

Chapter 62
**DOWN BUT
NOT OUT**

SILENCE!" ordered the admiral. "Let's listen for their ships!"

Everyone on board fell silent. Far off, they could hear the sound of horns hooting and engines grinding.

KERRANG!

There was even the sound of metal hitting metal as ships collided.

BASH!

BANG!

WALLOP!

"Oops!" said the admiral.

"We got 'em!" exclaimed Dotty.

"HOO!" shouted Woolly, punching her trunk into the air in triumph.

"They're the British naval fleet," began the admiral.

Down But Not Out

"The best in the world. They're down but they're not out. The smoke will lift soon. We must act fast. We need to change course if we're going to lose them. **STARBOARD HO!**"

All on board went to work to make the ship dramatically change course to the right. Even the mammoth was getting the hang of sailing now. Using her trunk, she grabbed hold of the wheel, spinning it hard to the right. The ship leaned the other way so fast that the old soldiers tumbled over. Woolly fell on top of the admiral.

"HOOO!"



DUMF!
"OOF!" cried the admiral. "GET THIS GIANT
FUR BALL OFF ME!"

Elsie smirked as she and all available hands on deck
prised the mammoth off their leader.

"Thank goodness I'm not planning on having any
more children!" muttered the admiral as he clambered
to his foot. He limped over to the stern of the ship.

DUFF! DUFF! DUFF!

Next, he took out his telescope and studied the sea
behind them. The curtain of smoke was slowly lifting.
Elsie sidled up to him and Woolly followed. The
mammoth was intrigued. She plucked the telescope
out of his hands with her trunk.

SWIPE!

"GET OFF THAT!"

he snapped before snatching
it back. He then turned
to Elsie. "Please try and
control your pet
mammoth."



"I'll try, sir," she
"I can't see any
it. My goodness,
Just then, Elsie

curtain of smoke
"THERE!"

The admiral
"BLAST! One

"We can't g

"NEVER

woman, and,

"HOOO!

"Yes, yes,
his eyes. "A

has got thro

"OH!

"We have
hour, they
be board
girl..."

"HO

"I'll try, sir," she replied with a grin.

"I can't see any ships," he said. "I think we've done
it. My goodness, we've done it."

Just then, Elsie spotted a shape poking out of the
curtain of smoke.

"THERE!" she shouted.

The admiral put the telescope back up to his eye.
"BLAST! One of them has got through."

"We can't give up, Admiral," said the girl.

"NEVER! Now listen up, men! And, erm,
woman, and, of course, girl..." began the admiral.

"HOOO!" added Woolly, not wanting to be left out.

"Yes, yes, apologies," replied the admiral, rolling
his eyes. "And listen up, mammoth! One of the ships
has got through."

"OH NO!" came a chorus of replies.

"We have to prepare for the worst. In less than an
hour, they will have reached us. We must be ready to
be boarded. Men, and, erm, woman, and, of course,
girl..."

"HOO!" Woolly reminded him.

The Ice Monster

"...and, who can forget, mammoth. We have no more shot. The gunpowder is gone. But you must arm yourselves with whatever you can lay your hands on!"

"YES, SIR!" came a chorus of replies.

"Good luck, men, and everyone else not contained in that umbrella term!"

Immediately, the deck of HMS *Victory* was a hive of activity, as all on board went about arming themselves. There weren't enough cutlasses to go around, so most of the soldiers picked up brooms and mops.

Slowly but surely, the British naval ship that was still pursuing them came into focus. She was the mighty HMS *Argonaut*.*

With four huge funnels pumping smoke from its coal engine, the *Argonaut* was powering through the waves right towards the *Victory*.

With their makeshift weapons in their hands, the old soldiers were ready for the worst. The admiral approached Elsie. "You are but a child. I think it best you go below deck."

* Named after the crew of Jason's ship, the *Argo*, in ancient Greek mythology.

Down But Not Out

"Are you kidding?" replied the girl, reaching for a long wooden sail batten. "I wouldn't miss this for the world."

"We'll make a sailor of you yet!" said the admiral. He took off his wooden leg and brandished it, ready to do battle. Forgetting he couldn't stand up on his one leg, he wobbled for a moment before hitting the deck.

THUMP!



Chapter 63

SURRENDER!

"SURRENDER!" boomed a voice over the loud-hailer from HMS *Argonaut* as it drew up alongside the *Victory*.

"NEVER!" came a chorus of voices from HMS *Victory*.

"SORRY, I DIDN'T QUITE CATCH THAT!"

"WE SAID 'NEVER'."

"DID YOU SAY 'NEVER'?"

"YES!"

"SORRY, IT'S

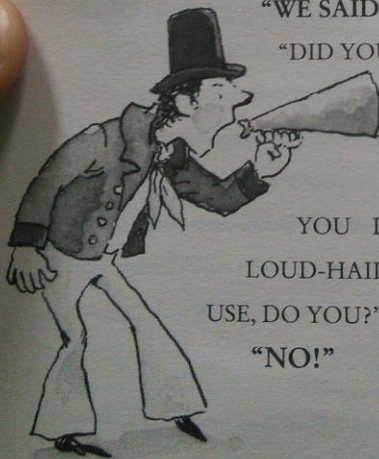
HARD TO HEAR.

YOU DON'T HAVE A

LOUD-HAILER YOU COULD

USE, DO YOU?"

"NO!"



"WHAT WAS THAT?"
"WE SAID 'NO'!"
"THAT'S A SHAME."
"WE KNOW."
"SORRY, WHAT WAS THAT?"
"WE SAID, 'WE KNOW'."

"THANK YOU FOR OUR ORDERS TO RETURN THE ICE MONSTER TO LONDON. IT IS THE PROPERTY OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN."

All the old soldiers

"Woolly isn't the property of anyone."

"OH NO, IT'S NOT!" began the chorus from HMS *Victory*.

"OH YES, IT IS!" came the voices back.

"OH NO, IT'S NOT."

"OH YES, IT IS."

"Are we at the pantomime?" asked the brigadier.

Surrender!

"WHAT WAS THAT?"
"WE SAID 'NO'!"
"THAT'S A SHAME."
"WE KNOW."
"SORRY, WHAT WAS THAT?"
"WE SAID, 'WE KNOW'."

"THANK YOU. NOW OUR ORDERS ARE TO RETURN THE ICE MONSTER TO LONDON. IT IS THE PROPERTY OF HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN."

All the old soldiers looked to Elsie. She told them, "Woolly isn't the property of anyone."

"OH NO, IT'S NOT!" began the chorus from HMS *Victory*.

"OH YES, IT IS!" came the voices back.

"OH NO, IT'S NOT."

"OH YES, IT IS."

"Are we at the pantomime?" asked the brigadier.



"IF YOU RETURN THE CREATURE TO US, THEN THERE IS NO NEED FOR US TO OPEN FIRE. DO YOU SURRENDER?"

"NO!"

"I AM PRETTY SURE THAT WAS A 'NO'."

"YES!"

"SORRY, YES THAT WAS A 'NO', OR YES BECAUSE IT WAS A 'YES'?"

"IT WAS A 'NO'!"

"THANK YOU!"

"OUR PLEASURE!"

"THANK YOU."

"NOT AT ALL."

"THEN PREPARE FOR BATTLE!"

"Cor, that took 'em long enough," muttered Dotty.

HMS *Argonaut* inched closer to HMS *Victory*.
The young sailors looked across at the old soldiers.



The two groups now
were all British after
Argonaut gave the



Surrender!

The two groups nodded to each other politely. They were all British after all. Finally, the captain of HMS *Argonaut* gave the order. "ATTACK!"

