

# AT THE DOCTORS

STORY BY PATRICK VAN HOESERLANDE ILLUSTRATION PETER BOSTEELS

“Youth divers?” It sounded like music to their ears.

The doctor looked at his papers and said, “Oh yes, there is only one diver”, and asked who of the two was learning to dive. Skubba raised his hand. He was speechless.

Skubba had to stand up and the doctor came up to him with a weird kind of magnifying glass with a light attached to it. He looked into both of Skubba’s ears.

“An otoscope!” Fred suddenly shouted.

“An auto scoop?” Skubba repeated, amazed.

“No, an otoscope,” the doctor corrected him. “With this thing, I can look into your eardrum to make sure it is not damaged. And these are caps with a funnel attached to it. This allows me to see if your Eustachian tube is working properly so that I can know that you can clear your ears,” explained the doctor.

“Yes, because that tube has to work well if you don’t want to have any pain while you’re diving,” Fred added.

“Right!” The doctor confirmed while a strange drawing showed up on his screen. He looked at it and mumbled, “Good.”

“Now we’re going to examine your lungs,” the doctor continued. “We’re going to test your lungs with this, a spirometer.”

Skubba and Fred looked at a handle with a large hole at the top end of it. The doctor inserted a short tube into the hole and asked Skubba to blow through the tube as hard as he possibly could. What a weird test!

As soon as Skubba blew into it, a little ball drew a circle on the doctor’s computer screen. He asked Skubba to blow through it again. Another circle appeared on the screen. “Also good,” said the doctor.

Skubba had to undergo other tests too. Listening to peeping sounds and tell which side he could hear them from, and then the doctor measured his heartbeat.

The doctor also asked why he wanted to learn to dive. Both boys then burst into chatter and began to tell their adventures in full detail. The doctor enjoyed it.

When he asked why Fred did not want to go diving, Fred answered that he did not feel at ease in the water. The doctor understood that and said you should only learn to dive if you really want to. Not because someone else expects that from you. Fred found that to be wise advice.

When all the tests were done, the doctor reviewed the results.

“That looks good. Skubba, you may dive! I will see you again next year.”

Skubba and Fred jumped up into the air. It felt as if they had won a competition.

They both gave the doctor a handshake and promised to visit him again. After all, it had been a fun and interesting visit, and they were no longer afraid to go to the doctors.

They loudly left to go home in all their excitement. Now the diving could really begin!

