

## CHAPTER 2

**“W**ELL, HERE WE ARE, MISS,” SAID ALLNUTT, AS HE WIPED the sweat from his brow. “Safe and sound. The question now is, what do we do next? I mean, we have enough tinned food and water for a few months... How long do you think this war will go on, miss?”

Rose, who was lost in her thoughts, said nothing. It was clear that Allnutt wanted to remain hidden in the backwater until the war was over. But Rose had other ideas. She wanted revenge. She wanted the Germans to pay for what they had done.

“I suppose it all depends on how soon the British soldiers find us,” Allnutt continued. “There are British troops based in the Congo, but they can’t cross the lake into German Central Africa. Not with the Queen Louisa there.”

“The Queen Louisa?” Rose repeated.

“Yes,” said Allnutt. “The Queen Louisa is the hundred-ton German steamship that patrols the lake. The Germans keep a huge gun on board called a six-pounder. It looks a bit like a small cannon. If it wasn’t for the Queen Louisa, von Hanneken, the leader of the German army, wouldn’t last a month here.”

“We have to help the British defeat the Germans!” said Rose suddenly.

Allnutt looked surprised. “What do you mean, miss?”

Rose thought for a moment. “Allnutt, this river, the Ulanga, runs into the lake, doesn’t it?”

“Well, yes, miss, it does,” replied Allnutt. “But there’s no way we can get to the lake in this boat, if that’s what you’re thinking.”

“Why not?” wondered Rose.

“Rapids, miss. Rapids, rocks and cataracts. There are 160 kilometres of rapids separating us from the lake. Even if we managed to get past the rapids, we’d have to cross the Bora Delta to enter the lake. We’d never make it in this boat.”

“But we have to do something!” said Rose. She looked around the boat and her gaze fell on a stack of red boxes. “What’s in those boxes?”

