Chapter 1

Attack!

June 1942. The night was cold and dark. The waves of the freezing North Sea rose and fell, moving the convoy of ships up and down. There were 30 ships in the convoy: six Royal Navy destroyers and the rest merchant ships, taking vital supplies from Britain to Russia.

This was the Arctic. The sea was so cold that if a man fell into it he would die in just a few minutes.

Fog hung over the sea. Somewhere out in that fog *it* lurked. The deadly danger. The *Tirpitz*, the giant German battleship. It weighed 43,000 tons and was half a mile long. It could destroy a whole convoy.

Suddenly an alarm rang out on the leading destroyer! A huge shape had been spotted on the radar. *Tirpitz* was out in the North Sea, heading towards the convoy! With her was a fleet of smaller German battleships, and submarines known as U-boats. The message was passed by radio along the convoy.

“Split up!” came the next radio message. “Break up the convoy.”

The hope was that if the ships of the convoy spread out then *Tirpitz* wouldn’t be able to attack them all.

The destroyers headed into the thick fog towards the giant shape on their radar screens. As the ships scattered, other shapes rose up from the depths of the sea. These were the German U-boats. They were hidden by the fog, but the U-boats could see their prey on their own radar. They were like a pack of killer hunting dogs.

Each U-boat picked its target and went after it.

The ships of the convoy saw the U-boats on their own radar, but it was too late to defend against them.

Wooooooshhhhhh! The sound of torpedoes forcing their way through the water echoed in the ships.

KA-BOOOOOOMMMMMM!!!!

The night sky lit up red and yellow as a ship exploded when the torpedo hit it. Then another ship blew up.

Thick black oily smoke mingled with the fog. Oil on the sea burned. Men in the water screamed for help, but were pulled down by the icy sea, or burnt by the flames.

More torpedoes. More fire and explosions. More black smoke mixing with the freezing fog.

The convoy was destroyed.

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Sink the Tirpitz

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