

Quint's story of the *U.S.S. Indianapolis*' sinking from *Jaws* by Peter Benchley

A Japanese submarine slammed two torpedoes into our side, chief. It was comin' back, from the island of Tinian when we just delivered the bomb. The Hiroshima bomb. Eleven hundred men went into that water. Vessel went down in twelve minutes. Didn't see the first shark for about a half an hour. Tiger. Thirteen footer. You know how to tell how long when you're in the water, chief? You tell by lookin' from the dorsal to the tail. Well, we didn't know. 'Cause 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. The sharks come cruisin'. So we formed ourselves into tight groups. You know it's...kinda like 'ol squares in a battle like a, you see on a calender, like the battle of Waterloo. And the idea was, the shark would go for the nearest man and then he'd start poundin' and hollerin' and screamin' and sometimes the shark would go away. Sometimes he wouldn't go away. Sometimes that shark, he looks right into you. Right into your eyes. You know that thing about a shark, he's got...lifeless eyes, black eyes, like a doll's eyes. When he comes at ya, doesn't seem to be livin'. Until he bites ya and those black eyes roll over white. And then, ah then you hear that terrible high pitch screamin' and the ocean turns red and spite of all the poundin' and hollerin' they all come in and rip ya to pieces. Y'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 of Cleveland. Baseball player. Boson's mate. I thought he was asleep, reached over to wake him up. Bobbed up and down in the water, just like a kinda top. Up ended. Well...he'd been bitten in half below the waist. Noon the fifth day, Mr. Hooper, a Lockheed Ventura saw us, he swung in low and saw us. He'd a young pilot, a lot younger than Mr. Hooper. Anyway, he saw us and 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 in the water, three hundred and sixteen men come out, and the sharks took the rest. June the 29, 1945. Anyway, we delivered the bomb.