

Gone Fishing | Dogboy Reborn Side Quest
Joe Rover

Have you ever noticed how the hero, no matter where he or she goes, they always seem to run into trouble? Like with a detective, they can go visit family in some small town that hasn't had a crime in 100 years yet as soon as the detective shows up there's a murder. To anyone watching it seems as if the person is always "on duty—"that they just go from one adventure to another. Have you ever wondered what they do when they aren't out doing "derring-do"?

"JOE! THE SHARK IS EATING THE BOAT!!" shouted Brain.

Yeah. I'd like to know too.

The boat rocked as another shark slammed into the side, sending us tumbling. I flipped to my feet as Brain climbed back to his normal stance. Sally seemed to be the only one unaffected; she stood balanced against the wall to the small bridge. Even though she seemed unaffected, I could see strain forming on her face as she fought to stay balanced, her time as a cheerleader in high school coming in handy.

I **swished** in a turn to check on Danny. One of the sharks held him down while another laid his leg over bread, mayonnaise, tomatoes, and pickles. Another shark wrapped a bib around its neck.

"Uh...guys?" said Danny.

I rushed towards Danny. I leapt into the air. While I was airborne, I transformed into my alter ego, Dogboy. I landed on the back of the shark holding Danny and dug the claws on my paw-hands deep into the shark's skin; the shark "yelped" in pain. I launched myself off the shark while reaching for my yellow belt. Before my attack, I commanded the belt's Fabricator to print my leash grapple. So as I shot backwards, I fired the grapple at Danny. Once he was secure, I pulled him towards me. We both landed on the deck. The claws on my paw-feet **clicked** softly as we touched down. Danny rested in my arms.

"My hero," said Danny, faking a feminine voice.

You couldn't tell because of my dark sunglasses, but I rolled my eyes. I dropped Danny on the deck.

Brain returned from the wheelhouse with the others' Doggy Bags, high-tech backpacks created by Brain. He passed the packs to Sally and Danny then slipped his on his back. Plasma created tendrils came from his pack and lifted him off the ground. Sally pulled her plasma blasters from her bag then slipped it on. Danny slipped his shield gauntlets on then swung on his backpack. We stood back-to-back as the sharks munched at the boat.

"I'm in the mood for sushi," said Sally, her blasters **whirled** as they charged.

"I love it when you talk one-liners," I said. "It's so romantic."

"Then you'll really like this." She charged down the boat, firing at the sharks. Each hit caused the shark to flip backwards and into the sea. Finally, one shark launched itself out of the water and straight for her. She dropped to her knees and slid under it. Once clear, she rolled to her side and fired at the flying shark. The blast hit its side and sent it back into the water.

"Wow," I said.

"Pfft," said Danny. "I could do that if I wanted." Suddenly, a shark shot towards Danny. Its mouth so wide you could see the license plate it tried to have for lunch.

Danny slammed his plasma shields together as the shark smashed into him. Danny issued a large, roaring grunt as he pushed back on the offending marine life. The shark was sent tumbling back into the ocean. Another airborne shark tried to bite at Danny. Danny smacked at it with one of his wrist shields and sent it sailing.

A shark, quite unexpectedly, erupted from the floor beneath us. The shark snapped and bit at Brain. But a set of his plasma tendrils shoved the beast back down the hole. Water began spraying into the boat. Tendrils reached into Brian's Doggy Bag and retrieved what looked like a can of aerosol spray. Brain sprayed a fine mist over the hole and it began to reseal. The mist was in reality a swarm of nanobots.

We then regrouped and waited for the next wave. But, the sharks just...left.

"That's never good," I said.

Suddenly, the boat rocked violently. We were all thrown to the ground. A large hill of water bubbled out next to us. The wave finally dissipated enough to reveal a 30-foot shark-demon-monster.

"That's my cue," I said. I fired my leash grapple at the beast.

The motorized grapple only got me about ten feet when the beast swiped at me. It sent me flying around it like a tether ball. I had to detach and land on its back. The back felt spongy and wet, but I was still able to use my paw-feet claws to "wall run" up its back. At least until the creature noticed me and fired water out its back through some kind of series of blowholes.

Well, that explained its size. It must be some kind of whale-shark hybrid. The bad news is that I had to stop running and hold on tight. The good news is that when a dog has a hold of something, it not going anywhere until the dog lets go. The water jets weren't powerful enough to knock me off.

Finally, the assault ended, but I was stuck. I no longer had the momentum to run up the beast and climbing would be slow; plus, it would just try to knock me off again. I only had two more grapple uses before the power would run out and it would disintegrate.

After taking a second to gather my thoughts, I knew what I needed to do...and it was the thing I should have done in the first place. (I'd like to see you think clearly while battling a 30-foot shark-monster.)

I hooked one end of my grapple into a spot near me. With a crawling-leap, I launched myself up the back of the monster. It took a couple tries before I could get my momentum up enough to run up the creature like before. Once again, it noticed me and started firing water. This time, however, I teleported. With a blast of golden fur, I vanished from the back and arrived on the beast's front, still holding my grapple. The creature took a swipe at me and I vanished in another burst of fur. This time I arrived on the creature's fin-arm. I ran along it until it tried to smack me. I teleported back to the back. This process repeated for about a minute. Finally, I appeared on the creature's head. The creature roared at me, but it was too late. I pushed the button to retract the leash.

While it'd been trying to smash me, I'd been jumping around covering it in the grapple wire. The wire began to tighten against the beast. It, finally realizing what happened, began to thrash and struggle. I groaned trying to keep from being pulled away by the creature. After a few seconds, the wire was taut. Once I hooked my end of the wire to the rest of the wire, the creature had nowhere to go.

The bad news is that we never did figure out how this creature came to be, but we did win the "biggest catch" prize.

*Joe Rover's eBooks are purchasable at many online retailers.