

CAMBRIDGE

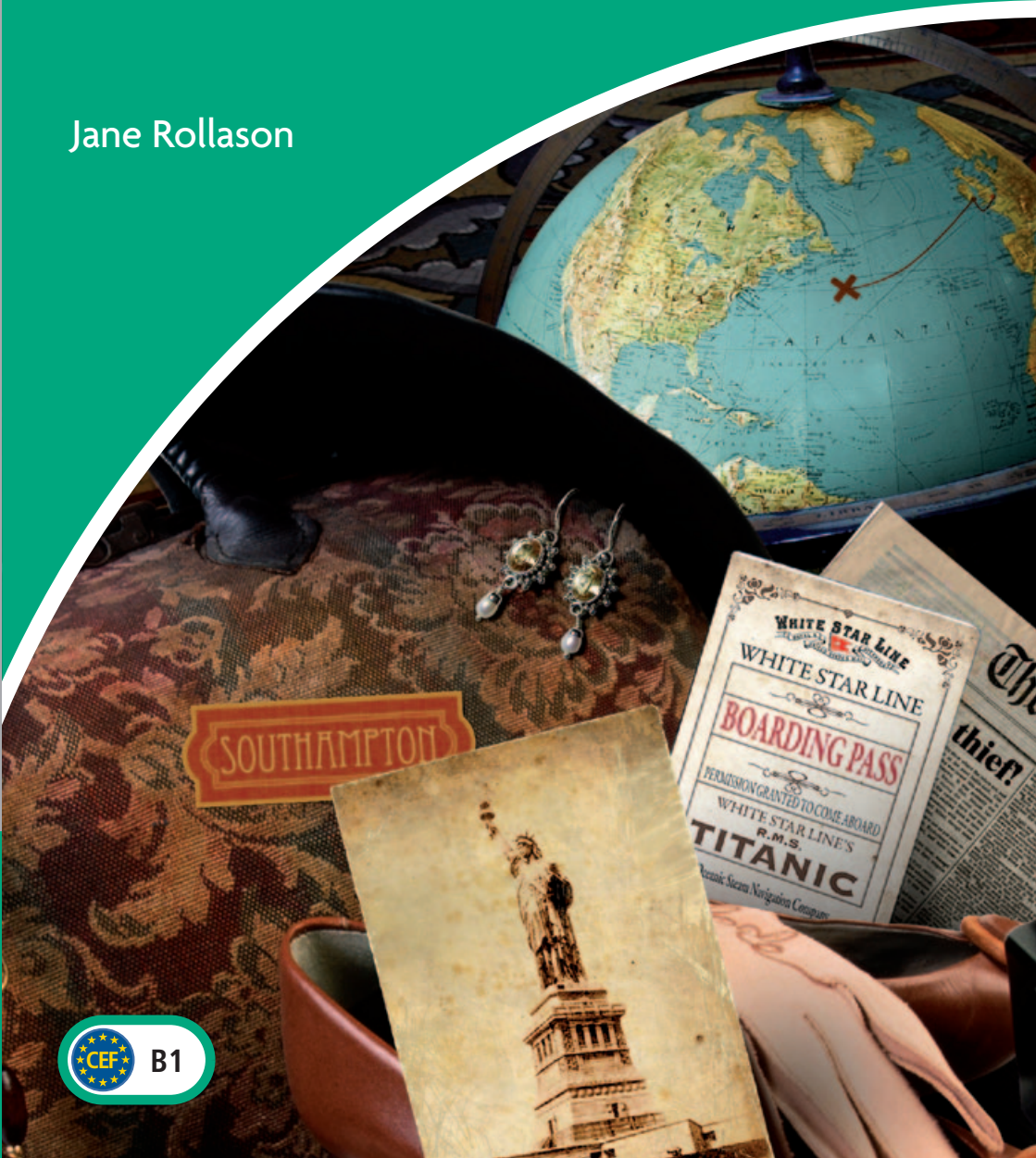
Cambridge University Press  
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Jane Rollason  
Excerpt  
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CAMBRIDGE

 Cambridge  
Discovery  
Readers

# Alone!

Jane Rollason



## People in the story

**Hannah Frost:** a sixteen-year-old girl

**Alfie Frost:** Hannah's older brother

**Mrs Violet Frost:** Hannah's mother

**Mr Henry Frost:** Hannah's father

**Marnie Moran:** a woman who works for the Frost family

**Grace Moran:** Marnie's sixteen-year-old daughter

**Leo Zimmerman:** a young bank worker

**Mr Miller:** a rich man who owns a bank in Southampton

**Daisy:** a girl who works for the Miller family

## BEFORE YOU READ

- 1 Look at the cover and the pictures in the first chapter.  
 Answer the questions.

1 When do you think this story happens?

.....

2 Do you know the story of the ship *Titanic*? What happened to it?

.....

3 Who has a ticket to travel on the *Titanic*?

.....

## Introduction

# Life in 1912

This story begins in an English town called Southampton in 1912. Southampton is by the sea, and big ships sailed from there to the United States. Around this time, many families were moving from Europe to the US. They wanted to start new lives in a new country.

Life in 1912 was different from life today. There were some cars, but most people travelled by carriage. Carriages were pulled by horses. Telephones were very new things then, and only a few people in England had them. Ships sent radio messages using a telegraph machine. Medicine and hospitals were not as good as they are today. Many people caught typhoid fever, and some died from it.

British money in 1912 was pounds and pence, as it is today. One British pound was worth five US dollars. A loaf of bread cost three pence and the cheapest ticket on the ship *Titanic* cost three pounds.



## Chapter 1

# A ticket on the *Titanic*

‘Mrs Frost, are you ready?’ called Marnie, from the front door.  
‘The carriage is here.’

‘I’m nearly ready,’ Hannah’s mother called back. Then she turned to her daughter. ‘You know I hate leaving you, my love, but you’re too weak to travel. The doctor says you must rest for another three weeks.’

‘And if I don’t get better ...?’ said Hannah.

‘You will get better,’ said Mrs Frost. She sat on Hannah’s bed and took her hand. ‘Remember, Dr Mason will visit you every day. Marnie will look after you. Then you can join us.’



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‘But I could come with you and rest on the ship.’

‘Hannah, you’ve had typhoid fever. You were very ill and the doctor says you aren’t ready,’ said her mother.

‘I can’t believe you’re leaving me on my own!’ cried Hannah. ‘All the family will be in America except me!’

‘Don’t behave like a child, Hannah,’ said her mother. ‘You’re sixteen – a young woman. And you won’t be on your own – Marnie’s here. She’s a part of the family.’ Then Mrs Frost added quietly, ‘Anyway, I have to go.’

‘Why do you have to go now?’ asked Hannah.

Before Mrs Frost could answer, Hannah’s brother Alfie came into the room.

‘Marnie needs you in the kitchen, Mother,’ he said.

‘I’ll be back in a minute,’ said Mrs Frost to Hannah, going downstairs.

‘Come and sit by the window,’ said Alfie to Hannah. ‘You can wave to us from there.’

Hannah walked slowly to the chair by the window. Alfie put a blanket around her and hugged her.



‘I wish you were coming with us,’ he said, ‘but Mother won’t wait. And I can’t let her travel alone.’

‘You shouldn’t go without me,’ said Hannah.

‘You’re just thinking about yourself, Hannah,’ said Alfie. ‘You were away at school when the trouble started and since then, you’ve been ill in bed. You don’t know how hard it’s been for Mother out there.’ He looked out of the window. ‘Her friends won’t speak to her and she’s afraid the police will come for her too. We have to go now – before she falls ill.’

‘Why did Father have to run away?’ Hannah asked. ‘Fathers should look after their families – not run away.’

‘Hannah!’ said Alfie. ‘The police were looking for him. They still are. He had to go.’

‘If he hasn’t done anything, why do the police want him?’ she said.

‘Don’t talk like that, Hannah,’ said Alfie. His usual smile was gone. ‘You know he hasn’t done anything. You know he’s innocent<sup>1</sup>.’

‘I’m sorry,’ said Hannah, not looking at her brother. ‘Of course he’s innocent.’

They heard someone on the stairs.

‘Ssh!’ said Alfie to his sister.

Mrs Frost came in. ‘Now, Hannah,’ she said. ‘I’m going to give your money and ticket to Marnie. I’ve paid the rent<sup>2</sup> on this house for the next four weeks. You’ve got two bags to bring – Alfie and I are taking everything else. Your dresses are in the big bag, and I’ve hidden your valuable things under your nightdresses in the small bag.’

‘You’ve thought of everything,’ said Hannah.

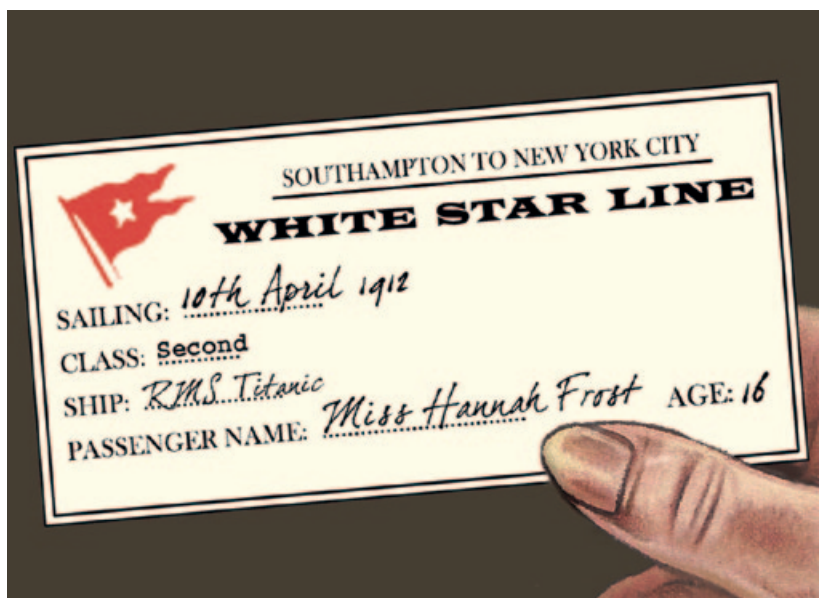
‘Do you want to see your ticket before I take it down to Marnie?’ asked her mother.

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‘Yes, let’s see it,’ said Hannah, smiling now. ‘How exciting!’

‘You’re travelling on a White Star ship,’ said Mrs Frost. ‘When you arrive in New York, go to the White Star office with Marnie. We’ll meet there.’

‘You’re lucky,’ said Alfie. ‘You’re going on a new ship – they say it’s the best ship in the world.’



‘Miss Hannah Frost,’ Hannah read from the ticket. ‘Southampton to New York City. White Star Line. Sailing: 10th April 1912. Second Class. Ship: RMS *Titanic*.’

‘We’ll eat at the best restaurant in New York when you arrive, Hannah,’ said Alfie.

‘Oh yes!’ cried Hannah.

‘That’ll be lovely,’ said Mrs Frost. ‘Now, Alfie, I think we must go.’

Hannah hugged and kissed her mother and brother.

‘Be brave, Hannah,’ said Mrs Frost.

Hannah stayed at the window. She watched her brother carry the last case out of the house and give it to the carriage driver. Then Mrs Frost came out.

On the other side of the street, two well-dressed women were walking by. When they saw Mrs Frost, they stopped and shouted at her. One waved her umbrella angrily. Mrs Frost turned and looked up at Hannah's window, and Hannah saw the sadness in her mother's eyes.

Finally the carriage drove away. Hannah started to cry. First her father had left her, and now her mother and brother were leaving her. It was a long way across the ocean. Her eyes were still wet when Marnie came into her room.

'Don't cry, Miss Hannah,' she said. 'We'll see them again next month.'

'They've left me alone,' said Hannah.

'You don't realise how lucky you are,' said Marnie. She sounded angry. 'I'd like a new life in America too. But after I take you there I'm coming back to Southampton. I'll be back here without a job.'

And she went downstairs.



## LOOKING BACK

- 1 Check your answers to *Before you read* on page 4.

## ACTIVITIES

- 2 Complete the sentences with the names in the box.

Mrs Frost	Mr Frost	<del>Hannah</del>
Alfie	Marnie	Dr Mason

- 1 ..... *Hannah* ..... has had typhoid fever.  
 2 ..... is travelling to America with Mrs Frost.  
 3 ..... will visit Hannah every day for three weeks.  
 4 ..... is afraid the police will come for her.  
 5 Hannah says that ..... has run away.  
 6 ..... is going to travel with Hannah to New York.

- 3 Match the two parts of the sentences.

- 1 Hannah can't go with her mother and brother because  b  
 2 Hannah's father went to America because   
 3 Dr Mason tells Hannah to walk and get fresh air so that   
 4 Dr Mason can't come down to the *Titanic* because   
 5 Marnie isn't excited about going to New York because   
 a he's going to Liverpool.  
 b she isn't well enough to travel.  
 c the police were looking for him.  
 d she's coming back to England after a week.  
 e she'll be strong enough to travel to America.

**4** Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- 1 Marnie became less friendly after Hannah went away to school.
- 2 Hannah goes downstairs because she hears a man's voice.
- 3 Hannah's father worked at Mr Miller's bank.
- 4 Mr Miller tells Marnie not to tell anyone about the false accounts.
- 5 Mr Miller has got copies of the false accounts in his red book.
- 6 Mr Miller is going to burn the red book.
- 7 Marnie and Mr Miller are happy to see Hannah on the stairs.
- 8 Graces pushes Hannah down the stairs.

**5** Answer the questions.

- 1 What does Mrs Frost say that she'll give to Marnie?  
 .....
- 2 Who goes for walks with Hannah while Hannah is getting better?  
 .....
- 3 When Hannah goes downstairs, what does she want to make?  
 .....
- 4 Where did Marnie put the false accounts?  
 .....

## LOOKING FORWARD

.....

**6** What do you think? Answer the questions.

- 1 Why has Hannah fallen unconscious?  
 .....
- 2 Chapter 3 is called *Alone*. Who will be alone? Why?  
 .....