

20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA



by Jules Verne

Adapted and illustrated
by Lee Krystek



CHAPTER ONE

The year 1866 was marked by a strange series of events reported by ships all over the world. On July 20th the steamer Governor Higginson sighted a strange "moving sandbank" off the coast of Australia. Eight days later, the same "sandbank" was spotted by another ship two thousand miles away. As the crew watched, twin jets of steam shot from the object into the sky.



On April 13th, 1867, the Cunard Line ship, *Scotia*, was struck by a sharp object. The vessel managed to make it to the port of New York City where it was immediately put in dry dock. I was staying in New York at the time and was invited by Commander Farragut, of the United States Navy, to view the ship. You see I had some interesting theories about the mysterious object.



Allow me to introduce myself. I am Professor Aronnax of the Paris Museum of Natural History. I have spent many years studying the sea and its life. I even wrote a book called *The Mystery of the Ocean*. I was sure the object that had hit the *Scotia* was a giant Narwhal (a type of whale with a long sharp horn).



I met with Farragut at the dry dock. Below the *Scotia's* water line was a neat, triangular hole that looked like it had been punched out by a machine!

Do you still think this thing is a narwhal, Professor?

Yes, Commander, but it must be gigantic!



The United States government has decided it must take action. I've been commanded by the Secretary of the Navy to take one of our fastest warships, the *Abraham Lincoln*, to hunt down the creature and kill it. The animal is clearly a danger to shipping.

That will be a terrible loss to science!

Perhaps not a complete loss. I have a letter for you.



Professor Aronnax
Fifth Avenue Hotel
New York

Sir:

If you will consent to join the *Abraham Lincoln* in this expedition, the Government of the United States will with pleasure see France represented in the enterprise. Commander Farragut has a cabin at your disposal.

Very cordially yours,
J. B. Hobson
Secretary of the Navy

I hurried back to my hotel room. The *Abraham Lincoln* would sail in only three hours. My Flemish assistant, Conseil, and I packed our bags as quickly as we could.

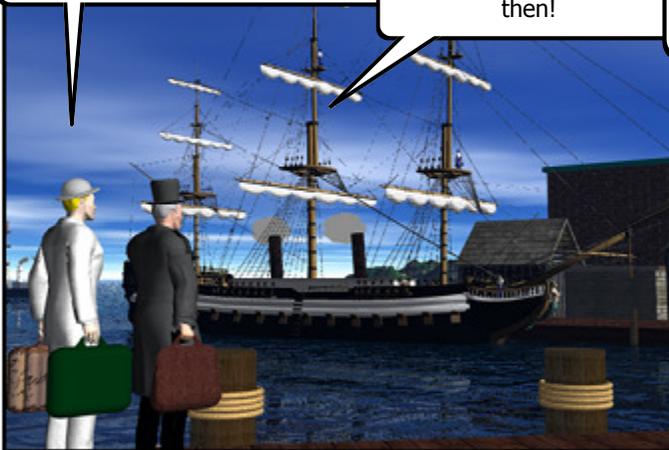
Conseil, this expedition could be quite dangerous. You do not need to go with me.

Where you go, Professor, I go, too!



There she is! It looks like she is almost ready to depart!

We had best hurry, then!



Welcome aboard, Professor! I'm glad you and your assistant could join the expedition. Let me introduce you to our other guest on this trip, Ned Land. Mr. Land is perhaps the most famous harpooner in Canada.

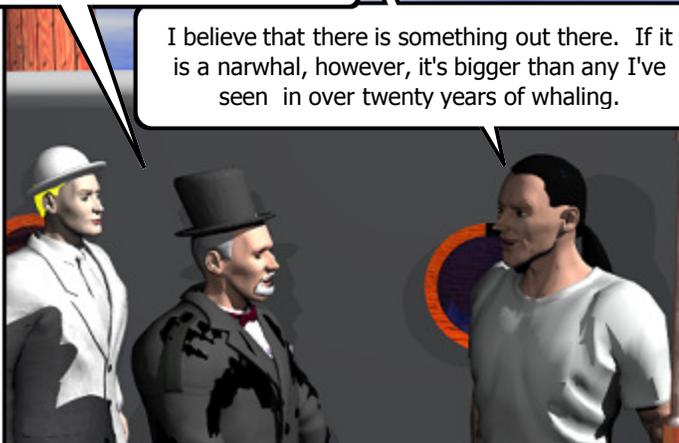
A pleasure to meet you, Professor!



I'm the hired gun they have brought along to spear your giant narwhal, Professor. Assuming that it really exists...

You have doubts, Mr. Land?

I believe that there is something out there. If it is a narwhal, however, it's bigger than any I've seen in over twenty years of whaling.



As the *Abraham Lincoln* headed out to sea, I wondered if Ned was right. If it wasn't a narwhal, what could the thing be? In just what kind of adventure were we now involved?

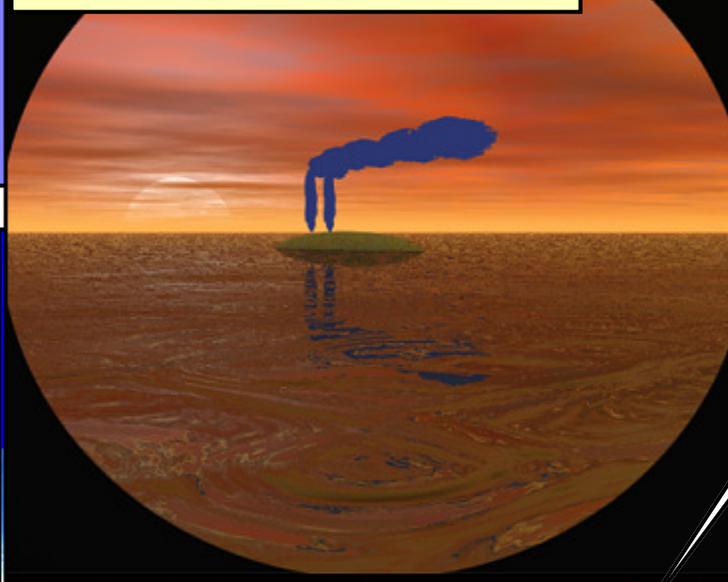


For months the ship searched the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans with no sign of the creature. Commander Farragut was a determined man, but the seas were vast and deep.



As we reached the end of the month of October, it seemed as if our mission was doomed to fail. All that changed, though, in the early morning hours of November 5th...

I grabbed a spyglass to see for myself. Ned was right! The captain called for full-speed ahead and the ship surged forward. The chase had begun!



The chase lasted throughout the day. The *Abraham Lincoln* would overtake the creature only to have it race away from us at twice our speed. Its strength seemed inexhaustible. Despite all our efforts, as the sun began to set, we were no closer to our quarry than we had been that morning.

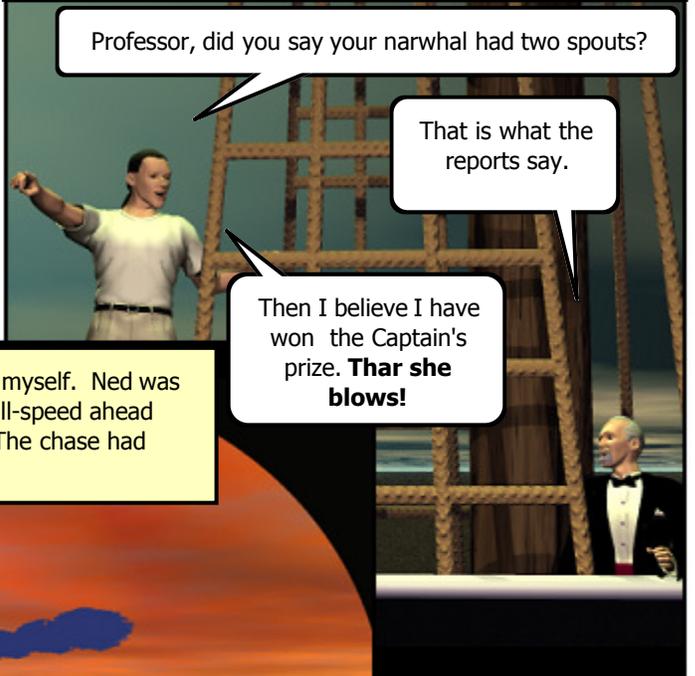


It was before sunrise. The Captain had offered a reward to the man who first spotted our quarry. Ned, Conseil, and myself, along with much of the crew, were up on deck. The sea seemed flat, without sign of anything on the horizon. I was about to go below for breakfast when Ned asked a strange question...

Professor, did you say your narwhal had two spouts?

That is what the reports say.

Then I believe I have won the Captain's prize. **Thar she blows!**



I'm afraid that between the dark and the fog we've lost the monster, Commander.

Perhaps not! Smith, stop the engines. We will proceed using sail only. Perhaps if we are quiet enough, we can sneak up on this thing.

Aye Aye, Sir!



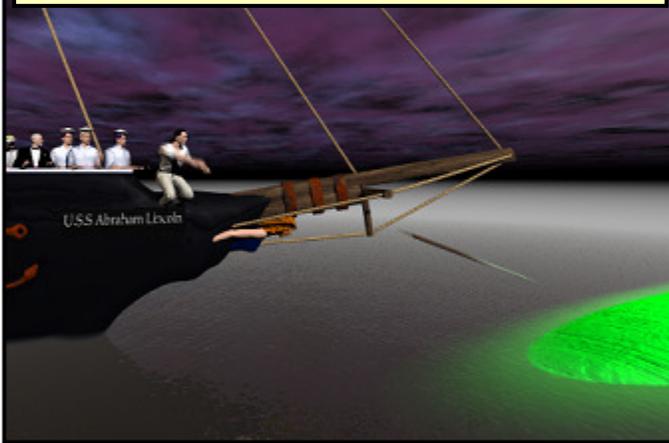
The captain was right! Within a few minutes we spotted a strange, motion-less glow from the fogbank up ahead. Perhaps the creature was sleeping.



As the Abraham Lincoln got closer to the monster, Ned grabbed his harpoon and took his place near the bow of the ship. The crew crowded forward to get a glimpse of the gigantic, glowing creature.



As the distance closed to a mere twenty paces, Ned threw the harpoon!



CLANG!



The moment the harpoon struck, the glowing light went out. Seconds later, there was a crash, followed by an explosion. The ship shook violently and I was thrown over the rail into the sea!



I found myself in the water. Unable to even tell which way was up, I would have drowned if a hand had not dragged me to the surface.



If you would lean on me, Professor, we might swim together with greater ease.

Conseil, is that you? You saved my life. Were you thrown into the ocean also?

No, I jumped in. I told you that where you go, I go, also!



Quick, Conseil, call out for the ship! Perhaps it can turn around and rescue us!

I am afraid not, Professor. I heard a sailor say that the rudder was broken by the monster's teeth. The *Abraham Lincoln* no longer answers to her helm. They cannot come back for us.



Suddenly I saw how desperate our situation really was. We were alone, hundreds of miles from land, floating in the cold sea. And the monster, the monster that we had perhaps wounded, was somewhere nearby...

CHAPTER TWO

With the *Abraham Lincoln* disabled by the monster and unable to help, we found ourselves in a desperate situation. Our strength to swim was weakening quickly. But then we heard a faint sound...



Hello? Anybody there?

Yes! Help us!

Swim this way!



With our last strength we swam toward the voice. It was Ned!

I was knocked into the water too, Professor, but I had the fortune to land almost directly on top of this thing!

What is it?

Why, Professor, it's your narwhal!



I found out why my harpoon bounced off it. The monster is made of iron!

This is incredible! It's some kind of machine. A ship that can travel underwater!



Are you sure this is what we were chasing? I don't remember seeing that structure at the front.

It's a pilot house of some sort. It must retract into the hull when they want to hide it...

The question is, "What do we do now?" Do we want them to know we are here?

Suddenly the decision was made for us!

The screw has started turning!

THUMP! THUMP! THUMP!

The ship! She's starting to go underwater!

Quick! The hatch! It's our only chance.

It's stuck. I can't turn it!

Stop! There are people up here!

Let us in! Let us in!

BANG! BANG!

The engines stopped and the ship rose to the surface. Moments later the hatch opened and two men emerged. Without a word they escorted us through the hatch, down a ladder and into a small room.

We were seated at a table and another man entered the room. I could tell by his bearing he must have been the commander of this undersea vessel.

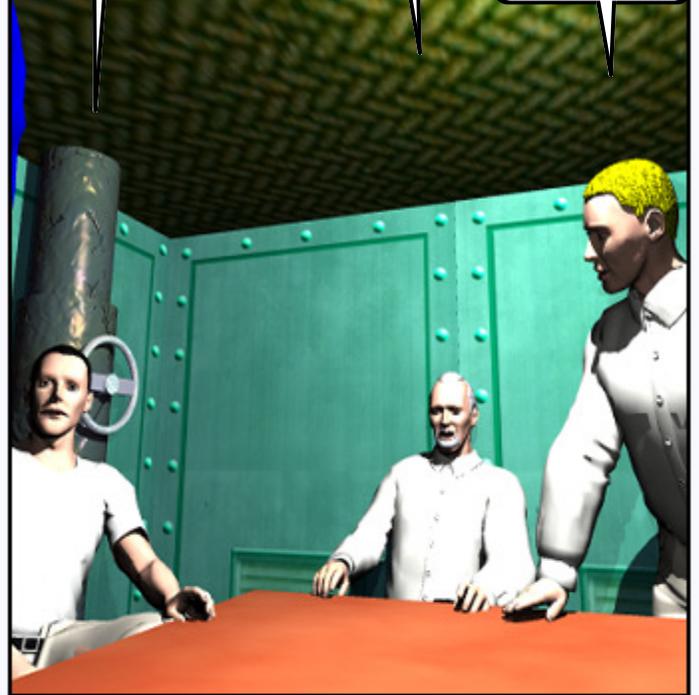
Captain, I'm afraid we were thrown from our ship when it collided with yours. Thank you for your assistance.



I don't know if they understand English, Professor.

I could try French...

or perhaps Flemish?



Gentlemen, I speak English, French, Flemish and several other languages, but I think for the moment English would suit us best. My name is Captain Nemo, and you are aboard my ship, the *Nautilus*. Now, please tell me who you are!



I told the Captain our names. Then he listened carefully as I gave him a detailed account of our adventure upon the Abraham Lincoln.

Gentleman, fate has made you passengers - permanent passengers - aboard my vessel.

Permanent passengers?

You have already seen too much. I have cut myself off from the world above the waves and I cannot let you carry stories about me back to that world.



Passengers! Prisoners is what you mean! Isn't it, Nemo?

It is myself I guard, not you, Mr. Land. If you behave you will have free run of the ship. If you decline my invitation, you can always say goodbye and go back up on deck...No? ...Very well.

Then the matter is settled. Gentlemen, I suggest you retire and make good use of the remaining hours of the night. The quartermaster will assign you cabins and arrange to have your clothes cleaned and returned to you.

Professor, would you be so good as to join me for breakfast tomorrow?

As you wish, Captain.



The next morning a member of the crew led me to the where the captain and I ate a sumptuous breakfast...

Captain, you say you have broken off all contact with the land, yet this excellent food must have come from a farm!



No, Professor, the sea supplies all our needs. That was not meat we ate, but fillet of turtle. The preserves were made from sea cucumbers. The cream was made from the milk of whales and the sugar from the plants of the North Sea.

That's amazing, Captain! There are so many questions I want to ask you. How does your vessel get to the bottom of the ocean? How do you return to the surface? Where do you get the fresh air we breathe?



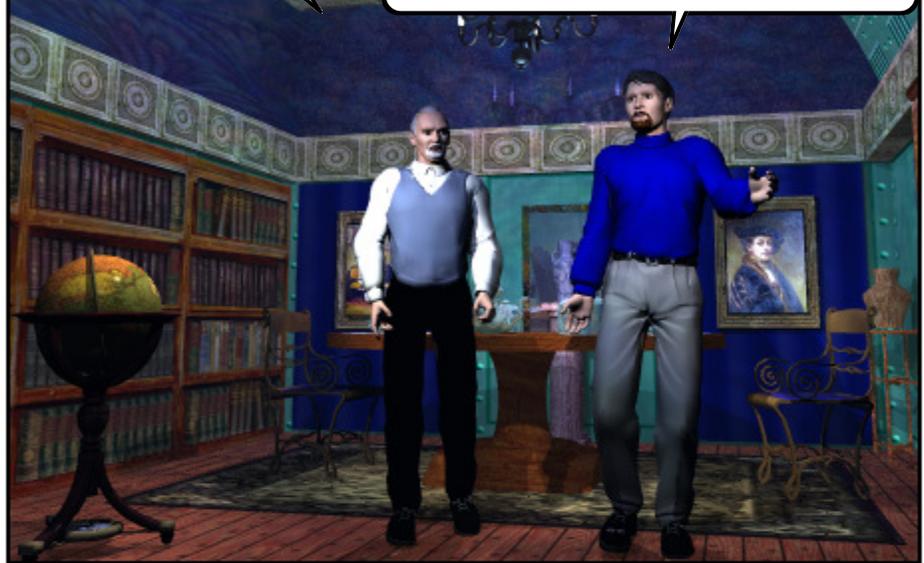
Since you are a permanent passenger, I'll be happy to share my secrets with you, Professor. Perhaps it would be best if I gave you a tour of the *Nautilus*. We can start right here in the salon.



This room serves as combination dining room, drawing room and music room. It even contains my extensive library. A library, which I might add, includes your own book.

I'm flattered that you've read it, Captain.

It's quite a good book, from a point of view above the waves. Your journey with us should give you quite a new perspective!



The Captain was good to his word and gave me a tour of his vessel from the pilot-house in the stem to the engine room in the stern.

Electricity is our powerful, obedient servant on board this ship, Professor. Electricity runs the pumps that store the air in tanks when we're on the surface. Those same electric pumps circulate the air when we are under-water. Electricity gives heat, light, motion, and in a word, life, to the *Nautilus*.



I love the *Nautilus* as if it were part of myself, Professor. There is nothing to fear, the double shell is of the strongest iron; there is no rigging or sails to worry about; no boilers to burst; no collision to fear. There is never a storm to brave, for below the surface it is always calm. This is the perfect sea vessel!



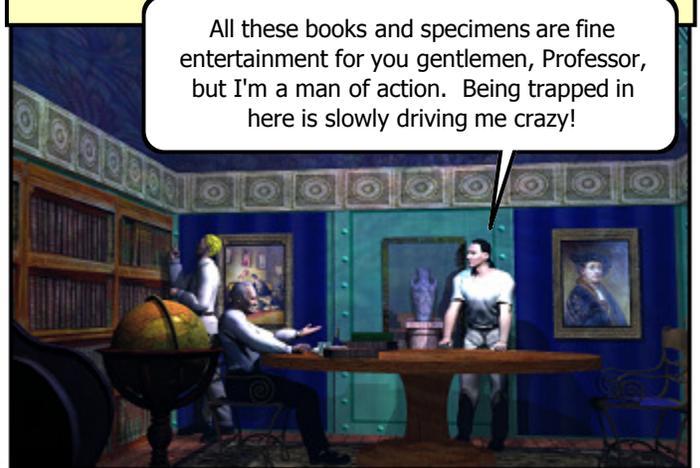
Captain Nemo was right. The *Nautilus* was almost the perfect vessel. The question was whether my companions and I would be happy living on it for the rest of our lives?



CHAPTER THREE

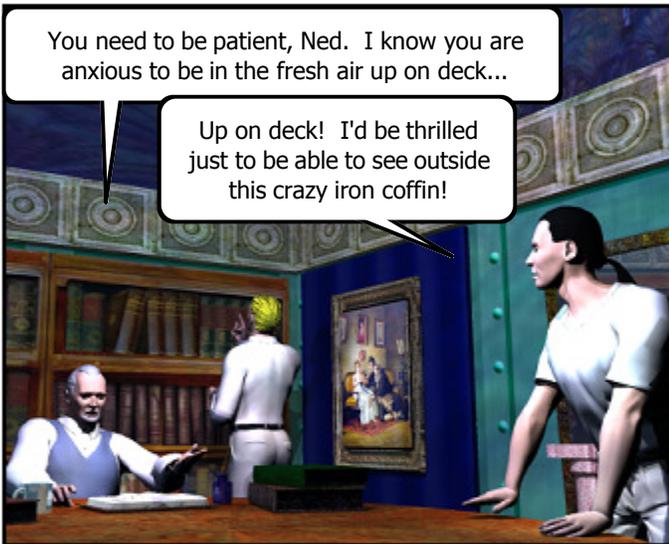
Several weeks had passed on board the *Nautilus* without incident. Conseil and I used the time to study the Captain's library and collections as Ned grew increasingly restless.

All these books and specimens are fine entertainment for you gentlemen, Professor, but I'm a man of action. Being trapped in here is slowly driving me crazy!



You need to be patient, Ned. I know you are anxious to be in the fresh air up on deck...

Up on deck! I'd be thrilled just to be able to see outside this crazy iron coffin!



As if on cue, the room was plunged into darkness and panels in the sides of the ship started sliding open. Suddenly we could see the ocean!

The room will be flooded! It is the end!



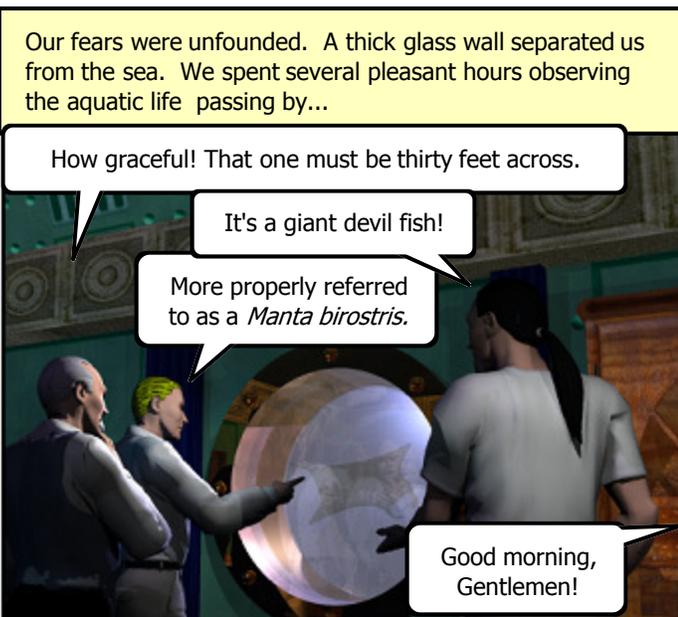
Our fears were unfounded. A thick glass wall separated us from the sea. We spent several pleasant hours observing the aquatic life passing by...

How graceful! That one must be thirty feet across.

It's a giant devil fish!

More properly referred to as a *Manta birostris*.

Good morning, Gentlemen!



Tomorrow we will be near the Island of Ceylon, known for its pearl fisheries. I thought you might like to visit one.

Out there? How will we breath, Captain?

We have special diving apparatus.

And what about sharks?



Are you afraid of sharks, Mr. Land? Don't be concerned. We will be armed with knives.

I'd prefer a good harpoon!

Then you shall have it! Till tomorrow, then, Gentlemen.



The next morning the crew helped us dress in heavy, seamless, rubberized suits. Onto our backs they strapped the breathing apparatus.

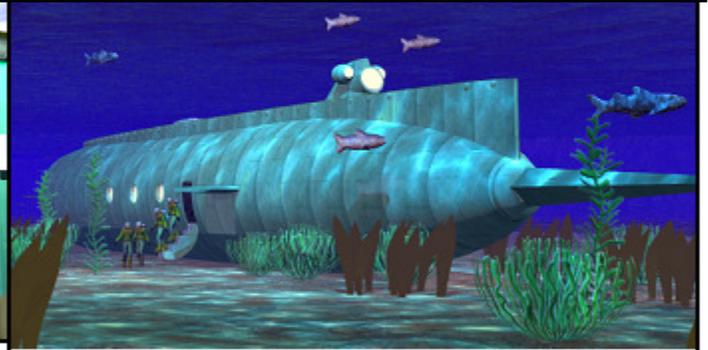
I have to admit, Professor, I don't know much about where pearls come from.



The pearl is actually nothing but a bit of sand that gets caught in the folds of an oyster. Over many years, the shellfish deposits substances



When we were fully suited up, we stepped through a watertight door into a small chamber. The door was closed behind us and after a moment I felt the chill of sea water rising to my chest. A few seconds later, another door opened and we stepped outside the *Nautilus* and onto the bottom of the sea.



With Captain Nemo leading, we walked across the bottom of the sea, stopping occasionally to pick up oysters and open them with our knives. Any pearls we found we tucked into a bag attached to our belts. In a few minutes, we each carried a small fortune of them with us.



The Captain took a turn and steered us into a large, underwater grotto. In the center sat an oyster of extraordinary size. The shells were open and inside I could see a pearl the size of a coconut. A jewel of priceless value!



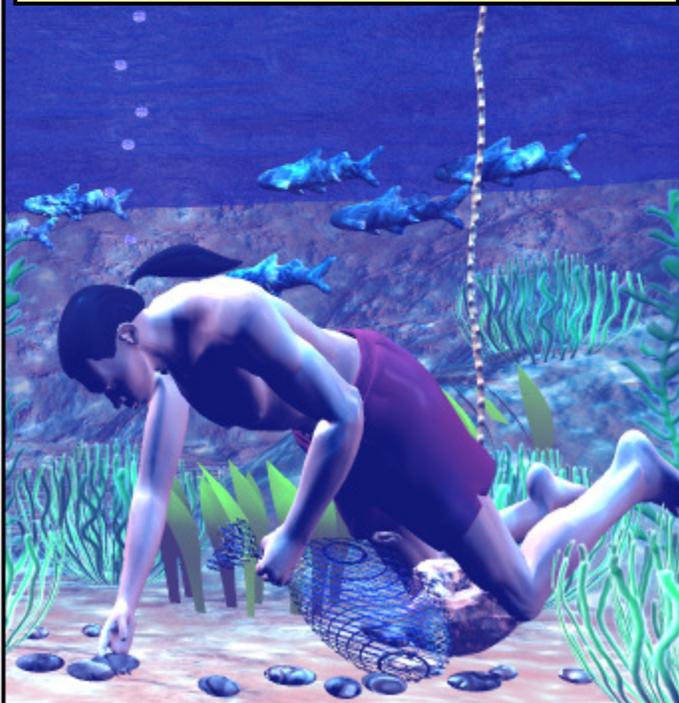
I reached out to touch it, but the Captain stopped me. Suddenly, I realized it was his intention to allow the pearl to remain there, growing slowly in size and value each year. In this place it was safer than in any bank on land!



We marched along for an hour before the Captain brought our group to a sudden halt. I looked up and saw movement toward the surface. At first, my blood froze thinking it might be a shark, but then I saw it was a man. He was being pulled toward the bottom by a rock he clutched between his knees.



He gathered oysters randomly off the bottom and stuffed them into a bag he carried with him. Then he released the rock and floated up to a small boat on the surface. The rock was then pulled up, the bag emptied, and the procedure repeated.



Suddenly, out of nowhere, a huge shark rushed at the pearl diver. The impact knocked the man over and stunned him while his feet tangled in the rope. The shark turned to face its victim and opened its ugly, tooth-filled jaws.



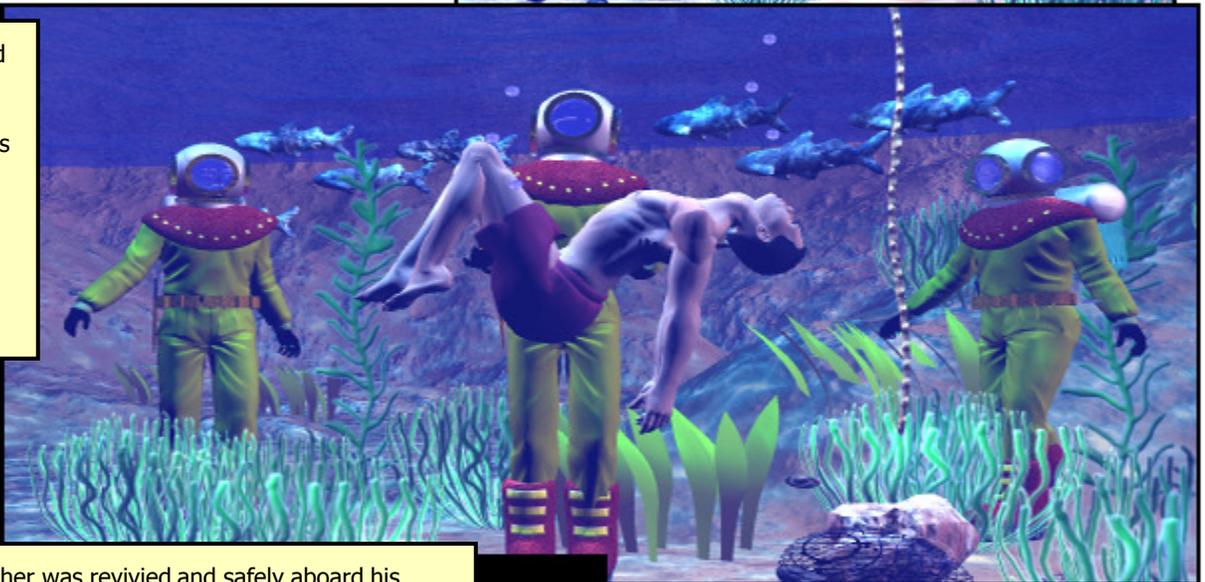
The Captain stepped between the shark and his prey. The monster charged, and Nemo jumped out of the way at the last moment. Clinging to the shark's fin, he thrust his knife again and again into the creature's belly, but with little effect. Suddenly the monster shook violently and threw the Captain aside.



Before the Captain could rise the monster reversed and was upon him. It would have been all over for the Captain had not Ned rushed forward with his harpoon. With amazing skill, he plunged the shaft deep into the creature's side and straight through its heart.



Nemo stood and raced to where the pearl diver lay tangled in his rope. The Captain freed him, picked the man up and carried him to the surface.



After the pearl fisher was revived and safely aboard his boat, Captain Nemo pulled his own bag of pearls from his belt and gave them to the man. I could see the man's eyes turn to delight and wonder as he pondered the identity of these superhumans to which he now owed both his life and his fortune.



We left the man to recover and started our walk back to the Nautilus. Within an hour we were back aboard, sitting in the salon, and enjoying each other's company over a wonderful dinner that included bowls of shark fin soup!



CHAPTER FOUR

Early in January the Captain informed me that he intended to take the *Nautilus* through the Straits of Torres. This passage, a small strip of water between Australia and New Guinea, has a bad reputation. Countless islands, islets, breakers and rocks make navigation a difficult task.



This is a bad sea, Professor, and one that does not suit a boat like the *Nautilus*.

I find it hard to believe the Captain would take his beloved ship this way if there was really any serious danger...

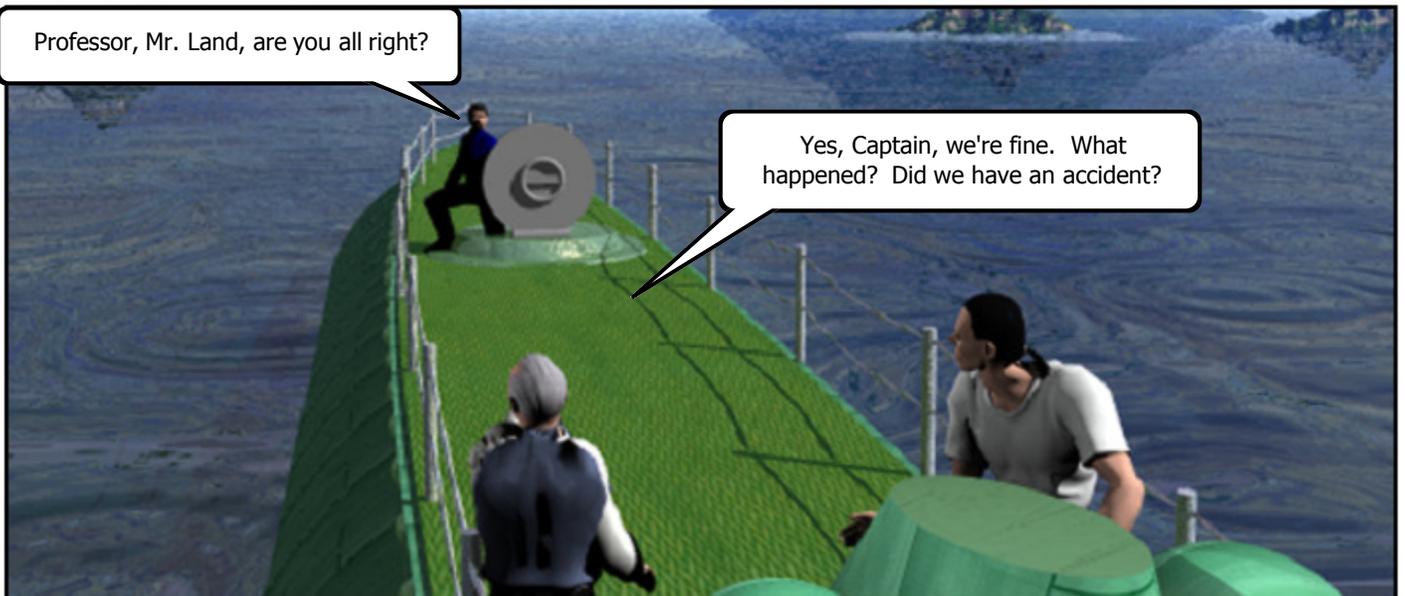


CRUNCH!



Professor, Mr. Land, are you all right?

Yes, Captain, we're fine. What happened? Did we have an accident?



Not an accident, Professor, an incident. We have fetched up on a shoal, but the ship is undamaged.

You going to have a difficult time getting her off with the weak tides they have here, Nemo!

Never fear, Mr. Land. In five days there is a full moon. I would be surprised if that will not raise the tide enough to get us free.

Five days! What luck! Professor, ask him if he'll let us go ashore.

Ned, he'll never agree to that...

Just ask him! Tell him you want to visit one of the islands to get some specimens for your collection!

Excuse me, Captain. Since we are going to be here several days, I was wondering if you might allow us to go ashore and explore that island. It would be a wonderful opportunity to add some specimens to my collection.

Hummm... I don't see why not, Professor. I'll make the arrangements.

The *Nautilus* carried a small boat in a compartment on deck. It was removed, lowered into the water, and loaded with supplies, including rifles.

This is going to be great! Dry land again!

Perhaps he knows something we don't!

I still can't believe that he agreed to let us go...

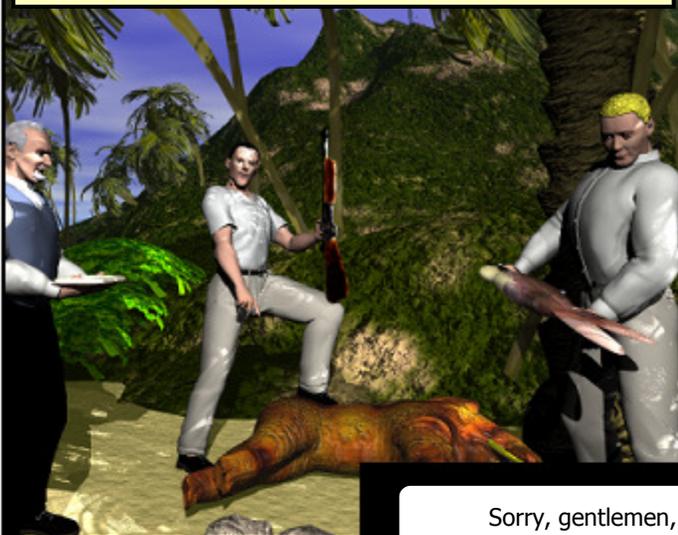
After a few minutes rowing, we reached the tiny island and beached the boat.

Meat! We are going to eat meat again!

Professor, I see some breadfruit trees. I would very much like to try making breadfruit pie!

We are here to make experiments. Let's make them!

We spent several days on the island. Both Ned and Conseil proved to be excellent hunters.



Conseil shot a beautiful Bird of Paradise for my collection and Ned bagged a wild hog of the sort the natives call "bari-outang."

At breakfast one morning Ned made an announcement...

Gentlemen, I've decided I'm not going back!

Captain Nemo will not be pleased.

Ned, have you thought this through? We are hundreds, perhaps thousands of miles from civilization!



Sorry, gentlemen, I've made up my mind and nothing is going to change-

THWAP!

Arrows do not fall from the sky...



By the time we got the boat in the water, there were a dozen men on the beach armed with spears, bows and rocks. Arrows and stones whizzed around us, but fortunately, none of us was seriously hurt.



This island isn't uninhabited after all! Grab everything and run for the boat!



Must be a hundred of them out there now, all stamping their feet and yelling...

Let them howl all they want! We're out of the range of their arrows!

Don't be so sure! Some of them are dragging canoes onto the beach.

Ned, when we get to the *Nautilus* you and Conseil stow the boat. I'll go and warn the Captain.



It wasn't hard to locate the Captain. The organ echoed through the ship.

Professor, this is most extraordinary! You've interrupted me at the climax of Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3. I hope you have a good reason!

I'm sorry, Captain, but our explorations seem to have attracted the attention of hostile islanders. I'm afraid we will be surrounded and overrun!



I see! Well, we can't have that, can we?

Bridge!

Yes, Sir!

The Professor tells me we are about to have unwanted guests. Clear the deck and secure the hatches against intruders.

Aye, aye, Sir!



The Islanders boarded the ship, but could not get inside. Instead, they took to stomping on the deck which made it difficult to sleep. I was also kept awake by the knowledge the ship had not taken on enough air. We would have to open the hatches tomorrow morning, leaving us exposed to attack.

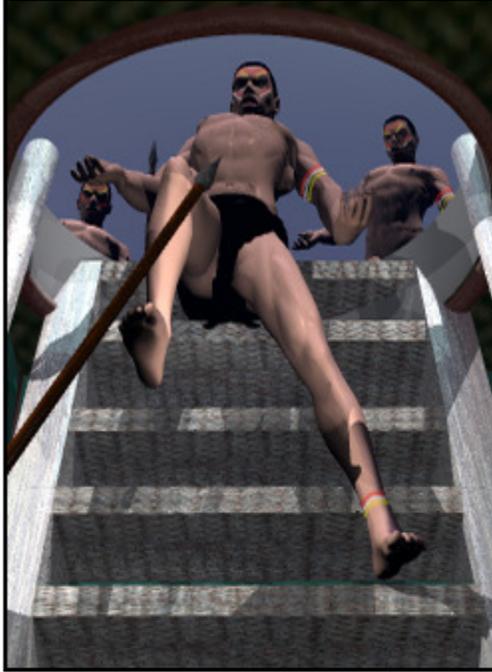
THUMP THUMP THUMP!



The next morning I waited nervously in the passageway. The crew seemed strangely calm. As soon as the hatch was opened, angry faces appeared. There were dozens of men on deck, all armed with spears.



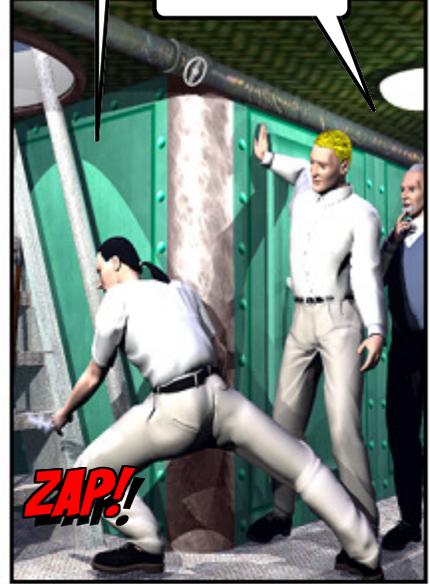
The first islander started down the ladder, but he was suddenly thrown backwards as if by some mysterious power. Another and another tried to enter, but all met the same fate!



Puzzled, Ned reached out to try and solve the mystery...

Yow! Struck by a thunderbolt!

Electricity!



How ingenious, Captain! You electrified the steps.

Very perceptive, Professor! Yes, an extremely painful, but harmless charge.

Now if you will excuse me, I'm off to the bridge. I can feel the rising tide starting to rock the ship. I suspect we will soon be able to get underway.

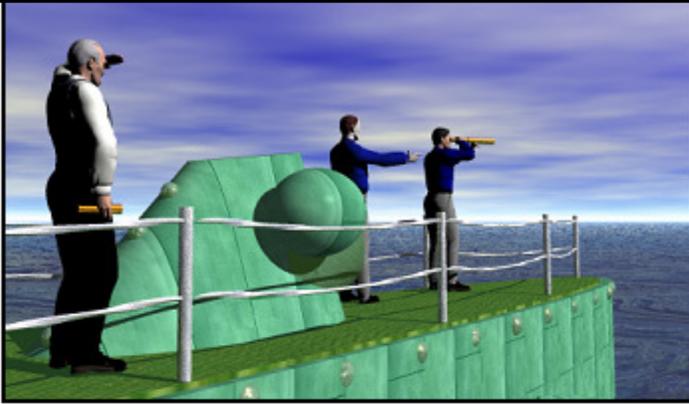


As the Captain predicted, by noon the Nautilus was free and on its way. The natives, seeing their island disappearing behind us, abandoned the deck and paddled home. By sunset, the ship had cleared the straits and was headed, once again, into the open ocean.



CHAPTER FIVE

On January 18th we were crossing the Indian Ocean. I went up on deck to get my usual morning air and I spotted Captain Nemo forward of the pilot house. He was using his spyglass to look at something on the horizon while he talked excitedly to a member of the crew.



I thought I saw a ship. I was about to raise my own spyglass to my eye when the Captain snatched it out of my hands.

I'm sorry, Professor, but you will have to go below immediately!



I was escorted to a small room. Within a few minutes Ned and Conseil were forced to join me.

What's going on?

I don't know exactly. I was up on deck and I thought I saw a ship. Before I could get a good look, Nemo sent me below.

Perhaps it was a rescue ship?

Whatever it was, I doubt that we will be allowed out of here until it is out of sight.

Well, at least we are getting an early lunch!

After we ate, I noticed that Conseil had fallen asleep. Then I too realized that for some unexplainable reason, I was also sleepy...

I can... I can hardly keep my eyes open!

The food. They must have drugged the food...

I awoke in my cabin that evening. Ned was knocking softly at the door.

Ned! What has happened?

Everything looks normal, but there's a mood about the ship. I think we've been in some kind of battle.

Do you think that ship I saw attacked us?

Or we attacked it...

I'll see you later, Professor. I want to get out of here. Nemo's coming down the passageway, probably wanting to speak to you. In my current mood, I'll wind up slugging him even if he only just says "Good Evening" to me.



The Captain led me to a cabin. Inside, a man lay unconscious with his head swathed in bandages. My examination showed that he had suffered a massive blow. If Ned was right about the battle, then this was a casualty.



The next morning the Captain asked us to join him outside. When we emerged I was surprised to see most of the crew waiting for us.



A group of men come forward carrying an oblong object: the body of the unfortunate crewman that died last night! This was a funeral!



We marched solemnly across the bottom of the ocean. At the front of the procession Captain Nemo carried a cross that had been carved out of coral.



After a short walk, we stopped. Here a grave had been dug into the bottom of the sea. The man was laid in his tomb and Captain Nemo placed the cross as a headstone. On either side were two similar crosses, also made out of coral.



The Captain seemed more sad and tired than I'd ever seen him before.

Sorry to disturb you, Professor, but did you once study medicine?



I was a doctor before I joined the museum.

Good. I was wondering if you would look at one of my men. He been severely injured.

I will come at once.

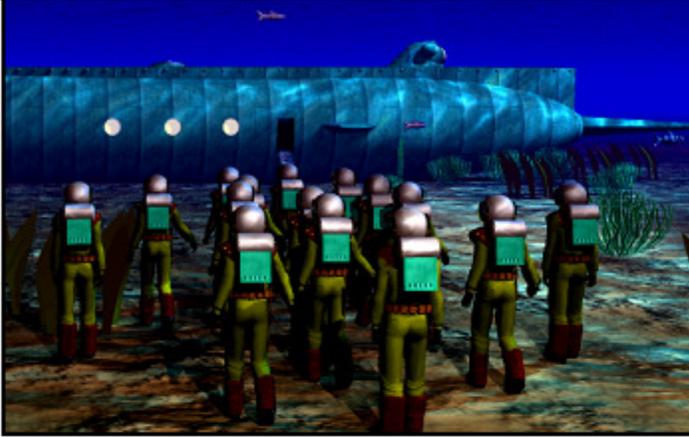
Captain Nemo was waiting outside. I gave him my report.

I'm sorry, Captain. There's nothing I can do for him. He's too badly.

I was afraid that was the case. Thanks for examining him.



When the burial was finished, we went back to the *Nautilus*. As we walked, I couldn't help but wonder about the other two crosses I'd seen. They must have been other members of the crew. Had they also been killed in battles with Captain Nemo's unnamed enemy?



CHAPTER SIX

I was working in my cabin one evening when the Captain appeared at the door.

Professor, what do you know about the history of Spain?

Not much, I am afraid.

Then allow me to tell you a curious tale.

Please do!



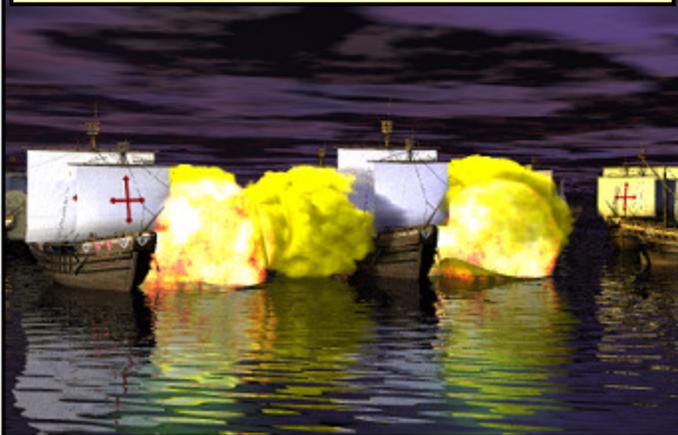
"In 1702 a Spanish convoy of ships filled with gold sailed from South America for Spain. Hearing that an enemy fleet was blocking the route to their original destination, the port of Cadiz, the fleet commander changed course and sailed into Vigo Bay on the northwest coast of Spain."



"It was important that the ships be unloaded immediately before the enemy fleet arrived. A dispute with local officials over import regulations, however, delayed the start of the task. The problem was eventually resolved, but by then it was too late. The enemy had sailed into Vigo Bay."

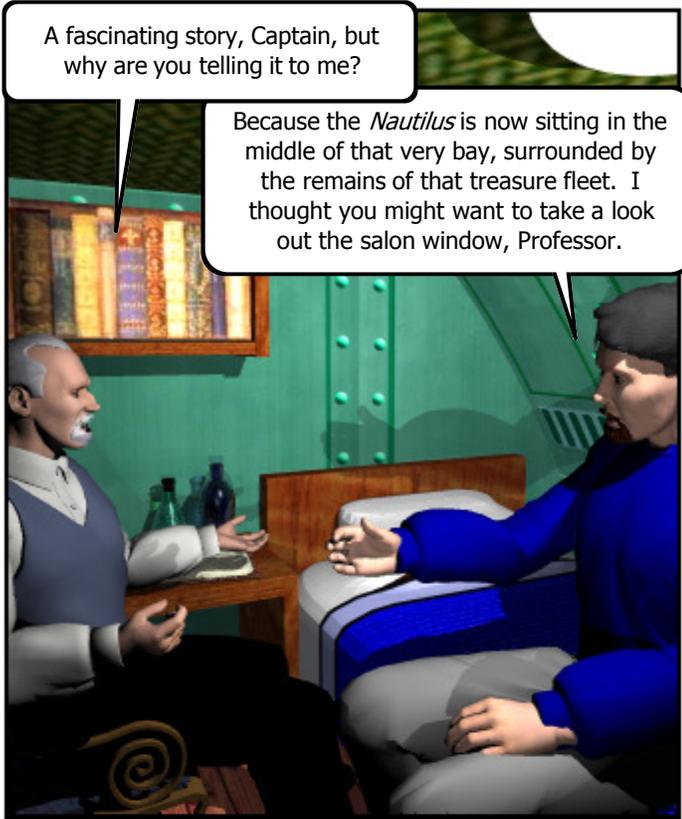


"The Spanish Commander was forced to fight a battle upon the bay. His men fought bravely, but they were outnumbered. Seeing he would lose, the Commander made a painful decision."



"Rather than let the treasure fall into enemy hands, the commander decided to burn and sink the ships. All of them went to the bottom of the bay - Vigo Bay - carrying immense cargos of gold and silver."

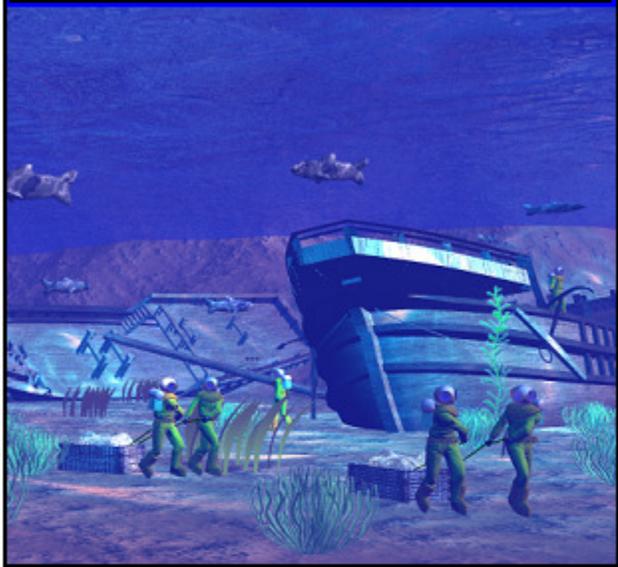




A fascinating story, Captain, but why are you telling it to me?

Because the *Nautilus* is now sitting in the middle of that very bay, surrounded by the remains of that treasure fleet. I thought you might want to take a look out the salon window, Professor.

I hurried to the salon. From the windows I observed that the *Nautilus* lay on the bottom of the sea surrounded by sunken ships. The crew in their diving suits were clearing away barrels and chests from the crumbling wrecks. Others dragged back crates to our vessel filled to the brim with treasure.



Captain, now I understand how you could afford to build and operate the *Nautilus* ! You've made yourself a direct heir to all these riches once carried by those unfortunate Spanish galleons!

Not just these wrecks, Professor, but countless others like them round the world.



Don't make the mistake of thinking I intend to keep all these riches for myself, Professor. I don't! I will see they get to the people who need them most: the poor, the downtrodden, the oppressed. This gold will aid their struggles!



Might we not don the diving suits and see this marvel up close, Captain?

Not this time. We will be on our way again shortly. There is an expedition I have planned in a few days, however, that might interest you. How would you like to visit the ocean bottom at night?

You heighten my curiosity. I will be happy to join you.



It was an evening several days later that Captain Nemo and I started upon this mysterious expedition. Invitations had not been offered to Ned or Conseil, so the Captain and I went out alone. After dressing in our suits, we left the ship in the usual way, carrying long sticks ending in iron points.



We started to climb a steep slope. Ahead of us an eerie, redish light lit the way. The path was surrounded by huge rocks with deep cracks. My blood ran cold when I saw an enormous antennae moving through the dark, or heard the snap of a frightful claw closing in the shadow of some nearby cave.



As we crested the hill, a spectacular sight came into view. Across a shallow valley lay an underwater volcano. Red-hot lava rolled down its sides while a cloud of glowing steam belched violently from the crater.



An even more amazing site greeted me when I looked into the valley below. A ruined city lay at my feet. Its roofs lay open to the sea, its temples fallen, its columns upon the ground. A perfect city beneath the waves!



What was this place? I made signs to the Captain, hoping he could furnish me with an explanation. He nodded, picked up a piece of chalky stone, then walked to a large black rock. He wrote out a single word: *Atlantis...*

Atlantis! The famous, legendary city that had vanished beneath the waves thousands of years ago in a catastrophic earthquake! I was standing, perhaps, where the earliest, civilized men had walked.

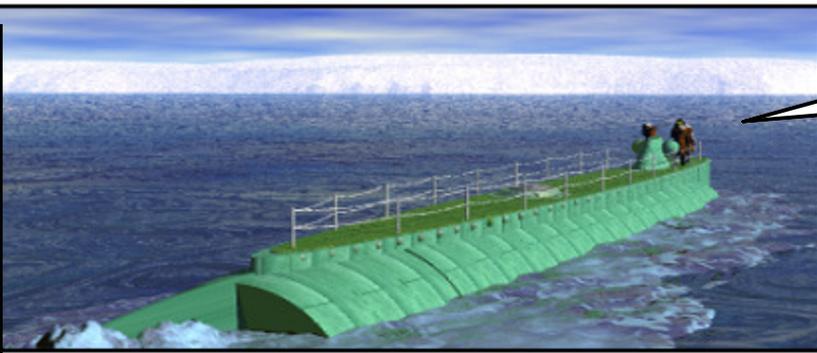


We remained overlooking the city for an hour, thinking about the people who must have lived there and the mysteries that lay buried under the volcano's light. Then the Captain signaled me it was time to go, and we made our way back to the *Nautilus*.



CHAPTER SEVEN

For many days the *Nautilus* had been traveling due south. As the weather grew colder, we passed huge chunks of floating ice. Finally on March 18th we reached the great ice pack that occupies this region of the Antarctic.



Well, Captain, I think we have just about reached the limit of our southern journey. What a cold and desolate place! Do you intend to turn around and head north again?

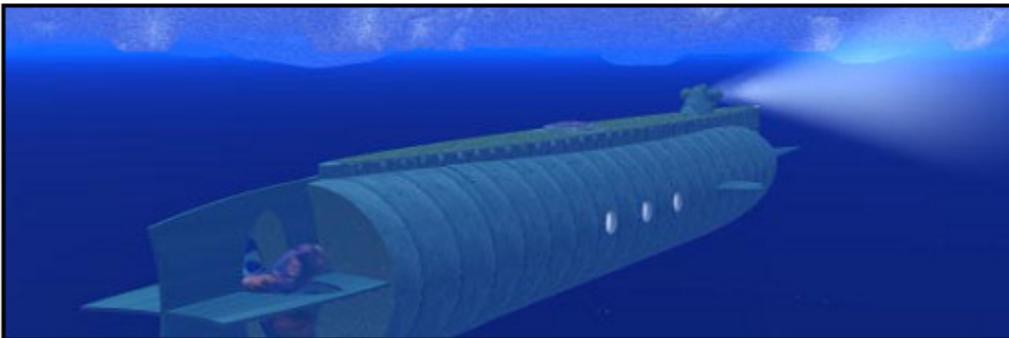
On the contrary, Professor. I intend to go further south still. All the way to the South Pole!

Farther to the South? Go ahead, Captain! Smash the ice pack. If it resists, give the *Nautilus* wings to fly over it!



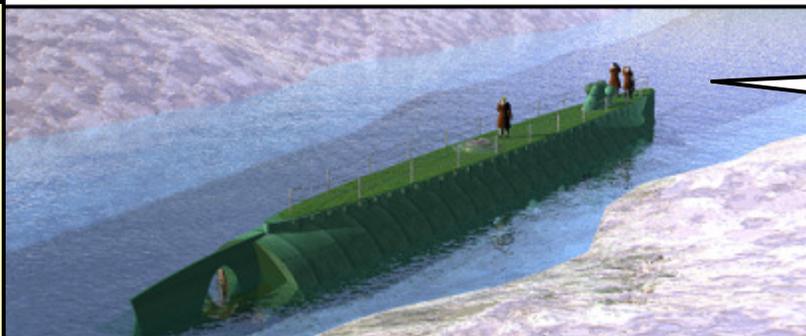
We're not flying over the ice, Professor. I intend to take the *Nautilus* under the ice!

Did he say "under the ice?"



Preparations for this adventure were quickly made. The pumps stored air at high pressure in the tanks. When all was ready the ship descended. At the depth of 900 feet, at the Captain predicted, we were able to move under the ice shelf.

We continued south toward the pole till the *Nautilus* found an opening in the ice where we surfaced. We would need to see the sun to get our exact position, but the sky was too cloudy, and visibility too poor to take any bearings.

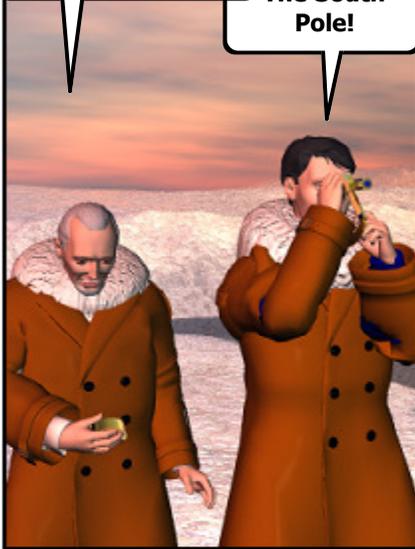


We may already be at the pole, but I cannot tell. Tomorrow the sun will be setting for the long Antarctic night. We will try then.

The next day was the equinox. The sun would set and not be seen again here for six months. After breakfast we went ashore to take the bearings. If the sun set at exactly twelve noon we would know we were at the South Pole.

Three...two...one...
Twelve o'clock!

The South Pole!



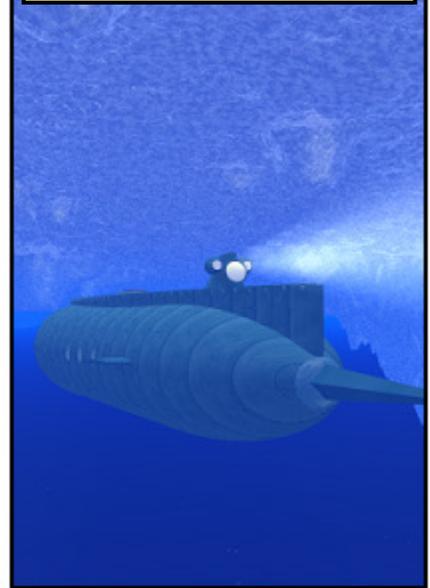
I, Captain Nemo, on this day, the 21st of March, 1868, have reached the South Pole at the ninetieth degree. I take possession of this part of the globe equal to one-sixth of the known continents!

In whose name, Captain?

Why, in my own, Professor!



Captain Nemo left his flag at the South Pole as a token of his successful expedition. After submerging, we headed northward toward South America. For 36 hours we sailed under the ice without incident...



It was three in the morning when I was awakened by a violent shock that ran through the ship and threw me from my bed.

CRUNCH!

Good heavens!



We found Captain Nemo in the salon examining the instruments.

Another incident, Captain?

No, this time it is an accident. A huge block of ice, the size of a mountain, has rolled over and trapped us between it and the ice pack above. We are floating in a chamber of water surrounded by ice on all sides and we cannot escape.



Gentlemen, there are two ways of dying under these circumstances. The first is to be crushed if the ice shifts again. The second is to die of suffocation: We only have 48 hours of fresh air left aboard the *Nautilus*.

The ice shelf we are sitting on is less than thirty feet thick. It is my intention to divide the crew into shifts. Each shift will go out in turn to attack the ice below with pick axes. If we can make a big enough hole, the *Nautilus* will be able to escape.

Is there no hope, Captain?

Put me on a shift, Nemo!

I would also like to help, Sir.

I, as well, Captain.



The work began immediately. Large blocks of ice were hacked away and floated to the top of the chamber. After 12 hours the hole was one yard deep. At this rate it would take five days to make our escape and we had less than two.



At the end of my shift I noticed something that greatly alarmed me.

Captain, the water out there is starting to freeze and the walls are closing in on us.

We have to find a way to stop it or our efforts will be in vain.

If only we could raise the temperature just a few degrees.



There must be a way to stop it... Raise the temperature... Raise temperature... That's it! Boiling water! Professor, get changed and meet me near the engine room!



The Captain and I flooded a huge tank with water, then heated it to the boiling point. We then discharged the hot liquid into the sea outside the *Nautilus*. It worked! Overnight the temperature in our icy prison rose to above freezing and the walls stopped closing in around us.



We would not be frozen in by the encroaching ice, but neither were we free. Hour after hour we labored and the escape tunnel below the ship got deeper and deeper. Aboard the *Nautilus*, however, the air became unbreathable.



When I got back to the ship after my last shift, I nearly choked on the bad air. We would suffocate in a matter of minutes if something was not done.

We must depart now!

(Cough) Can't. Still three feet left to go!

I have a plan. We'll flood the ship's tanks with water. The extra weight may cause the ice below us to crack!



I heard the water rushing into the tanks and the groan of the ice below as it resisted the *Nautilus's* increased weight. Our lives depended on this last chance! Suddenly there was a sharp crack and the ship started sinking rapidly. We were free!

Free, but not out of danger. The screw turned at full-speed and made the iron hull tremble as it pushed us northward. If we could not find open water quickly so we could surface, we would all be dead. The air was poisonous! My face became purple, my lips turned blue, and I lost consciousness.



Fresh air entered my lungs and I awoke. Ned and Conseil had found some air left in one diving apparatus. Instead of using it themselves, they were trying to revive me.

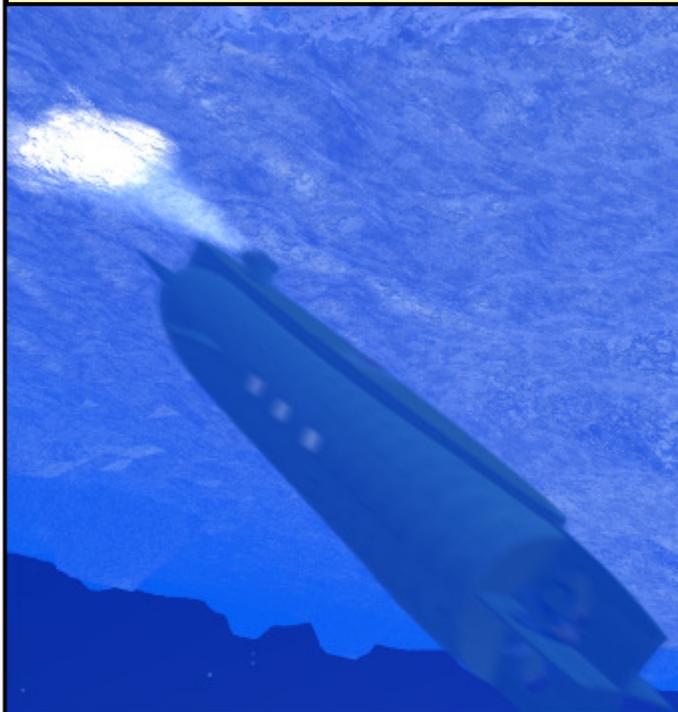
He's waking up!
Professor, can you hear me?

Save...save
(cough)
yourselves..

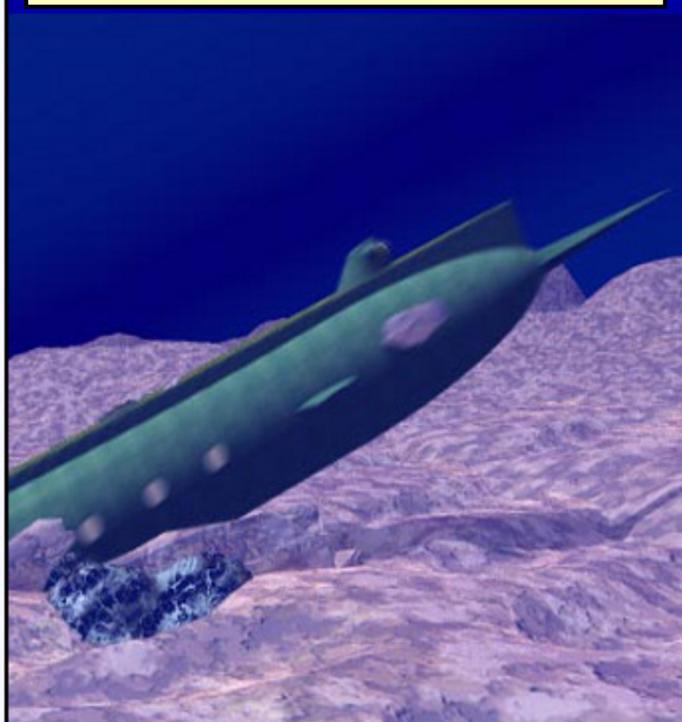
Professor, the ice has thinned! We are only 20 feet down. The Captain is going to try to smash through the last few feet of ice!



Conseil was right. The bow of the ship was pointed upwards. Again and again the *Nautilus* rushed forward like a giant battering ram striking the pack. With each blow I wondered which would crack first: The ice or the ship's iron hull.

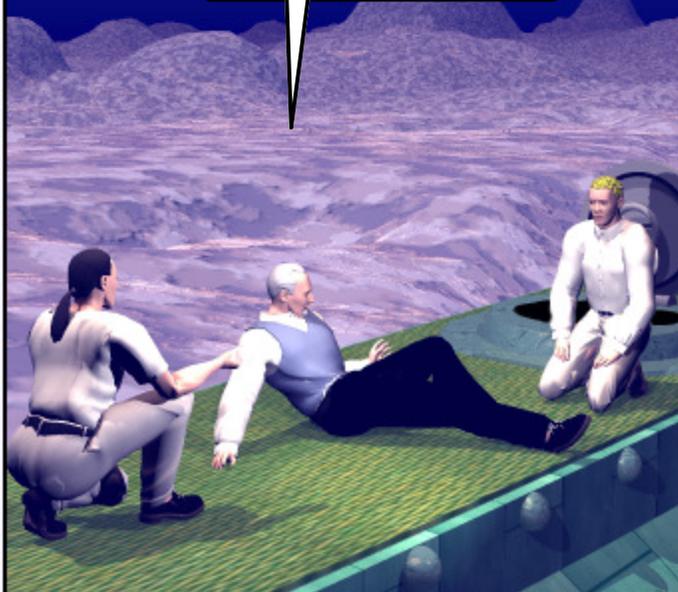


On the third try the ice gave way and the *Nautilus* shot into the air, then fall back onto the pack. The ice crumbled under the ship's weight and it was soon floating in a small pond of its own making.



I don't know how I made my way up on deck. I can only guess that Ned and Conseil carried me. The air was cold, but so very fresh. And we were safe.

I owe both of you my life!

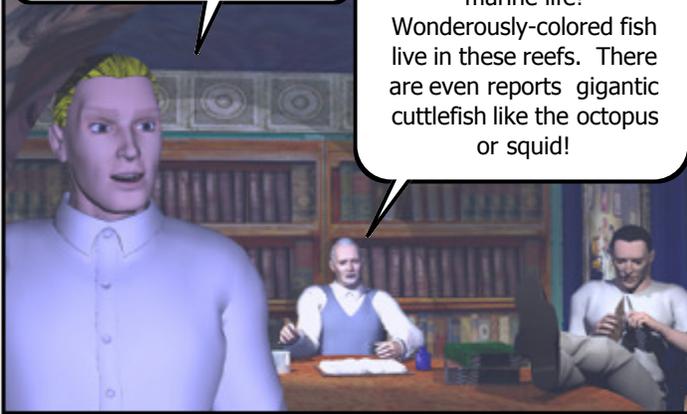


CHAPTER EIGHT

By April 20th we were sailing along high coral reefs near the Bahama Islands.

Professor, there are some very interesting specimens out here!

Yes, this part of the sea has a fascinating array of marine life! Wonderously-colored fish live in these reefs. There are even reports gigantic cuttlefish like the octopus or squid!



Giant cuttlefish! Ha! I'll never believe that such creatures exist!

But it's been documented, Ned! In 1861 the ship Alector came upon a huge cuttlefish-like animal right in these very waters. They attempted to haul it on board, but it escaped.



Professor, did that creature measure about 18 feet long?

Yes, that's about right.

And did its tentacles beat the water like a nest of serpents?

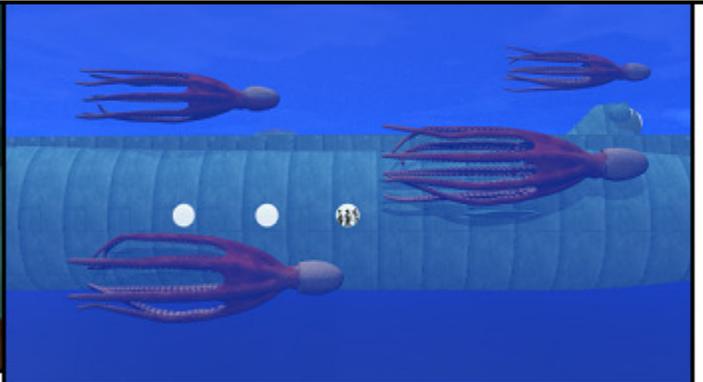
I would imagine.

Well, if this is not the same creature, then it must be one of its brothers!

What!?!



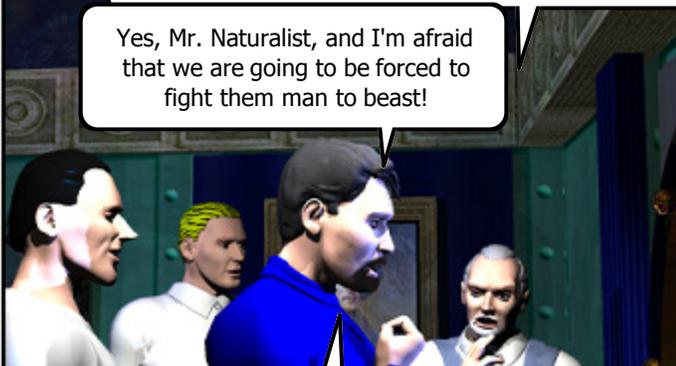
We rushed to the window and observed a creature worthy of legend. Its body must have weighed 5,000 pounds. As we watched, a second and a third appeared. I finally counted seven. I was so entranced by these creatures that I didn't even notice that the *Nautilus* had come to a stop.



Captain Nemo entered the room and without speaking to any of us went straight to the window.

A curious collection, don't you think, Captain?

Yes, Mr. Naturalist, and I'm afraid that we are going to be forced to fight them man to beast!



The screw is jammed. One of the creatures' tentacles has become entangled in the blades. We need to rise to the surface, kill it and drive the others away.

Conseil, Ned and I also volunteered to assist with repelling the beasts. We joined a group of the crew out in the passageway and were given axes. One crewman was sent to open the hatch.



As soon as the hatch was unlocked, it was torn open by the powerful suckers on one of the creature's arms. Then a tentacle shot down into the ship, wrapped itself around the man ahead of Nemo and lifted him out of the hatch.

Help!

Let's Go



We rushed out on deck. Ten or twelve of the creatures surrounded the *Nautilus* by now. Captain Nemo, swinging his axe, dodged through a guantlet of wiggling tentacles toward the unfortunate man who was now balanced in the air on one enormous arm.

Good heavens!

Help me!



Before Nemo could sever the tentacle that held the victim in its grasp, the monster slid off the platform and into the sea. The creature plunged into the depths, taking the sailor with him. I shall hear that poor man's cries for help all of my life. But there was nothing that could be done. He was lost!



There was no time to mourn. We fought a pitched battle upon the *Nautilus'* deck. We swung our axes like madmen into the midst of this nest of serpents that wriggled in the waves of blood. After a quarter hour most of the creatures were driven off. The end of the battle was nearly in sight.



Suddenly Ned was seized from behind by one of the last monsters. It lifted him high into the air, then started sliding into the sea. I tried to race to Ned's assistance, but I was too far away!



Dodging arms, Captain Nemo leapt forward and swung his axe mightily. It severed the tentacle that held Ned aloft and the Canadian came tumbling to the deck.



Ned jumped up, grabbed his harpoon and plunged it deep into the heart of the monster. It gave a shutter, then stopped moving. Suddenly we realized that the battle was over. All was quiet on the deck of the *Nautilus*.



We were bloody and exhausted. I watched the Captain. He stared out at the sea that had claimed yet another of his crew. A tear welled in his eye. The 20th of April was likely to be a day that none of us would ever forget!



CHAPTER NINE

By June we were cruising off the coast of England. I think Captain Nemo was avoiding me. He seemed increasingly angry and sad. Ned and Conseil busied themselves with plans and dreams of escape, while I continued my studies.



One afternoon I came up on deck hoping to catch a glimpse of the coast...

Professor, it's a ship!

From her rigging I make it a man-of-war, but I can't tell from what country. She flies no flags. Even so, if she gets close enough I'm going to swim for her. I suggest you do the same!



Just then a puff of white smoke erupted from the fore part of the approaching vessel. A few seconds later we heard a boom and a splash appeared near the stern of the *Nautilus*. The ship was firing upon us!



That was close!

Let me try signaling them!

Whoa! Don't shoot! There are friends on board this thing!



Suddenly Captain Nemo appeared and struck Ned down from behind!

Fool! Do you wish to be pierced by the spur of the *Nautilus* before it is hurled at this vessel?

WHACK!



Ship of an accursed nation, do you know who I am? Through you I've lost all that I loved - country, wife, children, father and mother. I saw all perish! You are all that I hate! I will have my revenge!



Captain, do you intend to attack this ship?

I intend to sink this ship, Professor! I am the law, and I the judge! I am the oppressor, and there is the oppressed, and there is the oppressor. Say no more. Fate has shown you what you should never have seen. Go below now!



We waited in the salon while the warship chased the *Nautilus* all afternoon.

Nemo has gone mad! I'd rather escape to that ship and perish with it than stay here and be made an unwilling accomplice in its destruction!

You may be right! No matter what these people have done to Nemo, he doesn't have the right to take justice into his own hands!



Suddenly we changed course to circle back on our pursuer. The pilot house was lowered into the ship and the railing removed. When we submerged, the surface of the submarine no longer had any point of resistance to slow its movement through the water.



The *Nautilus* closed in on its victim. The sound of the engines grew louder as our speed increased. Faster and faster we went until the whole hull trembled.



A shock ran through the ship. I screamed. I felt the penetrating power of the spur. Outside the hull I could hear rattlings and scrappings. The *Nautilus* had gone through the man-of-war like a needle through sailcloth!



The ship slowly started settling into the water as flames appeared on deck. As the water rose sailors crowded the rigging and clung to the masts.



Suddenly there was an explosion. The fire had finally reached the warship's magazines and set off the store of gunpower. After that the vessel sank rapidly and soon disappeared beneath the waves.

BOOM!



I saw Captain Nemo go to his cabin. On the wall was a portrait of a young woman and two children. He looked at it for a few moments, stretched his arms toward them, then dropped to his knees and burst into deep sobs.



CHAPTER TEN

I was awakened early one morning by a figure standing over me. It was Ned!

Professor, tonight Conseil and I plan to escape. Will you come with us?

Yes. How do you intend to do it?

There is land 20 miles to the east. After dark we'll go up on deck, take the boat and row for shore.



Do you know what country it is?

I don't know and I don't care! The sea is bad and there's a heavy wind, but those don't frighten me as much as Nemo! Gather your things and meet us on deck right after sunset.

I'll be there!



How long that last day seemed. I tried to act normal, but I was too nervous. I had to force myself to eat so I wouldn't weaken myself. At any moment I expected Captain Nemo to appear and block our escape.

Finally it was time. I took my things and headed down the passageway. I had to pass by the salon, but Nemo was inside playing the organ! What if he looked up and saw me with all my belongings and asked me where I was going? How could I answer him?



Suddenly, the Captain stopped playing, jumped up and ran out the door right past me. He was so upset I don't think he even noticed I was there.

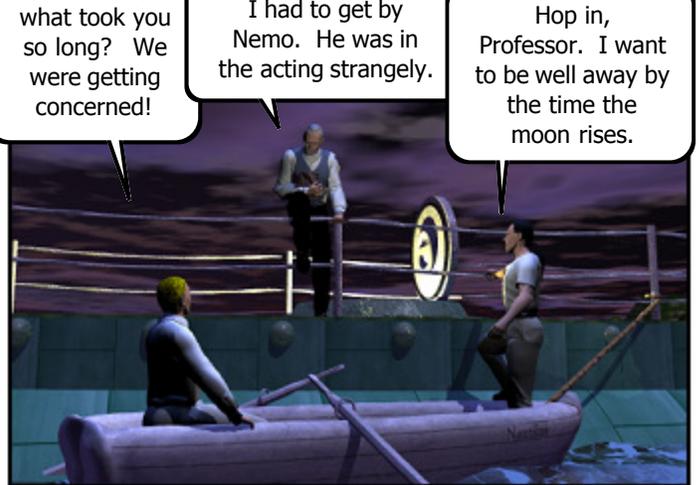
By the time I got up on deck Ned and Conseil had the boat in the water.

Enough! Enough! Please no more!

Professor, what took you so long? We were getting concerned!

I had to get by Nemo. He was in the acting strangely.

Hop in, Professor. I want to be well away by the time the moon rises.



As soon as I was seated in the boat we heard yelling from inside the *Nautilus*.

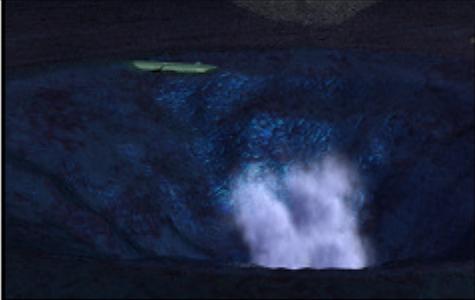
Our escape has been discovered. They must have noticed we are missing!

No. They're just shouting the same word over and over again: *Maelstrom*...

The Maelstrom!



The Maelstrom! At high tide the waters near the Island of Loffoden, Norway, begin to churn creating a whirlpool from which no ship can escape. Even whales have been caught and ground to pieces on the sharp rocks at the bottom. Apparently now the *Nautilus* was in the Maelstrom's deadly grip!



As the ship was pulled into the vortex, the little boat was thrown wildly about!

We still might survive if we stay tied to the *Nautilus*!

We were torn away from the *Nautilus* and hurled like a stone from a sling into the midst of the whirlpool. What a situation to be in! The little boat rocked frightfully. The roar of rushing water as it hit the rocks below was deafening!

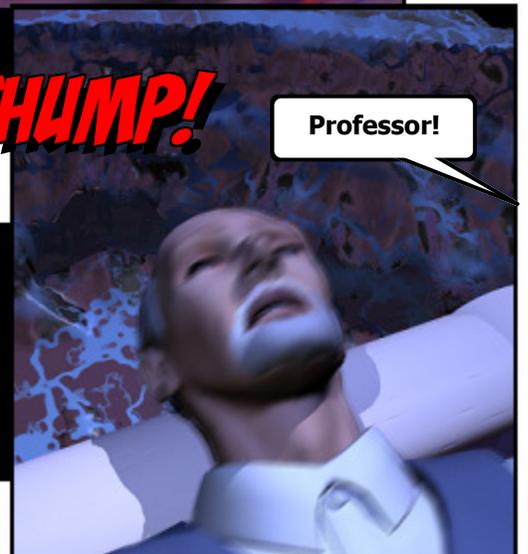


The boat spun around and around until I became dizzy. Suddenly it lurched violently and my head struck the gunwale and I lost all consciousness.

SNAP!

THUMP!

Professor!



How we got to land I cannot remember, but the next morning I found myself lying in bed in a fisherman's shack.

He's awake!
How do you feel, Professor?

Much better, my friends. Where are we?

We're safe, Professor. We are on a small island off the coast of Norway.

What happened to the *Nautilus*? Was it destroyed in the whirlpool?

We don't know. We never saw it again after the rope broke.

There's no debris on the beach, Professor. Perhaps Nemo and his ship escaped.

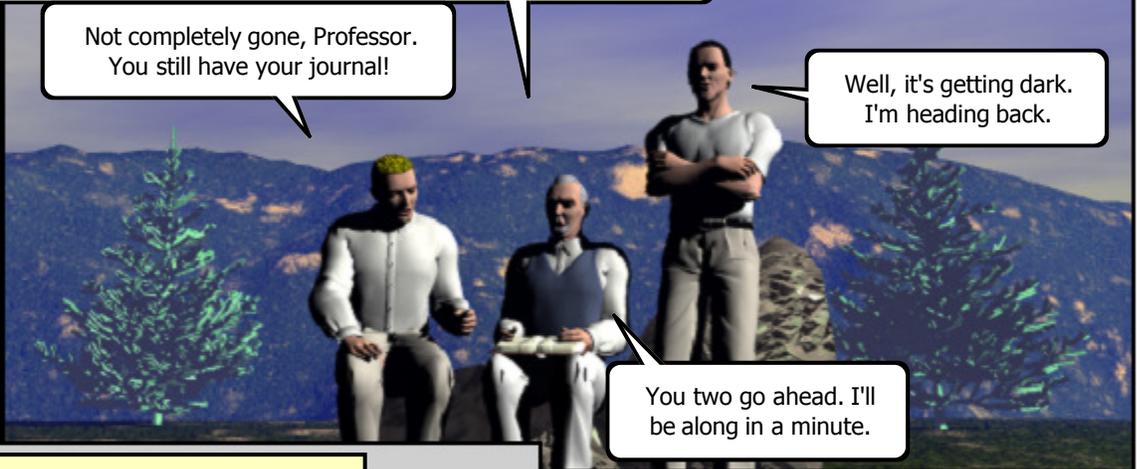


By evening I felt well enough to take a short walk to a bluff overlooking the sea.

What a waste! Think how much the Captain had learned about the ocean. Now that knowledge is completely gone.

Not completely gone, Professor. You still have your journal!

Well, it's getting dark. I'm heading back.



You two go ahead. I'll be along in a minute.

Captain Nemo and the *Nautilus* had survived so many dangers. Did they escape the Maelstrom as well? If they did, I hope the Captain will give up his quest for revenge and devote himself entirely to exploration.

As I looked out over the ocean I remembered a philosopher that once had asked, "Who can understand the depths of the sea?" There are only two people who can answer "I do" to that question. Captain Nemo and I.



THE END