars to examine it. "Mmm, yes. Eighteen carat." He sniffed it. "Freshly mined from the west coast of America."

"You can get all that from the smell, Lexi?" asked Pendle, the cabin boy.¹

¹ If you are a newcomer to this most excellent series, you should know that Pendle the cabin boy is, in fact, a girl. Also, where on earth have you been?

“No, the details are printed on each bar,” admitted Lexi. “There’s a royal stamp, too.”

“Royal gold! Royal gold!” Twitter, the mechanical parrot, squawked.

“Precisely,” said the commander. “This gold belongs to the King of England.”

“So do we according to our ‘Wanted’ poster. We be worth four thousand pounds now.” Captain Clockheart beat his chest proudly, making the hand on the clock in the centre of his chest spin twice as fast. “It warms the lumps of coal in me belly to feel wanted, so it does. Now, back to our ship, Steampunk Pirates! We have some celebrating to do.”

“Celebrating?” exclaimed the commander. “How can machines celebrate?”

“The same way as you do,” said Captain Clockheart. “With songs, laughter, food and liquid.”

“What do you eat and drink?” the commander asked.

“We consume the four main food groups, of course,” said Lexi. “Coal, wood, oil and water.”

“Talking of water...” Gadge fired a grappling hook at a high crossbeam on the *Leaky Battery* and swung back to the ship, knocking the commander into the ocean with a huge SPLASH! The rest of the pirates gave a rousing HURRAH!

“You scrap-metal scalliwags,” spluttered the commander, when he bobbed up to the surface. “You dare steal from the King of England? This is treason. Treason, I say!”

“Treason...” Lexi’s word-wheel spun round until it reached the definition of the word. “The betrayal of one’s country.”

“You call it treason, we call it freedom.” Captain Clockheart picked up a large silver tankard. “Now, lads, it’s time to fill our hold with gold, our sails with wind and our cups with oil. All hail the Steampunk Pirates!”
