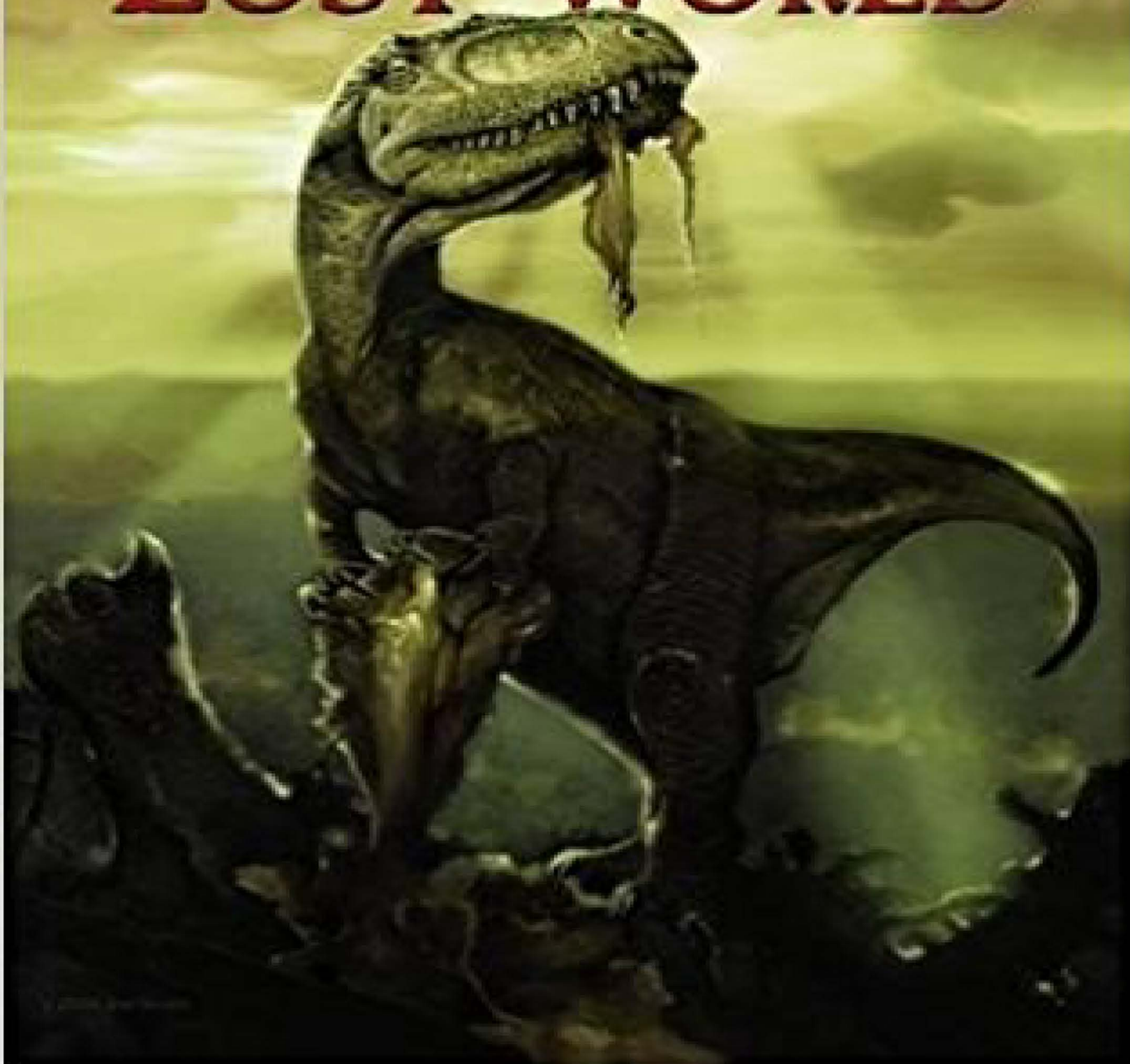


SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

THE LOST WORLD



CHAPTER ONE

Gladys Hungerton

I often listened to Mr Hungerton. He talked to me about economics. It was very boring, but I was in love with his daughter Gladys.

One evening, I listened to him for a long time. Finally, he left. I now had a chance to speak to Gladys. She was a proud woman and she treated me as a friend.

She looked at me and said, 'You're going to propose marriage.'

'How do you know?' I replied.

'A woman always knows. But Edward, I don't love you. I love somebody else,' she continued.

'Who?' I cried.

'Nobody really. I love the idea of someone. I want to love a hero, somebody like the great explorers Richard Burton and Lord Stanley! A man who has nearly seen death. A great hero! When I marry I want to marry a great man.'

'Then I'll do something great for you,' I replied.

'When you do, come back. We can talk about marriage then,' she said.

I left her and went to work.

I was a journalist and I had to work that evening.

When I arrived at the offices of the newspaper the Daily Gazette, I went to see my boss, the news editor, Mr McArdle.

'You're doing a very good job,' he said when he saw me.

'Thank you very much, sir,' I replied. 'I want to ask you a favour.'

'What is it?'

'Could you possibly send me on a mission for the paper? Then I could write some good articles for you.'

'What kind of mission, Mr Malone?'

'Well, anything with adventure and danger.'

'Do you really want to die so young?'

'No, I want to do something heroic with my life,' I said.

'Well, the age of exploration and romance is over. No, wait, I have an idea. What about exposing a fraud? You could show that he's a liar. Do you like that idea?'

'Yes, anything is good,' I replied.

'Well,' continued Mr McArdle, 'I'm sure that you can talk to this man. You're good at making friends with people.'

'Thank you, sir,' I said.

'So, try to talk to Professor Challenger.'

'Challenger!' I cried, 'Professor Challenger, the famous zoologist! The man who attacked Blundell, the journalist of the Telegraph?'

'Well, ' said Mr McArdle, 'you said that you wanted adventure. '

'Yes, I do, ' I answered, 'but what exactly has Professor Challenger done? '

'He went to South America on an expedition two years ago, ' he answered excitedly. 'He came back last year. He certainly went to South America, but he doesn't want to say where exactly. He started to tell everyone about his adventures. However, when people ask him questions he never replies. Something wonderful happened, or the man is a very good liar. He has some photographs in bad condition, but scientists say that they are fakes. When journalists try to talk to him, he just throws them down the stairs. Well, Mr Malone, this is your mission. Goodbye. '

My meeting was over. Now I had to make a plan to meet Professor Challenger. I knew that he hated journalists. I decided to

write him a letter saying I was interested in science. This is the letter that I wrote.

Dear Professor Challenger,

I am only a student of nature and science, but I am very interested in your ideas on the debate between the scientists August Weismann and Charles Darwin. I would very much like to discuss some of your ideas. I believe you are the real expert on this matter. I have many questions to ask you about this fascinating subject.

Please could I visit you at eleven o'clock tomorrow morning?

Yours respectfully,

Edward D. Malone.

CHAPTER TWO

Professor Challenger

Later I received a letter from Professor Challenger.

Dear Sir,

I received your letter. You can come to my house. However, I am a great scientist and I do not need your good opinion of me. Show this letter to my servant when you arrive. I do not want any of those horrible journalists in my house.

Yours faithfully,

George Edward Challenger Professor Challenger

The next day I went to his house. A servant opened the door.

'Is Professor Challenger expecting you?' he asked.

'Yes, he is,' I answered.

'Have you got the letter?' he continued.

I showed the letter to his servant and walked in. A small woman stopped me. She looked more French than English to me. 'Do you already know my husband?' she asked

'No, I don't,' I answered.

'Well, then I must apologise for him now. He's a perfectly impossible person. Do not argue with him. He can be dangerous. Do you want to talk about South America?'

'Yes, madam,' I answered, because I could not lie to a lady.

'Oh, that's a very dangerous subject! Just say that you agree with him. Call me if he seems dangerous. I can usually control him.'

The servant then led me into Professor Challenger's study. I was surprised when I saw him. He had a very large head and a big black beard. His chest and arms were enormous.

'Well?' he said.

'I am the student who wanted to ask you some questions about Weismann and Darwin,' I said. 'Perhaps, your opinion of Weismann was too critical,' I continued. 'And recent experiments show that maybe he's right.'

'Well,' he said seriously, 'you know that the cranial index is a constant factor?'

'Naturally,' I answered, but I did not understand anything.

'And that germ plasm is different from the parthenogenetic egg?'

'Oh yes,' I cried and I was surprised at my courage.

'But what does this show?' he concluded.

'I don't know. What does this show?'

'It shows,' he said in a loud voice, 'that you're one of those horrible journalists and that you're not a young scientist! I talked nonsense to you: my words had no real meaning!'

He stood up, and I was surprised because he was extremely short. He began to walk in my direction.

'You mustn't attack me,' I said.

'But I will,' he answered. He attacked me and in a second we went quickly out of the front door into the street.

Fortunately, just then a policeman arrived and said, 'What's happening?'

'This man attacked me,' I said.

'Do you want me to arrest him?' he asked.

'No,' I replied, 'I was wrong too.'

The policeman walked away.

The Professor looked at me and smiled a little.

'Come in,' he said, 'I want to tell you something more.'

We entered his house again. Mrs Challenger was extremely angry.

'You're terrible! You're not a famous professor at a great university because you always attack people!' she shouted. The Professor grabbed his wife and put her on top of a pillar.

'Put me down!' she shouted.

'Say please,' he answered.

'No, put me down, now!' she continued.

'No, say please,' he said again.

'Please! Please! Please!' she shouted.

Then the Professor took her down and gave her a big kiss.

After this the Professor and I returned to his study.

'I'm going to talk to you about South America,' he said. 'Two years ago I went on a journey to South America. I went to the Amazon to check some observations of the scientists Wallace and Bates. During my stay in the Amazon I became a friend of the Cucama Indians. They told me that there was a sick man that needed help. But before I arrived the man died. I was surprised, however, when I saw him. He was a white man, not an Indian. His name was Maple White and he was from the United States. He was an artist. Here are some of his pictures.

I looked at them. Some were of the Indians, and others were of different animals like turtles and alligators.

'Well,' I said, 'these don't seem very unusual.'

'Look at the next one,' he said.

It was a picture of a cliff with a thin, high tower of rock in front of it.

'I don't know anything about rocks,' I said.

'Well, try the next picture then,' he said.

The next one was of a man next to a huge and very strange lizard.

'Why did he draw this?' the Professor asked.

'I don't know. Perhaps he drank too much gin,' I answered.

'Or perhaps he really saw this creature,' he said.

I wanted to laugh, but I didn't want to fight with him again.

'Anyway,' he continued, 'the Indians took me to the cliffs in Maple White's drawings. I took some photographs. Most of them got wet during my journey home. Here is one that you can still see. Look!'

I looked carefully at the photograph. It was not in very good condition.

'What do you see?' he asked.

'I see the same cliffs and the rock tower of the drawing,' I answered.

'Yes, of course. But what do you see on the top of the rock tower?'

'I can see a tree.'

'And on top of the tree?'

'A large bird.'

'It's not a bird at all,' he concluded, 'and I shot it.'

He then pulled a wing out of a drawer.

'Is that the wing of a gigantic bat?' I asked.

'No,' he answered, 'it's the wing of a pterodactyl. Look at this book.'

He then showed me an illustration in a book that compared the wings of birds, bats and pterodactyls.

'This is incredible!' I cried because now I really believed him. 'How is it possible?'

'It seems that a volcanic action pushed up a huge area of rock millions of years ago. This area was protected and so the animals on this plateau continued to live. They never changed, and they're still there today.'

'Why don't you tell other scientists about your discoveries?'

'I told them about them but they laughed,' he said. 'Tonight there's going to be a lecture at the Zoological Institute Hall on "The Record of the Ages" by Mr Waldron. I'll be there. Come and you'll see the reaction of other scientists to my discoveries.'

I promised to come, and left Professor Challenger.

CHAPTER THREE

'Question!'

That evening I arrived at the Zoological Institute Hall. Outside there was a large crowd of people. Inside there were professors and also a large group of students. They were happy and noisy. Mr Waldron, some scientists and Professor Challenger sat at the front.

Mr Waldron began his lecture. He told us about the origin of our planet. He told us about the evolution of life from simple sea animals to fish and reptiles and finally to mammals.

Then he began to talk about the dinosaurs.

'Fortunately, those terrible reptiles were extinct long before humans appeared on this planet.'

'Question!' someone said in a loud voice.

Mr Waldron stopped for a moment, but then he continued, 'Those terrible reptiles which were extinct before the coming of man.'

'Question!' shouted someone again.

Mr Waldron looked with great surprise at the scientists near him. He then saw Professor Challenger with a smile on his face.

'Ah, I understand,' said Mr Waldron. 'It's my friend Professor Challenger,' and then he continued his lecture.

But it did not end here. Every time Mr Waldron talked about extinct prehistoric life, Professor Challenger interrupted him. Then the students began to shout, 'Question!' with the Professor.

'These interruptions must end!' shouted Mr Waldron angrily.

For a moment there was silence in the hall. Then Challenger stood up.

'I must ask you, Mr Waldron,' he said, 'to stop saying things that are not scientifically true.'

Some people began to shout, 'Send him home!', and others, 'I want to hear him!'

Professor Challenger sat down again and smiled. Mr Waldron finished his lecture quickly.

Finally, Professor Challenger had his chance to speak.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' he began, 'Mr Waldron is not a real scientist. He only explains our work to the general public. He is wrong when he says that certain animals are extinct. Nobody here believes me, but I am a prophet of science. I am like Galilee and Darwin, and I... (here there was a long interruption). The Professor walked forward and raised both hand. Everybody became silent.

'I won't say anymore. You can, however, test my ideas. Do you want to send somebody as your representative?'

Then, the famous scientist Professor Summerlee stood up.

'Are you referring to the discoveries that you made in the Amazon two years ago?' asked Professor Summerlee.

'Yes, I am,' replied Challenger.

'And why didn't Wallace, Bates and other famous explorers of that region see these things?' continued Summerlee.

'Perhaps, sir, you have confused the Thames with the Amazon. The Amazon is a much larger river,' answered Challenger. 'It's about 6,000 kilometres long. It's not strange that I saw things that they did not see.'

'Yes, of course,' continued Summerlee, 'I understand the difference: we can't test or prove your discoveries. Perhaps you can tell us the exact location of your discoveries.'

'I can't give that information now. Will you go on an expedition to test my discoveries?'

'Yes, I will,' answered Summerlee, and the crowd cheered.

'Then,' said Professor Challenger, 'you'll have all the information you need to go there. But you can't go alone. Who will go

with Professor Summerlee to the Amazon?'

This was a difficult moment for me, but I thought about Gladys.

'I will go!' I cried.

'Name! Name!' shouted the audience.

'My name is Edward Dunn Malone. I'm a journalist for the Daily Gazette,' I answered.

In front of me, there was another man standing.

'What's your name, sir?' asked Challenger.

'I'm Lord John Roxton,' he answered. 'I've already been up the Amazon. I know the area well.'

'Lord John Roxton is a famous hunter and traveller. He and Mr Malone will be perfect for this mission,' said Professor Challenger.

The meeting was over. I walked out of the hall into the night.

I was walking down the street when somebody touched my arm. It was Lord Roxton.

'Mr Malone,' he said, 'we'll be companions on this adventure. My house is near here. Come with me, I want to talk to you.'

We went to Lord Roxton's house. It was full of strange objects from around the world and the heads of wild animals. He gave me something to drink and a cigar to smoke. We sat down in comfortable armchairs and began to talk.

'Well,' he said, 'we did it, young man. I certainly didn't plan to go on this expedition. What about you?'

'No, not at all.'

'Can you shoot?' he asked.

'Quite well,' I answered.

Then he took out a rifle and said, 'This is a very good rifle. I used it against the slave traders 3 three years ago. Sometimes, young man, you must fight for human rights and justice. I fought my

own personal war against the slave traders in Peru. I killed many of them. In the end, I killed Pedro Lopez, their leader.'

He then took out another gun and gave it to me.

'So,' he continued, 'what do you know about Professor Challenger?'

'I met him for the first time today,' I answered.

'And how did you become interested in this expedition?' he asked.

I told him a little about my meeting with Professor Challenger, and he listened carefully. Then he pulled out a map of South America and put it on the table.

'I believe he told you the truth,' he said. 'I love South America. I've seen it all. I think it's the most wonderful place on this planet. Once you know it, you'll understand that anything is possible - anything. The Amazon River flows through a forest almost as big as Europe. Why can't there be something new and wonderful in such a place? And why can't we be the men to discover it?'

We talked a little more and then I left.

Finally, the expedition was ready, and Professor Summerlee, Lord John Roxton and I walked towards the boat. But before we got on the boat, we heard somebody shout. It was Professor Challenger.

'I have a few things to say,' he began. 'First, I have no reason to thank you. The truth is the truth, and your expedition has no importance to me. My directions and instructions are in this closed envelope. You must open it when you arrive at a town on the Amazon called Manaos, and only on the day and at the time which is written on the outside of the envelope. Is that clear? Mr Malone you can write anything you want in your letters to the newspaper. But you can't give any details about your exact destination. Goodbye, sir. After meeting you, I hate journalists a little less. Goodbye, Lord John. I can see that you don't know anything at all about science, but you'll

be able to hunt dinosaurs. And goodbye to you also, Professor Summerlee. If you can possibly learn anything, I'm sure this expedition will be good for you.'

After this, he turned and left.

CHAPTER FOUR

Into an Unknown World

We travelled across the Atlantic to the city of Para in Brazil. Here we hired a black guide named Zambo, who fortunately spoke some English. We also hired Gomez and Manuel, who were half Indian. They both knew the Amazon very well. Then we travelled by boat up the Amazon to the town of Manaos.

Finally, it was 15 July at 12 o'clock, the day and hour when we could open the envelope.

We were all standing around a table. Lord John picked up the envelope and opened it. He pulled out a piece of paper. He put it on the table, but there was nothing written on it. He turned it over, but there was nothing there. Professor Summerlee laughed.

'With this piece of paper Professor Challenger is telling us that this is all ridiculous, and that he's a fraud,' he cried. 'Now, we can return home and tell everybody that he's a terrible liar.'

Just then we heard someone say, 'Can I come in?'

There, to our great surprise, was Professor Challenger!

'I'm afraid I'm a few minutes late,' he said. 'Is everything ready for your journey?'

'We can start tomorrow,' I said,

'Good. You don't need a map now because I'm here.'

The next day we began our journey up the river in a boat called the Esmeralda. At the beginning the river was wide. It was like travelling on a lake. On the fourth day we turned into a tributary. Two days later we reached an Indian village. We got off the boat here, and, on 2 August, Professor Challenger sent the Esmeralda back to Manaos.

Some Indians built two canoes for us, and we took two more Indians with us. They were with Professor Challenger the first time. They seemed terrified to repeat the journey.

We got into our canoes and began to travel up the narrow river in the middle of the primeval forest. Fabulous tall trees stood over us. They were like the columns of a church. On the third day we heard a strange noise.

'What's that?' I asked.

'Drums,' said Lord John, 'war drums. I have heard them before.'

'Yes, sir, war drums,' said Gomez. 'Wild Indians. Bad ones not good ones. They watch us every mile of the way. They'll kill us when they can.'

The drums seemed to say, 'We'll kill you if we can. We'll kill you if we can.'

Our two professors were not afraid at all. They were too interested in the wonderful plants and animals around them, or they were too busy arguing about scientific theories.

That night we slept in the canoes in the middle of the river. We waited for an attack, but nothing happened.

The next day we arrived at some rapids about a mile long. These were the rapids where Professor Challenger lost most of his photos on his earlier journey. We carried the canoes around them. That night we were about ten miles above the rapids.

The next day we continued our journey until Professor Challenger said, 'Look at that palm tree there. That's the entrance to an unknown world.'

We pushed the canoes past the palm until we arrived at a shallow, transparent stream. It flowed through a low tunnel of green plants. The sound of the drums slowly disappeared, and the wild animals became less afraid of us.

On the third day we could no longer travel by canoe because the stream was not deep enough. We began our journey on foot.

The characteristics of the land changed. We began walking higher up. The tropical forest disappeared, and there were only palm trees.

After we left the canoes we walked for 120 miles. Finally we came to an area where there were no more trees. Then we came to a bamboo forest. It took us all day to cross it.

The next day we climbed up a hill. Suddenly, Professor Challenger saw a gigantic bird fly up slowly from the ground.

'Did you see? Did you see it, Summerlee?' he shouted.

'What do you think it was?' Summerlee asked.

'I believe it was a pterodactyl,' he answered.

'How absurd! It was just a big bird,' said Professor Summerlee.

Professor Challenger was too angry to speak and we continued our journey.

Lord John then came up to me. He was holding his binoculars.

'That was certainly not like any bird that I've ever seen,' he said to me.

We crossed another hill and then we saw the high red cliffs of Maple White's picture. They were about seven miles from our camp.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Rock Tower

That night we made our camp at the base of the cliffs. The high tower of rock was near us, and on top of it was one high tree.

'The pterodactyl that I shot was on that tree,' said Professor Challenger.

Professor Summerlee, for the first time, seemed to believe Professor Challenger.

'But,' continued Professor Challenger, 'we still have a big problem. How can we get to the plateau? There must be a way up because Maple White arrived there. During my last expedition I explored to the east.'

'Well,' said Lord John, 'we should explore to the west.'

The next day we walked west, and we arrived at Maple White's old camp. There we found an indication left by Maple White. It pointed west.

Soon we came to an area of bamboo under the cliffs. In the middle of this I saw something white. We cut away some of the bamboo, and discovered a skull and then a skeleton. The skeleton had clothes and boots. It was obviously a European.

'Who is this?' asked Lord John. 'Every bone in his body is broken.'

'I know who he is,' said Professor Challenger. 'It's James Clover, Maple White's friend. Maple White didn't come here alone.'

'It's also clear,' said Lord John, 'that he fell from the top of the cliffs, or somebody pushed him.'

We were all silent. Did someone throw him? We began to think of the possible dangers in that unknown land above us.

We continued walking until we saw an arrow marked on the rocks of the cliffs.

'Maple White again,' said Professor Challenger.

We continued for another five miles and came to an opening in the cliffs. There was another arrow pointing higher up. We followed this arrow and came to a cave. There was another arrow there. Lord John had an electric torch, and we entered the cave. But the cave was blocked by large rocks. This was the way Maple White arrived at the top. But now we could not use it.

The next day we walked twenty-two miles around the base of the cliffs, and made camp again.

Lord John shot a large animal called an agouti for our dinner. We gave half to the Indians, and we cooked half of it over a fire. That night there was no moon and it was very dark. Then something incredible happened. Suddenly we heard the sound of gigantic wings from above. Then, for a second, in the light of the fire we saw a long neck, two red eyes and a beak with teeth. Then this creature flew away with our dinner. It was a pterodactyl! We were all shocked and Summerlee was the first to speak.

'Professor Challenger,' he said very seriously, 'I must apologise. I was wrong.'

The next day we continued to walk around the cliffs. However, we didn't find a way up to the top. Then, after five days we arrived at our first camp again. When we went to bed we were very depressed.

The next morning Professor Challenger was very happy.

'I have found a way to the top,' he said.

'How?' I asked.

Professor Challenger pointed to the top of the tower.

'Yes,' I said, 'we can get to the top of that tower. But there is a gap between the tower and the plateau.'

'When we are on the top I will show you,' said Professor Challenger.

With the help of ropes, we climbed to the top.

Professor Challenger looked at the tall tree on the top and said, 'This tree will save us.'

'A bridge!' cried Lord John.

'Exactly, my friends, a bridge!' said Challenger. 'And now our strong young friend will cut down the tree.'

He then gave me an axe. I began to cut down the tree. It finally fell down, and made a bridge for us. The four of us then crossed. We were in the wonderful new world. It was a moment of victory. We walked forward a little bit and then we heard a loud noise. We returned to the edge of the cliff. Our bridge was gone. Then we saw Gomez on the other side.

'I pushed the tree down,' he shouted. 'You can never get down now. You'll die up there! I am Lopez's brother, the man Lord John shot five years ago. Now I can die happy.'

Gomez began to go down the tower, but Lord John shot him.

We were certainly trapped. We called Zambo, and with the ropes we pulled up some food.

The next morning we made our camp. Then we began our exploration of the plateau, which we called Maple White Land. Lord John walked in front. After we walked for a couple of minutes, he stopped.

'Look at this!' he said, 'these are the tracks of the biggest bird in the world!'

'Not a bird,' said Professor Challenger.

'What then?' asked Lord John.

'A dinosaur,' Professor Challenger answered.

We continued walking and came to an opening in the forest. There in front of us were five of the most incredible creatures in the

world - two adults and three young ones. They had skin like a reptile. They looked like gigantic kangaroos.

Lord John held his gun. The two professors were excited and happy. Unconsciously, they held each other's hand and watched like two young children.

'What will they say in England about this?' Professor Summerlee asked.

'I know exactly what they will say,' Professor Challenger replied. 'They'll say that we are frauds.'

'And if we take photographs?'

'They'll say that they are fakes,' said Challenger.

'And if we bring back a dinosaur?' said Summerlee.

'Well, then, perhaps, they'll believe us,' said Challenger.

'Iguanodons,' said Summerlee. 'You can find their fossil footprints all over the South of England. They lived there millions of years ago, but conditions changed. Here conditions haven't changed and these animals have lived.'

We continued walking. Finally we came to a very large hole. At the bottom of this hole was a small area of water. Around this water were the pterodactyls' nests. It was a horrible thing to see. Professor Challenger went too close and they saw us. They began to attack us. We were very fortunate to survive.

That night, in our camp, Lord John came to talk to me.

'Malone,' he said, 'do you remember the place where those pterodactyls were?'

'Very clearly.'

'It was a kind of volcanic hole.'

'Yes, exactly.'

'It had a blue colour.'

'Yes, but why?'

'Oh, nothing, nothing,' he answered and walked away.

CHAPTER SIX

I Was the Hero

The next day we stayed in the camp. We were very tired from our adventures. That night we heard horrible cries from the forest.

'What was that?' I said quietly.

'We've just heard,' replied Challenger, 'the sounds of a prehistoric tragedy. Some carnivorous dragon has killed an iguanodon.'

Then Summerlee raised his hand.

'Quiet!' he cried. 'I hear something.'

Some giant creature was coming towards our camp.

'I think it's going to jump into our camp!' I said, preparing my rifle.

'Don't shoot!' said Lord John quietly.

'If it jumps into our camp it'll kill us all,' said Summerlee.

'I have an idea,' cried Lord John.

Then he did something incredibly courageous. He picked up a burning torch from the fire. Then he went quickly out of the area of our camp. He ran towards the creature. In that moment we could see it in the light. It was all covered with blood. A moment later, the horrible creature ran away.

'I knew it!' said Lord John laughing. 'That monster is afraid of fire.'

The next day, we found pieces of iguanodon on the ground. The two professors examined them carefully.

'In my opinion,' said Professor Challenger, 'that horrible creature was an Allosaurus.'

That evening we returned to the camp and began to discuss our future plans.

'Tomorrow,' said Professor Summerlee, 'we should try to leave this land.'

'What?' said Professor Challenger. 'We must explore it. I am surprised at you, Professor Summerlee.'

'Professor Challenger,' responded Professor Summerlee, 'If we are killed, nobody in London will ever know about our discoveries. We can return to London and then prepare a larger expedition. Now we must leave this plateau.'

'Perhaps you're right,' answered Challenger, 'but first we must at least make a map of Maple White Land.'

'That will take too much time,' said Summerlee. 'There are no high mountains. How can we see all of the plateau?'

Then I had an idea. There was a very large tree near us.

'I can go up to the top of this tree,' I said. 'There I can see all of the plateau and make a map.'

I began to climb the tree. After a minute or two, I saw something incredible: a face. The face of a horrible red apeman was looking at me. It made angry noises at me, but then it disappeared quickly. I was shocked, but I decided to continue to climb.

When I arrived at the top, I looked around. In the distance I saw a lake. Then I drew a map of Maple White Land.

When I came down again, I described the apeman to my friends.

'Perhaps,' said Challenger, 'It was a kind of primitive man between ape and man: the missing link! We must discover more about it.'

'No,' said Summerlee, 'we must leave this land. Now we have the map, we can try to return to civilisation.'

That night I was too excited to sleep after my adventure. I thought about Gladys. She wanted me to be a hero. I could go to explore the central lake alone. I could go during the night and be back before morning.

I left the camp quietly and walked towards the lake.

There was a bright moon and I could see well. I arrived at the edge of the lake at one o'clock. I climbed up on a large rock and looked around. I could see some cliffs on the other side of the plateau. There were a series of caves in these cliffs. Now I could see lights in them! So, there were humans on the plateau!

I could see many creatures in the lake. One had a long neck and swam in the water. Then I heard the sound of a large animal walking very near me. I saw it. It was very familiar to me. But why? Then I remembered, it was the creature in Maple White's drawing - a stegosaurus.

When I looked at my watch again, it was two o'clock. It was time to return to the camp. I walked and thought about my great discoveries. Then, after a few minutes, I heard something behind me. The sound came closer. I turned and saw that horrible monster, the Allosaurus. I decided to run, but the creature began to run too. He came closer. I was terrified. I screamed. And then I heard a crash - I was falling down into a deep hole, and then everything became dark.

I was unconscious for a few minutes. When I woke up, I smelled something horrible. Around me there were large pieces of old meat. I was in a trap for dinosaurs, a trap made by humans!

I slowly climbed out of the hole, and continued my walk to the camp. Suddenly, I heard the sound of a rifle. I ran towards the camp, and shouted. Nobody answered.

When I arrived I saw blood on the ground. All my friends were gone. I was alone in that world.

But then I remembered Zambo. I went to the edge of the cliff. Zambo was still there at his camp waiting for us. There was an

Indian with him.

Zambo climbed up to the top of the tower of rock. When he was opposite me I threw a letter to him for the Indian to take to the nearest village. Maybe he could bring ropes to help us climb down.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Prisoners of the Apemen

I went back to our camp and tried to get some rest. It was horrible to try and sleep here, but it was safer than the jungle! The thought that I could die in this place made me very unhappy. The light from Zambo's fire was the only hope of escape from this dangerous world.

The next morning Sir John woke me up.

'Quick! Quick, young man!' he said.

'What? What is it?' I cried.

'Don't stop to think or talk! Just get the rifles and some food!' he responded.

In a moment we had everything and began running away. Finally, we found a place to hide and stopped to rest. I told him quickly about my adventures the night before.

'But what happened to you?' I asked him.

'Well,' he began, 'early yesterday morning hundreds of apes started jumping down from the trees above us. They captured us all and took us to where they live. They tied Summerlee and me up. But strangely enough, Challenger looked a lot like the king of the apemen! They gave him special treatment. He stayed with the king and ate fruit. You see, this plateau is divided between the apemen and the Indians. The caves you saw with lights belong to the Indians. There's a constant war between the two groups. In fact, yesterday, the apemen brought back twelve prisoners. They pulled the arms off of two of them and killed them. It was a horrible thing to see.

We also discovered that they have a special ceremony. They take their prisoners to the edge of the cliff and then they throw them off. That is what happened to James Clover, Maple White's friend. Yesterday, they pushed four of the Indians off the cliffs.

Early this morning I escaped and went to our camp. There I got you and the guns, and here we are.'

After we rested and talked, we ran quickly to where the apemen lived.

We arrived and hid behind some trees. I saw something that I will never forget. There was an open area of grass near the edge of the cliffs. The small houses of the apemen were in the trees, and they were made of leaves.

In this area there were about one hundred apemen. In front of them there was a little group of Indians and Professor Summerlee.

Then I saw two other strange individuals. One of them was Professor Challenger, and the other was the king of the apemen. Both of them were short with big chests and large heads. They were both covered with hair. The big difference between the two was that the Professor's hair was black and the king's hair was red.

Then the apemen took one of the Indians and pushed him off the cliffs. They waited for their next victim.

This time it was Summerlee. Two of the apemen caught him by the arms. Challenger turned to the king. He tried to convince him not to kill Summerlee. The king pushed Challenger away and then, in that moment, Lord John shot him.

'Shoot them! Shoot, young man, shoot!' he cried.

Professor Challenger and I helped Summerlee to run away. Lord John continued to shoot the apemen. We ran and ran. Finally we arrived at our camp. We thought we were safe, but then we heard the sound of feet. Lord John went outside with his rifle and found the surviving Indians. They were very frightened. One of them, we thought, was their chief.

We could not stay in the camp. The apemen knew where it was. We left with the Indians and found another place to hide.

That night, before we slept, Professor Challenger came to me.

'Mr Malone,' he said very seriously, 'you won't write that I looked like the king of the apemen?'

'Professor, I'll only write the truth,' I answered.

'Very good,' said Professor Challenger, and went to sleep.

The next morning we decided to go to the Indian caves. We left the forest and walked across an open area. When we arrived at the lake, our Indian friends began to shout with joy. A large number of canoes were coming towards us. When they arrived on land, an older Indian came and embraced the young chief. They had spears and bows and arrows. They were there to save their young chief from the apemen. Then the young chief began to talk to his men. He told them that now was the time to attack and defeat the apemen for the last time. They were all together and they had the help of these strange men with great magic - our rifles. We, too, decided to go with them the next day to fight the apemen.

That evening we made our camp by the lake. We saw many strange creatures in the water with long necks. One of them came out of the water onto the beach.

'Plesiosaurus! It's a plesiosaurus!' cried Summerlee. 'My dear Challenger, we're the luckiest zoologists that have ever lived!'

Lord John was not interested in the wonderful animals. Again, he noticed the blue colour of the ground near some volcanic holes.

The next day more Indians came. Now there were about four or five hundred of them. We all went towards the forest to fight our war against the apemen.

Before we arrived, the apemen attacked us. In the open, it was easy to defeat them. When we went in the forest it was more difficult. But, with the help of the rifles, in the end the Indians won.

After the battle Challenger turned to us and said, 'We've seen one of the typical great battles of history. What, my friends, is the victory of one nation over another nation? It's not important. The result is always the same. The most important victories of human history were different. They were the victories of primitive man over

tigers, of primitive man over apemen. Now the future on this plateau belongs to man.'

CHAPTER EIGHT

Back to London

After the victory, the Indians invited us to stay with them in their caves. Lord John did not think this was a good idea. So, we made our camp near their caves. We now had time to observe the animals of the lake and the plateau.

There were many fascinating things to see. But we wanted to go back home. The Indians never helped us. It was clear that they wanted us to stay. With the magic of the rifles, they felt safe. Every time we asked them for rope or wood to build a bridge, they just smiled.

Finally, the young chief came to us. He gave us a piece of bark. We took it back to our camp and studied it.

'It's very important,' I said. 'He was very serious when he gave it to us.'

'Maybe it's a joke,' Summerlee suggested.

'It's clearly some kind of writing,' said Challenger.

'It looks like a puzzle,' said Lord John. Then he grabbed the piece of bark.

'I've got it! he cried, 'How many marks are there? Eighteen. Well, there are eighteen caves above us.'

'He pointed to the caves when he gave it to me,' I said.

'Well, then it's certain. This is a map of the caves. Here's a cross.

What is the cross for? It's next to a cave that is longer than the other ones.'

'It's a cave that goes to the other side of the cliff,' I cried.

'I believe our young friend has solved the problem,' Challenger said.

We got some torches and went to explore the cave.

We didn't light the torches at first. We walked in the dark because we did not want the Indians to see us. After walking a long way we lit the torches, and walked quickly. Then we arrived at a wall of rock. We all became sad.

'Maybe this is the wrong cave,' I said.

'No, young man,' Lord John said, 'this is the right cave.'

I looked at the mark on the map again, and I cried with joy.

'Follow me! Follow me!' I shouted.

We ran back in the cave.

'Here,' I said, 'is where we lit the torches. But the cave has two arms. We didn't see the right one.'

We walked back a short distance and found a large black opening. We went quickly down this arm of the cave. After a while we saw a light. We ran towards it. We were at an opening on the cliff face.

'It's the moon!' cried Lord John.

He was right. We looked down from the opening and saw that we were nearer to the ground than we were to the top. It wasn't going to be easy to get down, but with our rope we could do it. We then returned to our camp.

The next evening we secretly took our things to the cave. Professor Challenger wanted to bring a large box but we managed to get it down.

We arrived at our old camp. There was Zambo and about twenty Indians. They helped us to get back to Para.

I will not describe our voyage back to England. I will only say that the news of our great discoveries reached England before our arrival. We received many telegrams asking us for information. But we decided not to tell the newspapers anything about our

discoveries. First we wanted to give a complete description of our discoveries to the members of the Zoological Institute.

About five thousand people came to the Queen's Hall to hear about our adventures. It was a wonderful evening. When we arrived in the room, the audience cheered for a long time. Then Professor Summerlee began his presentation. He talked about the new insects and plants. He told everyone about the prehistoric animals from the Jurassic period. He described the iguanodon, the pterodactyls, the allosaurus and the stegosaurus. He also talked about the apemen and the Indians of the plateau.

At the end of his talk, a scientist named Professor Illingworth stood up.

'This is all very wonderful, certainly,' he said, 'but they have no real proof!'

The audience began to shout, and Professor Challenger stood up.

'Well, sir,' Professor Challenger said, 'Summerlee has his collection of plants and insects. Doesn't that convince you?'

'No, it doesn't.'

'We have some photographs.'

'Photographs can be faked,' Professor Illingworth said.

'Do you want to see the creatures for yourself?' Professor Challenger asked.

'Yes, of course,' Professor Illingworth answered.

'And you will accept that as proof?'

'Certainly,' answered Illingworth.

At that moment, Professor Challenger made a signal. Zambo and I came up to the stage. We carried a large, heavy box which we put down. Professor Challenger took off the cover. He looked into the box and said, 'Come out, you pretty thing!' Then, a young pterodactyl

jumped up onto the edge of the box. Everybody was shocked. Some ladies screamed. Suddenly, the pterodactyl flew up over the heads of the audience. It flew around in large circles.

'Shut the windows! Shut the windows!' Professor Challenger shouted.

But, there was an open window, and the pterodactyl flew out.

Now everybody believed us, and the crowd carried us out of the hall on their shoulders. We were heroes.

But what about Gladys? Now, I really was a hero. Well, when I arrived in England, there was no telegram from her. I was very worried and went directly to her house. When I went inside, she was at the piano.

'Gladys!' I cried, 'Gladys!'

She looked at me with surprise. She was different.

'Gladys!' I cried. 'What's wrong? You're my Gladys - Gladys Hungerton?'

'No,' she said, 'I'm Gladys Potts. This is my husband.'

Life is certainly absurd. I said hello to a short man with red hair.

'I told my husband about us,' Gladys continued. 'We have no secrets. Anyway, you left me for your adventure. So I don't think you really loved me very much.'

I turned to leave, but then I decided to ask Gladys's husband a question.

'How did you win her?' I asked. 'Did you go to the North Pole? Did you travel with pirates?'

'That's a little personal,' he replied.

'Well, just one more question then,' I continued. 'What's your job?'

'I work in an office,' he replied.

I left Gladys and her new husband. I felt angry, but I also laughed at the absurdity of the situation.

I will now describe one more scene before I finish. Yesterday, Professor Summerlee, Professor Challenger and I had dinner at Lord John's house. After dinner, Lord John spoke to us.

'Well,' he said, 'there's one thing I want to tell you. Do you remember that I noticed a strange blue colour around the volcanic holes? Well, I've seen volcanic holes like that only in South Africa near the great diamond mines of Kimberley.'

Then he opened a little box and took out about thirty stones.

'Well, I found these near the hole where we saw the pterodactyls. I didn't tell you about them earlier because I wanted to be certain. Anyway, an expert looked at them. He said they have a price of at least two hundred thousand pounds. Of course, we will divide this money equally. Well, Challenger, what will you do with your fifty thousand?'

'I think,' Professor Challenger said, 'that I'll build a private museum. That has always been one of my dreams.'

'And you, Summerlee?'

'I'll stop teaching and work on all my collections,' he replied.

'I'll use my part of the money,' Lord John said, 'to prepare another expedition to our plateau. And you, young man, of course, will use your money to get married.'

'Not now,' I said sadly. 'But if you want me, I'll be happy to come with you.'

Lord John said nothing, but he offered me his hand.

- THE END -

Hope you have enjoyed the reading!

