



JAWS by Peter Benchley

QUINT: Japanese submarine slammed two torpedoes into her side, Chief. We was comin' back from the island of Tinian to Leyte. We'd just delivered the bomb. The Hiroshima bomb. Eleven hundred men went into the water. Vessel went down in 12 minutes. Didn't see the first shark for about a half-hour. Tiger. 13-footer. You know how you know that in the water, Chief? You can tell by lookin' from the dorsal to the tail. What we didn't know, was that our bomb mission had been so secret, no distress signal had been sent. They didn't even list us overdue for a week. Very first light, Chief, sharks come cruisin', so we formed ourselves into tight groups. It was kinda like you see in the calendars, you know the infantry squares in the old calendars like the Battle of Waterloo and the idea was the shark come to the nearest man, that man he starts poundin' and hollerin' and sometimes that shark he go away... but sometimes he wouldn't go away. Sometimes that shark, he looks right into ya. Right into your eyes. You know the thing about a shark? He's got lifeless eyes. Black eyes. Like a doll's eyes. When he comes at ya, he doesn't even seem to be livin' until he bites ya, and those black eyes roll over white and then... ah then you hear that terrible high-pitched screamin'. The ocean turns red, and despite all the poundin' and the hollerin', they all come in and they rip you to pieces.

You know by the end of that first dawn, lost a hundred men. I don't know how many sharks, maybe a thousand. I don't know how many men, they averaged six an hour. On Thursday mornin', Chief, I bumped into a friend of mine, Herbie Robinson from Cleveland. Baseball player. Boson's mate. I thought he was asleep. I reached over to wake him up. He bobbed up, down in the water, he was like a kinda top. Upended. Well, he'd been bitten in half below the waist.

At noon, the fifth day, a Mr. Lockheed Ventura swung in low and he saw us. He was a young pilot, lot younger than Mr. Hooper. Anyway he saw us and he come in low and three hours later a big fat PBY comes down and start to pick us up. You know that was the time I was most frightened. Waitin' for my turn. I'll never put on a lifejacket again. So, eleven hundred men went into the water. 316 men come out, the sharks took the rest, June the 29th, 1945. Anyway, we delivered the bomb.