

## JAVA HEAD

always stirred his imagination and sense of beauty, but the departure of the *Nautilus* had a special significance. It was the beginning, yes, and the end, of almost the whole sweep of human suffering and despair, of longing and hope and passion, and a reward.

"Let go the stern fast. Steady your helm there."

"Steady, sir."

A mere gust of song was distinguishable against the blast of storm. Under the lee of the stone warehouse, on the solidity of the wharf, the land, Roger Brevard watched the *Nautilus* while one by one the topsails were sheeted home and the yards mastheaded. "A gale by night," somebody said. The ship, driving with surprising speed toward the open sea, was now apparently no more than a fragile shell on the immensity of the stark horizon.

The light faded: the days were growing shorter. Alone Brevard followed the others moving away. Kate Vol- lar's red shawl suddenly streamed out and was secured by a wasted hand. Just that way, he thought, the color and vividness of his existence had been withdrawn.

THE END