



# SPOOKS IN THE DEEP

Ray Ricci  
Dan Gleason

This book is a work of fiction  
but all of it is true.

## DEAD-ICATIONS

*For the legendary writer Peter Chimaera, who first inspired me to write terrible fanfiction.*

*For Horror-Master Cedric Moon, the enigmatic troll from /x/ who taught me that horror could be funny instead of even remotely scary, and whose existence I can strangely no longer find any trace of.*

*For my illustrator Daniel Gleason, who brought my writing to life in ways I had only previously dreamed of.*

*Finally, for whoever is reading this right now.  
Thanks so much for your support.*

## **AUTHOR'S GORE-WORD**

*there won't be any more bad puns for the rest of the book, probably.*

Welcome to the Spook Universe. That name is not necessarily canon and is subject to change at any time and for any reason, not unlike the actual Universe we live in.

The Spook Universe is a world of much danger and intrigue. It's a violent place, filled to the brim with both literal-monsters and monstrous men. Survival is not guaranteed for any man, woman, or child.

Like the great philosopher/Ninja Cyborg Monsoon(季節風) once said, "*Wind blows, rain falls, and the strong prey upon the weak.*" And in the Spook Universe, none are weaker than mortal Men. Except mortal women and mortal children.

However, the Spook Universe is not a totally uncaring, Lovecraftian universe. There are many mysterious forces at work that seem to sometimes intervene like the gods of old—for better or worse—in the affairs of Men. There are also many great Homeric heroes who are able to contend with even the foulest creatures. Humans have also have found unlikely allies in Skeletons (or "Skelingtons", or "Skellies"), who have an affinity for both justice and martial arts. Humans in the Spook Universe have managed to eke out an existence almost identical to our own, even having to contend with vile monstrosities swaggering around all over the place. Imagine real life in America as it is now, in the year 2018, and throw in some evil half-bird people and sharks with arms and you've got the gist of it.

What you're about to begin is the first entry in a trilogy that can only rightfully be compared to *The Lord of the Rings*.

The story is so grand in scope, so epic, that even without all of the blatant Tolkien references, no other comparison would be accurate.

Our protagonist Redmond is not an author's childish self-insert (that character comes in the sequel), but a uniquely pathetic young man who must go on a journey of self-improvement and learn to do battle with the dangers of his world, or risk losing it all. It's a journey everyone can relate to with enough mental gymnastics.

A tale chock-full of blood and gore, but with just as much obscure videogame and anime references and memes, *Spooks in the Deep* is less of a traditional horror, and more like a horror-themed dramedy. It's a soap-opera where every character is ridiculous in their own way.

(mostly) Beautifully and memefully illustrated by Dan Gleason, this book is arguably some of the only worthwhile pieces of art in the world today.

We hope you enjoy it as much as we enjoyed creating it.

### ADDITION:

Life comes at ya fast, and with over a year of editing it's time to just push the book out. A lot's gotten in the way preventing me from making this as perfect as I originally wanted to. From the illustrator seemingly being cursed to the master file being corrupted multiple times and forcing me to restart, it's been a journey as maddening as a Lovecraft short. But if I don't get it out now, it's just never going to happen. And you know what? That's OK. Perfectionism stifles too much creativity. That's the very lesson that first inspired my writing, and I've forgotten it. A great man once said "Fuck it, we'll do it live!" So that's what I'm going to do.

—Ray



ADDITIONAL ADDITION: This isn't just a horror story, it's an INTERACTIVE\* ***MYSTERY*** so get your thinkin' caps on and look out for CLUES. Can YOU solve the mysteries behind the events of this story? :O

\*you interact with the book by reading it. There **are** clues though, so keep your peepers peepin!

Remember When I Said You Interact With This Book By Reading It?

I lied. There's MORE.

**INTRODUCING:**

## **-THE DEEPEST LORE HORROR-CAT QUIZ-**

**Do you have what it takes to be a horror-cat? After finishing the book, challenge your mind and answer these thrilling questions to find out!**

**Question 1: What does Rasta Rick have visions of?**

- a) the past
- b) the future
- c) both

**Question 2: Who invented Karate?**

- a) the Japanese
- b) Elves
- c) Deadly Bones

**Question 3: What year was Super Mario 64 released, and what kind of horror-cats travel across Universes?**

- a) 1996, spooky-leapers
- b) 1996, spooky-lepers
- c) 1996, TJ "Henry" Yoshi

**Question 4: Metres or meters?**

- a) metres
- b) meters

**Question 5: How old was Rasta Rick when he invented a new martial art?**

- a) 16
- b) 14
- c) 13

**Question 6: Is Redmond gonna be OK?**

- a) I think Redmond will be fine.
- b) Oof.
- c) Yikes.

**How'd you do? If you got 100%, you MIGHT have what it takes to be a horror-cat, kid. Don't stop training.**

ANSWERS: c, b, a, a, c, a

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an internal chatlog recovered from Grueber Corp discusses the shark-people:

<Jim89>idk, sometimes they just grow arms. That's pretty spooky.

<Kell1>They can swim faster than anything... can chew through steel... Can spook people to death without even having to eat them

<Jim89>they can be beaten with karate though?? they also probably can't survive on land. i mean, maybe. im just guessing.

<Mart\_e>where did they even come from? Am I allowed to ask that?

<Kell1>...

<Jim89>probably not, just watch what you say lol.

<Kell1>Well I'm sure the company has nothing to do with the shark-people, Marty. I've g2g run some reports I'll ttyl guys.

(User <Kell1> has disconnected)

<Mart\_e>thought she had the day off?



[The Timeless Art of Sharkduction]



## **PART II: THE DIVE BAR**

Redmond threw open the doors of the seedy local pub. Everyone immediately looked up and yelled “Arrrrrrgh!” It was extremely intimidating to a low-test city boy like Redmond.

Every single mother fucker in here was an expert fisherman and boat captain. All of them had the beards and hats to prove it.

But Redmond wasn’t just looking for any sea dog. He was looking for the saltiest sea dog there was. He would need nothing but the saltiest to take on the Shark Priestess. Saltiness was the fighting spirit of all maritime adventurers. It was the spirit that allowed them to brave the horrors of the deep. It was the spirit that allowed them to stare Poseidon in the face and say “Your mom.”

Redmond needed an extraordinarily salty man if he were to have even the slightest chance of saving Rob. And so he asked.

“Pardon my intrusion, gentlefolk, but may I ask who in here is the saltiest sea dog?”

“ARRRH, matey!” said the closest man. “The saltiest of us all be out past the Dead Mon’s Marsh! In the Spooky Lagoon!”

“Dead Mon’s Marsh?” repeated Redmond. “I’ve heard of it but I’ve never been there...”

“Ayyyy mon, I be happy to take you der!” someone called from across the room.

Everyone gasped and turned to the speaker. He was a cheerful looking rastaman with short dreadlocks, wearing a plain white tee and jeans. He seemed entirely out of place, but Redmond could tell that for some reason the other sea dogs in the bar had nothing but the utmost respect for this strange man, no older than twenty-five.

“Rasta Rick, are you sure?” asked the first sea dog, standing up. “Your tendinitis...”

“Ya mon, it aint be no thing. Da road der be a badman place, and de little guy surely be losin’ is life if he goes da normal way.”

“Thank you, Rasta Rick!” cried Redmond.

“Sure ting little mon, but be wa-nd. Da marsh be fool of fukin voodoo magic, mon. Stay ‘ere, Ima go get ya someting.”

Rasta left the room and a wizened sea dog stood up and put his hand on Redmond’s shoulder, collapsing Redmond’s weak legs. He put his hand to his face in disappointment as Redmond stood back up.

“Lad, are ye really sure ye wanna go through with this? It’s a dangerous world out there. This isn’t your middle-class suburbs. Why do ye be needin’ a salty dog anyway?”

“Well...” Redmond thought about his answer. He was certain he could trust these sea dogs with his story, but what he wasn’t certain of was himself. Was it his place to undertake such an important mission? He was, after all, just a bitch-dork. As Redmond doubted himself, Rasta Rick barged back into da bar, mon, and threw a poncho over him. Redmond was immediately overwhelmed by a powerful, dank odor, and just as powerful a sense of calm. He suddenly had confidence in himself.

“I need a salty dog to help me take on the Shark Priestess,” Redmond answered. “She turned my friend into a shark-person and wants to destroy all of mankind.”

Many of the sea dogs gasped. The room went silent as the sea dogs began whispering amongstest themselves. Only the old man and Rasta Rick didn’t seem concerned.

“So the old fish-bitch be finally making her move, be she?” laughed the old sea dog. “Well, kiddo, I’d be lying if I said I had any confidence in a boy as soft as yourself. The Priestess be more powerful than most men can imagine. But I trust Rasta Rick’s judgment more than I trust me own. I wish ye the best ‘o luck. Now get out of here, lads. I’ll calm these fools down.”

“I be seein’ ya soon, Charls. I’m gon’ help da kid fly.”

Without another word, Rasta Rick took Redmond’s hand and ran out the door.



“Dis way, mon!” cried Rasta Rick. “Run wif ya arms back, it add extra speed and it be real fuhkin' ninja, mon! Das mah ninja way :3 ‘Ere, take dis edbahnd, too.”



*[Rasta Rick is a yuge anime fan and also a Jōnin from the Village Hidden in the Kush]*

“Why are we running, Rasta Rick?” panted Redmond.

“I be needin’ a running start little mon,” answered Rasta Rick through heavy breathin, mon.

“What? Why?” questioned Redmond, confused.

“You be seein’ soon enough, little mon. Now, when ya get der, ya might be followed by some foul tings, mon. Dey be seein’ your body heat. Ya gotta hide in da cool mud if dey be trackin’ ya, mon. Ya gotta be cool!”

“Like in Predator™?”

“Ya mon, de baddies be like da Yautja. An dey got maaad claws ahn sheeit. So you got ta be like Ahnold! An’ der be some local Skeletons dat can handle dem. Find dem mon, and dey might help you!”

“My, what an adventure this will be! I can’t thank you enough for your help, Rasta Rick!” gasped Redmond.

“Nah problem little mon, I got faithin ya... Now it’s time for you ta GO!”

Rasta Rick grabbed Redmond in mid-run, spun him around, and flung him through the air like a slingshot.

“WHOOOOOOOOOOOOA!” yelled Redmond as he whizzed like a bullet over the road.

“REMEMBER, BOY!!!!” called Rasta Rick. “JUST BE *COOL!*”

Redmond flew through the air at the speed of rasta sound. After several minutes, he landed in a pool of foul black muck.

He looked up and saw planted in the mud a most frightening sign:

## **“LIVING NOT WELCOME >:( Fucking Fleshies, LEEEEEEEEEEAVE!!!”**

The sign was typed in Chiller, a very frightening font, so Redmond knew that whoever put it there meant business. Redmond had heard of a town of skeletons that lied in the marsh. He didn't know that they hated living people. Why had Rasta Rick suggested he seek their aid if they didn't like “fleshies?”

Suddenly, he heard a horrible screech from some distance behind him. He turned to find the road he had flown through, and shadowy figures some distance away, fast approaching.

*Crap!* he thought. *Need to hide...*

He slapped some mud on himself, also giving himself mud-facial hair as extra disguise because why not, and tucked himself in a nearby tree that looked liked Woody Allen.

He could hear foul little shrieks grow louder as they came closer and closer.

Then, they were just outside of Woody.

“KEEHEEHHEE! The human is here somewhere!” said one of them.

“BWAAAARK! Keep an eye open! General Whitefin said he would pay us well for him!” responded another.

Redmond could tell they were absolutely horrible creatures by the stupid, annoying way they spoke.

“KEEHEEBWARK! If he's here, we will find him. The mud and the trees cannot hide him forever!”

“Just keep an eye open for the Unseen Ones! CAWCAWKEE!”

“KEEHEEHHEE! HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO DO THAT? WE CAN'T SEE THEM!”

“Then keep an EAR open! CAWCAWKEEEEE! You think you're so clever? CAAAWWCAWCAWCAWWW!”

Redmond heard a thump as one of crow-men got slapped upside the head.

*These things are so freaking annoying,* he thought as they passed by.

When he could no longer hear their hideous, dumb voices, Redmond emerged from Woody Allen.

He looked around. There was no sign of the annoying bird-things. Redmond knew that as stupid as they sounded, they were surely a great threat to him, as Rasta Rick had warned. Most anything would pose a threat to someone as wimpy as Redmond. Still, he absentmindedly wiped the cold mud off of himself, completely forgetting that it made him invisible.

Next to the tree he discovered yet another sign. This one was significantly less spooky:

## **“Just Kidding, Welcome :) Bonestown 1mi Thataway→”**

This second sign, in magnificent Comic Sans, expelled the crushing anxiety that the original had dealt him by the original. They were just kidding! He no-longer had mental images of skeletons shrieking at him to leave. But now, an equally-frightening thought occurred to him: did he have the fortitude necessary to handle their banter? Or would he suffer embarrassment at the hands of these skeletal jokesters?

“Well, there's no use thinking about it,” he said to himself, “I've got to move on through this marsh, or Bob will be a shark-person forever!”

And so he started on, struggling through the thick mud, like a pathetic wimp.

**a chatlog recovered from Grueber Corp discusses the crow-people:**

<Jim89>Punk-ass nazgul-lookin' birds.

<Kel1>I wouldn't underestimate them. Against skeletons, sure, they're nothing. Can't even see them. But humans? I'd call them a threat. They can fly, have poison talons, and are exceptionally annoying.

<Jim89> Yeah because they have thermal-vision, they can't see Skeletons... or nerds who've watched "Predator".

<Mart\_e>Where are all of these monsters coming from????!!

<Kel1>...

<Jim89>ya reeeally gotta stop asking those kinds of questions, buddy. I know you're new but ffs, didn't HR go over this with you??

<Kel1>I'll cya guys later. Marty, really, just relax. The company has nothing to do with this.

<Mart\_e>What's up with your font lol

<Jim89>Jesus Christ, Marty...



*[A tree that looks like Woody Allen saves Redmond from certain death.]*

### **PART III: Crows and Bones**

Redmond trekked through the thick muck for what seemed like years. It was only really about 10 seconds.

BUT THEN SUDDENLY he was accosted from behind.

“BA-CAWWWWW!!!!” shrieked the crow-man, slashing Redmond with his talon-hands.

Redmond screamed and fell to the ground. Probably shouldn't have wiped the mud off.

“Help me, Sam!” he cried, I guess he thought he was Frodo or something. Those poison talons must have had him trippin'.

“YOU WILL SUFFER THE FATE OF TERRORFUL CROWISH DEEEEAATH!!!!!” shrieked the crow-man.

“NO YOU FOOL-BIRD! WE MUST BRING HIM IN ALIVE!” barked the second crow-man.

They grabbed Redmond and started to drag him away.

“KEEEEEEEEEHEHEHEHEHE! When General Whitefin gets hold of you, he'll bite your legs off and beat you to death with them!”

“You'll never get the ring!” gasped Redmond, deliriously babbling nonsense due to his wound.

But then, there was a voice.

“Ho-ho! It seems like the birds have wandered from their perch!”

The crow-men dropped Redmond in the mud, and wildly started looking around.

“IT'S AN UNSEEN ONE!” a crow-man croaked fearfully.

“START SHOOTING EVERYWHERE RANDOMLY!” shrieked the other.

The crow-men pulled AK47s from their shadowy wings and started firing wildly all around them. It looked like the Predators™ had become the... ill-prepared Special Forces unit blind-firing at an invisible foe. Remember that scene? God was a masterpiece of a movie. Except in this scenario, the crow-men didn't land a single shot.

A shuriken whizzed through the air and landed in the skull of one of the feathery fiends.

“THEY KILLED CROW-MAN 2!” cried one of the crow-men who wasn't crow-man 2.

“RETREAT!” squawked another.

They began to run away, flapping their wings, flap-flap-flappin' em, but two more shuriken flashed by, right into the head of one and the wing of the other. He flapped in vain and stumbled into the mud.

“CCCCAAAAAAWWW! WHERE ARE YOUUUUUUU?!? SHOW YOURSELF!” he shrieked. But he was not answered. He continued stumbling away.

Redmond stood up and looked around. He couldn't see his savior anywhere in this foul marsh.

“Where are you looking? I'm up here,” said the voice.

“Right up here.”

Redmond looked up and gasped with wonder. Standing on top of the Woody Allen tree was a skeleton with a martial artist headband. He was striking a magnificent pose.

“Asia Bones, can it be you?” Redmond asked. “The legendary bone-fighter who holds the Spirit of Fighting?”

“Grrrr... ANSWER ME, REDMOND!” called the skeleton, and he hopped down the tree with a front flip, landing gracefully and striking another awesome pose.

“THE SCHOOL OF THE UNDEFEATED BONES!” he roared, and he started punching the shit out of Redmond; a martial arts ritual that should have been met fist-to-fist, if Redmond weren't a wimp.

“AHH GAH FAHH GAHHH BWAAHH!” Redmond spouted, as he was being pummeled.



“ZENSHIN! WELL, REDMOND?! ANSWER ME! TEMPA KYOURAN! LOOK! THE BONES ARE BURNING RED!” roared Asia Bones, as he punched Redmond in the gut one final time.

Redmond coughed up blood before losing consciousness.

“Mhmmm,” said Asia Bones wisely. “He was not able to answer me. He is no fighter. But I see in his heart a flame. He is a determined, if useless, young man. I will help him.”

Suddenly, the surviving crow-man’s talon rose from the mud and gripped Master Asia I mean Asia Bone’s ankle, and he laugh-cawed annoyingly.

“KEEEHEHEHEHEHEHEHE! Some master! You should know better than to let your guard down! I was able to pinpoint you from the sounds of your stupid G-Gundam recital! ANIME IS FOR NERDS! NOW DIEEEE!”

With that, the crow-man broke Asia Bones’s ankle-bone in his powerful claw.

“KEEEEEEEEEHEHEHEHEHE! YOU’LL NEVER TAKE ANOTHER CROW-LIFE NOW THAT YOU’VE BEEN CRIPPLED, YOU POSEUR!”

...

“Are you sure?” replied Asia Bones.

“KEEHEHEHE WHAT DO YOU MEA—”

The crow-man looked at his talon and shrieked. He was holding his own broken ankle. He rolled around cawing in anger and agony. Bamboozled again.

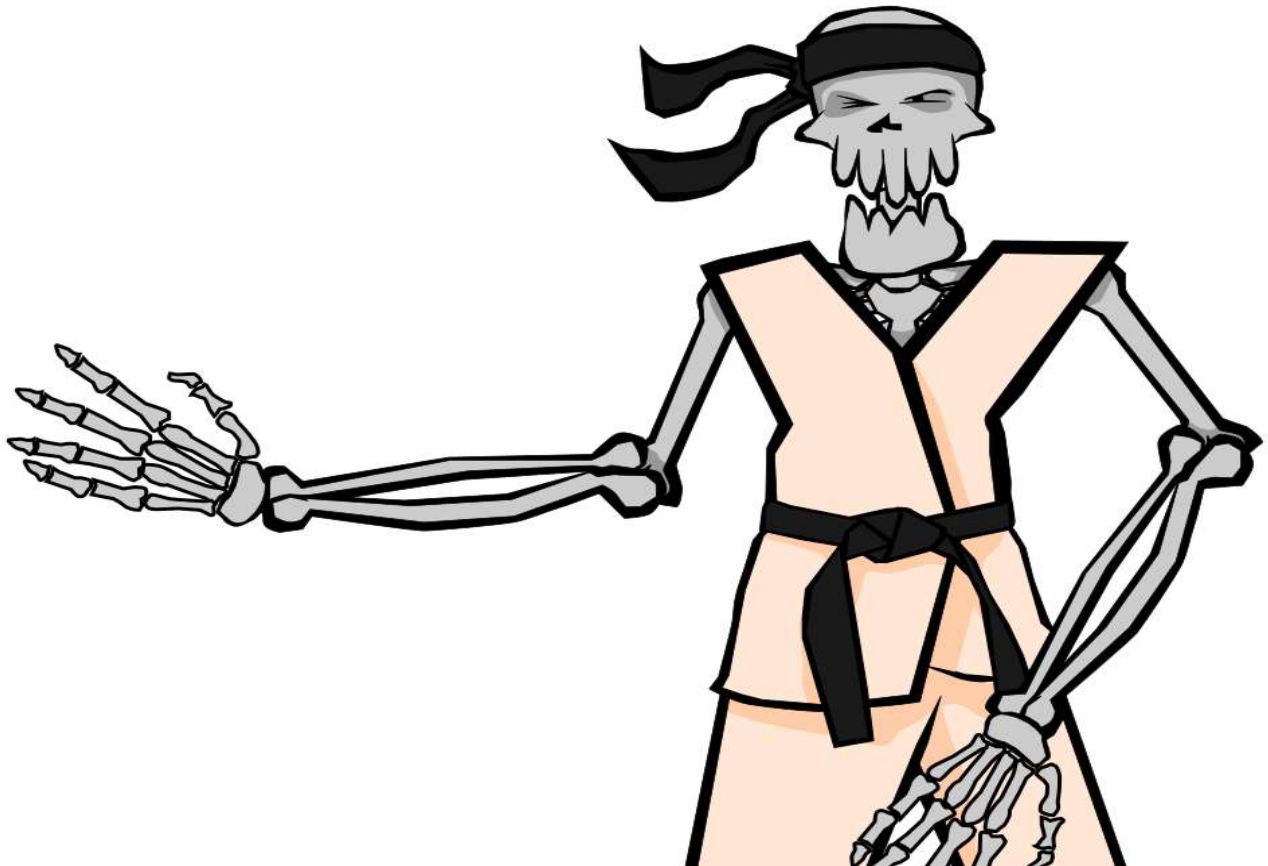
Without a word Asia Bones picked up Redmond and began to carry him farther into the marsh.

Redmond came to a little bit and sputtered “W-where are you taking me?”

“It’s all right, weakling,” replied the old master. “We are going to Bonestown.”

“YOU’LL PAY FOR THIS, SKELETON!!!” shrieked the crow-man.

“Nah,” muttered Asia Bones, walking on.



*[Asia Bones, the Undefeated of the Eastern Seaboard and wielder of the Spirit of Fighting]*

## **PART IV: Redmond's Awakening**

Redmond groaned and opened his eyes.

As his vision cleared, he found himself lying on a stained and foul smelling mattress on the floor of an old weather-beaten cabin. There were no windows, but from the light peaking through the front door, he could tell that it was daytime. He wobbled to his feet and approached the door.

Suddenly, there was a deep, terrifying voice from behind him.

“Where d’ya think you’re going, BOI?”

Redmond spun around, and to his horror, the mattress he had just been lying on now stood upright. It began to rock its sides and come closer.

“Do you know what I am?” it asked him, as it slowly shimmied toward him.

“N-no,” answered Redmond, vision blurring from extreme fear.

The mattress came within a foot of him and leaned toward his head, whispering into his ear.

“The best.”

It fell on top of Redmond, beginning to crush him. Redmond struggled in vain to push it off of him.

“Help meee!” he cried pathetically, as the mattress squeezed the air from his lungs.

Just before Redmond blacked out, the door burst open, and a familiar skeleton grabbed the mattress and flipped it over on to its back. Redmond sat up and gasped for precious air.

The mattress roared and flipped back to its vertical position, facing the interloper.

“So, Asia Bones. We meet again. I was hoping to spare you the humiliation of defeat,” it spat.

“You talk a big game for a single-sized, Ubiytsa” grunted Asia. “How long before the transmattressfication potion wears off?”

“One minute,” the mattress responded smugly.

“Then I’ll strike you down in a single blow,” said Asia.

Spooky battle-music started playing from out of nowhere; the Universe itself was watching with great interest. Redmond ducked behind the skeletal sensei, fear of the talking mattress overwhelming his mind and shaking him to his very core.

Asia Bones assumed a fighting stance: a legendary one known to villains around the world. A mattress could never hope to defend against the 100% chance critical-attack which would come next.

“Y-you lack the honor to face me in my true form, skeleton?” the mattress taunted fearfully, as it backed away like a punk bitch.

“You dare speak to me about honor?” Asia Bones said seriously. “No, you know nothing of honor, assassin. But I will teach you...”

Asia Bones took out his Amazon Kindle and selected the preloaded Oxford Dictionary of English.

“Honor, noun—”

“I know what honor means, you condescending bone-prick!”

“Do you? I’m not so sure. The quality of kno—”

“LA LA LA LA LA!” sang the mattress angrily, “I’M NOT LISTENING! LA LA LA!”

But Asia Bones continued on, knowing that indeed, the mattress could hear him.

“—wing and doing what is morally right.”

“NOOOOOOOOOO!” the mattress cried. The definition hit him like the cleansing rays of the Sun hitting a vampire.

“YES! Knowing and doing what is right! Does that sound like a quality you, a paid assassin, possess?”

“You don’t know anything about me!” screamed the mattress angrily. “You don’t know where I’ve been!”

“I don’t know? I’ve *been* where you’ve been,” Asia retorted seriously. “The difference between us is that while you turned to a life of crime, I became the greatest martial artist in the world. Now stand still and let me hit you.”

The mattress began sobbing green mucus. It was the transmattressfication potion wearing off. Asia Bones knew that even in the Ubiytza’s true form, the assassin was no match for him. But instead of being able to defeat him in a single attack, it might take two or even three. What a stupid, hideous waste of time.

“I cannot forgive you for attacking the young man. Before I send you flying, Ubiytza, will you tell me who hired you?”

“If I tell you, will you let me leave in peace?” asked the assassin.

“You know I cannot do that,” Asia Bones responded patiently. “If there is no consequence for committing Evil, then it will never leave this world. But I may hit you with slightly less force.”

“FORGET IT! IT’S NOT WORTH IT!” screamed the mattressassin.



[“*These nightmarish mattresses can be felled! They can be beaten!*”]

Asia Bones closed the distance in a single bony leap and cracked his knuckles.

“This ends here, and it ends now.”

Asia Bones growled “Dancing Fire Bones!” as he threw back his arms and forcefully slapped the mattress with both hands like a pro-wrestler. Flames erupted from his skelly palms and the mattress flew through the window. I know I said there wasn’t a window before, but now there’s a window.

From his spot on the floor, Redmond could see the mattress continuing to fly through the air into the distance from the force of Asia Bones’ attack. It blinked off in the sky, like Team Rocket.

Asia Bones offered his bony hand and lifted Redmond to his feet. The poor young lad was still spooked out of his mind. Asia Bones took a potion from his gi and poured its contents down Redmond’s throat.

“What was that thing?” Redmond asked.

“That was an assassin, Redmond. Under whose employ, I cannot say...” responded Asia Bones.

“Why was he a mattress though?”



“Is it not obvious, Redmond?” asked Asia, cracking his knuckles and releasing small flicks of fire. “Who would ever suspect a mattress of being an assassin? Only geniuses. Only me.”

“And that fire you used! That was incredible! How could any man or skeleton wield such power? Was that the Spirit of Fighting?”

Asia Bones stoically repressed his desire to grin in self-satisfaction.

“Yes boy, what you just witnessed was indeed the Spirit of Fighting. A power as old as time itself, tamed many years ago by non-other than Deadly Bones, the skeleton who fought Zeus and won. But that's another story. If I had to, I'd call it an enchanting prequel that's loosely tied to our own story, and probably titled something along the lines of *My Father is a Skeleton*, and it would probably be available right now in all major online book retailers, or at the author's website, perhaps online at [shekeleki.fun](http://shekeleki.fun).

“Asia, what are you talking abo—”

“Anyway Redmond, some years ago, after I won a martial arts tournament he was hosting, Deadly Bones entrusted the Spirit to me before he disappeared on a journey of self-discovery, or whatever hippie shit he was into at the time. I've used its power ever since to beat the shit out of any evildoers who'd harm the innocent and helpless and overall pathetic, such as yourself.”

Redmond bowed deeply.

“I thank you for saving me, Master Bones, but I need to find the sea dog who lives past this marsh.”

“I know, Redmond. I know everything about your quest.”

“How can that be?” responded Redmond, shocked.

“I read your mind, weak one. I saw everything that happened. To you, to your friend. I know the Shark Priestess has returned. I know that the scaly bitch seeks to sharkify all of mankind in her bitchy quest for world-domination.”

“Then you know that I have no time to waste!” said Redmond. “If I'm going to save Bob, I need to get moving.”

“You have no chance of that, Redmond,” said Asia Bones calmly. “As you are now, it's doubtful that you'll even be able to reach the sea dog alive. This town is safe from the likes of the crows who accosted you, but once you leave it you'll be right back at their mercy.”

“I need to try!” cried Redmond.

“Then at least let me train you, boy!” growled Asia Bones. “I may not be able to give you the power to defeat the Shark Priestess, but I can at least make you strong enough to lift a mattress!”

“THERE'S NO TIME FOR THAT!” yelled Redmond, and he stomped past Asia Bones and out of the cabin.

Asia Bones shook his head and smiled as he watched Redmond begin to wander helplessly through the streets of Bonestown.

He stumbled around like a newborn calf, tripping over himself, his legs giving out. Skeletons shoved him in self-defense before he could bump into them, and he bounced around the street like a pinball. But he was making progress.

“He reminds me of myself when I had skin, Rasta,” Asia said, as Rasta Rick appeared at his side in a puff of dank smoke.

“Ya mon, the little guy be goin' places, das a sheer ting. But where? And how he gon get der?”

## **DEEP LORE:**

***Rasta Rick, an incredibly powerful psychic warrior, has been known to have visions revealing esoteric truths of the past and future. However, he cannot do this at will.***



## PART V: A Bony Rebuke

Redmond stumbled pathetically through the town like a drunken buffoon. But he wasn't drunk, so he had no excuse. He was just a buffoon. A buffoon looking to save his dear friend.

Skeletons looked on carefully from their cabins, ready to spook this stranger in self-defense if need be.

Before he reached the edge of the town, he collapsed from exhaustion.

Asia Bones approached him.

"You're still weak from your wounds on top of your usual weakness, Redmond. You cannot make this journey."

"I have to!" cried Redmond. "Only I can stop the Shark Priestess."

"That's not true at all. Literally any skeleton in this town would have a better chance to succeed than you. Most human beings would have a better chance to succeed than you. You lack any of the attributes necessary to undertake a mission such as this," said Asia Bones sternly.

"Well I have to try!" retorted Redmond.

"No, that's not true either. What you have to do is leave this to the big bones. Even as I lecture you, Rasta Rick is getting in contact with Captain Redbones, the saltiest mother fucking sea dog this world has ever seen. Rasta Rick, Redbones, and I will stop the Shark Priestess. You will not."

Redmond jumped up. "You have to take me with you!"

"I will, Redmond. Because I admire your passion for adventure, despite your delicacy. But don't you dare forget: this is not your journey. You're coming along for the ride, nothing more. You are no match for the Shark Priestess. And don't get your hopes up about saving your friend."

"Y-yes sir..." said Redmond sadly.

Asia Bones put his skelly finger to his skelly head and telepathically communicated with Rasta Rick.

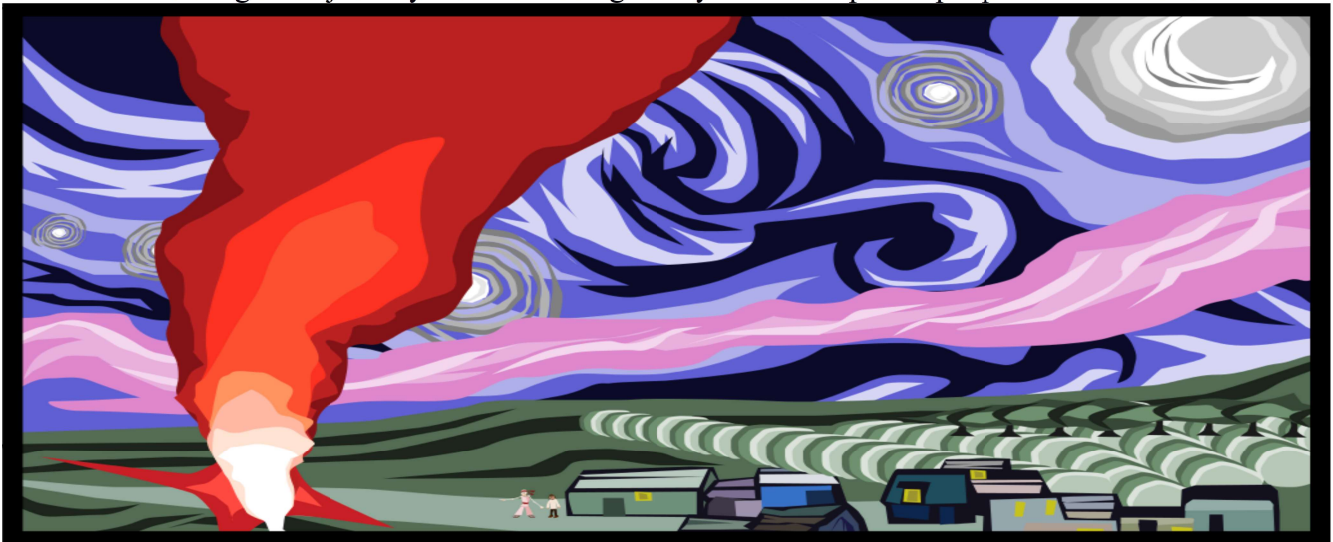
"Are you ready, Rasta?"

"Ya mon, firin' up da signal now."

In the distance, a flare shot up into the sky.

"That's our destination, Redmond. Let us go."

He handed Redmond a walking stick and they took off toward the flare shining in the *starry night*. In his heart, Redmond felt relief *lmfao* that's not how you spell relief, but anyway Redmond felt relief that this dangerous journey was now being led by more competent people than himself.





## PART VI: What it Takes to Breathe Underwater

Redmond and Asia Bones walked for what seemed like a year, which is a great explanation for why I'm writing this part a year later.

Suddenly, a crow-man burst from the mud in front of them in a spectacular aerial display.

"CULUCKOOK-KOO!" it screeched at them.

Unlike the other crow-men, this one was wearing... reverse... heat... uh... bone-detecting goggles. Sure let's go with that. Bone-detecting goggles which allowed him to see Asia Bones.

Redmond fainted in fear. But Asia Bones was not surprised. The crow-man had been tailing them since they left the skellie town. It foolishly believed it was being slick, and that Asia Bones hadn't noticed it. Dumbass bird.

It lunged at Asia Bones, idiotically believing that his ability to see him would also somehow enable him to actually defeat the old skeleton martial arts master.

"You keeeeed my comrades!!!" it crowed with a horrible crow voice.

"AND SO YOU DISHONOR THEIR DEATHS BY THROWING YOUR OWN LIFE AWAY?"

Asia Bones assumed a defensive stance in front of Redmond; two bony fists outstretched, and shouted "FLAME ON!"

Fire erupted from his bone fists and turned into a fucking dragon.

The crow was devoured instantly. What a disgrace.



*[Asia Bones releases the Ha-bone-ken technique on a crow who thinks he's Sam Fisher]*

When Redmond awoke, Asia Bones was kneeling over him with as much disappointment in a skull-face as one could imagine.

"What hope do you have of saving your friend, or even surviving this journey, if you faint at the first sign of danger?" he asked, with maximum disappointment in his gravelly badass voice.

"I'M SORRY!" weeped Redmond like a pathetic little baby.

"DON'T YOU EVER APOLOGIZE TO ME," roared Asia Bones, and he grabbed Redmond and tossed him into a tree, splitting it in half.

When Redmond awoke for a second time, Asia Bones stood over him, prepared to scold him.

"APOLOGIZE TO YOURSELF. YOU SET YOUR OWN LIMITATIONS, BOY. EVERY HUMAN HAS A SKELETON INSIDE OF HIM WAITING TO BURST OUT. AND IF IT DOESN'T

BURST OUT, YOU HAVE NO ONE TO BLAME BUT YOOOOOURSEEEEEEEEEELFFFF!” and THEN, Asia made a really, really spooky face at him and Redmond fainted again.

When he awoke for the third time, he was slung across Asia Bones’s back, nearing the hill where Rasta Rick had launched the flare.

Eventually, Asia Bones dropped Redmond before what appeared to be a house-sized spaceship parked neatly in front of a... lagoon? Is that an appropriate... I think so, let me just... oh yeah, that's perfect. A space-ship parked in front of a lagoon.

Rasta Rick exited it.

“Ay mon, um glad you could make eet heer!”

“Rasta Rick, what is this thing?” asked Redmond.

“Zactly what it lookin' like, mon. It be a space-ship. Come on in, I give ya da... *grand tour*. Step 'in to da grand tour, ah brand new adventa begins, anotha challenge for Redmond and 'is friends.”

After Rasta Rick was done singing the opening theme of the critically-panned Dragon Ball GT, they followed him inside.

“Dis be it, mon. Justa one room. Dey tour's ova.”

“Where did this ship come from, Rasta?” questioned Asia Bones.

“Ah dunno Asia, it just appeared here last week! I been usin' it to train me body, and it be maaad quick-like. Ah never felt so strong! It be somethin' special fa sure, but no-one's come back for it!”

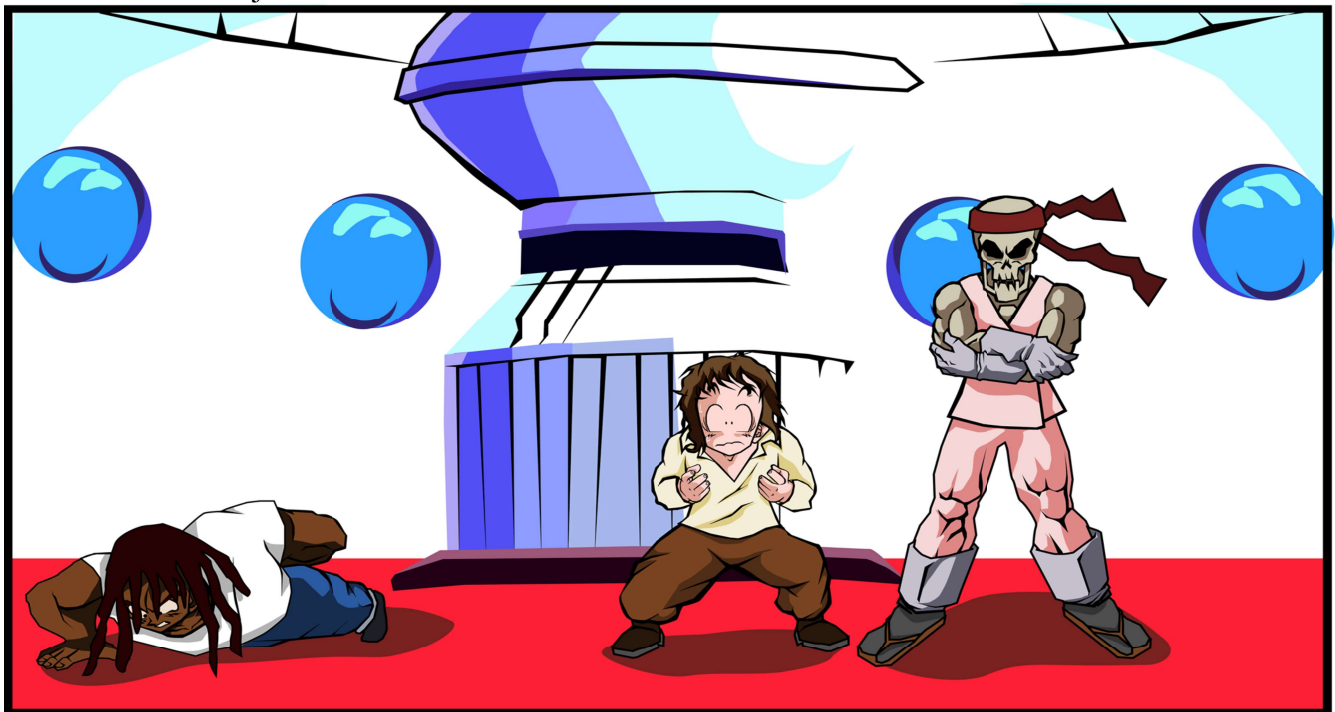
“Very well, Rasta. I'm sure we'll learn more about this mysterious ship later, or if our lives were say, a fictional story, perhaps in a sequel to our current adventure. But for now, we must focus on taking out the Shark Priestess,” Asia Bones said wisely.

“Agreed, Asia. So now we need to get goin' down to da ship graveyard,” Rasta Rick rasta'd.

“The ship graveyard?” asked Redmond with stupid curiosity.

“It be what da name implies, mon. A graveyaard' o ships,” Rasta Rick explained, and proceeded to drop to the ground and do push-ups.

Asia Bones joined him.



[Training inside the mysterious ship yielded preaternal results for Rasta Rick- no hyperbole]

“What are you two doing?”

“Is that a fucking joke?” asked Asia Bones as he effortlessly pumped out some fierce diamond push-ups. “We’re getting ready to breathe underwater.”

“...By doing push-ups?” asked Redmond stupidly.

“Yes, mon. Fer every push-up you do, you gain da ability to breath underwata fer a minute! Dis be common knowledge, mon!”

“That doesn’t make any sense!” retorted Redmond, with uncertainty because there was a skeleton and a magical Rastafarian and nothing really made sense anyway.

“Have you ever even tried it, boy?” snarled Asia Bones, beyond tired of how pathetically ignorant Redmond was to the way the world works.

“Well, no—”

“So shut up and give me 50, boy. We need to swim underwater to reach old Captain Redbones.”

“Y-yes sir...” relented Redmond, despondent.

Redmond dropped to the floor, just barely managing to hit the mark with his wimpy upper-body strength after taking three breaks.

Lord above, what a wimp Redmond is.

Exercise is so important, but like too many people in the modern era, Redmond was more accustomed to a sedentary lifestyle, foolishly spending hours on his computer, writing stupid stories and lurking on video game image boards instead of training his body.

Socrates once said “**No man has the right to be an amateur in the matter of physical training. It is a shame for a man to grow old without seeing the strength and beauty of which his body is capable.**” The kind of people who refuse to live by such sage wisdom are the kind of people like Redmond who can barely knock out 50 push-ups.

A personal friend of Socrates, and life(and death)long practitioner of the art and science of physical fitness, Asia Bones had to use the entirety of his spirit to hide his disgust at Redmond's display of physical frailty. If his old friend had lived to see what modern men had become, he'd weep.

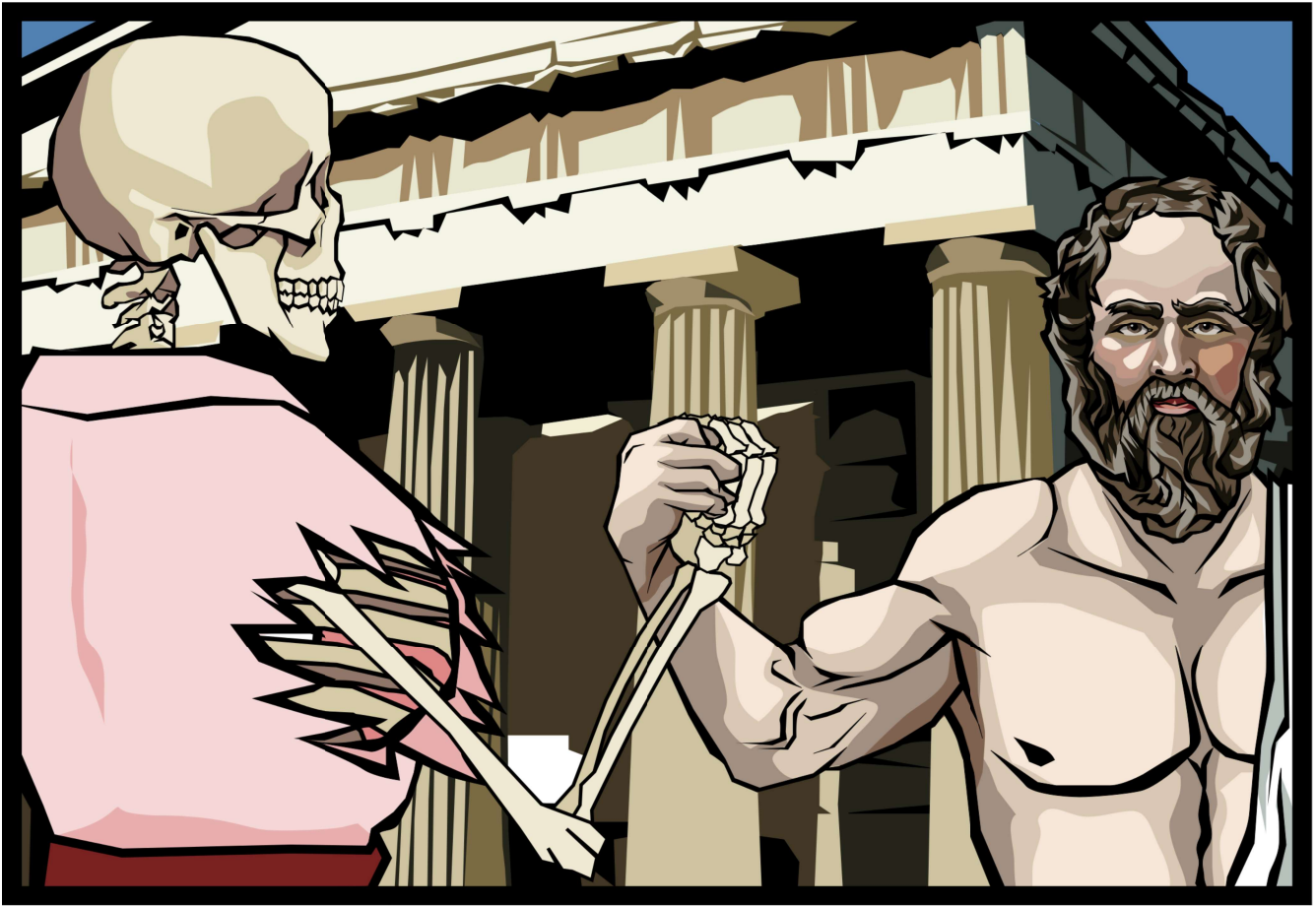
*>Comic Sans 12pt? Yep. Hey, it's your friend Ray. Just droppin' in to drop some **HISTORY FACTS/deep lore ...** They won't teach you this in school, but Karate was first taught to the Japanese by Elves for the purpose of slaying goblins. The Japanese made some adjustments to the techniques so they can now be used to beat up almost any monsters. The Elves and Japanese went back and forth, trading secrets, and eventually Professional Wrestling was also developed, which is used to fight ghosts, (and not to be confused with Greco-Roman wrestling) but that's another story.*

*So, to recap:*

- 1) Elves*
- 2) Anti-Goblin Karate*
- 3) Ancient Japanese Pro Wrestling*

*If you're not staying /fit/, you're literally asking to get beaten up by goblins, and I'm not victim blaming (I am) but I also do literally mean that goblins are reverse T-Rexes and are triggered by non-motion, so sitting around doing nothing will upset them, and goblins aren't especially well known for their impulse-control or empathy or long-term thinking.*





[“Asia, you son of a bitch!” —Socrates 430BC]

Rasta Rick, ever the warm soul, offered words of encouragement.

“Good goin’, mon! Not ah lot’o people can do fifteh push-ups!” he lied. “Now let’s get in dey water.”

The group exited the strange space-ship and moved toward the lagoon. But something caught Redmond's eye just as he was about to walk out the door. A small stamp of writing, close to the floor by the corner of the wall. He peered down at it.

“Hey, what does this say... property... of... Grueb--”

“Redmond!” barked Asia Bones. “Enough dilly-dallying!”

“Sorry sir!” replied Redmond, and he left the ship without another thought of the text that would obviously shed light on the origin of the strange space-ship.

“Okayy mons, da watah be waaaay dark, so just follow mah dreads and we get der safe 'n sound!”

And with that, Rasta Rick jumped 50 feet into the air, and dove into the lagoon.

“Wow, Rasta Rick sure is strong isn't he senpai?” asked Redmond.

“Listen here you little weeb,” said Asia Bones sternly, “Rasta Rick represents the peak physical capabilities of the human male body. Strength such as his can only be achieved through years of training so intense that it would kill lesser men such as yourself. Be thankful that we have him with us. I've seen him defeat foes that would be insurmountable to anyone else but me. Even without his training in that weird-ass ship, he's always been one of the few mortal men I've respected as fighters. He may even be as strong as I am. With him and I leading this journey, it's not a matter of *if* we'll defeat the shark priestess, it's a matter of *how quickly*. Now let's get moving.”

Asia Bones grabbed Redmond's hand, and tossed him into the water, diving in after them. To Redmond's surprise- surprise he immediately felt ashamed of- he could breathe through the water. He proceeded to follow Rasta Rick's magical glowing dreadlocks, Asia Bones following behind them to make sure Redmond didn't do anything stupid to get himself killed.

As he swam, Redmond thought about Asia Bones's words, and wondered if he could ever hope of becoming as strong as either of them or the magical Rastafarian. He felt ashamed of his relative worthlessness. Asia Bones had countless years of martial arts training and the mysterious Spirit of Fighting augmenting his already superhuman abilities. Rasta Rick had apparently always been strong, and blessed with strange, dank 420 abilities that allowed him to ascend to a state of near-godhood. Redmond could only hope that he wouldn't get in their way when battling the Shark Priestess.

*I'll probably never be as tough as them, Redmond thought to himself sadly.*

*I'll probably be a wimp forever... :(*

***wrong attitude, kid.***

**If you're going to critically self-examine(good!), at least follow it up with some action. Otherwise you're just torturing yourself. Why?**

***“If you don't like your fate, change it.” --Aida***

***I can't deny that I'm glad that Phantom was sold-out for the field trip in elementary school, so we had to see Aida instead-- way better.***



## PART VII: The Ship Graveyard

Rasta Rick, Redmond, and Asia Bones swam through the bitch-black (I meant to type “pitch”, but bitch-black is funny so I’m keeping it) water; the only light emanating from Rasta Rick’s magical dreadlocks.

After several minutes, Redmond followed Rasta upward, and they emerged from the cold water into a cave lit by bright torches on the walls. Torches made of human hands. Just kidding, they were just wood.

Asia Bones pulled Redmond back as Rasta grabbed a torch and proceeded into the cave.

“Listen to me, Redmond,” he said sternly. “Don’t act like such a fucking pussy in front of Captain Redbones. He’s not going to stand for that shit.”

Redmond was taken aback and almost started crying right then and there, proving Asia's point. Even he realized this.

“Well... I g-guess sometimes I'm a bit of a pansy...”

“That's right you are. Now toughen up, and come on,” and he pushed Redmond forward to follow Rasta Rick.

Redmond was glad that Asia seemed to care more about Redmond not making a fool of himself, than embarrassing him or Rasta.

Not long into their spelunking, the cave opened up into a shoreline, hidden by massive rocks jutting from the ocean, and littered with dozens of shipwrecks.

One wreck stood out above all of the others. Literally. It was a ship standing upright, entirely on top of several other, toppled ships. It appeared to be entirely white, and Redmond realized almost instantly that it was made out of bones. Of course it was made out of bones.

Rasta Rick stopped and turned to Redmond.

“Okay mon, we gotta get you on to dat ship first. Are you ready?”

Redmond didn’t have time to answer that question (the answer would have been “no”) before Rasta Rick lifted him up and jumped with him through the air-- about a football field’s distance on to the ship, where their fall was cushioned by Rasta’s magical dreadlocks. Asia Bones ninja-jumped and flipped from each shipwreck onto the bone ship to meet them.

“Ahoy, mateys! Welcome aboard the Queen Bones!” roared a spooky voice, so damn spooky, that Redmond yelped. He turned around to the voice’s owner, and screeched.

*It was a fucking red skeleton in a pirate hat.*

***Color* me  
confused!!! :o**

**classified correspondence recovered from a Grueber Corp private email server discusses the pirates:**

To: [BG@Grueber.ai](mailto:BG@Grueber.ai)

From: [Kelly@Grueber.ai](mailto:Kelly@Grueber.ai)

Subject: YA BEST START BELIEVIN' IN SKELETON PIRATES!

Jokes aside sir, Captain Redbones and his bony crew have been haunting every ocean on Earth for over 100 years. It'd be unwise to trust the crow-men to defeat them. Captain Redbones is an expert strategist and warrior. Many consider him to be the saltiest sea dog who ever... lived? I'm still confused about that.

Anyway, he is extremely racist against the shark-people; I believe we can definitely use this to our advantage.

I was unable to find out why his bones are red. Blood? Who knows? I don't understand why the color red matters so much?

I'll see what else I can dig up, sir.



## PART VIII: The Boy Must Be Salty

After Redmond awoke from being spooked into unconsciousness from Captain Redbone's visage, he found himself on a cot in the corner of small room made of bone. Through a doorway, he could hear Asia Bones and Rasta Rick arguing with Captain Redbones.

"I ain't havin' no lily-livered nancy boy in my bony crew!" roared Redbones.

"He just be comin' along for da ride, mon, it ain't no tang butta chickwing!" retorted Rasta Rick.

"Arrrr, he's a liability!" said Redbones. "I'm not having a piccc of dead meat taking up space on this ship!"

"Then let's cut to the chase," interrupted Asia Bones. "What does the boy need to do to prove that he's worthy of a spot on this crew?"

There was a pause. After a few moments, Redbones said "He's going to have to become salty."

For the first time, Redmond heard Rasta Rick lose his temper- there was a slamming of fists on a table, and Rasta's voice said

"He ain't nothin' but a kid! Askin' im to be salty at this time in his life be a death-sentence, mon! No, no, we won't do it!"

"Then he's not welcome aboard the Bone Mary, matey!" shouted Redbones, matching Rasta's intensity.

There was another moment of pause, and Asia Bones finally said,

"Fine. We will train the boy. By this time tomorrow, he'll be one of the saltiest goddamn sea dogs this side of the Skelington Isles."



*[Like a loving phoenix, Rasta defends his friend]*

### Author's Note:

*Hi, friend! I hope by now you've made a note of a certain VERY IMPORTANT CLUE. If you've already read the EPIC prequel, My Father is a Skeleton, you might already understand how it fits into the DEEP. LORE. If not, hey, no sweat! Everything will become clear.*

## PART IX: A Candy-Ass Becomes a Horror-Cat

It had been seven hours since Redmond's training at the hands of Asia Bones had begun. For seven long hours on the shoreline, Redmond had to endure Asia Bones making spooky faces at him to increase his bravery. There was no eating, and no resting. There was only spooky faces.

Redmond did his best to not faint; he felt determined to prove himself to Captain Redbones so he could save Bob and stop the Shark Priestess.

As Asia Bones turned down for what, Rasta Rick tied a rope around Redmond's waist.

"Now comes de ultimate test, mon- 'o physical fitness 'on brav'ry," Rasta Rick said, and he whistled.

Appearing from out of fucking nowhere, was a monster truck made out of monsters like goblins and fucking trolls and giant spider-scorpions and shit like that. holy spooks. And Redmond was tied to it.

It revved up its spooky engines and took off, and Redmond immediately started running to keep up with the monstrosity.

He was chasing the most hideous goddamn thing he'd ever seen just to stay alive. Holy shit, what a perfect metaphor for the hustle necessary to succeed in life. Whatever.

The monsters laughed at him as he struggled to keep up. They started calling him really mean names and shooting spit-balls at him through straws like this freakin kid used to do to me in middle school. He wasn't even a big kid, he was like an entire foot shorter than me and extremely thin and if I hadn't been such a goddamn shy pushover, I could have just beaten the crap out of him and then I could have paid attention in Spanish class.

Anyway, as Redmond ran and ran and rand paul, and cried, and cried, he felt something strange boiling in the pit of his stomach.

It was a stress ulcer, but also, it was the power of the horror gods. Redmond was becoming a horror-cat; a being Asia Bones had described to him as capable of withstanding the horrors of horror.

Redmond picked up his pace, gaining on the monster truck. The horrible creatures taunted him, but Redmond was finding new strength, coming from deep inside his bones! He leapt through the air and on to the truck, punching the ever loving shit out of every monster he could reach.

The monster truck spun out of control, and Redmond jumped off just as it fell over.

"We have no more use for this truck," said Asia Bones, and he turned his back to it and struck a pose. The monster truck exploded in a fountain of fire and gore.

**SONO                    CHI                    NO**  
**SADAMEEEEEEEEEEE**  
**EEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!**





A goblin head landed on Redmond's feet, and Redmond immediately started to play hackey sack with it instinctively.

"Aaaye, mon, he be gettin a bit o' da Barbados spirit in 'im, too!" laughed Rasta Rick, as Redmon passed the head over to him, blood spattering all over the sand.

The two kept the head bouncing, laughing and forgetting their troubles for a just a little while with their gory game.

Asia Bones looked on, smiling. For the first time since their meeting, he was truly proud of Redmond. He was a true horror-cat now. But while that was all well and good, if he wanted to survive the oceans, he'd still need to become salty as well. And if he wanted to be truly salty, he'd have to do what few men had ever dared even try...

He would have to kill a shark-man.

<YOU>Wait so what was the point of Redmond becoming a horror-cat if he still needed to become salty? What's the difference?

<ME>Gosh, I don't know, what's the point of learning something important that is tangentially-related to something else you have to learn? Look, horror-cats are jacks-of-all trades when it comes to spooky things. People who are salty specialize in aquatic horror. It's good to be both of them. Cover your bases.

<YOU>Okay, I guess that makes sense.

<ME>Of COURSE it makes sense.

## Deep Lore Fact(s):

### Quick rundown:

>Super Mario 64 was released in 1996.

>Parallel-universes aren't just in Super Mario 64!

>Some horror-cats have been known to travel between dimensions to acquire cool, unique new techniques and weapons. Epic drops.

Legendary loot. **Like, comment, and subscribe!**

>These dimension-jumpers are called "Spooky Leapers", not to be confused with Spooky Lepers.

>Spooky Leapers are very secretive. The only famous one is Deadly Bones himself.

>Deadly Bones, who hates the water, became salty by traveling to a Universe where one could become salty without setting foot in the water.

## PART X: The Deepening

Rasta Rick and Asia Bone accompanied Redmond on the small bone raft out from the relative safety of Redbones' shipyard fortress.

After a good hour of Rasta Rick's dreadlocks working like a fucking high-speed propeller, they arrived at an eerily dark expanse of open water.

Redmond knew this was their final destination; Blackfin Reef: one of the many outposts of the Shark Priestess's army, and from what Asia Bones had told him, one of the most dangerous.

Using his newfound strength, Redmond did 100 push-ups to allow himself to breathe underwater, and dove straight into the dark depths, taking with him a bone-harpoon gladly provided by an impressed Captain Redbones.

Killing a shark-man would seal the deal and make Redmond an official part of the skelington crew of the Queen Bones.

Rasta Rick has assured him that he'd dive in to save him if necessary, but Redmond asked that he refrain from interfering. This was Redmond's test of saltiness, and if he couldn't pass it, he might as well not even be alive. Asia Bones was impressed with Redmond's refusal, and nodded in approval and pride. Redmond had only been a horror-cat for a few hours, and already his demeanor was significantly less embarrassing.

"Rasta, this boy might just make something of himself," Asia Bones said, watching their young protege disappear into the spooky-deep.

"Dey be no doubt in mah mind, Aysha," replied Rasta Rick, smiling broadly. "Dey be no doubt."

As Redmond sunk further, his horror-cat vision took effect, and he began to be able to see through the darkness of the cold water; spotting a reef shaped like a tower several metres down. For fuc- it's so ridiculous to me that "metres" is being marked as incorrect spelling. Sometimes I just prefer the British spelling of things, and it's not even like it's an entirely different language. You're telling me that-- okay, hold on, I'm going to check if there's a British-English dictionary with this word processor-- okay, there is. I guess for anal people that's handy. Me? I don't care. I'll go back and forth.

DEEP      LORE:      **Metres is a  
prettier-looking  
word than meters,** I

don't care that I'm American.

Umm... so Redmond swam down to the tower...

And there, he was greeted by a shark who was a total asshole.

## **PART X-2: Redmond vs. The Shit-Talking Shark-Man** *if Final Fantasy can do it, so can I.*

“What’s up, bitch?” laughed the shark-man like a total asshole.

Horror coursed through Redmond’s bones, enraging him and filling him with strength. It could be compared to a kind of magical testosterone. He knew he could not lose.

“I’m here to kill you, you scaly fuck,” he growled.

“BAAAAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA,” laughed the shark-man. “A wimp like you? Kill ME? I am a shark-man, man. You are nothing but a little punk bitch. Get outta here before you get hurt, KIDDO.”

But Redmond would not be deterred by such weak shit-talking, and he unstrapped the harpoon from his back, and said “Come on, fish-tits. Tomorrow’s paper has an obituary with your name on it.”

The shark-man assumed a fighting stance. “Fine, you punk-ass jive little shit. Then have at you!” he roared, and charged Redmond head-on, mouth gaping open, prepared to tear Redmond apart.

Letting the spirits of horror guide him, Redmond took aim and chucked Redbones’s harpoon through the shark-man’s throat, sending him flying backwards and slowly floating toward the sandy floor.

“GG EZ” laughed Redmond.

It was done. The shark-man had been slain.



*[The Virgin Shark-Man v. The Chad Horror Cat]*

Just then, a small group of skeletons wearing red bandannas dove all around Redmond, initially startling him, before he realized that they were the crew of old Captain Redbones.

One of them spoke up.

“The sentry is dead, boys! Take the tower!” and the skellies charged into the tower, slaughtering the remaining lesser shark-men as Redmond stood back, in awe of the attack.

Redbones himself soon appeared at Redmond’s side, holding a fucking bitchin’ pirate sword, which he presented to Redmond.

“Welcome aboard, lad!” he said grandly.



“This sword is made out of the strongest, scariest steel in the world. It's been bathed in the blood of, I dunno, like 200 goblins. Its name is Foe...sting...er... Foestinger.”

“Wow, what a great and original name,” said Redmond sincerely, “Thank you so much, Captain.”

24 hours ago, Redmond would have wept like a child at receiving such a precious gift. But the new Redmond took the sword and didn't shed a single tear, accepting the weapon with the grace of a horror-cat, or any kind of normally functioning adult. He held it out and looked at his new weapon.

Its hilt was made of bone and encrusted with... nothing because that'd be feminine. Inside the blade Redmond could see what appeared to be the howling souls of the dead.

Redbones noticed Redmond's fascination with the blade. “Arrr lad, what ye see is real. That blade be made of Damascus steel. Anyone killed by this sword will have the soul sucked from their stupid bodies, strengthening the sword even further. Truly a weapon fit for a horror-cat.”

“Sir, where did you ever find such a weapon?” inquired Redmond.

“Arrr, I got it from a robbery victim!”

“It must have cost a fortune!” gasped Redmond.

Redbones sighed. The boy was a horror-cat now, but it hadn't made him any smarter\*

**\*GET IT? THE  
JOKE IS THAT  
HE STOLE IT  
BECAUSE HE'S  
A PIRATE.**

## **PART XI: Blackbones' Revenge**

Redbones stood with Redmond as they watched a few of the skellie crew take up positions in the newly taken coral reef tower- a new permanent base for them.

“With that reef-tower taken out, the shark-men have lost a strong presence here. Meanwhile, our own territory grows,” explained Captain Redbones to Redmond. “You did good, matey.”

When they were back aboard the Queen Bones, Redmond was given a huge feast of bone meal. Fucking gross.

Luckily the feast was cut short, as a shout ran out from the upper deck.

“WE’RE BEING BOARDED!” roared a skellie crew member.

“All hands on deck!” shouted Redbones, as he threw his sword straight through the Captain’s quarters open door with such force, that it lodged into the skull of an attacker.

Redmond burst onto the deck, sword in hand and examined the situation.

Black-bandanna’d skellies were climbing all over the ship, as Redbones’ crew did their best to keep them back.

Asia Bones joined Redmond at his side.

“It’s the crew of Captain Blackbones.” he explained, “No doubt here to recapture their old ship.”

“Redbones stole this ship?” gasped Redmond, surprised.

“They’re fucking pirates, boy,” sighed Asia Bones, as he charged into battle.

The red skellies fought bravely, but they were no match for the sheer numbers of the skellies climbing on to the ship. Asia Bones and Rasta Rick had no trouble defending themselves while keeping an eye on their young protege with their karate and magic- but at this rate, Redbones’s crew would be entirely wiped out.

But then Redbones stomped onto the scene with a massive bone mace and proceeded to defend his crew- knocking 3 or more enemies overboard with each swing; crushing all enemy skeletons in his path. Think Sauron at the Battle of Dagorlad in the beginning of The Fellowship.

The tide turned and with the superior fighting of Redbones and his allies, it became apparent that the black-skellies were losing the battle. And then, appearing from behind a guard of impressively large skellies, emerged a pitch-black skeleton, wearing the biggest fucking pirate hat Redmond had ever seen- with a feather larger than a man’s arm.

*Who could this black-boned skeleton-captain be?* thought Redmond stupidly.

Redmond’s captain stepped into the center of the deck to meet him, skull-to-skull. Never has there been a more impressive face-off between any two warriors since Achilles of Greece fought Hector of Troy. But which one of these skeletons has a shitty heel their mother didn’t bother dipping into the River Styx? Actually I guess that doesn’t really apply since Achilles killed Hector, so the better question is just “Which one of these skeletons is Hector?”

Anyway, the two skeleton-captains glared at each other, unblinking. Even if they could blink, they wouldn’t. Such was the intensity of their faceoff.

“Arrrrrrrr, Captain Blackbones...” arr’d Redbones.

“Arrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr, Captain Redbones...” arr’d Blackbones.

**ARRRRR! TO BE CONTINUEDDDDDDDDD!** (immediately, because this is now a complete story instead of a series of blog posts, but this scene is just so intense, that I felt the To-Be-Continued should remain, and I know you agree with me.)



*[The Skeleton Captains have been feuding since the 20's]*

Author's Note!

1- why don't you ask the kids at Tiananmen Square?

2- sry if this is getting "too randum", but there comes a point in every man's life when he has to fill in page-space for a stupid book that he should have finished over a year ago.

3- television made you buy it.

## **PART XII: The Fellowship of the Skeleton Pirates**

Without another “Arrr”, the two skeleton pirate captains lunged at each other, in a furious clash of bones and steel.

Captain Blackbones wielded a terrifyingly sharp blade, which swiftly danced around Redbones’s huge mace, but was unable to pass through to its owner.

The battle raged for hours, with many skellies taking short naps or sipping cups of tea or bottles of whiskey.

Rasta Rick rolled a massive blunt so magical that everyone on board got a contact high. But it did not quell the rage of the two pirate captains, each determined to be captain of the Queen Bones. After several more hours, Redbones began to tire. He was swinging a huge goddamn mace around, after all.

Blackbeard ducked under one final swing, and kicked Redbones over onto his back. He was just about to deliver the fatal blow, when Redmond of all people pulled Blackbones’s fucking skull right off his shoulders.

Everyone gasped.

“Excuse me, what the fuck are you doing?” roared Blackbones.

“I’m not going to let this pointless fighting go on any longer!” cried Redmond. “As you dumb assholes quarrel over a ship, the Shark Priestess is preparing to come for all of our hides!”

“Redmond speaks da truth, mon!” cheered Rasta Rick, literally lying floating on a cloud of the dankest kush.

“Aarrrrrr, the boy be right, Blackbones,” arrr’d Redbones, getting to his feet. “Forget the Queen Bones, there’ll be no ship nor sea for any of us if the Shark Priestess is allowed to swim!”

Blackbones’s skull stared long and hard at Redbones, searching for any hint of insincerity.

“What be ye pre-posin’?” he said finally.

“An alliance of bony pirates,” replied Redbones plainly. “We sail right into the Shark Priestess’s home, and make shark fin soup of ’em all! And when our common threat is gone, we can resume our fighting for this ship.”

“Arrrrrrrrrr, so be it, Redbones. But if I detect a hint ‘o mutiny, I’ll be throwing you all overboard meself, and the Queen Bones will be mine all the sooner!”

“What the fuck is so special about this ship?” whispered Redmond to Asia Bones. “It’s grounded, isn’t it?”

“Redmond, your ignorance never ceases to surprise and disappoint me,” sighed Asia Bones, as Rasta Rick touched ground and raised his hands high into the air.

“Den der it is, mon!” laughed Rasta Rick, and his dreadlocks vibrated as the ship rose into the air, off of its fortress-like perch, and onto the water. “Let’s get ‘ta sailin!”

The skeleton pirates all cheered, and Redmond suddenly felt much better about their odds. They now had a small army of pirates to take on the shark-men.

“Lad?” asked Captain Blackbones to Redmond.

“Yes?” asked Redmond, vacantly. Asia Bones sighed.

“Can ye put my fucking skull back on to me body?”

Redmond rushed to do so, as the skellie sea dogs rushed around the ship, preparing for the journey.

In celebration of this powerful new alliance, Rasta Rick smoked up the entire ship again. Everyone felt chill asf, despite their destination being nothing less than a battle for the fate of the planet. In his bones, Redmond felt that he would play a key role in the destruction of the Shark Priestess. He couldn’t explain this feeling, as he was surrounded by a group composed entirely of more useful fighters and thinkers than himself. Maybe it was just foolish pride.

But then, Rasta Rick approached him, putting a hand on his shoulder.

“Ya best prepare yaself, little brotha. Rasta Rick will always tryan protect ya, but it will be you dat saves us all,” he said seriously, and hugged Redmond tightly, smiled at him, and returned to the partying skeletons.

Redmond froze. Had Rasta Rick read his mind? What did he mean Redmond would save them all? He watched Rick from across the deck.

Rasta Rick looked like he didn't have a care in the world as he danced with Captains Redbones and Blackbones. But even Redmond knew better. This was no ordinary man, but a superhuman demigod, who watched over them all like freakin' Gandalf.

How could any man with such a burden on his shoulders seem so calm and cheerful? How could any man be completely void of any *fear and loathing* when living in a world as spooky and horrible as this? Was it the weed? No, it was something else. Something stronger; some ancient wisdom or power that granted Rasta Rick his superhuman chill.

*How do you do it, Rasta Rick? What is your secret?* Redmond thought. He smiled to himself, inspired by Rasta's good spirit, and joined in the festivities, trying not to worry about the Rastafarian's warning.

## **~IMPORTANT DEEP LORE FACT #184B~**

**[LEAKED BY: RAY, WITH PERMISSION FROM THE  
FED, WITH PERMISSION FROM NO-ONE]**

***AT THE TENDER AGE OF 13, RASTA RICK HAD DEVELOPED HIS OWN MARTIAL ART WHICH HE USED TO STEAL FROM THE RICH AND GIVE TO THE POOR, LIKE A LIL RASTA ROBIN HOOD.***

***SENSING THE BIRTH OF A NEW MARTIAL ART, DEADLY BONES FLEW TO HIS HOUSE AND, DELIGHTED BY THE YOUNG BOY'S ENTHUSIASM FOR TRAINING, DECIDED TO LET THE BOY LIVE.***

***RASTA SEES DEADLY SPARING HIS LIFE AS A SIGN FROM THE RASTA GODS, AND HAS DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO DOING AS MUCH GOOD AS HE CAN.***







## **PART XIII: The Voyage to Shark City, Mon**

“Ayyyy, we on a voyage to Shark City, mon!” laughed Rasta Rick, as the skeleton pirates danced around the ship gracefully, the massive bony aquatic conveyance going full speed ahead.

“AAAALL HANDS ON DECK, YE SCURVY LANDLUBBERS!” roared Captain Redbones and Captain Blackbones in unison. They had both refused to stand down as the head captain of the ship, so Asia Bones karate-chopped their bodies in half, and Rasta Rick rasta’d them together. They were now Captain Redblack- the ultimate skeleton pirate captain.

Suddenly, there was a thunderous chorus of squawks, and Redmond looked up at the sky to see ten thousand goddamn crow-men launching themselves toward the ship.

“Oh yeah, we forgot about the crow men,” he said.

“Ready yourself, Redmond,” instructed Asia Bones. “Let the horror guide you.”

The crow-men attacked the ship, pecking at the skeleton pirates with gusto. Despite the fact that they didn’t have any freaking skin, the skeleton pirates were extremely frustrated and inconvenienced by this.

Asia Bones spun through the air, karate-chopping and kicking dozens upon dozens of crow-men, and Rasta Rick back-flipped all over the damn place and used his giant blunt to blow up a smoke-screen to blind the asshole birds. The skellies didn’t have eyeballs which could be bothered by smoke, so this completely makes sense, trust me.

Captain Redblack stood tall and continued steering the ship, not at all deterred by the gang of crow-men pecking at his body.

“Redmond!” roared Asia Bones, “Defend the captain! After a couple of hours of pecking, his bones might begin to crack!”

“I’m on it, master!” Redmond answered, as he rushed to the captain’s aid, the horror guiding him through the 420 smoke screen.

Upon hearing Redmond call him master, Asia Bone’s non-existent heart swelled with pride, and he smashed crow-man beaks with extra gusto to show off to the rest of the pirates.

Redmond drew his sword and stabbed the ever-loving crap out of the crows that were pecking the captain. They fell to the ground, deader than shit. A crow-man tried attacking him from behind, but with Redmond’s new connection to the Horror-- which is basically exactly like the Force from Star Wars except spookier-- he sensed the crow-man coming a mile away, and threw his sword-arm back with not just his own wimpy human strength, but aided with the force of Horror itself, cleaving the crow-man in twain. It was clear for all to see that Redmond had gone from a “Frodo” to an “Aragorn” in the course of a day, and several of the skellies cheered at Redmond’s spectacular kill.

“WE MUST RETREAT!” howled one of the crow-men; apparently the flock leader, since the rest of the birdbrains obeyed and proceeded to rush back into the sky and beyond.

“ARRRRRRRRRRRRR! WE DID IT, LADS!” laughed Redblack, jumping and pumping his fist in the air. The rest of the skeletons proceeded to pump their fists in the air, and glow sticks and kandi bracelets rained from the sky.

Redmond stood at the front of the ship, staring down into the endless depths. Well, not really endless. The ocean does have a bottom. But it’s really deep. Or so I’m told.

Asia Bones and Rasta Rick joined him.

“Those crows were sent by General Whitefin,” Redmond said, recalling his first encounter with the winged assholes.

“Indeed they were, Redmond,” said Asia Bones. “It would seem the Shark Priestess seeks to gain non-aquatic allies. She may have also been the one who employed the shapeshifting-assassin.”

“Speaking of which--” said Rasta Rick, and he stabbed Asia Bones through the back of the spine.

“NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!” cried Redmond, and he punched Rasta Rick’s face. Redmond fell to the ground and held his teacher in his arms as the skellie pirates tackled Rasta Rick.

“Redmond--” coughed Asia. “You- must- you must find--“

“Find what, master?” cried Redmond, tears streaming down his face.

“I’m just kidding, I’m fine,” said Asia Bones and stood up, removing the knife from his back.

“ARRRR, WHAT’VE YE DONE WITH THE REEEAL RASTA RICK?” arred Redblack menacingly.

“Go ahead,” coughed the assassin, “throw me overboard. I’ve nothing but allies in the dreary depths!” he laughed.

Redblack grabbed the assassin’s arms in each hand and tore his body in half.

“We could have gotten him to talk!” argued Asia Bones.

“We must find Rasta Rick!” cried Redmond.

“I’m over here, mon!” said Rasta Rick, appearing from out of the crowd.

“Well, that as easy.”said one of the skeleton pirates.

“Also, we’re here now.” said another skeleton.

Redmond looked overboard and didn’t see anything. Just more freaking open ocean.

Asia Bones looked at Redmond and realized he didn’t get it. “It’s underwater, Redmond.” he sighed with disappointment. “They’re shark people. They live underwater.” and without another word, he dropped to the floor into some push-ups, followed closely by Rasta Rick, and the rest of the skellie crew.

Redblack handed Redmond a harpoon made of bone. “Are ye ready for this lad?” he laughed.

“I’m ready with a capital ARRRRR!” said Redmond, as he proceeded to start exercising as well.

Half of the skeletons laughed so hard that their ribs fell off.

“Gather yer bones and meet us in Davey Jones’s locker, me hearties!” laughed Redblack, as he followed Asia Bones overboard, with Rasta Rick diving in after him.

Redmond did the polite thing and helped the skeleton crew retrieve their ribs. They all then proceeded to plunge into the dark and spooky ocean.

## **OOPS! I hope you haven’t gotten TOO used to Dan’s delightful artwork!**

*Look, nothing lasts forever.*

**Especially not anything good. It was at this point that Dan was cursed by a gypsy or something, and was unable to continue making his FOINE art.**

**It’s important to not get SPOILED, so this is for the best. It’s a LESSON for you.**

**let’s all wish Dan luck with his curse, and hope he’ll be back to crankin’ out awesome art soon.**

**And now, back to the story.**

## PART XIV: Shark City

“Close your eyes for a second. Try to imagine the most darkest, spookiest, shark-infested place on the planet. Times that by about 100, and you got where we goin’. Shark City, bitch, Shark Shark City, bitch. Ten ten ten ten twenties on your skellies, bitch,” rapped one of the skeleton pirates as they sunk just outside of treacherous Shark City. Music is important for boosting morale.

Shark City was made entirely out of magical sand, and looked exactly like New York City. The only way to tell the difference would be to notice the shark-men swimming around all over the place. Also there was a big gate and giant walls. Like Troy. Except New York City.

General Whitefin met them at the gate with a small detachment of elite shark soldiers. Redmond immediately knew it was Whitefin, because he had white fins, as his name might imply.

“Whitefin!” roared Redblack, drawing his sword.

“What have you done with Bob?” demanded Redmond.

“You mean Sharkbert?” laughed General Whitefin, stepping aside.

(author’s note: I laughed so goddamn hard from typing “Sharkbert”, that I feel compelled to make a note of it)

From out of the crowd emerged Redmond’s dear friend. Except he was no longer the short, stocky man of somewhat generous proportions that Redmond loved so dearly. He was now a lean, mean, sharking machine.

“You shouldn’t have come here, Redmond,” he said in a dull, monotone, stereotypical brainwashed voice.

“Bob, this isn’t you!” cried Redmond.

“MY... NAME... IS... SHARKBERT!” roared Bob, I mean Sharkbert, and he charged Redmond with a big-ass trident.

Redmond dodged the attack gracefully like a ballerina warrior princess.

“What should I do?” he shouted to Asia Bones. “I don’t want to kill him! Which I could probably do effortlessly!”

“You KNOW what you have to do, Redmond!” Asia Bones called out, as the rest of the shark soldiers began engaging the skellie pirate crew.

Redmond looked within himself. Asia Bones was right. He *did* know what he had to do to save Bob’s soul.

He’d have to spook him... **In the deep.**

Meanwhile, the skeletons fought the shark-men with ferocity. Razor-sharp teeth vs. bones and bravery. and also Rasta Rick, who was able to smoke underwater. Shark City, bitch.

For every shark-man the skellies were able to shank, another took its place. The effort was useless, it seemed.

Until Asia Bones flew (swam) into the air (higher water) and unleashed his baka-naka-gen-jutsu; creating a wall of flame that drove into the sandy city, killing all shark-men lined up to join the battle. Damn.

With the sharky reinforcements depleted, the skeleton pirates began to get the upper-hand. At least, until General Whitefin suddenly grew 100 feet tall.

“What the hell, why is he 100 feet tall now?!” cried one of the skellies.

“I be sensin’ some daaark rasta, mon,” gasped Rasta Rick.

Sure enough, a stereotypical voodoo swamp woman appeared behind the group of shark-men, flipping him off and cackling.

“IT BE DA SWAMPMAMA JOOJOO!” roared Rasta Rick, and he propelled himself into her fists-first, punching her head clean off.

“Good thinking, Rasta Rick!” laughed Captain Redblack, as General Whitefin shrunk down to his normie size.

Captain Redblack and Whitefin engaged in a duel; two great warriors, dueling in a duel to determine who is the better duelist.

But then a headless Swampmama Joojoo stood back up, and raised her arms and danced around, and Whitefin grew into a giant again, and kicked Captain Redblack clear through the sky-water like a whale going up to breach.

“This is bullshiiiiiiiiit!” he roared as he disappeared out of the water.

General Whitefin began stomping on the rest of the skellies. Asia Bones and Rasta Rick backflipped out of danger.

“We can’t win as long as da swampmama be makin’ ‘im big, mon!” cried Rasta Rick.

“There must be some way to kill her!” cried a skellie pirate just before being stepped on.

“BAH HA HA HA HAAA! FOOLS! ONLY US SHARK PEOPLE KNOW HOW TO KILL THE SWAMPMAMA!” roared 100-Foot Whitefin.

All hope seemed lost, but then Redmond was struck with a brilliant, spooky idea. He took Swampmama’s head and tapped Sharkbert on the shoulder. Sharkbert turned around, and Redmond held the head out and Sharkbert cried out “Holy shit!” and became Bob again. Redmond slapped him across the face.

“HOW DO WE KILL THE SWAMPMAMA?” he shouted, shaking Bob by the shoulders.

“Y-you need to cut off her hair!” Bob stuttered, stunned by his regained humanity. “But it has to be fashionable!”

Redmond spun around towards the skellies.

“Is there a cosmetologist here?!” he shouted.

There was silence for a second, before he received his answer.

“Over here... right over here,” replied Asia Bones, holding out his hands.

Redmond grabbed the swampmama's head and stuck it on his harpoon, and launched it off toward Asia Bones.

Asia jumped up, and horizontally karate-chopped the voodoo woman’s dreadlocks, shortening them. They looked quite nice.

“OH NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO” screamed her head and her body exploded, shortening General Whitefin once more.

“WOOOOOOW,” said Whitefin, annoyed.

At that moment, still expecting a gigantic Whitefin, Captain Redblack sailed the Queen Bones underwater and impaled Whitefin on the bow, which was shaped like a skellie holding a sword. lol.

The ship crashed down, creating a smokescreen of sand, and giving the remaining skellies enough time to slaughter the remaining shark-men.

“Ahoy, mateys!!!!” laughed Redblack, and began dancing.

The rest of the skelies danced too. Except for Asia Bones.

“Our job isn’t finished yet,” he said sternly. “Not until the Shark Priestess has met her end.”

He then struck a pose.

“I agree,” said Redmond, also posing. He turned to Bob. “Where is she?” he demanded.

“She’s probably at her throne in the Empire Shark Building...”

“So what are we waiting for?!” asked Redmond, beginning to march.

“But you can’t go there!” yelled Bob worriedly, scrambling to get ahead of them all. “It’s guarded by sharkingtons!”

“What the fuck is a sharkington?” asked a skellie.

Asia Bones closed his eyes and sighed in worry.

“Shark Skeletons...”

## **PART XV: The Priestess's Throne Room**

The skeleton pirates took off their pirate garments and Rasta Rick distributed running shorts, t-shirts, and magical running shoes that were invulnerable to not being fashionable. Then they all sprinted through the city, like a skeletal track team. Redblack and a few of the skellies stayed behind to fix the ship.

On and on and on they ran, huffing and puffing, but remembering to breathe deeply through their nose-holes. You've never seen skeletons run this impressively. Gazelles have nothing on this level of grace. Neither does anything else. This is grace beyond grace. Advanced grace.

So much grace in fact, that the universe tore apart at their heels; the skeleton pirates were breaking reality itself with their majestic running. As they reached the Empire Shark Building, they each launched themselves through the windows, and the charging tear in the space-time continuum whooooshed passed them, and then there was nothing but blackness everywhere.

"What the fuck is going on?" asked one of the skeletons, looking around at the nothing that enveloped them.

"We are so goddamn awesome," said Asia Bones, "that reality itself could not handle us. We've destroyed the entire universe."

*What?*

**The End.**





## **PART XVI: The Birth of a New Skeleton**

“NOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!” roared Bob, and he punched the Priestess right in the tit.

“OWW!” she screamed, and kicked his face. He flew backward outside the Asia/Rasta-sized hole, but was able to grab on to the ledge.

“Somebody help me!” he yelled.

But there was no one. The skeleton crew was more than tied up, barely able to defend themselves from the overwhelming ferocity of the sharkingtons. His friends were gone. This was it.

“You should have stayed a shark,” said the priestess, as she raised her foot to step on his hand.

“Hey, shark priestess!” said Deadmond’s disembodied head. She spun around to face him, surprised at the talking head.

“SAY CHEESE. Bitch.”

And his body threw Foestinger through her stupid, distracted face, sucking her bitch soul from her moron body.

The sharkingtons all collapsed, and Deadmond stood up to collect his head.

In his horror mastery, he had been given a second chance. He could now shed his skin and live again as a skelington. His flesh evaporated, leaving a spooky skeleton. The new-and-improved Deadmond.

“We did it,” said Bob.

“Indeed,” said Deadmond. “I just wish my friends hadn’t all been brutally killed...”

Suddenly, they heard an “AHOYYYYYYYYYYYYY!”

Deadmond, Bob, and the remaining crew ran to the hole in the wall. It was none-other than Captain Blackbones, steering the Queen Bones. On board were Asia Bones and Rasta Rick, waving and smiling at the heroes still inside.

Tears rolled down Deadmond’s face as he smiled and waved back.

The crew of the Queen Bones hopped inside to retrieve their fallen comrades and provide aid to those still alive but severely fucked up.

When Bob and Deadmond got on board, Bob immediately fell on one knee and bowed before Rasta Rick and Asia Bones, as Deadmond pulled them into a hug.

“It cannot be... you fell!” he exclaimed, confused, yet overjoyed.

“Through fire. And water,” replied Asia Bones. “Actually just water. We’re under the water, Redmond. It was fine.”

“Ya mon, we jus sank slowly down! Ol’ Redblack picked us up on ‘is ship!” laughed Rasta Rick.

“I’m so glad you two are okay,” Deadmond wept.

Asia Bones looked him up and down.

“So you’re a skeleton now,” he noted. “I figured that might happen.”

Deadmond looked at him surprised. A lot of surprise going on.

“What do you mean?” he asked.

“Rasta Rick had a vision, Redmond.”

“It’s Deadmond now.”

“Ha that’s pretty funny. Anyway... Deadmond... did you ever wonder why you were named “Redmond?”

Redmond thought about it.

“No,” he said, “I never knew my parents, or why they chose to name me after the Bicycle Capital of the Northwest. They just left me at the orphanage when I was still a babe. An infant, not a hot girl.”

“Yes I know what a babe is in this context, Deadmond. Rasta Rick saw your past, Deadmond. You were not named after that stupid city in Washington. You were named *Redmond* after your father... the Crimson Skeleton.”

“Crimson Skeleton?”

“That's right, Deadmond. Your father was a skeleton. And not just any skeleton, but a rare, red one.”

“I don't understand...”

“Yeah because I'm still explaining it. Just stop interrupting. You see, Deadmond, your father's father was a skeleton by the name of Skeleton Sacramento, who bedded the wife of Satan. Your grandfather cuckolded Satan, Deadmond.”

“Jeez.”

“He had his reasons. Anyway, your father, Crimson Skeleton was an incredibly powerful skeleton thanks to inheriting his mother's demonic powers. He even took over for the original Deadly Bones for a while. But that's another story. Maybe you remember I mentioned it earlier? *My Father is a Skeleton*, available at—”

“Asia, please.”

“You're right, Deadmond. It's not really required reading. Anyway I believe you've inherited your father's powers. No ordinary horror-cat could have raised himself from the dead as you have. Horror mastery that great is an attribute unique among even full-blooded skeletons such as myself. There is a mysterious power that seems to revolve around the color red, Deadmond.”

“So I was able to survive because of my father's powers?”

“NO Deadmond! They are **YOUR** POWERS NOW. AND NOW I BELIEVE YOU CAN ANSWER ME!”

Asia Bones let loose a great flurry of punches, which Deadmond was now able to instinctively meet, meeting him bony fist for bony fist.

“THE SCHOOL OF THE UNDEFEATED BONES!” yelled Asia Bones.

“THE WINDS OF THE SPOOK!” answered Deadmond.

“ZENSHIN!” roared Asia Bones.

“KEIRETSU!” answered Deadmond.

“TEMPA KYOURAN!” they said together, “LOOK! THE BONES ARE BURNING RED!”

Chills, every time.

Asia Bones withdrew his hand and looked at Deadmond proudly. He had come a long way from being the useless little asshole he had rescued from the crow-men. But he still had a long way to go.

“Child, we must speak on a very grave matter.”

“What is it, master?”

“I do not believe the shape-shifting assassin was under the employ of the Shark Priestess. I believe you were always his primary target; he only ever attacked Rasta and I to separate us from you. That is why I've commissioned Captain Redblack and his crew to guard us for the duration of your training in the ways of horror.”

Deadmond was shocked.

“Who would want me dead?” he asked. “And why?”

“A very dangerous man, Deadmond. Perhaps the most influential person on this entire planet. He fears your potential. You could pose a great threat to him. His name is Benjamin Grueber.”

“Benjamin Grueber?” repeated Deadmond.

“Son of a bitch. I KNEW IT.”

*To Be Continued...*

## a chatlog recovered from Grueber Corp reveals a security breach:

<Jim89>Are we going to talk about Marty?

<Kel1>What about him?

<Jim89>You really think he somehow... dropped a mattress on top of himself and suffocated? Who the hell can't lift a mattress?

<Kel1>It may be hard to believe, but that's what the autopsy said. Suffocation. He was found under a mattress, what else could have happened to him?

<Jim89>...I guess. It's just so strange.

**(User <Deep> has connected)**

<Deep>Because it's not true. Martin Franklin was killed because he was asking too many questions.

<Jim89>WTF

<Kel1>Who is this?

<Jim89>IDK, Deep who are you?

<Deep>Kelly Grueber, you should learn to keep your mouth shut, too. I saw what you did. Which means HE saw what you did. Just because you're Ben's daughter doesn't mean he won't kill you too.

<Kel1>WHO IS THIS

<Deep>I can't believe you people really thought this was a private channel. I could be anyone, really.

<Kel1>I'm contacting security.

<Deep>Don't bother. Just listen to me.

**(User <Jim89> has disconnected)**

**(User <Kel1> has disconnected)**

<Deep>Idiots. And I know you're reading this, Ben.

<Deep>You can't keep getting away with it. I'm coming for you.

**(User <Deep> has disconnected)**

*“Yikes, what’s goin’ on here?!”*

Don’t worry! :^D

**Spooks in Space**  
coming soon!

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