

Sharks

Once the crew cut the engine, the only sound on the ocean was the gentle lapping of the low waves splashing along the side of the boat.

“You only get an hour for the hundred bucks,” said the captain. “You may want to hurry up.”

With a final breath, Susan climbed over the steel edge and splashed into the Hawaiian water. The tropical water was warm from the constant sun, and perfectly clear. The minute she was underneath the surface, she focused in on the sharks. They swarmed the baited water, mouths wide to catch anything that might be food, remaining swift despite the distraction of the boat and cage.

Susan, memorized by their grace, barely remembered what she came here to do. She surfaced long enough to fix the snorkel, then began snapping pictures with her underwater camera. The sharks were everywhere, and the pictures came within seconds of each other, snap after snap after snap. But as she continued to stare, the snaps slowed, and eventually died out. She paused as a big shark came by, glancing at her and slowing as it passed by the cage. She could almost feel him staring at her, sizing her up, waiting for something. She jumped as he turned around, and as he darted away, she noticed he was missing an eye on the other side. She took a final picture of the empty eye socket as he disappeared. The look he had given her shocked her, like he knew something she didn't. A quick glance behind her to the boat, and then back to where the blind shark had hovered. A look of defiance crossed her face. In a single motion as swift as the swimming sharks, she dropped her camera through the bars of the cage, broke the surface, grabbed the edge, and signaled for the boat to pull her in.

She wrapped herself in a towel, and started to shiver, despite the warm air.

“Where's your camera, miss?” one of the crew questioned.

“I left it in the water.” She didn't look at him, just stared at the horizon.

“In the cage?”

“At the bottom.”

“Why on earth would you do that?”

Now she snapped her attention from the oblivion to his face, the look in her eyes burning through him, not because she was mad at him, but the anger was still present.

“I was contracted by a fishing company to come out here. The photos were for an advertisement.”

He remained silent for a minute, and giving up on getting a response, she turned back to the horizon.

“It's illegal, ya' know. Marine dumping,” he said, as he turned back to dump the rest of the unused bait into the water.

By Cassandra Martel