



From the author of *A Cry for a Hero* and *Ram I Am*



# THE DOLPHINIUS EFFECT



JONATHAN WOMACK

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Jonathan Womack

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## SYNOPSIS

In the thrilling sequel to *Ram I Am*, Jack and Vonya receive an SOS unlike any other, a dire plea emanating from the sea, another tortured soul crying out for a hero.

Jack transforms into his superhero alter ego, *Ram*, and tracks the signal to its source, encountering a male bottle-nosed dolphin with psychic abilities who calls himself *Dolphinius*.

Ram learns of an insane war taking place between the US Navy and cetaceans worldwide. As the clock ticks toward a cataclysmic retaliation against the humans, Ram and Vonya must battle a new foe with unimaginable power from enacting a devious plot for global genocide.

## Part 1

# A Cry for a Hero

*“To hunt a species to extinction is illogical.”*

Mr. Spock – Star Trek, The Voyage Home

## Chapter 1

"An Espresso sounds good," Jack said, reading the menu. He and Vonya had just finished lunch at an outdoor seaside cafe at Monterey's El Nino restaurant.

"It does," Vonya said, her Russian accent softened from living in Virginia the past year and a half. "But how about instead we save it for the coffee shop we passed on the way here?"

"Connoisseur Coffee?" Jack said, one eyebrow raised.

"Da," Vonya said, "the aroma of the beans, and the deserts looked amazing."

"Nice call," Jack said, "I'll get our waitress's attention."

Vonya put down the San Francisco brochure and reached across the table to hold Jack's hand, her smile as invigorating as summer sun. "Honey, we don't have to do this if you will be uncomfortable." Vonya referred to their plans to visit Alcatraz that afternoon, a place known to be haunted. Her mate was sensitive to psychic imprints and avoided such environs.

Jack shrugged it off. "I'm not worried about it. As a matter of fact I was just thinking that it would be cool if it was turned into a hotel resort."

"I have heard more crazy ideas, maybe they will." She picked up her water glass, preparing a toast, Jack mirroring her gesture.

"To friendly ghosts," Vonya said.

"I'll drink to that".

They clinked glasses and drank.

"You ready?" Vonya said.

"Ready." Jack no sooner put down his glass when his spider sense tingled from a new and inexperienced frequency fraught with trouble.

"Jack, what is it?"

Jack blinked away the paranormal pulse and focused on the here and now. "I don't know, something's up, something I haven't felt before."

Vonya noticed the patrons craned necks and followed their attention to a gathering commotion taking place a short distance behind Jack. A crowd was gathering on the boardwalk near the pier's edge, their attention focused on the sea, their backs to Jack and Vonya, gulls circling overhead.

"Jack," Vonya said, tilting her gaze. "Something is happening on the water."

Jack turned toward the ocean to look at the crowd, wondering at the source of their interest. "Let's check it out."

They left a generous tip and crossed the boardwalk, worming their way through the masses to the water's edge. Spread before them was the beautiful Monterey Bay, as scenic as a post card, the salt air brisk and clean, the clang of a ship's bell like percussion to squawking gulls.

And then, they saw it, swimming in the water, not more than a yardarm away, making chirps, chortles and clicks.

A lone bottle-nosed dolphin.

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Meeting eyes with the mammal, Jack had the startled look of a man caught on train tracks with a locomotive bearing down. He glanced at his watch, pretending to be late for an appointment as a way to camouflage his peril. "Oh my god, babe, we have to go."

Vonya read Jack's eyes, recognizing a stealth emergency. With so many people present, discretion was a must. Jack needed a 'safe house' where he could become Ram. "The car."

Jack nodded, and they hurried to the parking lot, Vonya pulling the keys from her purse and triggering the door locks. Once she and Jack were

buckled in, she started the ignition and pulled out of the space, Jack adjusting the passenger seat to full recline.

"There's a Navy ship running SONAR outside the bay," Jack said, "they're attacking a school of dolphins."

"Did you learn of this from the dolphin?" She held his trembling hand as she steered the rental car into light traffic. "Why would the navy attack dolphins, I thought they used them for underwater demolitions."

Jack nodded, his face losing color. "That's the problem. Something turned the dolphins on humans, I saw visions of dolphins destroying naval vessels, it was kept secret from the media. The Navy is killing them by the hundreds, the suffering is overwhelming. I have to do something. Ram has to do something."

Vonya's own heart rate grew hurried at Jack's obvious distress. "Mind over emotion, Bushka," Vonya said, "Just like Hadji says."

Jack turned to her for a last look before transforming into his alter ego. "Easier said than done, darlin'. Wish me luck."

"Be careful, they may have psi-defenses."

"I will. It shouldn't take me long. If I'm not back in fifteen minutes, give me the pinch."

She nodded confirmation. "Love you."



"Love you, too."

Jack closed his eyes, his body turning relaxed, the trance setting in. Like a ghost rising from a casket, Jack separated from his body, floating above his physical shell, his phantom form coalescing into a muscled superhero with sparkling essence and flowing cape, an 'R' icon framing his Hercules chest.

*Ram on!*

With the swiftness of a speeding dolphin, Ram arced into the western sky, angling toward an offshore flotilla of Naval vessels and military might.

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