

to your countries after that. We don't want stories in the newspapers about us.'

'What are you saying?' I asked. 'We want to go home.'

'You can go now,' he answered. 'But it's going to be difficult for you, because you haven't got a boat. You're underwater and you aren't near the coast. Stay with us now, and you can see a lot of interesting things. But you can never go home.'

### Chapter 3 Our First Weeks Underwater

We stayed, of course.

We walked with Nemo's men to our new bedrooms. Then I had some food with the captain.

'Our food comes from the sea,' he said, 'and we eat very well. Our shirts, our shoes, our beds, our pens – we make all of them from sea animals, too. I love the sea! It's our only friend. People can't make problems for us here.'

'But you don't want to listen to me all day. Come and see my submarine.'

We went into a room with thousands of books. 'I often read your book about sea animals, Mr Aronnax,' the captain said. 'You write very well. But your time on the *Nautilus* is going to teach you a lot of new things. A submarine is a good home for a scientist.'

I visited every room on the *Nautilus*, the first and only submarine in the seas. Captain Nemo was its builder, and he talked about his answers to the problems of an underwater boat. He was a clever scientist and a very interesting man.

Later, Ned and Conseil asked me about Captain Nemo. Who was he? Where did he come from? Why did he stay away from people and live underwater? But I didn't know the answers to their questions.



*'You can see a lot of interesting things. But you can never go home.'*

Then, suddenly, the *Nautilus's* sea lights came on and we stopped thinking about the captain. The sea looked very beautiful, with fish of every colour, big and small. We didn't take our eyes from the sea all night. Captain Nemo was right: a submarine was a good home for a scientist.

The weeks after that were quiet but interesting. The submarine usually stayed about a hundred metres underwater. But every morning we went up for air, and my friends and I looked across the blue waters of the Pacific.

We didn't often see Captain Nemo. But Conseil and I looked at his books, and at the fish in the sea. Only Ned was unhappy. He wasn't a scientist and he didn't like reading. And he didn't like eating fish every day.

One day Captain Nemo said, 'There are a lot of animals in the Trees of Crespo. They make good food. Do you want to look for some with me?'

'Trees?' I asked. 'Are we near the coast?'

'They're underwater trees,' he answered.

Ned didn't want to come. But Conseil and I dressed in diving suits and walked on the sea floor with the captain and his men. It wasn't difficult. On a boat, diving suits are heavy, but they are light in the water. There was only one problem: I wanted to talk about the tall trees and beautiful fish with Conseil, but you can't hear people in a diving suit.

Captain Nemo and his men killed some big animals, and we went back to the *Nautilus* with a lot of good food.

## Chapter 4 Papuan Spears

After two months on the *Nautilus*, we were near the coast of Australia. Captain Nemo wanted to take us to Asia, but the seas in front of us were very difficult. The coral reefs are famous



*Conseil and I dressed in diving suits and walked on the sea floor.*

because they are beautiful. But they are famous, too, because boats often hit them. There are a lot of dead seamen in those waters.

We went slowly, and looked for coral reefs under the water in front of us. For a long time we didn't have any problems. Then, suddenly, there was a big noise. The *Nautilus* stopped.

'What's wrong?' I asked the captain.

'The *Nautilus* is sitting on a coral reef. It can't move,' he answered quietly. 'But it's not a problem. After five days, the sea's going to take us away from here.'

The sea goes up and down every day, of course, and it goes up and down every month, too. Was Captain Nemo right?

Ned didn't want to wait and see. 'We can escape from the *Nautilus* today,' he said. 'The coast is near. Let's go!'

'No, Ned,' I answered. 'The Papuans live on that coast. Papuans often kill and eat their visitors.'

Every day, Ned looked across the water at the beautiful coast. 'Perhaps we can go there and look for food,' he said.

We asked the captain. 'Of course you can go,' he said, with a smile. 'Take the little boat, but be back here before night-time.'

Ned, Conseil and I arrived on the coast, and for a long time we didn't stop eating. There was a lot of fruit on the trees, and it was very good. Conseil and I looked at the beautiful animals. Ned looked at the animals, too, but he wanted them for food. He worked quickly, and that evening we had a lot of dead animals, and fruit, for the *Nautilus*'s kitchen.

We started to put things in the little boat. But suddenly Conseil said, 'Ow! What was that on my hand?'

'Look!' Ned said. 'There are men in the trees. They've got spears. They're going to kill us!'

Conseil and I were quickly in the boat, but Ned wanted to get the food first. A rain of small spears came from the trees, then one hundred men started to run to our boat. We went quickly



*Ned, Conseil and I arrived on the coast.*

across the water to the *Nautilus*. The Papuans stayed on the coast, because they didn't have boats.

In the morning, there were six hundred Papuans on the coast, and some of them had boats. They came across the sea to the *Nautilus*.

'We've got a big problem now,' I said to Captain Nemo. 'The Papuans can't get into the *Nautilus* today, because the doors are closed. But tomorrow there isn't going to be any air in here, because we can't open the doors. What are we going to do then?'

Captain Nemo didn't look unhappy. 'We're going to wait and see,' he said.

I didn't sleep well that night. In the morning there were a lot of Papuans on the *Nautilus*. There wasn't much air for us now, but the doors stayed closed.

'We're going this afternoon,' the captain said.

That afternoon, after five days on the coral reef, the *Nautilus* suddenly started to move. Captain Nemo was right. The sea was up – and the submarine was in water again! We moved quickly away from the coast. We looked back, and the Papuans were in the sea. Then we opened the doors, and air came into the boat.

## Chapter 5 Nemo's Gold

We went across Indian and Arabian waters and into the Red Sea. Ned didn't stop thinking about escape from the *Nautilus*.

'Where are we going after this?' he asked.

'Back to the Arabian Sea first,' I answered. 'Then perhaps down the African coast...'

But we didn't go back to the Arabian Sea. One day Captain Nemo said, 'Tomorrow we're going to be in the Mediterranean.'

I didn't understand. 'We can't go from the Red Sea to the

Mediterranean in a boat!' I said. 'How are we going to take the *Nautilus* across Egypt?'

'We aren't going to go across Egypt. We're going to go *under* it,' the captain answered. 'I know an underwater tunnel.'

That evening, we went into the tunnel. It was very dark and very small. But Nemo was a good seaman, and the *Nautilus* didn't have any problems. In a very short time, we were in the Mediterranean.

We then moved quickly away from Egypt. Near Crete, I remembered stories in the newspapers. Crete was in Turkey, but the Cretans wanted to be Greek. A lot of Cretans were now dead, because the Turkish people were very angry with them.

I looked at the sea. There was a swimmer underwater, and he didn't have a diving suit.

'Quickly!' I said to Captain Nemo. 'Let's go to him now, or the sea's going to kill him.'

'He's OK,' the captain answered. 'His name's Nicolas, and he's a very good swimmer.'

Was this man a friend of the captain? I wanted to ask, but then I stopped thinking about the swimmer. Captain Nemo had gold in his hands! I looked behind him, and there was gold on the table, too – a lot of gold!

Later, I listened to the noises of the night. Men went away from the *Nautilus* in the little boat, and came back a short time later. Did they take gold with them? Where did they take it? Was it for the Cretans?

We didn't go near any coasts after this, and three days later we were in the Atlantic. Ned was angry. He wanted to escape to a European country, and Europe was behind us now.

But first we went up the coast of Portugal and Spain.

'We're going to escape this evening,' Ned said. 'Meet Conseil and me at the little boat at nine o'clock.'

I wanted to stay on the *Nautilus*, because it was a good home

for a scientist. But I wanted to see Paris again one day, and this was perhaps the only time for an escape.

‘OK,’ I said to Ned.

At nine o’clock, I opened my door and started to walk to the little boat. But suddenly, the *Nautilus* stopped on the sea floor. Then Captain Nemo arrived.

‘You wanted the answer to a question, I think, Mr Aronnax,’ he said. ‘Come with me.’

I went with him to the window. There were some old boats on the sea floor, and Nemo’s men were there in their diving suits. They walked to the old boats and came back with gold in their hands.

‘These boats went down to the sea floor in 1702, heavy with South American gold. My men and I sometimes come here and take a little gold. But it isn’t for us. There are unhappy people in many countries. The gold is for them.’

I remembered the problems in Crete and started to understand Captain Nemo.

But Ned was not a happy man. ‘Where were you?’ he asked me later. ‘We waited for you, but you didn’t come.’

## Chapter 6 To the South Pole\*

A day later, we were many leagues from the coast.

‘The roads here are very bad, Mr Aronnax,’ Captain Nemo said. ‘But do you want to walk on them with me?’

Roads under the sea? I didn’t understand. But I put on my diving suit and went with the captain.

Nemo walked quickly underwater. I wanted to stay with him,

\* The South Pole, the North Pole: places in the Antarctic and the Arctic (see pages 6–7)



*They came back with gold in their hands.*