

20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

By Simon Pelletier

The galaxy watched as Charles C. Waterton dove into the dark depths below the main playing area. He scanned back and forth, looking through his cigarette smoke filled face-mask. He was searching for a shimmer of gold down in the black depths; the golden sardine would be the end of the match and it was Charles' job to find it. He was usually down here looking for it while all the action happened above. Beaters knocking hammerhead sharks around and keepers holding sparkly seahorses from sailing through the three goal hoops. And the cheers and adulations of the crowds of the universe, broadcast on speakers for the players to hear, echoed down to where he floated.

The year is 3021 and the galaxy is obsessed with planet Earth and its plethora of underwater sporting events. Cricket, underwater backgammon and quidditch. In the last thousand years Earth and its inhabitants had gone through a remarkable transformation. The planet, while predominantly covered in water, contained a significant portion of dry land; about one third land to two thirds water. The hundred and fifty million square kilometres of land was where humans had been spending their time. Initially it was foraging for food, finding comfy places to nest, and cute babies to make. The natural process of simple matter coalescing into ever more complex arrangements, a kind of anti-thermodynamics you weren't taught in your undergraduate education, led from hunter gathers of ancient origin, to Plato, to Cleopatra, to Cesar, to Virgin Mary, to Jesus, to Muhammad, to George Washington, to Adolf Hitler, to the Beatles, to Madonna, to Miley Cyrus, to Obama, to Donald Trump, to Xi and India. By this time, the early twenty-first century, humans were far too busy engaging in idle smartphone use and incessant internet screaming to notice their ever increasing global ocean temperatures brought on by too many farting cows. These cows and their farmer accomplices destroyed the air. The air became so stinky that the suns heat wasn't able to go anywhere. Eventually this lead to the Earth getting warmer and its polar ice caps melting – somewhat akin to putting a tub of ice cream in the dryer. It turns out there is a lot of ice on the top and bottom of the globe and the extra water that rushed into the ocean caused the water levels to rise and completely and utterly annihilate the dry land. As the hundred and fifty million square kilometres of land on Earth flooded with ocean water the great societies of humankind built giant underwater city-sea-domes and equipped every able citizen of the earth with one working scuba-mask and one set of fins. It was in this rather surprising way that humanity managed to completely adapt to the catastrophic change that made a landscape into a waterscape.

Once the planet was fully covered in water the first underwater backgammon league was started. The matches were recorded and broadcast for all of earth to see. Over many hundreds of years, as humanity continued to grow, they added new underwater leagues to the list of sporting events. No one is quite certain how exactly it was that the entire galaxy ended up being so enraptured with one tiny planet's ocean blue and its vast assortment of underwater leagues. But it was with the eyes of the universe, and much fanfare, that Charles C. Waterton grabbed the golden sardine and sealed his team's first win in the inaugural quidditch match that would mark the twenty thousandth league under the sea.