

The Best Shark Story Ever

By: Austin Huibers



Chapter 1 - The Foggy Dock

The fog hung over the New York Harbor like a gray curtain, curling around the pilings, mooring ropes, and boats like it wanted to swallow everything whole. The smell of salt and diesel stung their noses, and somewhere far off, a gull called - though the sound was muted and distorted, swallowed by the thick mist. Every wooden plank beneath their feet creaked and groaned as the five friends - Mark, Josh, Darren, Tyler, and Luke - carried their coolers, tackle boxes, and a mixture of nervous excitement and anticipation.

“Cap’s running late,” Mark muttered, checking his watch for the third time. He leaned against the railing, squinting into the gray blur of the harbor. “Figures. We wait, and he’s always late.”

Josh shook his head, trying to hide a grin. “Of course he is. Running a deep-sea boat must be hard work... or maybe it’s just bad time management. Either way, it’s classic.”

Darren shrugged, stuffing his hands in his jacket pockets. “Relax. We’re already here. The fog’s... kind of cool actually. Makes the harbor look like a painting or something. Creepy, but cool.”

Tyler adjusted his hood, glancing nervously over the edge of the dock. “I don’t know. I hate this fog. You can’t see the water, can’t see the ends of the pilings. Makes the place feel... haunted or something.”

Luke laughed, but there was a nervous edge to it. “Haunted by what? Ghosts? Pirates? Sharks?”

At that moment, a figure emerged from the fog at the far end of the dock. He moved with an eerie, deliberate grace, leaning on a gnarled wooden cane. His left leg was replaced with a peg, and a hook gleamed where his left hand should have been. A long, scraggly beard whipped in the wind. The friends froze, uncertain how to react.

“Sharks,” the man said suddenly, his voice low and gravelly, eyes locked on the black water beneath the dock. “Big ones. Hungry ones. They watch. They remember. Been circling for hours now.”

Tyler laughed nervously. “Uh... right. Sure, buddy. Sharks. Got it.”

“I’ve got the best shark story you’ll ever hear,” the man continued, ignoring the joke. “True as the tide. And lucky you... not everyone gets the tale firsthand.”

Josh raised an eyebrow. “Alright old man, we got some time to kill, lets hear some of it” he said with a chuckle.

The man’s mouth twisted into a thin, theatrical grin.

The friends exchanged uneasy glances. The fog seemed to grow thicker, pressing in around them, muffling the harbor’s usual sounds - the slap of waves against the pilings, the distant moan of a passing boat. Even the gulls were gone. The black water beneath the dock rippled in subtle, deliberate patterns, like something large moved just beneath the surface.

The man leaned closer, voice dropping to a conspiratorial whisper. “Summer of ’76. Statue of Liberty... built right here, in the New York Harbor. Tipped over during installation. Waves and debris everywhere. Sharks moved in where they’d never go normally. Hammerheads, great whites... even tiger sharks swam up the river, all the way to Albany.”

Josh’s jaw dropped. “Albany? That’s... a hundred miles inland!”

“Distance is meaningless when they want blood,” the man said, eyes glinting. “They remember the foolish, the laughing, the unaware. And the harbor? It keeps them sharp. It’s alive, boys. Alive with teeth, shadows, and patience.”

Darren shook his head, trying to force a laugh. “Sharks don’t do that.”

“Minor details,” the man said with a shrug. “The story survives, even when the facts don’t. You’ll see.”

Mark let out a nervous laugh, peering past the man at the waves. “Alright... we’ll hear it. But I swear, if you say Albany again...”

The man’s grin widened. “Patience, boys. The story’s just beginning.”

And in the thickening fog, with the black water curling around the pilings like liquid ink, the friends felt it - that strange, pulsing feeling that maybe, just maybe, the old man wasn’t entirely lying.

Chapter 2 - The Stranger's Warning

The fog wrapped around the dock like a living blanket. The friends clustered near the railing, peering into the black water that swallowed the pilings whole. The man's peg leg shifted as he leaned on his cane, hook catching the faint light.

"They're circling," he said, voice low and deliberate. "Alpha shark. Remembers every laugh, every mistake. Every careless fisherman. You don't want to meet it... but sometimes it finds you anyway."

Josh swallowed hard. "Circling... sharks don't... they're fish."

"Not fish," the man corrected, voice dropping to a near whisper. "Predators with memory. With grudges. With law degrees if you push them."

Tyler snorted nervously. "Law degrees? Okay... now you've lost your mind."

"Embellishment," the man said with a shrug. "Details don't matter. Only the lesson. Respect the water. Respect the fog. And never... ever laugh at the wrong time."

The friends glanced nervously at the black, rippling water. Shapes seemed to move beneath the surface. Just shadows, they told themselves. But the shadows lingered longer than expected, as if studying them, waiting for a mistake.

Chapter 3 - The Tale Begins

The man leaned forward, hook tapping against the wood. “Summer of ’76. Statue of Liberty... installed in the New York Harbor. Tipped over. Waves and debris everywhere. Sharks moved in. Not ordinary sharks - exceptional sharks. Shark prodigies. Shark lawyers. Shark architects. Some swam rivers suing the city for trespassing. Top of their class, mind you. You don’t want to laugh at a shark that files injunctions. They swallowed maybe 50 swimmers straight out of the water; some say they consumed a sunken car”

Josh’s jaw dropped. “Rivers? Eating a car? You’re insane.”

“Insane?” the man barked a laugh. “Perhaps. But true. I watched it. One alpha, cunning and precise, remembered everything. He learned to calculate tides, track fishermen, even forecast fog patterns. And he waited...Some say those sharks wanted to eat pieces straight of the statue, or perhaps prevent it from ever being put up in the first place”

Darren shivered. “Bro what are you talking about? Guys I think we should leave.”

“No,” the man said, grinning. “You’re lucky. Most people never hear the story. You... you’ll get it firsthand. So, stay put, no one is leaving”

The fog seemed to thicken, curling around their legs like it wanted to trap them. Even the distant city sounds were muted, leaving only the slap of water and the old man’s tap-tap-tap of his hook on the wood of the dock.

Chapter 4 - The Flood of Sharks

“The waves stirred the harbor,” the man continued. “Sharks that never belonged here moved in, navigating debris and timber. Alpha shark... the clever one... it knew which fishermen laughed too loudly. Which ones were careless. Who thought the harbor was safe. And it waited. Always. Some say it had 20x30 vision, not even hawks have that apparently”

Josh shook his head. “20x30 vision isn’t even a think I’m pretty sure”

“Minor details,” the man snapped. “Facts are fluid. Rivers can be highways if a shark wants. Top-of-class sharks, remember. Don’t laugh, or one day they will sneak up on you when you least expect it. Anyways be quiet and let me continue, you said you wanted to hear the best shark story ever, right?”

Suddenly the water rippled and a shadow in the water moved swiftly past the dock,

Tyler leaned over the railing, squinting. “I... I swear I just saw something move. Under the water.”

“Good,” the man said, voice rising. “Let them watch. Let them wait. The story isn’t just about sharks. It’s about fear, patience, respect. And what comes when you mock it. Also, apparently the statue of liberty wasn’t made by the French but the Chinese”

Josh turning his head from the water back to the man “The Chinese? Brother where do you learn your history facts?”

The water lapped softly, but in the fog, it sounded deliberate, predatory. Something out there was watching.

Chapter 5 - The Alpha Shark

“The alpha shark...” the man whispered, hook tapping the wood like a metronome. “It remembers. Every careless laugh. Every foolish step. I lost my friend to it once. A moment of disbelief... and gone. Taken before I could blink. And the harbor... the harbor is alive with it. My friend was magnet fishing the day the Statue of liberty fell into the harbor. He’s a patriot and dove in thinking he could help push it back up. I know, not the smartest man, but he means well. Anyways, the Alpha circled him and ate him in one bite. No chewing or anything”

Darren swallowed hard. “Okay guys, this dude is so weird, we really should leave.” Darren motioning towards the man “No offense of course”.

“No,” the man said. “You’re here. Lucky. Witnessing history. The shark doesn’t care about your disbelief. He’s slowly luring you boys closer to his territory; hell he’s probably listening to my story right now”

He gestured to the black water. “See it. Feel it. Remember the warning. And one day... maybe, if you’re foolish, you’ll meet it yourself. You guys might even meet it on your little boy’s trip today”

The friends stared at the harbor, waves rippling unnaturally under the fog. Shapes lingered, too dark to identify, but too deliberate to ignore. Waiting on the captain to show up.

Chapter 6 - The Personal Turn

“I was a deckhand back then,” the man said, voice softening slightly. “Saw the tipping statue. The chaos. The blood in the water. The alpha shark... it took my friend. I survived, but every scar, every warning, it’s mine. And now... he even took my leg and hand. But I still have my goodlooking qualities if you know what I mean” he said with a wink and chuckle.

Josh replied, “No, we have no clue what you mean” looking at the others

The man leaned back, hook catching the misty light. “I haven’t done a good cannonball lately.”

Josh shivered. “A cannonball, huh? Are you okay in the head man? But hey go for it, would love to see a one legged cannonball.” The others laughed nervously. The man’s smile immediately dropping and his gaze peering at them.

“You laugh, they remember,” the man said. “Watching. Waiting.”

The fog pressed closer, curling around their legs and the dock itself, making the wooden boards feel narrower, almost precarious. The harbor shimmered like liquid ink, dark and infinite. The man continuing his story, and the boys for waiting for a captain who seemed like he would never show.

Chapter 7 - Uneasy Laughter

“Now, for the absurd part,” the man said, leaning forward, voice conspiratorial. “The alpha shark was probably born from a line of sharks even bigger if I had to guess. Top of its class in size and bite strength. Learned contracts. Learned to hunt. Learned grudges. Swam up rivers as a youngling and probably could jump clean over a boat if he wanted. I’m pretty sure sharks can jump 30 feet out of water, I saw that somewhere once”

Josh forced a laugh. “Theres literally no way they can jump 30 feet but okay” he replied.

“Minor details,” the man said sharply. “The harbor doesn’t care. You will see.”

The friends noticed movement beneath the dock, subtle but deliberate, as if the black water itself had a mind. Even the gulls were gone, leaving silence and the occasional slap of waves. Suddenly, something hit the dock with some force, everyone grabbed onto something for balance.

“What was that” Tyler asked with confusion

Josh replying quick “It was probably just a rogue wave or something”

“In a marina? I doubt it”, the man said quietly “It’s the alpha, he’s waiting for you to boys to leave on your trip, he’s hungry for human flesh”.

Tyler trying to ease the tension “So how does this story end old man, seems more like crazy ramblings at the moment, you really sold that *‘best shark story ever’* to us earlier”

Chapter 8 - The Silent Threat

The dock creaked under their feet. The fog pressed closer, damp and suffocating.

“Cap should be here any minute,” Josh whispered.

“Late again,” the man said. “Cap is always late. But hey, gives me time to finish my story. So finally, one day I say to myself, I’m going to kill this son of a bitch. The issue was I had no real weapons. So, I walk to the parking lot, snap a piece of wood off a fence and start sharpening it with this here knife” the man flashing a blade to the group “I got it nice and sharp and stood on an overpass near the river. I waited for hours, until finally he came. I saw his shadow slow but powerful moving right towards me, en route right under the bridge. The second he got within range I lept off, falling with enough force to drive the steak through its brain. But unfortunately, I’m not the most athletic guy and massively underestimated the distance. I landed about twenty feet short and in the water directly in front of him. He took that attack personally I think, he chomped down on my leg than hand, taking them clean off. Now I got these beauties” he said, pointing to his peg leg and hook hand, “And that’s the end of the story boys, now I sit here waiting for it, so I can enact my revenge. Now, wasn’t that the best shark story you have ever heard?”

Mark swallowed hard calmly replying “My guy, that was the most scattered, fake and ridiculous story we’ve ever heard. There is literally no way any of that happened let alone any sharks in this marina or even body of water. On a nicer note, though, didn’t you say you wanted to do a cannonball? I think that’s something we’d all love to see?” mark said, looking at the others for a nod of agreeance.

The man crouched dramatically, hook glinting in the fog. “I did say that didn’t I? Watui.0 ch closely, boys. Watch the master at work” He said moving towards the end of the marina dock.

The friends’ laughter died in their throats, replaced by a nervous tension. Shapes moved beneath the water, black, shapeless, deliberate.

Chapter 9 - The Cannonball

“I haven’t done a good cannonball lately,” the man said cheerfully - running past the group (with surprisingly good speed) and leapt off the dock.

He jumped off the dock, maybe gaining one inch of height in the air. It was more of a fall than a jump. He tucked his working leg into his body, grabbing it with his one good arm, and resembling something of a cannonball form. Time seemed to slow for a second with the man in the air smiling and the boys laughing from the dock.

But just as quickly as he decided on an impromptu cannonball, something horrible happened. From out of nowhere a massive shark broke the surface of the water, he met the man mid air swallowing him whole. The boys’ faces went from a laughing smile to a horrific look of concerns, as the shark swallowed the man whole. Its body crashed into the dark water, submerging in a mess of blood and bubbles.

The water calmed, deceptively peaceful. Ripples stretched outward as the fog swallowed the sound.

The friends scrambled back, adrenaline making their legs heavy and unsteady. The harbor remained black, alive with unseen movement.

Chapter 10 - Aftermath

The fog clung to the dock like a living thing. The friends huddled together, eyes fixed on the black water, shivering from cold, fear, and disbelief that a man was just swallowed by a shark in front of them.

“He’s gone,” Mark muttered.

“Holy shit, what the actual fuck just happened. Was he actually telling the truth about that story? Do you think that was the shark from his story?” Josh calmly asked aloud.

Suddenly their phones buzzed with a text from the captain reading “Just pulled in, meet you at the boat in 5 minutes, sorry for the wait”.

The group glancing at their phones, then back at the water, not sure what to say.

Then almost in unison they all looked at each other saying at once “Best... shark... story... ever.”

Authors Thoughts

I wrote this story because I love the mix of humor, mystery, and absurd fear. It's the kind of tale you'd hear from someone at a bar or a dock - half believable, half insane - but you can't stop listening. It's about stories that get bigger the longer they're told, about friends who don't believe until it's too late, and about the strange pull of the ocean. Oh, I also just love shark stories and movies.