

VII -At the earths core

In "Freedom," the seventh chapter of "At the Earth's Core," the protagonist finds himself temporarily free from immediate danger after evading a large animal and the disorganized guards. This newfound hope leads him through a dark corridor and up a flight of steps to the surface, just outside the city of Phutra, in the land called Pellucidar. The continuous daylight and the verdant, untamed landscape of Pellucidar offer both a marvel to behold and a tactical advantage for escape. Despite the potential for liberty, the protagonist's thoughts remain with Perry, his companion, recognizing that freedom is worthless without sharing it with Perry.

He reflects on the physics of Pellucidar, as explained by Perry, particularly the unique gravitational effects that make movement feel more effortless than on the Earth's surface. This feeling of agility and the environment's exotic beauty ignite a desire for exploration, even as he debates the feasibility of aiding Perry. Trekking across the plains and through a canyon, he marvels at the prehistoric fauna and flora, engages in a brief hunt, and savors the raw, nourishing bounty of the land.

Upon reaching a peaceful valley, his solitude is shattered upon discovering a primitive boat and, shortly after, encountering a threatening, spear-wielding native. In desperation, he takes the boat, leading to a chase into the sea. Just as capture seems imminent, a monstrous sea serpent attacks the pursuer. The protagonist, moved by a sudden empathetic connection with the fellow human in mortal peril, contemplates intervening, even as he acknowledges the futility of combat against such a beast.

This chapter emphasizes themes of survival, the bond among all humans despite their circumstances, and the protagonist's unyielding desire to return for Perry, reflecting on the fundamental human condition and the instinctual drive for companionship and empathy, even amidst the dangers of an alien world.