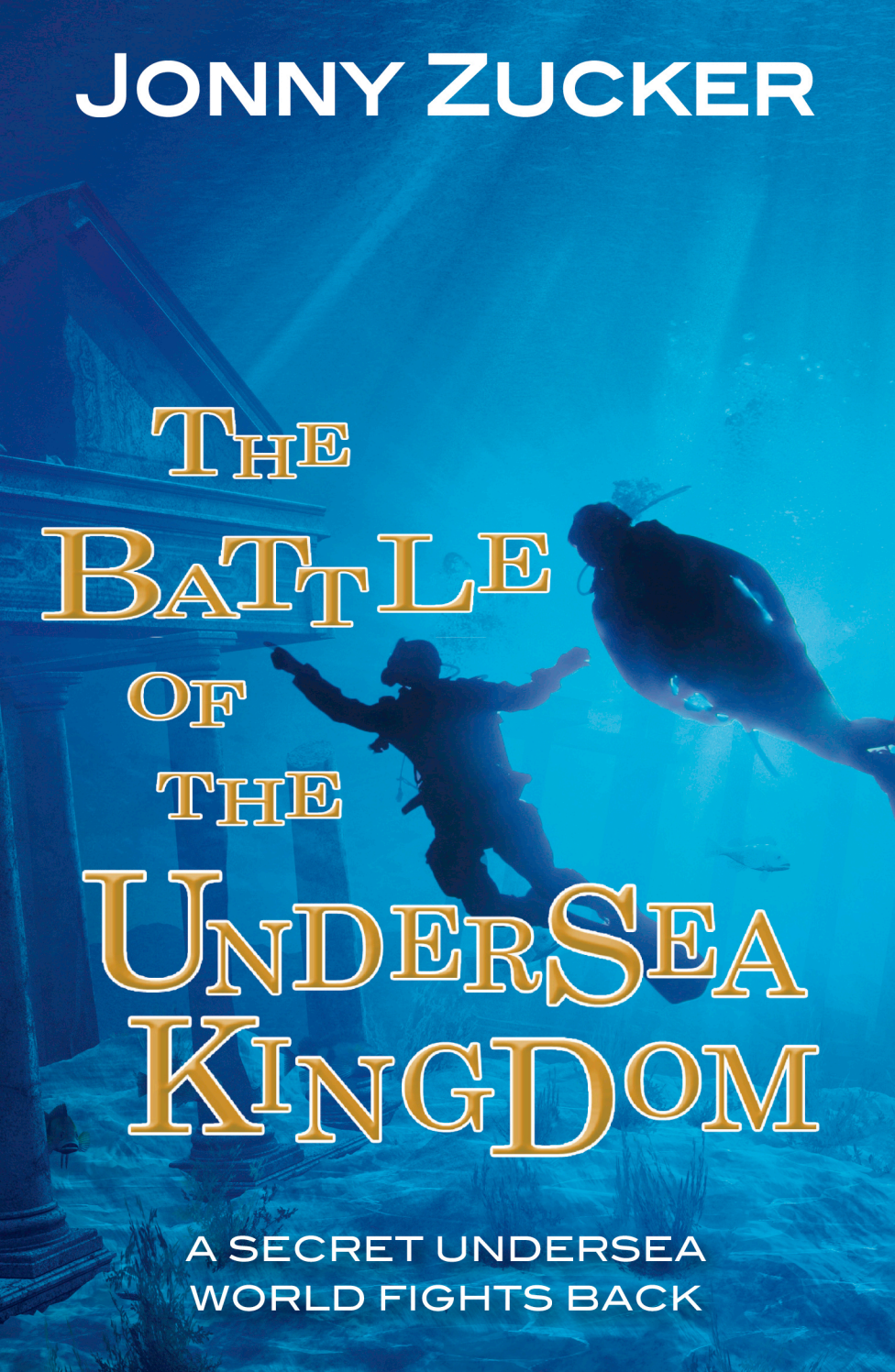


JONNY ZUCKER

An underwater scene with a blue color palette. In the foreground, two divers are silhouetted against the light. One diver is on the left, pointing towards the right. The other diver is on the right, swimming away. In the background, there are ancient stone ruins, including a large column on the left and a structure with a pediment. Sunlight rays filter down from the top of the frame.

THE
BATTLE
OF
THE
UNDERSEA
KINGDOM

A SECRET UNDERSEA
WORLD FIGHTS BACK

TOXIC



“ ‘You are all wrong!’ said Tyler in a loud, clear voice.

Everyone fell silent.

‘The kidnapers do not come from another village. They come from under the sea.’ ”



THE
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THE BATTLE OF THE UNDERSEA KINGDOM

**JONNY
ZUCKER**

**ILLUSTRATED BY
ALAN BROWN**





CHAPTER 1

‘The mayor has been kidnapped!’ screeched an elderly woman, as she ran into the sea-front boat repair shop.

Danny and his dad, Tyler, looked up from the boat they were fixing and followed the woman out of the shop.

It was dusk, and the sleepy little village of Tidehaven should have been quiet.

But now everyone was gathered in the village square.

A village elder called Caleb was holding up a piece of paper.

‘We found this ransom note,’ he explained. ‘It says we will only get the mayor back if we pay a hundred gold coins to his kidnappers.’

‘Where was the note found?’ shouted someone.

‘On the beach,’ replied Caleb.

‘The kidnappers must come from a nearby village,’ said someone else.

‘They want the money to be left on the rocks, by the sand dunes at the top end of the village,’ said Caleb.

‘Which village do you think did it?’ asked someone.

‘You are all wrong!’ said Tyler in a loud, clear voice.

Everyone fell silent.

‘The kidnappers do not come from another village. They come from under the sea.’

‘This is no time for your silly sea stories, Tyler,’ said Caleb wearily.

Everybody knew about Tyler and his strange stories about creatures under the sea.



Nobody took him seriously – they all just thought he was a bit odd.

‘The note was found on the beach,’ continued Tyler. ‘The ransom money is to be left near the sand dunes. Sea creatures are the kidnappers – it’s obvious.’

But Tyler was shouted down. The villagers ignored him and carried on talking about other villages.

Tyler and Danny listened to the other villagers for a while. Then they returned to their repair shop.

‘Get some sleep son,’ said Tyler. ‘We have much work to do.’

Danny nodded. He didn’t know if his dad’s stories about creatures under the sea were true or not, and he had no idea what his dad was planning.