

## X -At the earths core

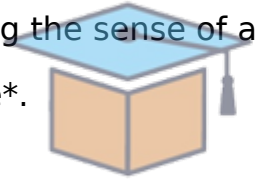
In chapter X of *\*At the Earth's Core\**, the protagonist and his friend Ja encounter each other again. The hero, having barely survived his adventures in the hidden world of Pellucidar, is surprised and relieved to find Ja on the surface and quickly updates him on his recent trials. He narrates his escape into the wild mainland, surviving dangers from both wildlife and native tribes, thankful for Ja's timely rescue. In turn, Ja expresses his astonishment at the hero's unexpected presence and details how he tracked him to this point, emphasizing the bond they've shared since the hero saved Ja's life. Ja offers him a place among his people, the Mezops, promising a comfortable life and companionship. However, driven by loyalty to his original companions and a quest to rescue Dian the Beautiful, the hero declines, aiming to return to Phutra and the Mahar temple.

The discourse shifts to a deep discussion about the nature of Pellucidar, the inner world's geography, and its inhabitants' understanding of the universe. Ja and the protagonist discuss the flat Earth theory of Pellucidar versus the outer world's spherical one, touching on the naivety and humor found in such a misunderstanding but also sparking a deep curiosity and determination in the hero to educate and improve the knowledge of Pellucidar's inhabitants.

Upon deciding to head back to Phutra to rescue his friends, notwithstanding the likelihood of his own death, he is caught and interrogated by the Mahars—intelligent reptilian creatures who rule the inner world. He concocts a story of willingly returning to Phutra, disguising his true motive of planning an escape for him and his friends. This leads to a tense confrontation with the Mahars and their guards, illustrating the protagonist's quick thinking and resourcefulness.

Finally, reunited with his colleague Perry in Phutra, they engage in a perplexing conversation about the nature of time in Pellucidar, highlighting a significant disconnect in their perception of the passage of time—a phenomenon that seems to only compound the myriad of mysteries and challenges they face in this strange world. This philosophical musing on time adds depth to their already enigmatic surroundings, setting the stage for their continued adventures and quest for survival.

This encapsulation maintains the crucial elements and stylistic essence of the original narrative, preserving the sense of adventure, camaraderie, and mystery that defines \*At the Earth's Core\*.



Summaryer