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THE GHOST FILES

Jeff Belanger's New Book is Here!

Friday
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The Ghostly Skeleton

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Breakdown

Dana T. McManus, Coast Range, northern Oregon, 1996



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I am a complete skeptic on all matters spiritual. I try to keep an open mind and enjoy stories of anything that smacks of the twilight zone, but I don't believe a word of it. I don't believe in an afterlife, or UFOs. That said, I have had one encounter that I can't explain. The way it happened was so spontaneous that I think that I can rule out a practical joke, but any other explanation fails me. I know that everyone always says this, but this is really true.

I was camping with a friend in the Coast Range, in northern Oregon. We were riding dirt bikes and were out after dark for one last ride. My bike was equipped with a very bright aftermarket headlight and I could see what I saw quite clearly. As I rounded a corner on the way back to camp my headlight shown on what seemed to be an incredibly white, incredibly skinny person. I seemed to be looking at a literal human skeleton. It was definitely masculine looking and standing on the bank, about ten feet above the road. I saw it so briefly that it just didn't compute. After I passed it, I looked over my shoulder to see where my friend was and he was about two hundred yards back.

I just assumed that I had been the victim of a bizarre trick of light. I was sure that what I saw was an artifact of lighting and human perception.

When my friend pulled in to camp a few seconds after me, he said that he was feeling awful and wanted to pack up and go home. He then began picking up camp like a scared rabbit. I thought, "Aha! He saw the ghostly light trick and he's gone completely to water, what a scaredy cat!" Or something no less juvenile.

I began to rib him. I said, "What's the matter? you look like you've seen a ghost"

I was making fun of him.

He said, "You saw it too?" I told him that I had, and that it was a trick of light, and that he was acting about thirty years too young. We did pack up and leave camp.

On the way home, I found out that what we had seen couldn't have been the same trick of light. The being I had seen was about ten feet up the bank on the left side of the gravel fire road. What my friend had seen was at road level, on the *right* side of the road and it was holding a large, scary, white dog on a leash. But we both thought we had seen what amounted to a walking skeleton. Something that in no way resembled a living human being, but looked like nothing so much as a skeleton puppet.

It was such a striking, real event that I have no doubt that we both saw the same thing.

It's been almost ten years and no practical jokers have come forward. I've camped and ridden there dozens of times since that night have never seen anything else that was strange.



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