

'I'm afraid I'm going to need more proof, Professor,' I said.

'All right,' said Challenger, 'then I'll continue with my story. Once I'd seen Maple White's dinosaur sketch, I decided to explore the area further. I asked two of the Indians to guide me to the red cliffs that Maple White had drawn in his book. They were reluctant at first; the Indians believe that evil spirits called *Curupuri* haunt the cliffs, but I persuaded them to help me. After a long and difficult journey up the river and through the forest, we finally arrived at the red cliffs.'

Challenger removed a photograph from his desk drawer and placed it on the desk. The photograph was badly damaged, but I could still see the outline of the red cliffs.

'Unfortunately, our boat overturned on the return journey, and my camera and film were ruined so I don't have much proof of what I saw,' he explained. 'I only have a couple of damaged photos, but everyone thinks they're fake.'

Challenger showed me another photo, this one of a strange bird in an enormous tree.

'What is that?' I asked. 'A bird?'

The professor shook his head. 'No, it isn't a bird. I shot it so that I would have proof of my experiences.'

'You have it here then?' I asked.

'I had it,' said Challenger. 'Unfortunately it was lost in the same boat accident that ruined my photos... All I have left is part of its wing...'

Challenger reached into a leather bag and pulled out the upper part of what looked like the wing of a large bat.

'That's a bat wing!' I exclaimed.

The professor looked at me squarely. 'This wing belongs to a pterodactyl, a flying reptile of the Jurassic period.'

Challenger opened a book and showed me an illustration of a pterodactyl. The wing looked exactly like the wing that was on the desk.

Suddenly, there was no doubt in my mind that the professor was telling the truth about what he'd seen. I told him that I believed him and he leaned back in his chair and smiled warmly.

'But where did Maple White see the dinosaur?' I asked.

'I think he managed to climb to the top of the cliffs... I didn't

