

Selkie's Quest Opening Cutscene

by

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EXT. STREETS OF KETTLE - NIGHT

Kettle: one of the many crossroads for zeppelin pilots and crews. It is a grungy city, with more than one tavern of ill-repute.

MUIR FREEMONT, captain of the airship the Red Dauntless, saunters down a dripping alley, headed towards one such tavern.

29 years old, wearing a leather duster and wide-brimmed hat, dual pistols at his hip, Muir carries himself with an easy confidence that verges on arrogance.

Reaching The Crossroads, he casts a furtive glance over his shoulder before striding through the doors.

INT. THE CROSSROADS TAPROOM - NIGHT

People - human and mythic alike, traveler fashion from all Thirteen nations represented - mill around the pub.

The air is hazy with smoke, the DIN of conversation and gambling is terrible, and Freemont's perpetual smirk turns into a frown.

Looking around from beneath his hat, he heads for the bar, orders an ale, and sits with his back to the room, shoulders hunched.

Brow furrowed in thought, he orders another ale before finishing the first one, and continues to stare moodily at the bottles on the bottom shelves behind the bar.

He ignores the ramblings of the lolling young man - wearing a garish red coat with five tankards around him - on his right.

THOMAS ASHBY, aged 20, is drunk. His sallow skin is ashen, and there are dark circles under his hazel eyes.

Thomas swipes at a stray strand of hair that has escaped its pomade, and mumbles something into his cup that catches Freemont's attention.

ASHBY

...get her back. Find the Jewel, win
her back. Yes, that would work. Know
where is, need ship though.

Freemont leans over, elbows on the counter, empty glasses shoved aside.

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CONTINUED: (2)

FREEMONT

What sort of Jewel, friend? A pretty diamond? Oh, but those are so common. Perhaps you seek a fire opal? A sea blue aquamarine?

Ashby looks at Freemont with suspicion, scowling, and hugs his current tankard closer to his chest.

ASHBY

No, no. None those. The Selkie's Jewel.

FREEMONT

But, my lad, the Selkie's Jewel is a myth, a fable told to impressionable children.

Swaying backwards, Ashby gestures dramatically, nearly knocking a tankard off the counter. Freemont catches the glass, and sets it on his left.

THOMAS ASHBY

Isn't, though. I know where is. I know to find it.

FREEMONT

You do, do you?

The lad takes another large swallow of beer, the foam dripping down his chin. His eyes are crossed when he looks back at Freemont.

THOMAS ASHBY

Yesh... But I'm not gon' tell you.

A crowd of rowdy young men enter then, and swarm the bar, SHOUTING their orders and elbowing each other in their haste to be first.

Sitting back, Freemont waits until they have left before continuing the conversation with Ashby, eyes alight with mingled hope and excitement.

FREEMONT

Why not, lad?

THOMAS ASHBY

Becaushoo keep calling me lad. And because is big secret. BIG SECRET!

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Thomas sways again in his seat and Freemont grips his shoulder with a trembling hand to steady him.

The crowd of hoodlums moves through the bar, SHOUTING and HOOTING, making conversation difficult.

FREEMONT

There's no need to shout, lad. And
it's utter nonsense! Big secret
indeed.

Glancing over, Freemont notices that Ashby has finished his sixth beer.

FREEMONT (CONT'D)

Your glass is empty. *THAT'S* why you
can't tell me the secret. Your throat
is too dry to speak another word!

Ashby scowls, jaw set to the side, and leans away from Freemont.

THOMAS ASHBY

Tha's not why...

FREEMONT

Barman! Another of the same for the
lad, on me.

The *BARMAN*, a tall skinny man with receding, grey hair, nods and *PLUNKS* two tankards of ale before the men before retreating to a corner where he resumes polishing glasses with a dingy rag.

Freemont edges his stool closer to that of Ashby, and wraps an arm around the youth's slim shoulders, sliding the tankard in front of him.

Swiveling his head to Freemont, he takes the tankard in both hands and downs half of it in a breath; Freemont watches in awe.

FREEMONT (CONT'D)

Now, you were saying?

THOMAS ASHBY

About what?

Freemont pats Ashby on the shoulder, hugs him close to whisper in his ear:

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CONTINUED: (4)

FREEMONT

The Jewel, lad. The Selkie's Jewel.

THOMAS ASHBY

Ohriiiight... Ha'ent you read Tales o' the Deep?

FREEMONT

Sadly, I have not. But it is apparent that I must get myself a copy.

Ashby nods wisely.

THOMAS ASHBY

Should. Best zine on things as proven myths. Came out few years ago.

FREEMONT

Yes, yes. I'm sure. But do get on. I am in a bit of a hurry. Where is the Jewel?

THOMAS ASHBY

Aurelius Tobac, the author, said it could be found in the north.

Freemont blinks, an eyebrow raised.

FREEMONT

The north?

THOMAS ASHBY

Yes, north. Somewhere. I don't 'member where exactly. But is what he said.

FREEMONT

(to himself)

Of course he decides to stop being useful right now. Damn teenagers. I don't have time for this.

(To Ashby)

Well, my boy. I leave you to your sorrows. I am indebted to you, and appreciated our chat more than you know.

As Freemont stands to go, hand still resting on Ashby's shoulder, the boy turns to him, eyes wide, but unfocused.

THOMAS ASHBY

Where you going?

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FREEMONT
Places of import, lad. Places of
import. Here.

He tosses Ashby a coin before striding for the door.

FREEMONT (CONT'D)
Have another round on me.

Freemont exits the bar, leaving the noise and the boy behind
for the quiet of the foggy streets.

He chews a knuckle in thought, then strides down a dim ally
way, rats scattering at the sound of his step.