

GRADED READERS

CAPTAIN GRANT'S CHILDREN

JULES VERNE

Student's Book

LEVEL 4

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CHAPTER I

On the 26th of July 1864 a beautiful yacht, the *Duncan*, was sailing along the English Channel. It was making its first voyage. The owner, Lord Edward Glenarvan, was on board the yacht with his wife, Lady Helena, and his cousin, Major McNabbs.

One of the sailors saw an enormous fish following the yacht. He informed the captain, John Mangles, and the others.

"What do you say, McNabbs?" asked Lord Glenarvan. "Shall we try to catch it?"

"If you like. It's all the same to me," was his cousin's answer.

The sailors threw a strong rope over the side of the yacht. There was a big hook on it, hidden in a big piece of bacon. In a few minutes the shark had hooked itself. The sailors pulled the rope and soon the big fish was lying on the deck. They were curious to see what it had eaten. They cut off its tail and then opened its stomach. It was empty except for a bottle.



"Well, be careful how you take it out," said Lord Glenarvan. "There might be something in the bottle!"

"Do you think we may find something important in this bottle?" asked Major McNabbs.

"It's possible," replied Lord Glenarvan.

The bottle was washed and now Lady Helena and the others were looking at it.

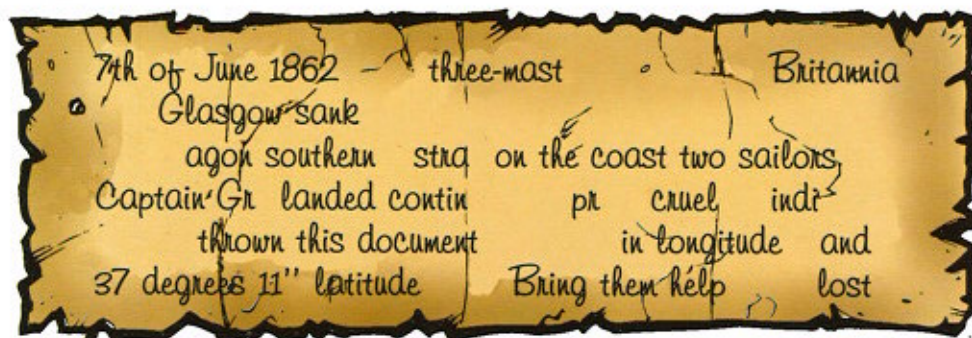
"I want to know where it came from," said Lady Helena.

Lord Glenarvan took out the cork carefully and looked inside, "There are papers inside!"

"Break the neck of the bottle off. Then you can easily take out the papers without damaging them," said Mangles.

"Try it, Edward, try it," said Lady Helena enthusiastically.

The message on the papers was difficult to read. All they could understand was:



7th of June 1862 - three-mast Britannia
Glasgow sank
agon southern strag on the coast two sailors
Captain Gr landed contin pr cruel indi
thrown this document in longitude and
37 degrees 11" latitude Bring them help lost

"agon must be Patagonia in South America," exclaimed Lady Helena.

"But does it touch the 37th parallel?" asked McNabbs.

"It does," answered Mangles.

"The two sailors and the captain land ... land where?" asked Lord Glenarvan and without waiting for an answer continued, "*contin* must mean on a continent! What happened to them? *pr* must mean they are prisoners and cruel indians must be the meaning of the next two words." Lord Glenarvan was convinced.

"They threw this bottle into the sea so that somebody would find it and bring them help. They are lost."

Mangles ran to his cabin and after a few minutes returned with the *Shipping Gazette* and more information. "I've got it!" he said, "Captain Grant and his ship the *Britannia* left Peru on May 30th, 1862 for Glasgow. Captain Grant is a famous adventurer! We have all the details we need to go and find him and his crew!"

"Oh, we must, Edward!" cried Lady Helena.

When the *Duncan* reached port, Lord Glenarvan sent a telegram to the *Times* and the *Morning Chronicle* to place an advertisement concerning Captain Grant. Then he boarded a train to Glasgow. He was on his way to London to speak to the Admiralty. Lady Helena and Major McNabbs returned to their home, Malcolm Castle.

The next morning two young people arrived at Malcolm Castle and asked to speak to Lord Glenarvan about Captain Grant. Mary was about sixteen with a tired, pretty face and sad eyes. The boy with her, Robert, was about twelve and looked strong and determined. They were Captain Grant's children. Their mother had died years ago and they were now alone in the world.

Lady Helena welcomed them. Mary had not heard any news of their father for more than a year and she believed he was dead.

"Oh, papa, my poor papa!" cried Robert. Mary sat silently, without moving.

"Lord Glenarvan is in London and he is making preparations for your father's rescue. You will stay at the Castle until he returns, of course," Lady Helena said.

The children thanked her for her kind offer and spent the night at the Castle.

Lord Glenarvan returned the next day with bad news. The Admiralty weren't going to help find Captain Grant. The children were very disappointed.

"Why don't we all sail to South America and search for Captain Grant ourselves?" asked Lady Helena.

Lord Glenarvan thought it was a wonderful idea and gave orders to prepare the *Duncan* for the long voyage.



CHAPTER 2

The journey aboard the *Duncan* was pleasant and the children were excited.

"It's almost time for breakfast," said Glenarvan. "Shall we go below?"

Major McNabbs was last to go below. He saw a stranger and stopped to talk to him.

"Who are you, my good man?" asked the Major.

"I, sir, am Jacques Elician François Marie Paganel. I am the Secretary of the Geographical Society of Paris. I am the passenger in cabin Number 6. This is the *Scotia*, isn't it?"

"No, it's the *Duncan*," replied the Major.

Paganel had boarded the wrong ship. It was dark when he got on and fell asleep immediately because he was tired.

Glenarvan and the others found the story amusing. Paganel was invited to stay until they reached the first port. There he could make other arrangements.

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The *Duncan* sailed from Glasgow to Madeira, from there to Cape Verde, through the Straits of Magellan and round to Port Famine. By that time, Paganel had changed his mind. He had heard of Captain Grant and wanted to help.

When they anchored at the Port of Talcahuano in Chile, Lord Glenarvan and Paganel went to see the British Consul. Unfortunately, they didn't have any news of the *Britannia*.

"He must be somewhere on this continent," said Paganel to the others aboard the *Duncan*. "We should cross the continent following the 37th parallel on foot. That means crossing Chile, over the Andes Mountains and into the plains of the Pampas in Argentina."

It was decided that Lord Glenarvan, Paganel, Major McNabbs, Robert and three sailors would go on this adventure. The *Duncan*