

CHAPTER 10

MEANWHILE, THE LIEUTENANT-COMMANDER ABOARD HMS Matilda was pacing up and down on the deck impatiently. The British naval ship had been searching for the Queen Louisa for weeks, without much luck. The lieutenant-commander's mission was clear: destroy the Queen Louisa so that the British troops can cross the lake into Central Africa and take the Germans by surprise. But the ship had proved almost impossible to find, and the lieutenant-commander was becoming increasingly frustrated.

The lieutenant-commander stopped his pacing long enough to stare across the lake, when he suddenly spotted something in the distance. There was smoke on the horizon, and below it, a white dot. At that moment, a lieutenant came running towards the lieutenant-commander, waving a pair of binoculars.

"We've spotted her," said the lieutenant breathlessly, as he gave the binoculars to his superior.

The lieutenant-commander looked through the binoculars and smiled. "That's the Queen Louisa, all right," he said. Then, he noticed something else: the Germans had raised a white flag.

"What do you think they're up to?" the lieutenant-commander asked his lieutenant.

The lieutenant shrugged. "I don't know, sir. I doubt they plan to surrender."

The lieutenant-commander watched as the Germans pulled the flag halfway down the mast and then raised it again. "That means they want to talk," he said.

"Talk?" exclaimed the lieutenant. "Talk about what?"

The lieutenant-commander said. "I don't know, but I'm certainly going to find out. I'm leaving you in charge while I'm out there. If this turns out to be some sort of trick, I'm giving you strict instructions to open fire on the boat, understand?"

The lieutenant nodded. "Yes, sir."

The lieutenant-commander and two of his officers climbed into a lifeboat which was then lowered into the water. The lieutenant



watched as the boat slowly made its way to the Queen Louisa. Once the lifeboat had reached the German ship, the lieutenant saw the Germans help the lieutenant-commander climb aboard. Then, his superior disappeared into a cabin.

Fifteen minutes later, the lieutenant-commander reappeared. He and two new passengers climbed into the lifeboat and headed back to the Matilda. The Queen Louisa saluted and began to move in the opposite direction. When the lieutenant-commander was back on board the Matilda, he instructed his officers to take the unidentified passengers to his cabin.

The lieutenant was shocked to see the new arrivals. "Who are they?" he asked.

"A mechanic and a missionary's sister," replied the lieutenant-commander. "The Germans said they found them wandering around on the islands after their boat had been destroyed in a storm."

The lieutenant looked surprised. "It was very decent of the Germans to let them go," he commented.

"Yes," the lieutenant-commander agreed. "But I have no idea what I'm going to do with them. This is no place for civilians."

"Perhaps they can give us some information about the Germans?" said the lieutenant. "Should we ask them if they know anything?"

"We could do that," replied the lieutenant-commander, "but I doubt they'd be very helpful."

The lieutenant-commander was right; Rose and Allnutt knew nothing about the Germans' military strategy, and he quickly lost interest in the pair. He was only interested in attacking the Queen Louisa. The lieutenant-commander ordered his officers to take Rose and Allnutt to their own cabin, while he prepared for battle.

The next day, the Matilda and another British ship, HMS Amelia, attacked the Queen Louisa together. The crew aboard the Queen Louisa hardly had a chance to react when the two British ships suddenly opened fire on them. The bullets blew holes in the stern of the Queen Louisa and the steering gear was smashed to pieces. Thick, black smoke rose from the ship and some brave German soldiers tried to fire on the British ships with their rifles, but it was no use.



The Matilda and the Amelia fired upon the Queen Louisa for a second time, and it was a matter of minutes before the ship began to sink. The British ships then made an effort to rescue the German survivors.

The lieutenant-commander was delighted with his victory. With the Queen Louisa gone, the British forces would be able to cross the lake and crush von Hanneken's army. The lieutenant-commander looked forward to receiving a medal or a promotion for his efforts, but first he had to deal with Rose and Allnutt. Two days after the attack, the lieutenant-commander called the pair to his cabin to discuss their future with them. He told Allnutt that he had made plans to send him to South Africa to join the army. Rose, on the other hand, would be sent back to England immediately.

Allnutt was content with the lieutenant-commander's decision, but Rose was furious. She had no intention of going back to England; she could not face a life without Charlie.

Once they had returned to their cabin, Rose took hold of Allnutt's hand and said quietly: "Charlie, we have to get married."

Allnutt was surprised by Rose's proposal; he had secretly been planning to propose to her, but hadn't managed to find the courage.

"And we have to do it as quickly as we can," Rose added. "I have no desire to return to England alone; I'm coming with you to South Africa."

Allnutt smiled. "That's about the best idea you've ever had, Rosie!" he said.

And so, Rose and Charlie prepared to leave the lake once and for all. Rose's wish that the Germans would be defeated had come true. Now, she and Allnutt could begin their final journey to a new life in South Africa, as man and wife.



CHAPTER 10

Comprehension

1 Read the following statements. In each box write T if the sentence is True and F if it is False.

1. HMS Matilda raised a white flag.
2. Two new passengers joined the British ship on the lake.
3. The Queen Louisa attacked the British ships.
4. The Germans on board the Queen Louisa were all killed.
5. Rose proposed marriage to Charlie.
6. Rose and Charlie went home together to England.

2 Expand the notes below into sentences. Then, put the sentences in the order in which the events happened, by writing 1-5 in the boxes.

☐ a. The / lieutenant-commander / be / delight / victory

☐ b. The bullets / blow / hole / stern / Queen Louisa

☐ c. The / lieutenant-commander / mission / be / destroy / Queen Louisa

☐ d. The / lieutenant-commander / and / two / officers / climb / lifeboat

☐ e. The British ships / fire / upon / Queen Louisa / second time

Vocabulary

3 Complete the following sentences using the words in the box.

frustrated superior delighted furious defeated forces

1. Last night Italy _____ Argentina in a thrilling game.
2. Dad has asked his _____ at work for an extra week's holiday.

3. She was _____ to be chosen as captain of the hockey team.
4. I always feel terribly _____ when I don't have a chance to speak in class.
5. Enemy _____ are preparing to invade the country.
6. I really lost my temper! I was so mad and _____ when Jane refused to give back my Rhianna CD.

4 Match the two columns to make expressions.

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|------------|---------------|
| 1. receive | a. interest |
| 2. open | b. the army |
| 3. lose | c. other hand |
| 4. join | d. a medal |
| 5. make | e. fire |
| 6. on the | f. an effort |

Follow-up activities

5 Discuss.

1. Raising a white flag before a battle can mean an invitation to have a discussion. But it can also be a trick. Do you think HMS Matilda's lieutenant-commander was right to trust the enemy? Why? / Why not?
2. The Germans saved the lives of Rose and Charlie but the British wanted to have any information they had on the enemy. Do you think it was right to ask Charlie and Rose to tell them?
3. The lieutenant-commander had different plans for Rose and Charlie. Do you agree that women cannot be in the army? Why? / Why not?
4. What sort of life do you think Rose and Charlie will have together in South Africa?

6 Imagine that you are Rose or Allnutt and have been asked by a newspaper to write about your adventure in Africa. Write an article narrating the main events of the story. (100 - 120 words)