

CHAPTER 7

I SEARCHED THE WOODS SURROUNDING OUR CAMP AND CALLED OUT for my companions, but no one answered. What had become of my friends? Had they been attacked by wild animals? None of our possessions were missing and even the rifles had been left behind. I searched the forest again, but found no animal tracks. An hour later, I returned to the camp. Was I going to die alone in this terrible place? Then I remembered Zambo, down at the bottom of the cliff.

I peered over the edge of the cliff and saw our faithful servant cooking a meal over a fire. Mojo sat nearby him. I waved my hands and shouted. Zambo looked up, waved back and then climbed to the top of the rock. He listened to my story with great concern.

'The evil spirits got them, master,' he said. 'You must come down or they will get you too.'

'How will I get down?' I asked.

'We need more rope,' said Zambo. 'I will tell Mojo to go to his village and get more rope. The other two have already gone to get help.'

'All right,' I said.

Zambo returned to his camp, and I returned to mine. I spent the rest of the day writing about my adventures of the night before. When night came, I closed the thorny gate of the camp and lit three fires in a triangle. I ate dinner, and then fell into a deep sleep.

In the early morning, just as the sun was rising, I felt a hand touch my arm. I opened my eyes with a start and saw Lord John kneeling beside me! He was pale and wide-eyed; his face was scratched and bloody, and his clothes were torn.

I stared at him in amazement, but he gave me no chance to ask questions.

'Quick, young fellow,' he cried, as he raced around the camp filling bags with provisions. 'Get the rifles, get the cartridges, fill up your pockets! Get some food! Don't stop to think, every moment counts!'

Still half asleep, I ran into the woods after Lord John, with a rifle under each arm and bags of food in my hands. He stopped at a thick clump of bushes and quickly took cover. I did the same.

