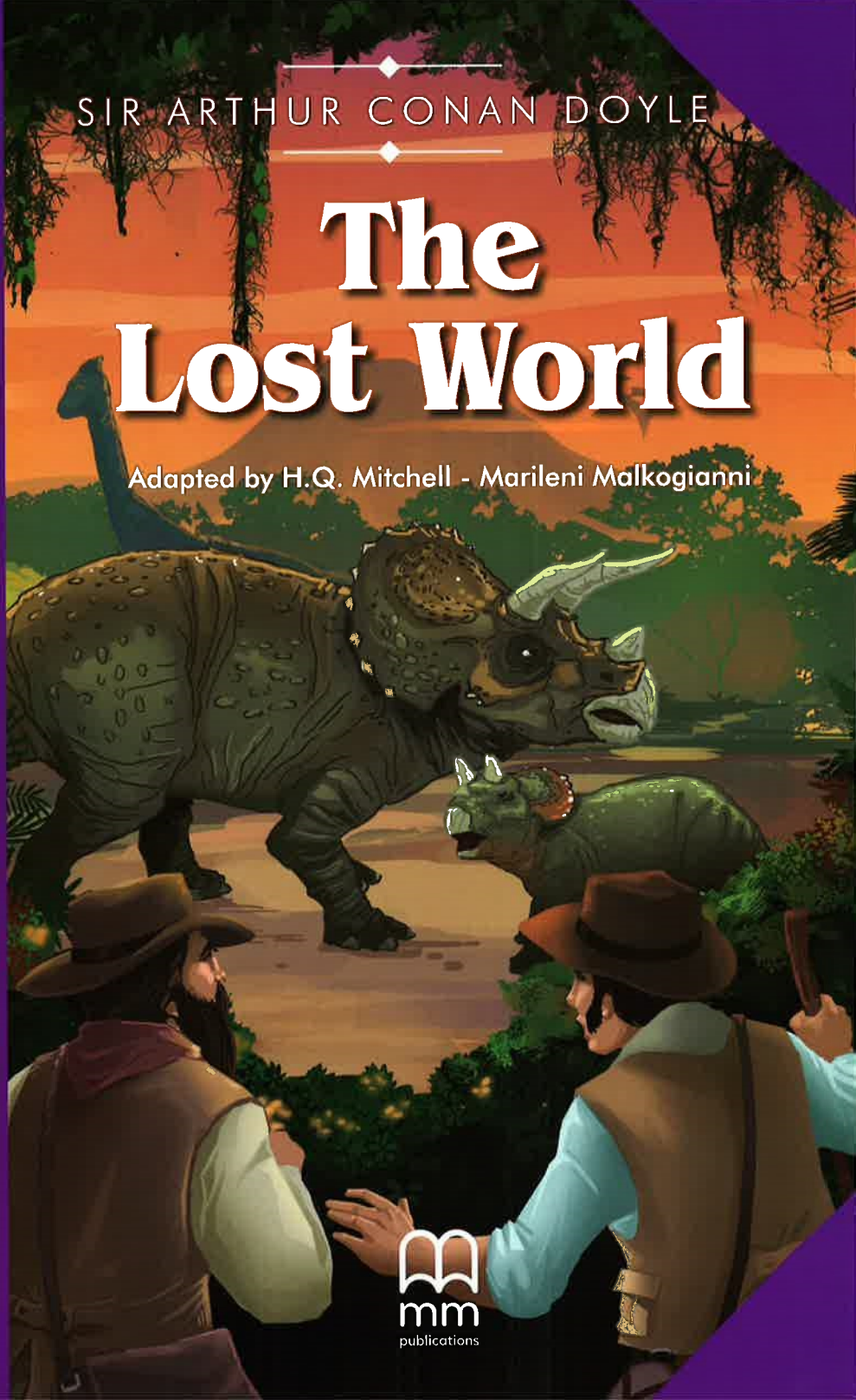
TOP READERS

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

The Lost World

Adapted by H.Q. Mitchell - Marileni Malkogianni



mm publications

level 4

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CHAPTER 1

When I was a young man, in my early twenties, I fell in love with a girl named Gladys Hungerton. Gladys was the most beautiful girl I had ever seen – she had dark hair, large brown eyes, and delicate ivory skin. Unfortunately, Gladys was not in love with me; though we spent many hours together talking and laughing, she regarded me as a friend and nothing more. Despite this, I made the decision to propose to Gladys. I knew there was a chance she would reject my proposal, but I had to try. And so, one cold October evening, I visited Gladys at her house and asked her to marry me.

'Oh, Edward,' said Gladys after a long pause, 'we have such a beautiful friendship, why can't we simply remain friends?'

'Because I love you, Gladys!' I exclaimed. 'I want to spend the rest of my life with you!'

Gladys gave me a look of pity. 'But I don't love you, Edward, and I have never loved you.'

'Why can't you love me, Gladys?' I cried. 'Is it my appearance?'

Gladys squeezed my hand gently. 'No, of course not,' she said.

'Is it my character?' I asked. 'Tell me what you want me to change!'

Gladys sighed. 'Edward, let me explain to you what kind of man I want: I want a man who has no fear of death; a man who has travelled the world and who has had many exciting adventures. I want to marry a man who's brave, heroic and famous!'

'All right,' I said. 'If you want a brave and heroic man, I will do something that will make you proud.'

Gladys laughed at my enthusiasm. 'What are you going to do?' she asked.

'I don't know,' I replied. 'But if I do something great, will you marry me then?'

'We'll see,' said Gladys with a smile. 'Now, you're working the night shift at the paper and you're running late.'

I said goodnight to Gladys and walked briskly to the offices of the *Daily Gazette*, where I worked as a journalist. When I arrived, I immediately made my way to the News Editor's office.

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'Good evening, Mr McArdle,' I said, knocking on the door.

'Hello, Mr Malone,' replied McArdle. 'I must say, I really enjoyed your latest article; you've done some excellent work for us.'

'Why, thank you,' I said.

'What did you want to see me about?'

'I'd like you to send me on a mission for the paper.'

'What sort of mission did you have in mind, Mr Malone?'

'An adventure,' I replied. 'A dangerous adventure!'

McArdle raised an eyebrow. 'You seem very eager to lose your life,' he said.

'I need to do something heroic,' I explained, 'My future depends on it.'

McArdle looked at me curiously. 'I'm afraid we only send very experienced journalists on important missions,' he said. 'Wait a minute, I have an idea – would you be interested in interviewing Professor George Challenger?'

'Professor Challenger?' I repeated. 'The famous zoologist? Didn't he punch a journalist from *The Telegraph* the other day?'

McArdle nodded. 'Two years ago, Professor Challenger went on an expedition to South America. When he came back last year, he told everyone that he'd seen dinosaurs and other strange beasts. Most people think he's lying about what he saw. The journalist from *The Telegraph* called him a liar too – that's why he punched him. After that encounter, Challenger stopped doing interviews. Perhaps you can convince him to do one last interview; I'm sure our readers would be interested to find out more about his adventures.'

McArdle handed me a thick file. 'Here's some information on the professor; you might need it.'

I took the file and looked through the notes. 'Do you think he's telling the truth?' I asked.

McArdle shook his head. 'I doubt it very much,' he said.

'All right,' I said. 'I'll pay professor Challenger a visit.'

I returned to my office and wrote a letter to the Professor asking him to meet me the following Wednesday. Then, I spent the rest of my shift reading through McArdle's notes. I had no idea then that my interview with Professor Challenger was about to change my life forever.

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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.

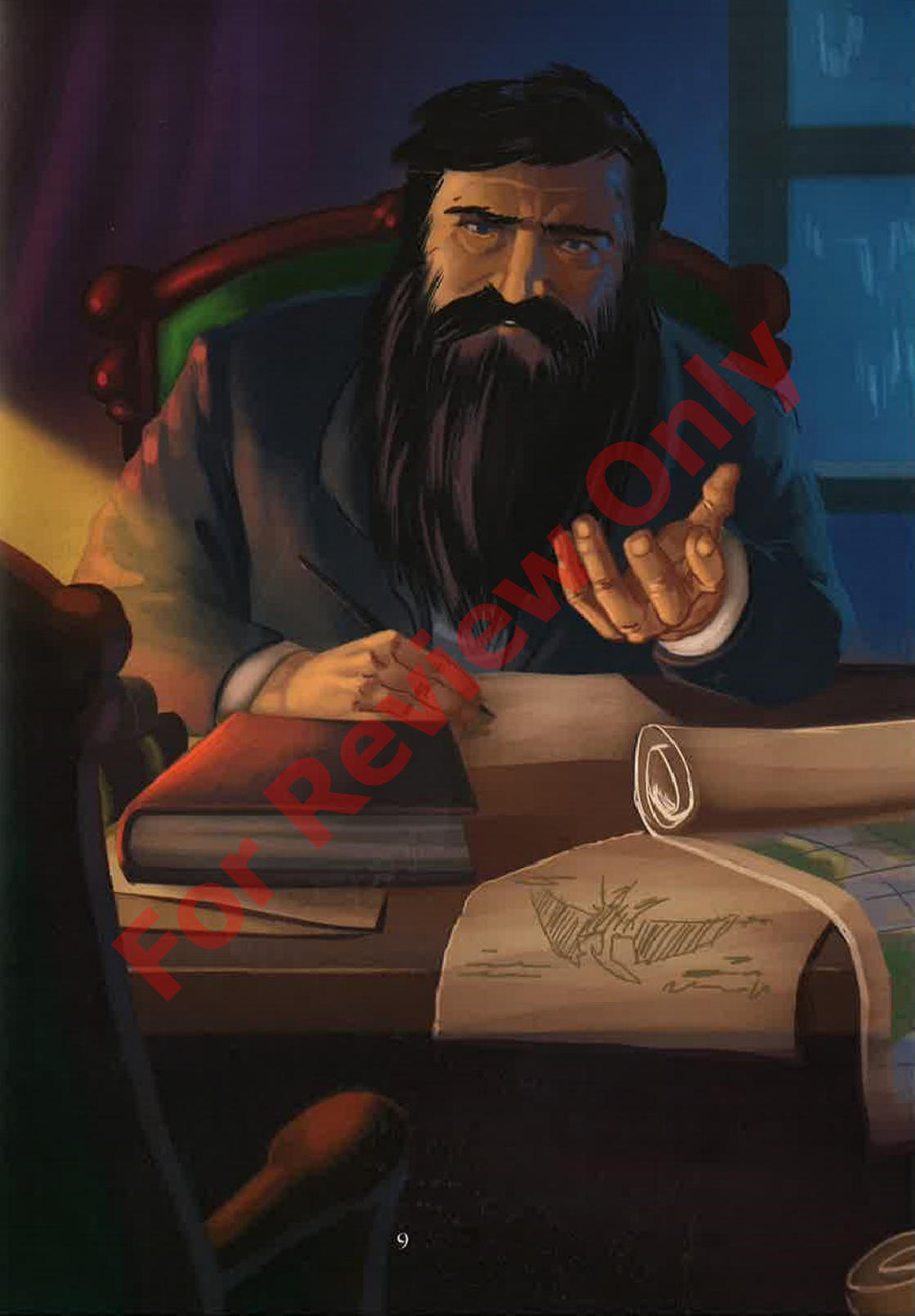
'First, let me say this: the only reason I agreed to do this interview is because I like your newspaper. If you dare call me a liar, I'll punch you like I did the other fellow – am I making myself clear?'

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

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