

# Alone!

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 American English



B1

## People in the story

**Hannah Frost:** a 16-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 16-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?

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

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

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## Introduction

# Life in 1912

This story begins in an English town named 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 United States. 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 traveled 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. One British pound was worth five U.S. dollars. A loaf of bread in England cost three pence (or six cents), and the cheapest ticket on the ship *Titanic* cost three pounds, or fifteen dollars.



## Chapter 1

# A ticket on the *Titanic*

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

“I’m almost 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 need to 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.”





“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 16 – 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 sick 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 gets sick.”

“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 have 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 nightgowns in the small bag.”

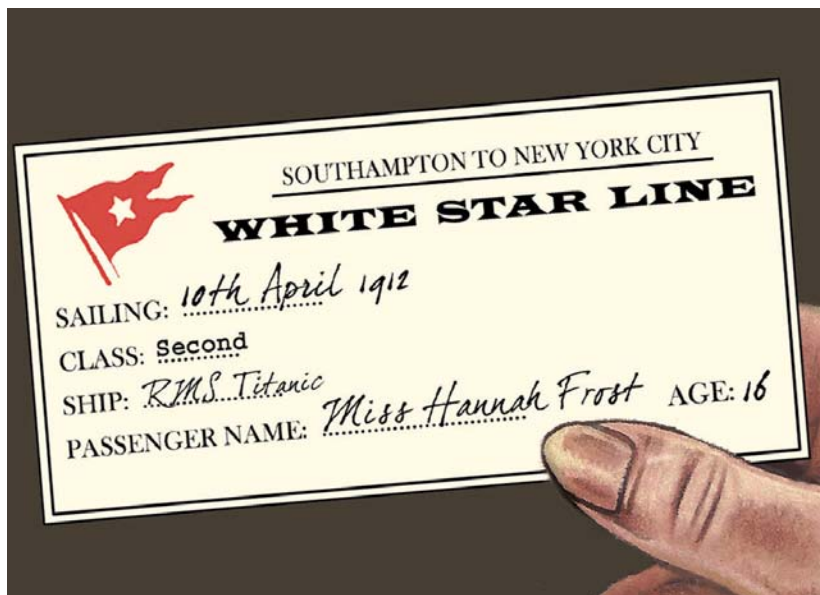
“You’ve thought of everything,” said Hannah.

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

“Yes, let me see it,” said Hannah, smiling now. “How exciting!”

“You’re traveling 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 have to 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 suitcase 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 realize 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.