

Neptune's Rage

Nelson is a captured sailor in a computer game, Neptune's Rage. He is waiting on level 8 (Ropefish Reef) for the player, Jack, to reach him.

(Standing at the bars of his cell)

Nelson; Help! *(pause; a count of 2)* Help! *(pause, a count of 2)* Help!

Oh, what's the point? I'll lose my voice before he gets to me. If he gets to me. His brother, Alfie, reached level 8 in three days; Jack was stuck at the Horrible Harbour for a week.

All I want is the chance to play my tiny role in this game; to provide the small but crucial piece of information which will enable the player to progress to the final confrontation with the Pirate King on Level 9. Is that so much to ask?

I sometimes worry that when the moment arrives I'll forget my lines – even though I've rehearsed the scene every day since the game was released back in October. I had hoped they would write me a bigger part, or make me a leading character. If I do my best I might be remembered when they bring out the sequel. *(Thinking)* That would be cool....

Concentrate Nelson! You mustn't let the side down; let's practice one more time.

(Thinking through the scene) The player comes in, and I'm at the bars of my cell. He is attracted by the little golden glow above my head; 50 shots of health which he will need after facing the Spiteful Squid. He breaks open my cell and I'm released.

(assuming the voice of the character)

"My ship mates are being held in the chamber above. Jump down this pot hole and swim along the underground stream. The bubbles contain oxygen to help you reach the stairway...."

(breaking off) What was that noise? It sounded like a door slamming. *(Looking down as if to the level below)* Well, *that's* a surprise, Jack is climbing the iron ladder. That means the squid is dead! Well done, Jack – you must be getting the hang of this game at last. He's at the portal now! Level 8, here we come!

(Assuming the position at the bars of the cage)

Help! Help! Help!