

Rivals

Simeon Jellymellon, unlike other Nautilus, has always viewed himself as “different.” As a boy he dreamed of travel and adventure, while his Nautilus brothers thought of nothing but staying in the village to protect it and start families. Simeon on the other hand refused to settle. Regardless of his family and neighbors’ opinions, Simeon was determined to explore the Lurk and dedicate his life to exploration. While traveling he met many unique people, learned many languages, and spent the majority of his life seeking adventure. The more of the world that Simeon saw, the more surprisingly civilized he became. Though he still holds on to some of his truly Nautilus ways. As an explorer, Simeon loves to collect souvenirs and “interesting specimens.” He didn’t feel the least bit of remorse if any item in his collection belonged to someone else when he encountered it; however, he treasured his own possessions and any who dared to take from Simeon be damned. Most of Simeon’s treasures, in his old age, have become worn. His most valued collectibles he keeps on his person at all times. These particular items that set Simeon apart include a tri-corner hat, complete with the tail of a dead sea horse stuck in the side to make it look even more unique, a jacket that no Nautilus would usually wear, and a sword that he snatched from a fight years before.

Now Simeon Jellymellon resides back in his original Nautilus village, as an old man with many stories of adventure to tell. Recently Simeon heard new stories of one of his few sworn enemies, the Cog, attacking Nautilus villages. Simeon recalls his past interactions with the Cog, and stands firmly by the fact that he has never come across one that he likes. He believes that they are a selfish people, who have little respect for the world’s treasures and will take whatever they want by force. Simeon knew that it was just a matter of time before the Cog came for something else that the Nautilus discovered. Simeon resigned himself to defend whatever it was that the Cog came after.

Percival Cuthbert, the proud father of two, has worked hard for the little he owns. Percival is a miner under the order of the Cog hierarchy. He leads a small crew of drillers to initiate mining expeditions on any new resource, especially UnderAether. He only goes into action drilling for UnderAether once the military can gain hold of an UnderAether extraction site. Percival loves his job, knowing that he is helping his people by mining this material. UnderAether is very valuable, and Percival has his own fascination with the resource. He loves the tingling feeling that radiates through his body whenever he comes close to the substance, and it fuels his pride knowing that drilling this powerful resource will improve the life of the Cog. What he doesn’t understand is why the Nautilus will not share such an important and valuable resource. Why are they so selfish that they cannot give the Cog what they desire?

It was a blissfully warm day in the village, with children playing outside and fish swimming through the ocean above. Simeon was relaxing on his porch, reminiscing with an old friend, and of course, providing a strong opinion to everything said. He overlooked the village: it was decently wide made mostly of stone, coral, and hardened seaweed. Its edges came to abrupt stops overlooking the Lurk, a vast unexplored (except by Simeon) region that descended all the way down to the deep darkness of the ocean

floor. Suddenly, the temperature dropped and the water darkened. Simeon cast a wary eye skyward at the increasingly growing shadow overhead and grunted. This was something he had only seen once before but had never forgotten. Simeon shook his head to clear away a few cobwebs he felt had accumulated during his recent months of idleness. It was happening. A magnificently large Cog ship was descending upon his village. “Trowbridge, run home and warn your relatives we’re under attack!” shouted Jellymellons. Trowbridge, a rather boring sort of busybody was a man of much talk and little action. Bewilderment and then fear quickly crossed his face as he managed a curt nod to Simeon and darted off the porch. Simeon hustled into his shabby home, his wooden leg knocking furiously against the floor, maneuvered skillfully through the clutter and grabbed up his sword and lucky hat. Even in his old age he was surprisingly agile especially compared to the heavily armored Cog who weren’t used to being underwater.

As the Cog flowed from the ship, Simeon charged cutting through their ranks. Several Cog soldiers shot at him but the water slowed the lasers and Simeon either dodged or deflected them with his sword. He quickly slashed through the weak points, the joints and tubes in their armor, and swam amongst them as they entered the town below. Simeon was the only saving grace of the village, as the overpowering mass and heavy weapons of the Cog quickly ravished it. Simeon was cutting Cog down at will but was slowly being pushed back to the edge of the town by the Cogs overwhelming numbers. Percival was still in the ship witnessing the destruction going on below, but was horrified by the sight of Simeon ripping through his fellow Cogs. Sick of seeing his companions struck down he grabbed his drill, attached his breathing apparatus and quickly jettisoned from the ship. He fell quietly upon Jellymellon and rendered him unconscious with a drill-gun butt to the back of his head. Simeon gently fell off the edge of the town and drifted slowly into the blackness of the Lurk below.

Later in the day after the Cog had completely secured the village and the extraction site of the UnderAether. Percival and his crew were sent out to begin the drilling process. The drilling was going well, so Percival issued a break for his men, but as a good leader he stayed behind and continued the work under supervision of the guards. It began to get dark as he was drilling and the sparks that shot out from the stone and UnderAether became increasingly visible. He heard a sound of something gently hitting the ground behind him. He turned and saw the two guards on the ground and Simeon leaping upon him, sword in hand. Percival raised his drill and blocked Simeon’s sword from slashing open his skull, their eyes met, and they immediately knew they had become Rivals.

To be continued.

