

Jarheads

[\[The Day After Ragnarok\]](#)

Camp LeJeune in North Carolina was thirty three feet above sea level. The crest of the Serpentfall tsunami that devastated the East Coast reached up to two hundred feet. It was thus natural to assume that *all* United States Marine Corps personnel in North Carolina were wiped out on July 23rd, 1945. Certainly nothing resembling an actual functional military force could have *possibly* survived literal Ragnarok.

When asked about this, Col. Lewis Burwell Puller, USMC (detached duty) reportedly growled, “Haven’t you sons of bitches ever heard of boats?”

Col. Puller admittedly does not have *many* Marines. He can field up to about one thousand men, roughly organized in four companies. That includes recruits, the aged, the injured who can both fight and shoot, and the insane-but-reliable. Most of them are scattered throughout the core territories held by the Free Colored Army (a full third of Puller’s forces were originally being trained or stationed at LeJeune’s segregated Montford Marine Camp, and at any rate Puller considers the Konfederacy to be no-account, traitorous, devil-worshiping poor white trash), acting as combination town guards and training

cadre. They mean it about the training, too. Anybody who had a problem with teaching a black man how to shoot Klansmen riders off their horses from at least two hundred yards away didn't last long. One way, or the other.

Puller himself travels a good deal, checking in with his men on a regular basis. The platoon that follows him around are some of the toughest bastards in the Poisoned Lands, as well as some of the best-armed. All of Puller's Jarheads have enthusiastically embraced the concept of looting the fallen enemy; truthfully, very few of them ever rejected it in the first place. It's just that now the Colonel has made it policy.

Colonel Puller's long-term goals are hazy, at best. There's an argument to be made to bugging out and trying to make it west to what's left of the United States, or at least Texas; and there's a much better argument to be made about how there's plenty of good Americans who need to be kept safe, before they forget that they *are* Americans. Too many of those bedsheet dragon-lovers in Birmingham have already forgotten it, and there's a large part of the colonel that's eager to respond by either conquering that Mayoralty, or burning it to the ground.

The only reason he hasn't is because he just doesn't have the men, even when the FCA's own troops are taken into

account. He can't really count on the FCA *that* much, either; they're mostly focused on protecting their own communities from slave-takers and raiders. And, truth be told, the FCA has a *complicated* opinion of the Colonel. As long as his Jarheads are broken up into useful but separated chunks, there's nothing really to worry about. But when you put them all together, they could go through a militia force twice their size without visible strain. That makes people thoughtful. Not treacherous. Just... thoughtful.

Still, Puller could do it. Conquer Birmingham, that is. He'd need four times as many trained Jarheads, or access to ten times more former Army personnel and other militia, or even a nice, solid civil war between two or more factions of the traitors. But he could absolutely do it. That Mayoralty's too sure of itself, too used to being on the offensive, too ready to try for subversion and terror instead of a straight-up fight. He could take them.

He just needs more troops, dammit.

- Moe Lane
- <http://www.moelane.com>