

CHAPTER 1

In 1866, something strange was happening in the seven seas. As ships were crossing the ocean, they were getting attacked by a **mysterious** monster. It was a horrible sight, a long creature with tentacles and some people even said that they saw it **glowing**.

Sailors were terrified of going to sea and some of the most experienced and **ferocious** captains refused to take their ships out of port. Without ships sailing, there was no trade between countries and no passenger ships either. The problem of the mysterious monster became so bad that the governments of the world began to **take notice** of it.

So many people had seen the mysterious monster, but nobody knew what it was. It was a lot bigger and faster than any whale that anyone had ever seen. Sailors and captains that saw the monster would tell tales about the **beast** that got wilder and more exaggerated with every retelling. The only thing that was certain was that the mysterious monster was huge, quick, and so scary

mysterious (adj) strange, difficult to understand

glow (v) to shine with low light and heat

ferocious (adj) very violent, savage, barbarous

take notice (phrase) to pay attention to something

rough (adj) violent; difficult to deal with

beast (n) a wild animal that is dangerous

There were so many **sightings** of the mysterious monster that sailors began to write down what they saw. On 20th July, 1866, a steamship called the Governor Higginson saw something that looked like a strange **reef** in the water that suddenly came out of the water and went a hundred and fifty feet into the air.

Two days later, another ship saw the same thing. It was seven hundred **nautical leagues** away from where the Governor Higginson had seen it. Two weeks later and two thousand leagues away from the other two sightings, there was another one.

These three sightings were enough to get the governments of the United States, Great Britain and Germany more than a little worried about it. People were gossiping about the mysterious monster and wondering about what it could possibly be.

Scientists and journalists were arguing about what it could be in the newspapers. In 1867, we were still no closer to finding out what the mysterious monster was, but it seemed that it didn't cause trouble any more.

sighting (n) seeing

reef (n) a long line of rocks, coral or sand near the surface of water

nautical (adj) relating to ships, sailors and sailing

league (n) a unit of distance equal to 4.8 kilometres



Scientists and journalists were arguing about what it could be in the newspapers.

That was until March 1867. A passenger ship called *The Moravian* hit a rock that had never been there before and suffered major damage. Three weeks later, a ship called *The Scotia* from the British Cunard Line hit another rock that had never been there before on a different sailing route. But the crew of *The Scotia* all said that they hadn't hit anything, rather that they were **rammed** by something that put a hole in the side of the ship.

After this, every disaster at sea was blamed on the mysterious monster and the people were calling for the governments of the world to do something to end the danger this monster presented.

My name is Pierre Aronnax and I am a scientist. I had just returned from doing some research in the Badlands of Nebraska when I heard about the mysterious monster. Before I went to Nebraska, I was a lecturer at the Museum of Natural History in Paris. When *The Scotia* was hit, I was in New York, preparing to go back to France. The reports of the tragedy said that it wasn't caused by a rock, a **floating** reef or floating **wreckage**.

Instead, all the experts believed that it was because of a giant monster or a very powerful vessel that sailed under the water. Nobody believed that a **submarine** vessel was possible because nobody had ever heard of such a machine existing before.

ram (v) to hit something; to crash

floating (adj) moving on water or in the air

wreckage (n) broken parts of a vehicle (e.g. a ship)

submarine (n) a ship that can travel underwater

Reporters came to see me in New York because I had written a two-volume book called *The Mysteries of the Ocean Depths*. They asked me many questions about what I thought the mysterious monster could possibly be. I told the reporters from The New York Herald that I was certain that the mysterious monster was definitely a Giant Narwhal. A Narwhal is a whale with a horn on its head, a bit like a **unicorn**.

After the reporters put my opinion in the newspapers, many people agreed with me. It was much more likely that a Giant Narwhal had caused the damage than a submarine vessel. Even though people agreed with me, nobody was happy about the monster being out there. Merchants and insurance companies were the unhappiest of everyone about the mysterious monster. Every time one of their ships was attacked, it cost them a lot of money. They were so unhappy that they made the government of the United States put together a hunting **expedition** to find and capture the mysterious monster.

Captain Farragut was put in charge of the expedition on a ship called *The Abraham Lincoln* and I got a letter from the Secretary of the United States Navy asking me to join the expedition. I wanted to go home to France and rest after I had spent so long doing research in Nebraska. But a chance to capture a mysterious monster was too much of a golden opportunity to **pass up**.

unicorn (n) an imaginary animal that looks like a horse with a single horn in its head

expedition (n) a long journey organized for a specific purpose

pass up (phrasal verb) to not accept; to decline; to reject

I thought that even if we were at sea for a few months, I could still go back to France afterwards. My servant, Conseil, had been my servant for ten years and agreed to come with me on the expedition. I was forty years old when I got the letter asking me to join the expedition and Conseil was thirty.

There wasn't long to go before the expedition was going to leave. We got rid of most of the specimens that I had collected during my research in Nebraska. I thought that specimens from a Giant Narwhal would be extremely valuable. In fact, I thought they would be much more valuable than the work I had been doing.

Only a few hours after the letter arrived, we were on The Abraham Lincoln and ready to go monster hunting. The Abraham Lincoln was a frigate, a fast and powerful ship that was perfect for hunting sea monsters.

Captain Farragut took the ship out into the ocean to where the monster had last been seen. There were thousands of people at the docks of New York harbour. All of them were cheering as we **departed**. After all, we were going to stop a sea monster and make the oceans safe again.

get rid of (idiom) to throw something away

specimen (n) an example or a piece of something

depart (v) to leave

Captain Farragut was a very good captain and the perfect man to lead the expedition. He was certain that we were going to find the monster and he was ready to capture it or die trying. The whole crew were just as **dedicated** as the captain was to the expedition. They spent every moment looking for the mysterious monster and there was a \$2,000 reward for the first man to spot the monster.

I was desperate to find the Giant Narwhal as well. Conseil was the only person on the ship that didn't seem to care about trying to find the mysterious monster. This annoyed me a lot, but there was nothing I could do about it.

Everyone on The Abraham Lincoln was armed with as many weapons as you could imagine, but the ship had one very special weapon on it to help capture the Giant Narwhal – the greatest **harpooner** in the world, a man called Ned Land.

He was a big man that was stronger and more stubborn than any man I had ever met. He was a French Canadian from Quebec so he was the closest to another Frenchman that I had on the ship. We talked in French while we were on the ship and Ned Land told me tales about his great adventures hunting whales on the high seas.

He was the perfect man to help capture the Giant Narwhal, but Ned Land didn't think that creatures like that could possibly exist. He didn't want to talk to me about it, though.

dedicated (adj) working hard at something; being loyal to a person or a cause
harpoon (n) a long weapon used especially for hunting large fish or whales
harpooner (n) someone who uses a harpoon

On 30th July, 1867, I asked Ned for his opinion on the mysterious monster. We had been at sea for three weeks and were just off the coast of Argentina. We hadn't seen any sign of the monster so far.

“There is no way a sea creature could put a hole in the side of a metal ship,” Ned told me. I tried to convince him that it was with scientific talk and statistics. Ned remained **sceptical** about the monster, but I was never surer that the mysterious monster was a Giant Narwhal.

We asked other ships if they had seen the monster. None of them had seen anything. We came across some whalers and we all got to watch Ned Land throwing some harpoons. He killed several whales for the whalers and I was impressed by his abilities with a harpoon.

The crew kept watching for the Giant Narwhal, but though there were a few false sightings, we were no closer to finding the creature. The only member of the crew that wasn't watching for the Narwhal was Ned Land. He spent most of his time reading instead.

We sailed into the Pacific Ocean and the China Seas and finally reached the last place that the monster was seen. Everyone was even more **alert** than before, but still there was no monster. We sailed across the China Seas looking everywhere for the monster

sceptical (adj) having doubts about something

alert (adj) watchful of a problem or danger; wary; wide-awake

but there was no sign of it. We had been at sea for three months and seen nothing. Everyone was ready to give up and go home, but Captain Farragut asked us for three more days to look for the creature.

We all agreed to give him three more days. We threw bacon off the back of the ship to bring the monster to it. We launched the lifeboats to help look for it properly, but two more days had passed and still nothing.

It was 4th November, 1867 and the three days were nearly up. I was on the deck with Conseil. It was night and the moon was covered with dark clouds. We were talking about the trip.

“We should have gone back to France and not come on this expedition. Everyone is going to laugh at us,” I said.

“We deserve to be laughed at. We could have been at home all this time instead of chasing after an aquatic unicorn whale that doesn’t exist,” Conseil said.

“Ahoy! The monster is **leeward on the weather beam!**” Ned Land cried out suddenly. Everyone rushed to the side of the ship to look for the creature. It was off the starboard side of the ship, glowing in the distance, under the waves.

“That’s just glowing sea life,” one of the sailors said.

“No, it’s the wrong kind of glow and it’s coming straight at us!” I cried.

leeward (adj) on or toward the side of something that has shelter from the wind
on the weather beam (phrase) on the side of a ship which faces the wind

“Full steam ahead! Get us out of here!” Captain Farragut cried. The sailors rushed about the ship to get us moving, but the creature was too fast. It caught up to us and then swam in circles around the ship. The light of the creature suddenly **vanished**. Captain Farragut still tried to run away. I couldn’t understand why we weren’t trying to capture the beast.

“I can’t attack the creature at night. I believe it’s your Giant Narwhal, but I won’t attack until the morning,” the captain said when he saw my face. Nobody on the ship slept that night. We were all terrified of being attacked. At midnight, the Giant Narwhal disappeared, but an hour later we heard the sound of it spouting water.

“Let me have a boat. I will go and capture the creature!” Ned said to the captain, but Farragut wouldn’t let him go.

At 2 a.m., the Narwhal lit back up, but it was five miles away from the ship. Even though it was so far away, we could hear it breathing and beating its tail.

The rest of the crew were getting ready to fight the monster. At 8 a.m., Ned saw the Narwhal in the daylight. It was only a mile away from the ship and it was moving so quickly that it was leaving a huge **wake** behind it. Now that we could see it in the daylight, we could see that it was much smaller than the reports had said. It was only two hundred and fifty feet long. We watched it moving. Suddenly, it fired two jets of water a hundred and twenty feet into the air.

vanish (v) to stop existing; to disappear

wake (n) a track left behind something moving in the water (e.g. a boat)

I had never seen a whale fire water into the air like that before so I knew that it was a new kind of species.

“Full steam ahead! Attack the beast!” Farragut cried. The ship went towards the Narwhal, but we couldn’t catch it. It was just too fast. We chased it for forty-five minutes without any success. The captain asked Ned Land what he should do.

“Keep chasing the beast. I will try and harpoon it,” Ned replied. When we tried to go faster, the Narwhal went faster too. We chased it until midday before we decided to start shooting the creature.

The first few shots from the crew missed, but when we did manage to hit it, the bullets bounced off its skin. We chased it all day. We thought it was never going to stop. But at 11 p.m., it stopped still and our ship came alongside it.

Ned Land was ready with his harpoon to strike the monster. We were only twenty feet away from the monster when Ned threw his harpoon and it **clung** against the Narwhal. It sounded like the Narwhal was made of metal. Two jets of water fired out of the beast, rocking the ship and I fell into the sea.

cling (v) to stick to something; to hold onto something very tightly



Ned Land was ready with his harpoon to strike the monster.

CHAPTER 2

I went underwater for what seemed like forever. By the time I got back to the surface, The Abraham Lincoln had gone away. I screamed but nobody answered. My clothes were getting heavier and it was getting harder to keep my head above the water. I thought I was going to die as my head went under the water when a hand pulled me back above the waves.

It was Conseil. He had jumped into the sea to save me.

“We are on our own, sir,” Conseil said, “The rudder and **propeller** on The Abraham Lincoln are broken and it can’t come to rescue us.”

I was terrified and started to scream and wave my arms about in panic, but Conseil was calm and set about working to save us. He took out a knife and cut off our clothes so they weren’t weighing us down. It was much easier to keep our heads above the water without our clothes.

I hoped that The Abraham Lincoln was sending out the lifeboats to look for us. After three hours in the water, I was so tired I started to sink again, but Conseil was there to save me. When the light of morning came, we found that we were completely alone. The Abraham Lincoln was nowhere in sight and there were no lifeboats in the water.

propeller (n) a device that has two or more blades that turn quickly and cause a ship or an aircraft to move

Conseil started to panic now. He was yelling and then the two of us heard a buzzing sound in the distance. Conseil yelled again and a voice called back to him. We were both so tired that we couldn't stay above the water any more. I started to sink and then hit something hard.

I opened my eyes and saw Ned Land was standing next to us. He was completely calm and standing on a floating island. He had been thrown off the ship like I had too. The floating island was made of metal and we all believed that it must be the Giant Narwhal covered with steel **plating**.

I kicked the steel and didn't know what to think, other than that my Giant Narwhal was man-made. I had so many questions about the Narwhal, but Ned didn't have any answers for me.

"I have been standing here for hours and it hasn't moved at all," Ned told me.

"If this Narwhal has been made by a man, then it must have a crew and we are safe!" I cried. As soon as the words were out of my mouth, the Narwhal started to sink beneath the water. I knew that if it went under the water, we were all dead. I tried to find some kind of opening so that we could get inside.

plating (n) a thin layer of metal



“I have been standing here for hours and it hasn’t moved at all,” Ned told me.

“Damn pirates!” Ned shouted as he kicked the Narwhal. All of a sudden, a **hatch** on the Narwhal opened and a man popped out of it. He cried out in surprise when he saw us and disappeared again. Then eight men came out of the vessel and grabbed us. They took us down into the Narwhal and we were prisoners.

We were thrown into a dark cell and the door was locked behind us. I had no idea where we were. Ned was shouting at the men that had locked us in the cell. He had a knife in his hand. He was ready to fight anyone that tried to hurt us.

I tried to explore the room. There were no windows and the walls were steel and smooth. There was a table in the cell and there was a mat on the floor. We sat in the cell for half an hour before anyone came. A lamp was lit and light filled the cell. It was so bright that I was blind for a moment. Ned still had his knife out and was ready to fight.

The door to the cell was opened and two men came in. One of them was short and looked very powerful. The other man was tall and was far more impressive than the short man. They were both wearing suits that were made of sealskin. They talked to each other in a language that I couldn't understand. They didn't try to talk to us, but just looked at us instead.

hatch (n) a small door or an opening

I thought the short man must be the captain and I tried to talk to him in French, but he didn't reply. Ned tried to talk to him in English, but he didn't reply either. Conseil tried German but still the short man didn't say anything to us.

The two men started to talk to each other again and Ned lost his temper.

"Calm down, Ned," I said. It took a while for Ned to stop shouting but he did calm down. I thought that the men must be Turks, Arabs, Indians or Spaniards, but I didn't know which of them they could possibly be.

Another man came in who was a servant. He was carrying clothes for each of us to wear. Ned had his own clothes, but my clothes and Conseil's clothes were floating in the ocean. We got changed into the clothes the servant brought while he set the table for us. He brought us dinner that had fish in it but the rest of it was a mystery to me. It was still good to eat. I looked at the cutlery on the table; all of it had the same thing written on it – MOBLIS IN MOBILE / N.

It meant *mobile in the mobile element*. The mobile element was the water. I didn't know what the *N* meant, but I thought it must be something to do with the name of the captain. After dinner, we were all so tired that we fell asleep on the floor.

I woke up before Ned and Conseil. We had been asleep for a very long time and the servant had come in to clear the table while we were sleeping. When Ned and Conseil woke up, we

all agreed that we must have been asleep for a whole day and that we were all very hungry.

The three of us started to talk about what we should do. Conseil and I wanted to wait and see what happened, but Ned wanted to escape as soon as possible. I now knew that this ship wasn't a Narwhal at all. It was a submarine vessel. As much as Ned wanted to escape, I didn't think it would do us any good. We were underwater and there was no way that we could escape.

"We need to stay calm for now and wait to see how things turn out," I told Ned. He agreed, but the longer we sat in the cell, the angrier Ned got. Nobody was bringing us anything to eat and I thought that we had been left to rot in the cell.

When the servant finally came back to the cell, Ned was so angry that he grabbed the servant by the throat. Conseil jumped on Ned and tried to pull him off the servant. A moment later, the short man came into the cell and said in French, "Let him go. Listen to me."

Ned let go of the servant. The servant ran out of the cell as the short man stood there. He was clearly the captain. The three of us waited for the captain to speak again. He was a very clever man who spoke English, French, German and Latin. He had been playing games with us and wanted time to think about what to do with us. He knew who each of us were and how we had ended up on his ship.

Test 4

Put the list in order by entering the numbers 1 to 10 in the gaps below.

- a. ___ Ned, Aronnax and Conseil were thrown into a prison cell.
- b. ___ Nemo took the Nautilus to mine sodium for his ship.
- c. ___ Aronnax and Conseil came to New York after they had been in Nebraska.
- d. ___ The Nautilus saved the Antarctic whales from the sperm whales.
- e. ___ The Abraham Lincoln left New York harbour.
- f. ___ Aronnax and Conseil cut off their clothes to stop them from sinking.
- g. ___ The Nautilus was attacked by giant squids.
- h. ___ Captain Nemo gave Aronnax a tour of the Nautilus.
- i. ___ Aronnax woke up in a fisherman's cabin.
- j. ___ Aronnax killed the sea spider with his gun.

GRAMMAR CHECK

Test 1

Choose the correct answer.

I began to think that Nemo knew what we were up to. It took only two days for us¹ the Mediterranean Sea which gave us no time² from the ship. Ned was very angry about it, but there was nothing that we³. I spent the two days in the museum with Conseil. There were lots of shipwrecks for us⁴ at, but the sight of them upset me. I couldn't help but think about how many men⁵ when the ships had sunk.

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. a) to cross | b) crossing | c) crossed |
| 2. a) escapes | b) escaped | c) to escape |
| 3. a) can do | b) could do | c) have done |
| 4. a) to look | b) looking | c) looked |
| 5. a) have died | b) had died | c) die |

I⁶ the next day feeling very confused. I wasn't in the cell. I was back in my cabin. The door was unlocked⁷ I went to the platform,⁸ I found Ned and Conseil were waiting for me.

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------|------------|
| 6. a) have woken up | b) wake | c) woke up |
| 7. a) after | b) so | c) until |
| 8. a) which | b) who | c) where |

Test 2

Fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions.

1. Nemo leapt the shark and stabbed it with the knife the belly.
2. Ned was so angry that he grabbed the servant the throat.
3. the surface of the water, the only thing I could see was the ocean stretching out miles every direction.
4. The lifeboat was attached to the submarine a cord.
5. Nemo stopped us and pointed a shadow area in front of us.
6. There is something mysterious those people.

Test 3

Use the conjunctions below only once to fill in the sentences.

and as until before

1. I didn't sleep that night I couldn't get the images of the sinking ship and dying sailors out of my mind.
2. The submarine got to the surface and one of the squids ripped the hatch off we could open it.
3. We were stuck Nemo could free us from the ice.
4. Captain Farragut was a very good captain the perfect man to lead the expedition.

VOCABULARY CHECK

Test-1

Match the definitions (1-10) on the right with the words (a-j) on the left.

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
| a. ___alert | 1. to make known; to show |
| b. ___glow | 2. not giving up or stopping |
| c. ___hatch | 3. watchful of a problem or danger |
| d. ___relentless | 4. to shine with low light and heat |
| e. ___sinister | 5. an example or a piece of something |
| f. ___specimen | 6. a small door or an opening |
| g. ___suffocate | 7. to pay attention to something |
| h. ___take notice | 8. to die from lack of air |
| i. ___vanish | 9. bad; evil; dangerous |
| j. ___reveal | 10. to stop existing; to disappear |

Test 2

Choose the correct answer.

1. He sat close to the fireplace and watched the coals in the dark.
a) bending b) rowing c) glowing
2. The man was jailed for attack on an innocent man.
a) ferocious b) gentle c) mild
3. The astronauts heard noise on the far side of the moon.
a) speedy b) mysterious c) valuable
4. The researchers collected of dead animals on their expedition.
a) definitions b) prices c) specimens
5. Our flight is scheduled to at 10 a.m. tomorrow. We should be at the airport at 8 a.m. to check in then.
a) depart b) land c) arrive
6. Although everybody was sure that we could win, he remained
a) adamant b) sceptical c) certain
7. The harpoon the shark in the heart and it died.
a) contributed b) pierced c) sharpened
8. They have a collection of historic items, which are very rare.
a) worthless b) bold c) priceless
9. You should take of the terms and conditions before buying an expensive product like that.
a) notice b) meaning c) part