

# 20,000 Leagues under the Sea

Jules Verne

retold by Elizabeth Gray



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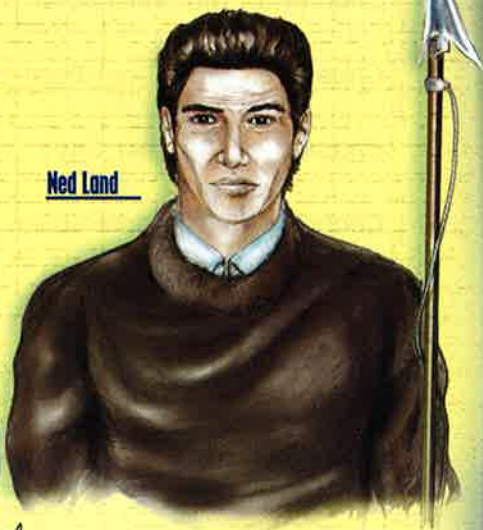
Professor Aronnax



Conseil



Captain Nemo



Ned Land

# The Monster from the Deep

I am Professor Aronnax. My job is to study everything dead or alive under the sea. I see beautiful and ugly things down there. But there is one strange experience that stays in my mind like a nightmare.

It was 1867. Some sailors said that they saw a dangerous giant monster living in the cold waters of the ocean. Some ships tried to find it and kill it, but they never returned.

People said it looked like a whale.

"It was 300 feet long!"

"Water came out of its back. It was like a big, underwater explosion!"

The largest whale was only 180 feet long and if these men were right, this was even larger. I was famous because I was the writer of a book called *The Mysteries of the Great Ocean Depths*. When the captain of the American ship the *Abraham Lincoln* decided to leave and look for the monster, he asked me to go with them as an expert.

The idea was very exciting. I invited my faithful assistant and good friend Conseil to go with me. He always helps me to organise the names and places of the wonderful strange sea creatures that we find in the oceans of the world. He accepted the invitation and we got ready to go.

The *Abraham Lincoln* left New York harbour on the 3rd of July, 1867. Five hundred thousand people were there to say



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goodbye. Ned Land, the famous whale killer, was also on the ship. Farragut, the captain of the ship, was a strong and brave man. When we first met, he shook my hand and smiled at me.

“Don’t worry! The ocean isn’t big enough for both the sea monster and me. I’ll kill it or it’ll kill me. All I know is that one of us will die.”

I didn’t like this idea, but I didn’t say anything at the time.

We sailed for three months and we never saw the creature once.

The men wanted to find and kill the sea monster, but after all this time everyone on the ship started to believe that there was no monster. And then, it happened ...

It was night-time and we were 200 miles off the coast of Japan when suddenly Ned Land, the harpooner, cried out.

“There it is!”

“Don’t lose it. I want it, dead or alive!”

The men on the ship began to run and shout.

“Get the ropes! Prepare the cannons!”

The creature looked as if it was asleep. We could see it because there was a strange light under the water. Then, a cannon fired at the monster. A cannonball hit it, but it didn’t move. Captain Farragut didn’t know what to do.

“My God! If a cannon can’t kill this monster, what can?”

Just then, I saw Ned Land, with his harpoon in his hands, climbing to the front of the ship.

Everyone watched him silently. I saw the harpoon leave his hand and hit the giant creature right in its back. Water shot out of the wound. Its force knocked me right out of the ship into the dark cold ocean.



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