

CHAPTER 2

ON WEDNESDAY MORNING, I ARRIVED AT MY OFFICE AND found a letter from Professor Challenger on my desk. He had agreed to be interviewed at his house at ten o'clock. I quickly gathered my notes and took a cab to the professor's house in Enmore Park. When I arrived, I knocked on the door and the professor's butler answered it.

'Do you have an appointment?' he asked.

'I have a letter,' I said, as I handed it to him.

The butler nodded and showed me in. I followed him to the end of a passage; he tapped lightly on a door and I heard the professor shout from inside. The butler pushed open the door and there was Professor Challenger, sitting behind a large table covered with books, maps and diagrams. His appearance made me gasp: he had a red face and a black beard, and his blue-grey eyes were framed by thick black eyebrows. He was a large man with broad shoulders and a wide chest, and his enormous hands were covered in long black hairs.

'Well?' he said. 'What is it?'

I cleared my throat nervously. 'Good morning, Professor Challenger, I'm Edward Malone from the *Daily Gazette*.'

Challenger nodded. 'Yes, yes... Sit down.'

I did as I was told. 'Thank you for agreeing to see me today,' I said.

Challenger put on his spectacles. 'I presume you want to talk about my trip to South America?'

I nodded.

'First, let me say this: the only reason I agreed to do this interview is because I like your newspaper. If you dare call me a liar, I'll punch you like I did the other fellow – am I making myself clear?'

I nodded. 'Yes, sir.'

I removed a notepad and a pencil from my pocket, and began my interview with Professor Challenger. 'Why did you travel to South America?' I asked.

'I went to South America to study the animals of the Amazon. After many months of research, I made my way back down the river, and spent a night at a small Indian village inhabited by Cucama

