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Книга предназначена для изучающих английский язык на уверенном продолжающем уровне.

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АНГЛИЙСКИЙ В АДАПТАЦИИ: ЧТЕНИЕ И АУДИРОВАНИЕ

**Артур Конан Дойль**

**ЗАТЕРЯННЫЙ МИР = THE LOST WORLD**

**3-й уровень**

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**ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE**



**THE LOST  
WORLD**

## CHAPTER I

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### There Are Heroisms All Round Us

**M**r. Hungerton, her father, really was the most tactless person I've ever met, — *a fluffy, feathery, untidy cockatoo of a man*, perfectly good-natured, but absolutely centred upon his own self. If anything could have driven me from Gladys, it would have been the thought of such a father-in-law. I am convinced that he really believed in his heart that I came round to the Chestnuts three days a week for the pleasure of his company.

For an hour or more that evening I listened to his monotonous speculations about bad money driving out good, the token value of silver, the depreciation of the rupee, and the true standards of exchange.

“Suppose,” he cried, “that all the debts in the world were called up simultaneously, and immediate payment insisted upon, — what under our present conditions would happen then?”

I answered that I would be a ruined man. He jumped from his chair, reproved me for my habitual light-mindedness, which made it impossible for him to discuss any reasonable subject in my presence, and ran out of the room to dress for a Masonic meeting.

At last I was alone with Gladys, and the most important moment for me had come!

She sat with that proud, delicate profile of hers outlined against the red curtain. How beautiful she was! We had been friends, quite good friends; but I could never get beyond the same friendship which I might have established with one of my fellow-reporters upon *the Gazette*, — perfectly frank, perfectly kindly, and perfectly unsexual.

Gladys was full of every womanly quality. Some thought her to be cold and hard; but I was of a different opinion. That delicately bronzed skin, almost oriental in its colouring, that black hair, the large eyes, the full but exquisite lips, — all the signs of passion were there. But I was sadly conscious that up to now I had never found the secret of drawing it forth. However, come what might, I should have done with suspense and bring matters to a head tonight. She could refuse me, but it's better to be a cast-off lover than an accepted brother.

Being deeply in thoughts I was about to break the long and uneasy silence, when Gladys started talking.

"I have a strong feeling that you are going to propose, Ned. I do wish you wouldn't. I like this state of the things."

"Now, how did you know that I was going to propose?" I asked in wonder.

"Women always know. Oh, Ned, our friendship has been so good and so pleasant! What a pity to spoil it! Don't you feel how wonderful it is that a young man and a young woman can talk face to face as we have talked?"

“I don’t know, Gladys. You see, that does not satisfy me in the least. I want my arms round you, and your head on my breast, and — oh, Gladys, I want...”

She had jumped rapidly out of her chair, as she saw signs that I proposed to demonstrate some of my wants. “You’ve spoiled everything, Ned,” she said. “It is such a pity! Why can’t you control yourself?”

“It wasn’t my fault,” I said emotionally. “It’s nature. It’s love.”

“Well, perhaps if both love, it may be different. I have never felt it.”

“But with your beauty, with your soul! Oh, Gladys, you were made for love! You must love!”

“One must wait till it comes.”

“But why can’t you love me, Gladys? Is it my appearance, or what?”

She softened a little. She put forward a hand, pressed back my head. Then she looked into my upturned face with a very sad smile.

“No, it isn’t that,” she said at last. “You’re not a conceited boy by nature, and so I can safely tell you it is not that. It’s deeper.”

“My character?”

She nodded severely.

“What can I do to mend it? Do sit down and talk it over. No, really, I won’t if you’ll only sit down!”

She looked at me with a wondering distrust which was much more to my mind than her wholehearted confidence. She sat down.

“Now tell me what’s wrong with me?”

“I’m in love with somebody else,” said she. It was my turn to jump out of my chair.

“It’s nobody in particular,” she explained, laughing at the expression of my face, “only an ideal. I’ve never met the kind of man I mean.”

“Tell me about him.”

“Oh, he might look very much like you. But he must be a man who could do, who could act, who could look Death in the face and have no fear of him, a man of great deeds and strange experiences. It is never a man that I will love, but always the glories he has won; for they would be reflected upon me. Think of Richard Burton<sup>1</sup>! When I read his wife’s life of him I could understand her love!”

She looked so beautiful in her enthusiasm that I nearly brought down the whole level of the interview. I gripped myself hard, and went on with the argument.

“We can’t all be like Burton,” said I, “besides, we don’t get the chance, — at least, I never had the chance.”

“But chances are all around you. It is the feature of the kind of man I mean that he makes his own chances. You can’t hold him back. I’ve never met him, and yet I seem to know him so well. There are heroisms all round us waiting to be done. It’s for men to do them, and for women to reserve their love as a reward for such men.”

---

<sup>1</sup> Sir Richard Francis Burton (1821–1890), English explorer, anthropologist, and translator known for his travels and explorations in Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

“I’d do anything to please you.”

“But you shouldn’t do it merely to please me. You should do it because you can’t help yourself, because it’s natural to you. I dare say I am merely a foolish woman with a young girl’s fancies. And yet it is so real with me, so entirely part of my very self, that I cannot help acting upon it. If I marry, I do want to marry a famous man!”

“Why should you not?” I cried. “Give me a chance, and see if I will take it! Besides, as you say, men ought to MAKE their own chances, and not wait until they are given.”

“Why not?” she said. “You have everything a man could have, — youth, health, strength, education, energy. I was sorry you spoke. And now I am glad — so glad — if it wakens these thoughts in you!”

“And if I do —”

Her dear hand rested like warm velvet upon my lips. “Not another word, Sir! You should have been at the office for evening duty half an hour ago; only I didn’t have the heart to remind you. Some day, perhaps, when you have won your place in the world, we shall talk it over again.”

And so it was that I found myself that foggy November evening pursuing the Camberwell tram, inspired, and with the eager determination not to waste another day before I could find some deed which was worthy of my lady. But who — who in all this wide world could ever have imagined the incredible shape which that deed was to take, or the strange steps by which I was led to the doing of it?

And, after all, this opening chapter will seem to the reader to have nothing to do with my narrative; and yet there would have been no narrative without it, for it is only when a man goes out into the world with the thought that there are heroisms all round him, and with the desire all alive in his heart to follow any which may come within sight of him, that he breaks away as I did from the life he knows, and ventures forth into the wonderful mystic twilight land where the great adventures and the great rewards lie.

You should have seen me, then, at the office of *the Daily Gazette*, on the staff of which I was a most insignificant unit, with the settled determination that very night, if possible, to find the quest worthy of my Gladys! Was it hardness, was it selfishness, that made her ask me to risk my life for her own glorification? Such thoughts may come to middle age; but never to an ardent man in his early twenties in the fever of his first love.

## CHAPTER II

### Try Your Luck with Professor Challenger



always liked McArde, the old, round-backed, red-headed news editor, and I rather hoped that he liked me.

The old man nodded as I entered the room, and he pushed his spectacles far up on his forehead.

“Well, Mr. Malone, from all I hear, you seem to be doing very well,” said he kindly.

I thanked him.

“The coal mine explosion was excellent. So was the Southwark fire. You have the true descriptive touch. What did you want to see me about?”

“To ask a favour.”

He looked alarmed. “Tut, tut! What is it?”

“Do you think, Sir, that you could possibly send me on some mission for the paper? Anything that will have adventure and danger in it. I really would do my very best. The more difficult it is, the better it would suit me. I would do my best to put it through and get you some good material.”

“You seem very anxious to lose your life.”

“To justify my life, Sir.”

“Dear me, Mr. Malone, I’m afraid the day for this sort of thing is rather past. The big blank spaces in the map are all being filled in, and there’s no room for romance anywhere. Wait a bit, though!” he added, with a sudden smile upon his face. “Talking of the blank spaces of the map gives me an idea. What about exposing a fraud — a modern Munchausen — and making him ridiculous? You could show him up as the liar that he is! How do you like it?”

“Anything — anywhere —”

McArdle was plunged in thought for some minutes.

“I wonder whether you could get on friendly terms with the fellow,” he said, at last. “You seem to have a sort

of genius for establishing relations with people. So why don't you try your luck with Professor Challenger?"

I looked a little shocked.

"Challenger!" I cried. "Professor Challenger, the famous zoologist! Wasn't he the man who broke the skull of Blundell, of *the Telegraph*?"

The news editor smiled grimly.

"I don't suppose he can always be so violent as that. I'm thinking that Blundell got him at the wrong moment. You may have better luck."

"I really know nothing about him," said I. "I am not very clear yet why I am to interview this gentleman. What has he done?"

"Went to South America on an expedition two years ago. Came back last year. Had undoubtedly been to South America, but refused to say exactly where. Began to tell his adventures in a vague way, but somebody started to pick holes, and he just shut up like an oyster. Something wonderful happened — or the man's a champion liar. Had some damaged photographs, said to be fakes."

I walked across to *the Savage Club*, but instead of turning into it I leaned upon the railings of Adelphi Terrace and gazed thoughtfully for a long time at the brown, oily river. I can always think most clearly in the open air. Then I had what I can only regard as an inspiration. As a Pressman, I felt sure from what I had been told that I could never hope to get into touch with this Professor. But he was a fanatic in science. Was there not an exposed margin there upon which he might be accessible? I would try.

I entered the club. It was just after eleven, and the big room was rather full, though the rush had not yet set in. I noticed a tall, thin man seated in an armchair by the fire. He turned as I drew my chair up to him. It was Tarp Henry, of the staff of *Nature*. I plunged instantly into my subject.

“What do you know of Professor Challenger?”

“Challenger?” He gathered his brows. “Challenger was the man who came with some cock-and-bull story from South America.”

“What story?”

“Oh, it was nonsense about some unusual animals he had discovered. I believe he has retracted since. Anyhow, he has suppressed it all. He gave an interview to *Reuter’s*, and there was such a howl that he saw it wouldn’t do.”

“Anything more about Challenger?”

“Well, I’m too detached to talk scandal, and yet at scientific conversations I HAVE heard something of Challenger, for he is one of those men whom nobody can ignore. He’s as clever as they make them — a full-charged battery of force and energy, but a quarrelsome faddist, and unscrupulous at that. He had gone the length of faking some photographs over the South American business.”

“You say he is a faddist. What is his particular fad?”

“He has a thousand, but the latest is something about Weissmann and Evolution. He had a fearful row about it in Vienna, I believe.”

“Can’t you tell me the point?”

“Not at the moment, but a translation of the proceedings exists. We have it filed at the office. Would you care to come?”

“It’s just what I want. I have to interview the fellow, and I need some lead-up to him. I’ll go with you now, if it is not too late.”

Half an hour later I was seated in the newspaper office with a huge volume in front of me, which had been opened at the article “Weissmann versus Darwin,” with the subheading, “Spirited Protest at Vienna. Lively Proceedings.” I was unable to follow the whole argument, but it was evident that the English Professor had handled his subject in a very aggressive fashion, and had thoroughly annoyed his Continental colleagues.

“Nothing else I can do?” said my help-mate.

“Well, yes; I want to write to him. If I could write the letter here, and use your address it would give atmosphere.”

“We’ll have the fellow round here making a row and breaking the furniture.”

“No, no; you’ll see the letter — nothing contentious, I assure you.”

“Well, that’s my chair and desk. You’ll find paper there.”

When it was finished I read it aloud to Tarp with some pride in my work.

“*Dear professor Challenger,*” it said. “As a humble student of Nature, I have always taken the most profound interest in your speculations as to the differences

between Darwin and Weissmann. I have recently had a chance to refresh my memory by re-reading —”

“You infernal liar!” murmured Tarp Henry.

“— by re-reading your masterly speech at Vienna. That outstanding statement seems to be the last word in the matter. There is one sentence in it, however — namely: ‘I protest strongly against the insufferable and entirely dogmatic assertion that each separate id is a microcosm possessed of a historical architecture developed slowly through the series of generations.’ Have you no desire, in view of later research, to modify this statement? With your permission, I would ask the favour of an interview, as I feel strongly upon the subject, and have certain suggestions which I could only elaborate in a personal conversation. With your consent, I trust to have the honour of calling at eleven o’clock the day after tomorrow (Wednesday) morning.

“I remain, Sir, with assurances of profound respect,  
yours very truly,

*Edward D. Malone.*”

“But what do you mean to do?”

“To get there. Once I am in his room I may see some opening. I may even go the length of open confession. If he is a sportsman he will be tickled.”

“Tickled, indeed! He’s much more likely to do the tickling. Well, goodbye. I’ll have the answer for you here on Wednesday morning — if he ever answers you. Perhaps it would be best for you if you never heard from the fellow at all.”