



(Read part 3 [here!](#))

Finding myself with no other choice, I left left the Old Man, of whose name I was even uncertain, to his fate, and endeavored back to the Beach to save what I could of the Books.

By the time I reached the sands of the beach, the dark waters already stretched quite some seventeen Yards inland from the site of the wretched ship; and thus I was obliged to wade that distance and later swim to reach the rigging of the ship.

However, when I was halfway up the rigging, I perceived that the ship had called more of those beastly Things from the water; as I had feared, destroying its bodily Crew did not dispel its curse. There now stood one of their number brandishing a most fearsome Cutlass high upon the Deck.

Another stood beside him, dropping a collection of Bombs into the water at my feet, which exploded in torrents of water.

However, I had still my own cutlass tied to its faithful Rope, and this I swung with the utmost compass of my strength at the Fiends above. This succeeded in disarming the cutlass-holding Pirate (the arm, still gripping its weapon, fell into the water like a seagull shot through with a musket ball), and quite Maiming the fellow with the Bombs.

I bethought myself of the destruction that had been wrought by my carelessness—when I brought the multitude of foul Fiends upon Thoth.

Conscious of the redemption I could bring by salvaging the treasure underneath my feet—saving what was left of Thoth—my heart was filled with a passion as if drug from the ocean's deep.

I finished my climb up the rigging to find myself confronted with more of those foul beasts, brandishing all kinds of makeshift weapons: fearsome Meat Knives, weighty Clubs, rusty Cutlasses. But this wasn't the time for fear.

I fought valiantly. My cutlass flew like a bird around the deck. It alit first on one fiend, splitting his skull like a crisp Tomato, and then made its purchase on a next and lodged in his Breast. I yanked the blade away and a strange kind of Blood, grey and Translucent, erupted from the wound.

However, the waters still surged underneath the ship, and presently they began to flood the deck upon which I stood. Thinking of the remaining portion of the Library, I dove into the space below the stairs to salvage what I could of the Books.


I swam down those wretched stairs and through the ship's Corridors until I reached the submerged

galley. The green and brackish Water was filled with torn and floating Pages. Some leather Volumes floated in the murk. I fetched one from the water and opened it; I found its pages only filled with Mush. I tried another book, and the contents were the same. I felt as if that pulp, which had once held the writings of a Civilization, was like my own soul: all the teachings once inscribed upon it had been mashed up by cowardice and greed.

I probably would have carried on my futile search until my lungs were filled with black sea, had not I felt a hand upon my shoulder then. I turned to see a billowing white Cloud, and I thought it was some vengeful Angel come to cast me into the deep. But it swirled away to reveal a Face, and I saw that it was merely a Beard. It was the old man from the cliff, come to rescue me!

He pulled me up with a strength unbefitting such an ancient creature. Finally divested of even the will to sacrifice myself, I ended my struggle and let him pull me from the ship.

0

 Send to Kindle

- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Tumblr](#)