

Journey To The Centre Of The Earth

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Having made a raft from wood taken from the giant mushroom forest, with rigging consisting of a mast made of two staves lashed together, a yard made of a third, and a sail borrowed from the air stock of rugs, they set sail from the harbour - Port Grauben, named after Axel's fiancée. With a north-westerly wind propelling them along at about three miles an hour, silvery beams of light, reflected here and there by drops of spray, produced luminous points in the eddy created by the raft. Soon all land was lost to view. Five days out to sea, they witnessed a terrifying battle between two sea monsters. One having the snout of a porpoise, the head of a lizard, and teeth of a crocodile - an Ichthyosaurus. And the other, the mortal enemy of the first, a serpent with a turtle's shell, the Plesiosaurus.)

THE BATTLE

Five days out on an infinite sea, they prayed for calm on an ocean free, But the surface of the water was indicating some disturbance.

The raft was hurled by an unseen source, two hundred feet, With frightening force And a dark mass rising showed to be a giant porpoise

Rising out of the angry sea, towered the creature's enemy, And so the two sea monsters closed for battle

Crocodile's teeth, lizard's head, bloodshot eye, stained ocean red Moving close to their raft's side, the two men prayed as one and cried "Save me, save me, save me, save me"

The serpent's fight went on for hours, two monsters soaring up like towers And driving down to the depths in a single motion

Suddenly, the serpent's head, shot out of the water bathed in red And the serpentine form lay lifeless on the ocean

Crocodile's teeth, lizard's head, bloodshot eye stained ocean red Battle won, a victor's pride, the three men thanked the Lord and cried "Praise God, praise God, praise God, praise God".

(Cumulus clouds formed heavily in the south, like huge wool packs heaped up in pictures que disorder. Under the influence of the breezes they merged together, growing darker, forming a single menacing mass. The raft lay motionless on the sluggish waveless sea and in silence they waited for the storm.)

(For four days the storm had raged as they clung to the mast of

their raft for safety. Finally, with their raft wrecked after being bashed against the reefs, they lay sheltered from the pouring rain beneath a few overhanging rocks where they ate and slept. The next day all trace of the storm had disappeared and what remained of their stock seemed intact. Checking the compass brought only heartbreak as it showed that a chance of wind during the storm had returned them to just a few miles north of Port Grauben. So, deciding to try and find the original route they advanced with difficulty over granite fragments mingled with flint, quartz, and alluvial deposits, eventually reaching a plain covered with bones. Like a huge cemetery. A mile further on, they reached the edge of a huge forest made up of vegetation of the Tertiary period. Tall palms were linked by a network of inextricable creepers, a carpet of moss covering the ground and the leaves were colourless, everything having a brownish hue. Exploring the forest they discovered a herd of gigantic animals, Mastadons, which were being marshalled by a primitive human being, a Proteus. He stood over twelve foot high and brandished an enormous bough, a crook worthy of this antediluvian shepherd.

) ----- THE FOREST

Journey on through ages gone, to the centre of the earth
Past rocks of quartz and granite, which gave mother nature birth

Burial ground of ancient man, his life no more is seen,
A journey through his time unknown, I wonder where he's been

(Wonder where he's been, wonder where he's been, wonder where he's been)

The shore now gone behind the hills, a forest in our sight,
Rocks and distant mountains, bathed in waves of blinding light

Forests from far gone time, no living man has seen,
A private pre-historic world, for you and I a dream.

Brownish hue dictates my eye, no colour hides their fear,
Flowers faded, dull and cold, now bleached by atmosphere

Creatures twisting under trees, huge monsters soaked with rage
Hidden deep below our earth, a frightening, bygone age

Their shepherd came, now long extinct, a huge primeval man
The three men filled with disbelief, just turned as one and ran.

(Dumb with astonishment and amazement which bordered on stupefaction, they fled the forest. Instinctively, they made towards the Lidenbrook Sea. Discovering a rusty dagger on the beach, and the carved initials of the explorer before them on a slab of granite, they realised that they were once again treading the route of Arne Saknussemm. Following a short sea journey around a

cape, they came ashore where a dark tunnel plunged deep into rock. Venturing down, their progress was halted by a piece of rock blocking their way. After deciding to blow their way through, and setting the charge, they put out to sea for safety. With the explosion, the rocks before them opened like a curtain, and a bottomless pit appeared in the shore. The explosion had caused an earthquake, the abyss had opened up, and the sea was pouring into it. Down and down they plunged into the huge gallery, but on regaining their senses found their raft rising at tremendous speed. Trapped in the shaft of an active volcano they rose through the ages of man to be finally expelled out on a mountain-side riddled with tiny lava streams. Their journey was completed and they found themselves 3000 miles from their original starting point in Iceland. They had entered by one volcano and they had come out by another. With the blue mountains of Calabria in the east they walked away from the mountain that had returned them. The frightening Mount Etna.