

Rookie Burwick

Megalodon



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MEGALODON

By
Rookie Burwick

Dedication

My cousin Josh.

Acknowledgements

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Prolouge

The *USS Freedom* was your typical US Navy Littoral Combat Ship, except a bit bigger than the Independence class ships. It was almost 418 feet long, with a speed of 44 knots to match. The bridge stuck high in the misty morning air like a needle in hay, with the radar pole reaching out toward the heavens. The ship was truly a good and strong one, mostly thanks to its build and crew. It was located in the waters near the waters off Virginia, and was headed for the southern borders of Africa, which was the longest journey its crew had ever experienced. Or, at least the battleship's crew. The *USS Freedom* was just a ship belonging to the shoreline patrol section of the DERSON. It didn't really have much of a place, except in watching the waters near the shores of the US for incoming threats both above and under the surface. They were ordered to patrol the waters around Hawaii for a week, then spend two more weeks patrolling the Gulf of Mexico, then the waters off the coast of Florida.

The ship sailed very slowly through the morning mist, creating a very eerie effect on the ships at its sides, which also were naval ships. They all belonged to DESRON 23, a fine mix of good shoreline patrols. The air was cold thanks to the thick breeze that mixed into it, along with the fog itself that gloomed everyone experiencing it. There wasn't a single sound out there on the bridge besides the waves rolling gently by. But no one could see those waves.

Inside, everything was just as quiet, with everyone hard at work inside the main control room. The time was about six thirty-four in the morning, and the sun was just beginning to really brighten the surface of the water beyond the fog.

Captain Ronald Skith stood there on the balcony, staring out into the empty grey color of the fog, wishing it would lift sooner than later. He hated the fog more than anything about the sea. It bothered him for a reason *he* wasn't even sure of. Or maybe it wasn't the fog at all. He couldn't lie to himself. The fog wasn't the thing that bothered him. It was the other ships in the shoreline patrol factor of the DESRON

that really bothered him. Despite the fact that his ship was the biggest, a different ship had been placed as the head commander for the whole operation. He didn't want to be so hasty or selfish, but he did like to be in control of things. His ship was the biggest, the fastest, and the most well-built of them all. He had expected the Naval Headquarters in Washington D.C. to assign him as the head. But no. They had to assign a smaller ship, with a less experienced captain. That had angered him from the beginning. But, he always bit back at that anger with regret for being so selfish. Commands were commands, and he couldn't change them.

Suddenly, he heard footsteps approaching him. He took a deep breath and tried to look pleasant as his XO, Chaplin, approached. As always, he wore his slightly small uniform coat that pressed up against his thin form while his trousers hung a little loose just below his knees. His black hair seemed bleaker than usual today, probably because the sun was shining down on it.

"Good morning, captain," the young man smiled.

Skith shook his hand. "And good morning to you, Chaplin. Anything to report?"

"Not at the moment sir. I just thought I'd remind you of your meeting with Dr. Chenworth."

"Ah yes, the kooky, new age weirdo."

"Yes, that one."

"Well, thanks for the reminder. When was it scheduled for again?"

"It's set for. . ." Chaplin looked down at a clip-board in his hand. "Four o' clock, sir."

"Right. Tell him I'll be there."

"I shall do, sir."

There was a silence for a moment.

"Is there anything else, Chaplin?"

"Oh no, not at the moment. I was just looking out into the fog."

"I see. Get back to work, Chaplin. Deliver that message to Jacobs, then do your normal duty."

Chaplin only nodded in reply, then hurried away. He watched until his young XO was around the corner, then turned back to the sea, and continued to stare. Despite the fog, he still loved to be outside. He had joined the Navy almost six years ago after spending his

earlier days deep sea fishing. This small Littoral Combat Ship was just a dust speck on a piece of paper compared to the ships he'd been on over the years. Battleships and aircraft carriers were his favorites. He preferred the bigger ships, mainly because the smaller ones made him un-comfortable. They were a bit *too* small for his liking and, as far as he was concerned, there was no real reason for these Combat ships. Who would attack the shorelines of the US?

The thought only made him shrug. He didn't understand the silly notion, but he had to deal with it. He only had two more months before returning back to shore, then it was off to Hawaii for vacation with his wife, Darla. That made him smile. He would finally have a break. Sure, he was only forty-six years old, but he still needed a break. He took another deep breath before removing his yacht cap and straightening out his light grey hair. He placed the cap back on his head and straightened out. Another thing he wasn't overly fond of was how he always had to have a certain appearance. It had been exhausting from the very beginning.

"Captain Skith, please report to the control room," a loud voice boomed over the microphones.

He jumped at the sound of it, but hurried away moments later. He hurried up the railed stairway, his footsteps thundered loudly through the railing as he walked up. At last he reached to the top of the staircase. and swung inside the control room.

"What's going on?" he asked.

"Captain, come here and look at this!" Chaplin replied from behind the crowd of people gathered around his seat.

"What's going on? Is it serious?" he asked.

"I would say so, sir."

He hurried over to Chapin's station and peered down at the small sonar screen. Then he saw it. The massive blimp, heading straight for them. He looked up and glared through the window and watched in horror as, even through the thick fog, the tall and massive dorsal fin rose out of the water and cut through it, just waiting to smash into them. He shut his eyes tight, and waited, hoping it was all an illusion. He opened them again, it was gone. He sent up a prayer of thanks, and looked back to the computer.

The massive object was still there, and headed straight for them. Then, the *USS Freedom* was hit. It lurched forward with a sudden jolt of force. Her engines blew. Everyone on the deck fell overboard and into the cold water. Everyone inside the bridge fell to the floor, either dead or unconscious.

Sparks flew. Screams echoed. Metal creaked, and the shark the lurked beneath the rugged ship swam effortlessly into the waters beyond.

Chapter One

Dr. Marlin A. Jacobs sat in the back seat of the Harbin Z-9 chopper that glided slowly through the thick morning fog, its windshield slick with wet mist. He stared out the two large windows up in front of him, and felt a pang of nausea. He was so amazed at how thick the fog actually was. Neither him nor the pilots could see anything on the outside. Seated next to him were two naval men who both held small weapons in their hands. No one had said a word since the departure of the chopper, which had taken place miles back in Florida.

He leaned forward and cleared his throat before speaking.

"How close are we?" he asked.

"Oh, maybe eight minutes tops," the co-pilot replied.

"That long? How can you tell through this fog?"

"Radar. That's how."

"Oh. It must be some strong radar."

"Indeed it is, Dr. Jacobs. Indeed it is."

He leaned back again, and relaxed, a little. He never had felt comfortable with the idea of being flown out to the *USS Tulsa*, but that's the way it had to happen. Aircraft had never been on his list of likings. He hated being in the air with the possibility of dying. He just couldn't take that kind of worry. Surprising enough to everyone else inside the chopper, he was a weaponry engineer and former marine biologist. The captain of the *USS Tulsa* had called him there for the same reason the other combat ships of the DESRON had. A tip-top secret project for only him, his fellow scientists, and the Navy to know about. He didn't quite understand why it was so tight as far as security, but that was not his business. He needed to focus on completing the task, not the forces surrounding it. The other guys, Dr. Ian Lisster and Dr. Arlo Chenworth, were also a big part of the whole thing.

Lisster and him were the engineers, as he was told, who would help design the mechanical part of the project. Chenworth was just the scientist who came up with the blue-prints and the designs themselves. He was the one who had the easiest part of the job. But,

despite that fact, he didn't mind getting his hands dirty. Between his brains and strength, and Lissiter's knowledge of this project, they could easily finish everything before the month was out. But, of course, he couldn't say that just yet. For all he knew, it could take more than a month to even *begin*. He had contacted both Chenworth and Lissiter and had tried to get some info out of them, but neither would talk. However, Lissiter was more willing than Chenworth. He and Lissiter had always been close friends, and still were. But even before the captain had contacted him, Lissiter had. The man knew him well enough to know what kind of "projects" he would come along to work on. And now, he sat in the rear of the chopper, glazing out. He couldn't help the nausea. It was natural for him, mainly because he got queasy every time he even looked at a photo of a helicopter or airplane, or any other type of aircraft. He couldn't remember for sure, but his thoughts told him that this was his first time flying.

He looked down at the small tablet that lay in his lap, itching to pick it up, and look through the plans one last time. But he had memorized them real well already. First thing to do was to get settled in. Second thing was to get to work in a lab that the captain had prepared for him. He would begin working on the project along with Lissiter, who just happened to also be on board the *USS Tulsa*, which made him more comfortable. He knew that man well, and trusted him. Lissiter was scheduled to be on board the *USS Billings*, but its captain didn't trust him enough. According to the *USS Tulsa's* captain, Lissiter was rejected right away by the *Billings*.

At his feet was a large duffelbag full of clothes and papers. Despite the light objects inside it, it was really heavy.

"Okay, we're nearing the ship," the pilot's voice suddenly made him jump.

"Excellent. Let me know when you begin to land," he replied.

As they neared the small naval vessel, he leaned forward and looked down at it. He had imagined it being much bigger, but the reality side of his brain knew it was a smaller, Independence-class vessel. Though it was barely see-able through the fog, he still could make out the important details. The tall radar pole stuck high above the bridge, and the deck was a fairly well-size one, yet small.

"We're going to have to circle a couple of times to land, but that won't take long."

"Don't tell me anything. Just do what you have to do."

The pilot reached up and pressed a button on his head radio. "Come in, *USS Tulsa*."

"Hello, Harbin Z-9, this is the *USS Tulsa* responding."

"Are we clear to land?"

"Yes, you are clear to land."

The pilot said nothing further and looked back to the window. It surprised him how quickly these people worked. The only other experience he'd had with any type of ship had been a very long and lagging one. The pilots circled around for the third time now, and he could only stare into the grey nothingness. The helicopter circled around again, having reached the end of its last circle, and proceeded to continue circling. That was another big thing he didn't understand about aircraft; especially helicopters. The pilots had to circle around the landing sight so many bloody times.

He looked down at the deck again, and could see a few men scattered here and there, doing their duties. The sight was not only a normal one, but an interesting one as well.

"We are now landing," the pilot said suddenly.

He only nodded and watched out the window. The world outside began to spin as the chopper lowered towards the deck. But, only moments later, it stabilized, and he saw the dock up close. It was bigger than he had thought, but was still quite small. The chopper gently landed on the deck, and the engine's roar now became much louder as it echoed off the metal walls of the bridge.

"This is your stop, Dr. Jacobs," the pilot said.

"Thank you boys. I'll see ya in a month or two."

Both pilots nodded, smiled, and then turned back to the window as he pulled the door open. He quickly grabbed up his dufflebag, and swung it over his shoulder. A grunt escaped from his mouth as the strap dropped onto his shoulder.

The chilly outside air burst inside, and breeze whipped his black hair around as he stepped out and onto the deck, shutting the door tightly behind him. Luckily enough, his strong stubble beard was far too short to flip around in the breeze. He looked up into the sky, and

took a deep breath. Being on board a ship at sea was going to take some getting used to. But he didn't have hardly anything to worry about thanks to the fact that he had never really experienced any trouble with seasickness.

He turned and walked a few steps towards the bridge, admiring its size and height. It was covered with doorways, staircases, poles, monitors and outside stations for advanced weaponry control. It was all here, packed and crammed into this small ship. In his amazement and sight-seeing, he hadn't noticed that the chopper had left already. He turned around to find it flying away from the deck, leaving him to his task on board the *USS Tulsa*.

"Good morning, Dr. Jacobs," he heard a voice call out from somewhere on deck.

He looked around at the men which were on the deck, and soon caught sight of an older looking fellow walking towards him. His hair was cut somewhat short and was a very dark brown color. It was almost black, with a hint of grey. He was dressed in a very nice uniform with brass buttons, pins and patches covering every inch of its surface. Walking behind him were four other men, all of them dressed in dark black military looking uniforms, and all of them carrying weaponry.

"You must be captain Dob," he said at last, now smiling.

"That I am," the man replied. It was Liam Dob, the captain of the *USS Tulsa*, and a fine captain too.

"Well, this is a pleasure," he said.

The captain approached and shook his hand with a firm grip. "Welcome aboard."

"Thank you, captain. This is a fine ship you've got here."

"Oh, much thanks, Dr. Jacobs," the captain turned and looked up at the bridge. "It's small, but it still has its place in the DESRON."

He paused for a moment. "Allow me to introduce my heads of security," he turned to the armed men.

"This is Sgt. Mirhon, the chief of security."

They shook hands. "Nice to meet you, soldier."

"Same, Dr. Jacobs."

"And this is Sgt. Rollind."

The second officer stepped forward and shook his hand. He nodded at the armed man as he stepped back.

"The others are Sgt. Tranklind and Sgt. Rogers. Their job is to secure the ship every few hours."

"Sounds interesting."

"And I must say, they've done quite a job."

"This is also quite a fog we have out here."

"Yeah, I've never seen anything like it. How about you?"

"Well, I haven't been out to sea much."

"Aren't you a marine biologist?"

"Yes, a *fomer* marine biologist. But I spent most of my time studying small sea life from the shore."

"Ah, I see. That would explain why you now are working with us on this project."

"Speaking of that, might I ask what this project is all about?"

The captain looked around for a moment. "I'd prefer it if we talked inside my corders. Lets get you out of this cold."

They both hurried across the deck, keeping at a quick pace. It only took about two minutes before they reached the first staircase, and tredged slowly up it, with Dob in the lead. All the while, he continued to look around and gaze at various objects on deck, most of which were covered by tarps. They climbed off the last step and now stood on a small platform that lead inside the bridge.

"Inside is the main control room. My corders are just across the hall from there," Dob held out his arm and stepped aside to allow Marlin in first.

As he stepped inside, he saw the long rows of computers, keyboards and buttons that stretched all throughout the room. People were seated in front of every computer, busy monitoring and controlling the ship. Dob walked up in front of him, then stopped and began speaking to a young, attractive woman seated just a few stations down. Her blonde hair was put up in a bun, and her lean yet charming face glazed up at him as he spoke quietly to her. Marlin waited for the captain's signal before nearing the woman's station. When he approached, the woman got up from her seat.

"Dr. Jacobs, allow me to introduce my XO, Jane."

He shook her hand and nodded a "hello" to her. But that apparently wasn't good enough.

"Nice to meet you," she said.

"Nice to meet you as well," he replied.

"That's all, Jane," Dob nodded to her, and the woman took her seat. Then he turned back to Marlin.

"Now, Dr. Jacobs, just so you know, this is usually where you can find me. I've provided you and Dr. Lissiter with a radio in your lab in case you need assistance."

"Thank you. Where is Lissiter?"

"We'll be meeting with him shortly. Now, onward?"

"Yes, onward."

He continued to follow the captain as he opened the door and stepped out into the hall. The hallway was your typical hallway. Well cleaned carpet that lined it's floors, good lighting on the ceiling. Nothing new, for him anyways. The captain walked friskly across the hall and opened another door, and beckoned him inside. The "captains corders", as they called it, was a nice and organized room, and was a bit empty. Except for a large desk and a few filing cabinets, the room was bare.

"Is this your corders?" he asked.

"Yep. This is it," Dob replied.

"Is anyone else allowed in here?"

"No, just me. But, of course, for you I've made an exception."

"Of course."

Dob took a seat behind the desk, and pulled out a drawer from the rightside. He flipped through some files, and finally pulled out a thin-looking specimen. He shut the door, then opened the folder. Marlin walked over and peered down at it's containments. The one peice of paper the the folder held was a blueprint for large naval weaponry. Or that's what it looked like, anyway.

"What's this," he asked.

"It's a construction plan for adding on to our weapons, Dr. Jacobs."

"Is that the project?"

"Yes, it is. I need you to engineer brand new weapons for the *USS Tulsa*, Dr. Jacobs."

He took that in for a minute, and thought about it. "Does the Naval headquarters know about this?"

"Oh, don't worry, they know. But, only you, Dr. Lissiter and the Navy can know of this."

"So, why is this so top secret?"

"Because, if America gets a hold of this, then it's enemies possibly could. And we don't need that."

"I get it. So, why do you want to do this."

"Security reasons. If we were to have this kind of weaponry, just think of the enemies we could eliminate."

He nodded as he took in some more of what the captain had just said. It certainly sounded like a useful project, and maybe even profitable.

"What are these weapons gonna be made of?"

"The actual firing part will be made of the strongest steel there is. The weapons themselves will be made out of a lower quality steel. We're hoping to extract energy from various sea life to power these weapons."

"What? That's not even possible."

"I'll let Dr. Lissiter explain."

He let out a slight sigh, and paused for a few moments.

"Right. I'll do it."

"Excellent. Now, allow me to show you to your cabin."

* * *

Marlin followed the captain along the well-lit corridor, eyeing everything as they went. The captain had said it wasn't a far walk from his quarters to the room, but Marlin was finding otherwise. They had been walking through halls and rounding corners for almost twenty minutes now, and his legs weren't in the best of shape.

"Lots of hallways for such a small ship. No offense," he said.

"None taken. I've gotten frustrated trying to find my way around," the captain replied.

"How many turns is it to get to the control room from my cabin?"

Dob laughed. "I wouldn't know, Dr. Jacobs."

"So, is Ian at the lab?"

"Yep. This project has kept him very busy. He hardly ever leaves that lab."

"That sounds like him. When he gets wrapped up in something, it's impossible to pry him away from it."

"You know him?"

"Oh yeah. We're good friends."

"Odd that he never mentioned that."

Marlin found himself shrugging. "If it's outside of his interest at the moment, he never mentions it."

At last, he rounded one last corner and saw the captain opening a door that led into a small, single-bed cabin. Marlin walked up and peered inside, and smirked.

"Nice. It'll do, Capt."

"Do enjoy your stay. Dr. Lissiter will be coming to escort you to the lab where the two of you can get to work. If everything goes as planned, you should be able to start right away."

"Good. Thanks for the walk."

"Anytime."

The captain turned and hurried away, leaving Marlin to himself and his cabin. He shut the door behind him, and continued to scan the room. It was the typical setup. Nice bed, red carpet, a flat screen TV, and a small fridge that could only be opened with a keyhole. On the opposite wall from him was the entrance to the bathroom. It was just large enough for a single man who was on board the ship to design advanced weaponry. He swung his bag onto the bed, and sighed with relief. The weight that had pressured his shoulder from the bag was getting really hard to manage. He felt around the bed in a few spots, then sat down on it, still examining the room.

He couldn't help it. He lay down and relaxed his muscles, and breathed. He had occasional trouble with asthma, which was already flaring up. He guessed it was the carpet cleaner they used. That was really the only possibility. But, he then shifted his focus to the project. The captain had said to wait for Ian to come and escort him to the lab. He could get lost trying to find it himself. He rolled over and unzipped his bag, and dug through it until he found his tablet. The screen lit up as he pushed the small button along the side, and he

waited for it to fully start up. Moments passed before the main menu came up. He typed in a quick password, and the sonar image of the ship came up. It had been the last thing he'd looked at before leaving the airport.

He pressed his finger against the cold screen, and moved the image around, scanning the deck, bridge and bow as he went. Then, he tapped on a small icon in the right hand corner, and the image zoomed in on the weapons located all around the ship. The ones located on the bottom of the ship were the largest of them all, and were close to the same size as the large canon on the deck. That must have been one of the things covered by the tarps. He knew enough about the Navy to know that they didn't like to expose their weapons unless needed. So, building new weaponry would have to only take place inside the lab. But the whole thing seemed a bit unrealistic. How can they make new weapons, and get them attached? It was going to take a lot of hard work to get the weapons secure and in place.

Suddenly, there was a loud knock on the door, which made him jump. He turned and tried to look through that small, round window that was centered on the door, but he couldn't. He sprung to his feet and hurried to answer it. He unlocked the small flip-lock that was just a couple inches down and to the right of the window, then opened the door. Staring back at him was Dr. Ian Lissiter, expert engineer and machinery manufacturer. The two of them immediately smiled.

"Ian! How good to see you," he said, shaking the man's hand. It hadn't changed. Like the rest of him, Ian's hand was covered in speck full skin that glimmered in the lighting above them, and his light grey hair was still neatly placed on top of his thin head.

"Good to see you too, Marlin," Ian replied. "Settled in?"

"Oh, you could say that," they both laughed.

"My word, it's been what. . .two years?" Ian shook his head in amazement.

"Yeah, that sounds right. I never did keep count."

"Well, there's nothing wrong with that. My work here on the *USS Tulsa* has kept me very busy."

"So, how are things working out with Miranda?"

"Oh, not the best. She's still mad about that incident."

"Time to move on, then?"

"Yeah, I would suppose."

"Now, the captain told me about some weapons we needed to build. Is that the project here?"

"Yes, it is. The Navy has arranged for new weaponry to be built into every single ship belonging to them."

"Are you going to be doing all of those weapons?"

"Oh no, just these combat shoreline patrol ships of this DESRON."

"So, what other ships belong to this DESRON."

"It mostly consist of battleships and aircraft carriers, just like any other. The battleships patrol the outer waters, and the combat ships patrol the inner waters, a few yards from the shore."

"Oh, I get it. Different duties for even the ships."

"Yep, that's it. Now, I'm sure you know why I'm here."

"To escort me to the lab?"

"Yep. That's right. Are you ready to go?"

"Let me get my lab coat, and I'll meet you around the corner."

"Alright."

He shut the door and chuckled a little, then he hurried over to his duffle bag, still piled on the bed. He dug through some more papers and clothing before he at last found his clean, white lab coat, and slipped it on. Now, he felt normal again. This was what he was used to, and it did lighten his spirit. He hurried back over to the door, stepped out into the hall, and shut it tight.

Ian stood near the corner of the hallway. "Follow me."

* * *

Marlin looked up at the sign that read "*LAB AREA 17*" and smiled. He could tell already that he and Ian had gotten a much bigger and much more luxurious lab than any other scientist or person on board the ship. The doors that lead into the lab itself were tall and wide, meaning an even larger room beyond.

"Shall we?" Ian interrupted his deep wonder.

"Yes, lead the way," he replied.

He followed Ian through the doors, and stepped inside the lab. Immediately he began looking around, seeing exactly what he not only wanted but *needed* to see. A long, metal-topped worktable covered with blueprints, research papers and even some chemistry items, all of which were completely necessary. Across the floor from the worktable on both sides were file cabinets, containing important information about the ship's frame and weapon history, as well as some history about the Navy itself. Behind the worktable was a few small, bare shelves, and next to that, another door that had locks and keypads all along the sides and handle.

"Wow, this is better than I expected," he said.

"Yep. It's a good place to work. But, surprisingly, this is where we'll actually create the weapons."

"Really? In this lab?"

"Oh yeah. This lab and no other."

"I can't imagine how we'll ever get this thing done before the month's out."

"Are you kidding? This could take up to three months, my friend."

"Three months?"

"Yep. Sure, it is a long wait, but the captain's patient."

"What about me and my schedule?"

"Not to worry. Just think. If we are successful in this, the US will be even safer than before. These new weapons will change the Navy as we know it."

"Is that a good thing though?"

"Oh come on. You've seen the plans for the weapons, haven't you?"

"Yeah I have."

"Well then you know why we're doing this. To change the Navy."

"Change it or just improve it?"

"Good question, Marlin. But I don't have the answer. Today's advanced technology has gone passed the weapons of the Navy, and now they want to upgrade."

"Upgrade, aye?"

"Oh yes. We're going to upgrade to the next level of underwater weaponry."

"I've got no idea where these weapons are even supposed to be installed."

"Ah, follow me and I'll show you."

He followed Ian around to the opposite side of the table, and saw a small computer with another sonar image of the ship flashing on its screen.

"This can show us where the weapons are, every last one of them," Ian said.

"I see. How do you work this thing?"

Ian leaned forward and hit a few keys, then stood back up and waited. The screen began rotating around the ship, flashing various object on the deck and on the bottom of the ship in orange.

"Those orange flashings are the weapons. The ship's covered in em' as you can see."

"That is a lot of weaponry. Do they want all of these weapons replaced?"

"Yes. All of them."

He looked down at the screen and stared for a moment. On the bottom of the ship, below the surface of the water, there was six total canons, and five missile launchers. On the deck, there was three total canons, all of which were quite small.

"We've got a lot of work ahead of us."

"Indeed we do, Marlin."

"Do we have the material to start building?"

"Not yet. The materials are being flown out here by helicopter. They should be arriving tomorrow."

He paused for a moment, and leaned forward himself to have a closer look.

"Well, this brings up a question I've been meaning to ask."

"What's that?"

"The captain described these weapons as being made out of steel. But I got the idea you were saying differently. What's the story?"

"In a way, yes. I am saying it differently."

He paused. "What do you mean?"

"Well, come with me and I'll show you."

Ian walked towards the end of the table in swift, quickly-paced moves, and stopped at the corner. He beckoned Marlin to follow, which he did. As he approached he could see a tall, glass container that was sealed tightly with a metal lid. It wasn't just any container, though. It held inside it a large, triangle shaped, brown colored, object.

"What's this?"

"This, my friend, is the tooth of the most fearsome predator to ever exist. Carcharodon Megalodon."

He raised an eyebrow. "What's this got to do with the weapons."

"Well, you see, this tooth is only a couple hundred years old, meaning it still has moisture and dentin, and it still has some energy within it."

"Energy?"

"Yes, my friend. We're extracting this rare source of energy from this tooth, hoping to somehow put it into the weapons."

He paused again and thought for a moment. Every word that had just come out of Ian's mouth suddenly sounded completely crazy, and impossible.

"This is. . .weird, okay? I don't know where you're getting all of this, but you can't make a fully-functioning weapon from shark teeth."

"That's where you're wrong, now. This tooth belonged to the largest predator to ever exist. Unlike the smaller species of sharks, this big thing had to use much more oxygen and much more energy. No other creature has energy in its teeth, except the Megalodon."

"So what you're saying is the teeth of this mega shark have some sort of specialty about them?"

"Well, yes. That's what it boils down to."

"This isn't science or even mechanics. This is just nut-talk, Ian. Don't listen to those people that say there's energy in all these places. Don't."

Ian took a deep breath, and let it out in a sigh. "Marlin, perhaps you need to see something."

"See something? Now what?"

"You won't believe me if I told you. You have to see it first."

Chapter Two

The door that was sealed to the handle with security was where Ian lead Marlin next. The old man, now assumed crazy in Marlin's mind, slid his ID card through the slot, and the door opened.

"This is the only way to get in. This card," he said as he lead Marlin into a dark room.

"What's going on? Where's the lights?"

"Wait a moment."

Seconds later, he heard a click, and lights began switching on. He looked around and saw nothing. But not all the lights appeared to be on.

"Keep your eye on that dark area over there," Ian said.

He followed Ian's directions, and waited. Finally, lights lit up the darkened area, and he saw a gigantic tank. He took a few steps closer to it, and tried to see what was inside besides water. But all he saw was the water. Nothing else.

"An over-sized, empty fish tank?" he asked.

"Just wait."

He waited a few more seconds before his eyes caught sight of it. The tail attached to the end of its body propelled it through the water at a quick speed, and the massive jaws on the other end of its body held rows of razor shark-and oddly large-teeth. It was a shark. But, just like it's tail and jaws, it's body was bigger than any great white he'd ever seen.

"What is this?" he asked, half stuttering.

"This, Marlin, is a real, living Megalodon shark."

"Really? This is a Megalodon?"

"Yep. It sure is, my friend. Isn't she amazing? A few researchers and I captured her off the coast of Africa three months ago. I couldn't believe it when we reeled her in! She's fifty feet long, Marlin. That's almost thirty feet larger than the record for a great white."

"Wow," is all he could say.

The massive shark circled around numerous times in the tank, each time peering over at them as it passed. It's tail left a ray of bubbles behind it as it swayed from side to side, allowing the gigantic

sea monster to move through the water. He couldn't help but gulp as it came around again, eyeing him with a look that, even though he couldn't read it, he didn't like.

"What do you feed this thing? A deer?"

"Nope. We've been feeding it special probiotics and other gut-friendly bacteria in hopes of getting her to an even bigger size."

"Does the captain know about this?"

"Of course he does. You don't think I'd sneak a killer shark aboard a Naval ship without permission do you?"

"Well, you never know. Say, that tooth that you've got in there, it doesn't belong to this creature, does it?"

"No, it doesn't. I got that off an abandoned fishing trawler that had been bitten into just about two and half miles from here."

"So, there's more than one Megalodon?"

"Well, this was a few years back."

"But that's a big tooth, Ian. That could belong to one heck of a monster."

"Don't get excited now. You look worried."

"I am worried. This thing is a shark, Ian. And a fifty foot long one taboot."

He looked back up at the fearsome creature, and watched it some more. It was just so frightening to think, but this thing could almost swallow him whole. One bite from that thing's mouth was all it would take to die. He shivered at the thought.

"Why did you bring this thing on board?"

"To extract it's cartilage."

"Don't tell me. . ."

"Yes, we're using it's cartilage to try and add to the weapons' power. It's a risky take, but we're trying it anyway."

"But, how is that possible? Doesn't cartilage decompose rapidly once drained of life and blood cells?"

"We've also found a way to preserve it in its natural state."

"How, a freezer?"

"Nope. Surprisingly, we have brought DNA into the picture. If we can preserve the shark's DNA inside it's cartilage, it'll stay firm and fresh."

"How do you preserve the DNA?"

"Since we can't really see it, we use special computers to extract it, then we develop it into a liquid, and store both the liquid and the cartilage inside small jars."

"Hmm, sounds simple enough. but, what if this stops working?"

"We'll find a way to get around that."

"Oh really?"

"Yeah, of course we will. We're scientists."

"Oh please."

They both paused.

"Look, I've got a dinner with the captain, and I need to get going. Thanks for the tour, see you tomorrow."

"All right, my friend. Tomorrow it is."

"And, if you don't mind, I need your card to get out of here."

Ian quickly handed over the card without a word, and watched his friend rush out the door.

* * *

Marlin hurried down the corridor, taking turn after turn until he finally reached his room. Stepping inside, he locked the door behind him, and then went right to changing. The captain hadn't invited him to dinner, but he needed some way to think over Ian's actions, and make sure they were even sane. And, he had planned to join the captain anyways.

As soon as he was done, he scampered back over the door, and opened it. He looked around before stepping back out into the hall, then shut the door and rounded the corner in hopes of finding the map he'd seen hours earlier. He rounded another corner and began walking down yet another long hallway, searching his mind for the vision of the ship's map. At last, after rounding another corner, he found the large map. He scanned through the map, and soon found the dining hall, just a couple turns away.

He hurried around the corner and started towards the hall. He didn't know what Ian was up to, but he did know that he had just seen an awfully big shark.

Chapter Three

The dinner hall was packed full. Trainees, commanding officers, and people from the control room filled the entire area, seated on the long benches, and chowing down on the day's dinner.

Marlin pushed through the door a few minutes after having found the map, and immediately started looking for captain Dob. He imagined the captain would be having dinner around now, but he didn't know. The guy must have had a busy schedule. The room was a nice one. It wasn't like a restaurant, but it still provided a nice place to take a break. On the farthest wall, there was a doorway that lead outside and onto a small station, and along the same wall was the buffet where you got food. He scurried up to the front and signaled for the waiter standing behind it to begin.

The man was standing with his back turned to Marlin, and turned to him seconds later after the whistle. The man was blonde-haired, stern-face, and beef-built. He looked like a cross between John Wayne and Lou Ferrigo, just with blond hair that covered his thick head.

"Ah, Dr. Jacobs," the man said.

"Yes, how did you know?" Marlin asked.

"Oh come on, doc. Everyone on this entire ship knows you're on board," the man shifted uncomfortably around the dirty, tiled floor.

"The captain must have spread the word quite a bit."

"Yeah, he did. All I know is that you're working on some pretty *secret* stuff."

"I sure am. Enough chit-chat. Get me some food."

The man served him up with the same food he had everyone else in the room before sending him off to a near-by table. It sat in the far back of the room and was empty. He sat down and set his plate on the table in front of him, whispered a quick prayer of thanks, then started eating. The dish served was a type of chicken dish, and came with a side of mash potatoes, macaroni salad and green beans. He started by digging into the chicken first. It had a very moist texture, and he had never enjoyed that. He didn't mean to complain, but that's the way it was. As he took another bite, he

glanced around the room, still looking for the captain. He wondered if the guy even ate dinner. It was already after six and the captain certainly hadn't eaten for hours now. But, at last, he caught sight of the captain, entering the room. Most everyone around him stopped talking, and nodded a friendly "hello" to the man as he passed.

He stood up and waved the captain down, but it wasn't easy getting his attention. But, nevertheless, he got the captain's attention and, after watching him get his own plate of food, gestured for him to sit down across the table from him.

"Evening, captain," he said.

"Same to you, Dr. Jacobs," Dob replied.

"Man, you sure don't eat very much," they both smiled.

"Well, running this ship keeps me on my toes."

"Oh come on Capt., you've got to eat more often."

"How goes the project?"

"Oh okay, I guess. We haven't really started yet. We're going to do that tomorrow. Ian just showed me around a little, and explained the deeper parts of the whole deal."

"Well, good. I hope you can get a lot done tomorrow."

"Same here. My schedule is now broken thanks to this."

The smile vanished from Dob's face.

"Oh, sorry about that. How serious of work did you have scheduled?"

"Nothing very important. Just some budget meetings, you know. Stuff that tech people do."

"Ah, I see. Enjoying the food?"

"Yeah, it's pretty good. Could be worse."

"Exactly. I hear the military just feeds ya beans and sometimes maybe some eggs."

"Wow, that is bad."

"No kidding."

"So, how long have you been in the Navy?"

"Well, I joined almost thirty-six years ago now, and all of those years have been great ones."

"What do you do around here that keeps you so busy?"

"Oh, today it was mainly the computer trouble. Our main computer suddenly went black, and we've been trying to get it back

online pretty much all day."

"Did you fix it?"

"Yeah, we did finally."

"Oh, by the way. . ." He paused for a moment and chewed. "Changing the subject, captain, I would like to know what the deal is with the weapons. Ian says they're gonna be made from shark teeth. You say they'll be made from steel. What the heck is going on?"

The whole time, Dob had his finger up to his lips, shushing Marlin. "Look, Dr. Jacobs. . ."

"Call me Marlin."

"Okay, Marlin. Look, I have suspicions that there are people on board this ship that don't belong here. Spies, maybe."

"So, is that why you're lying about the material?"

Dob looked around for a moment, then answered. "Yes, it is, Marlin. I can't have the wrong person finding out our real plans."

"I see. Obviously Ian wasn't too worried. He blabbed everything right out, and never looked around or made sure things were silent."

"Dr. Lissiter isn't the most careful person I've met."

"True, he is a bit careless. But not enough to spill the beans to enemy spies."

"You never know. . ."

"That's right, captain. *You* never know."

"What are you saying?"

"I'm saying do you really know what Ian's got down there?"

Dob leaned forward and nodded very slightly. "It's that Megalodon, isn't it?"

"Yeah, it is captain. That thing is being used to make weapons in the most scientific way possible."

"Then what's to worry about?"

"Oh come on Capt., there's plenty to worry about. He's got this tooth down there that belongs to a Megalodon, but not the one he's got in that tank. There must be more than one. What if that thing finds us?"

"Calm yourself, Marlin. We're scanning the waters surrounding us nonstop, twenty-four hours a day. We have yet to see a single thing out there."

"Alright. Maybe I am over reacting, but still. Keep monitoring the water until I'm back on dry land, and I'll be happy."

"We will, Marlin. Keep your focus on the project for now."

He eyed the captain for a moment before nodding. "Right. Shall do, Capt."

"Please, just call me Liam."

"Alright, shall do that, too."

"Thanks. Now, might I ask if you've seen the blue-prints for the new weapons?"

"Yes. I got your email last night, and have looked through it several times."

"Good. Memorize the best you can. I have to be honest, the internet isn't the best either."

"My tablet seemed to have no trouble connecting. It didn't ask for the network password. Is there one?"

"I'm not sure. I've ever really taken any notice. The guys who installed it years back set it all up, and I paid no attention to what they did."

"You should've. It might come in handy one of these days."

"It might. But that doesn't matter right now. If you'll excuse me, I have one last meeting to attend to before the nights out."

"No trouble. I'm gonna go outside and get some air."

Dob nodded his goodbye, and then took off towards the exit. Marlin watched and waited as he hurried back out into the hall, then got up himself, and strode softly towards the open doorway on the farthest wall. He could tell from the distant view he had of the outside that the fog had cleared, and a bright, vanishing sunset shone over the waves.

He stepped out onto the station and took a deep breath. It was so refreshing, he needed another. So he took another. The sun was just low enough to create an amazing and even beautiful effect on the ocean that lay stretched out beyond the deck, and the rest of the ship. He heard something over to his left, and turned to find young man, in his teens, puking over the side of the railing.

"You alright?" he asked.

The boy turned to him and smiled weakly.

"Yeah, I guess."

"Seasickness, I'm guessing."

"Yeah, I've got it pretty bad."

"Well, just try not to eat much. That's what works for me."

"Thanks for the advice."

"No problem."

There was a slight pause.

"Who are you?" the boy asked suddenly.

"Oh, my name's Dr. Marlin Jacobs."

"Nice to meet. . ." the boy spat out a little more. ". . .You. . ."

"Take it easy."

The boy didn't respond, but only nodded. It was hard to watch the poor kid puke like that. He couldn't imagine how bad it was inside the bridge. It seemed bad enough out here. He tried his best not to watch as the kid continued to lurch forward and vomit. IT fell down and splattered onto the deck below, followed by much more. It appeared that the kid had eaten quite a bit earlier in the day. He watched for a few more seconds before hurrying back into the dining hall and scattered through the now empty tables, hoping to get back to his room before the night was out. After all those twist and turns and hallways, he would probably get dizzy.

Ian's crazy antics were the thing that bothered him the most as he strode on down the hallway. It just wasn't possible to do the things he was doing. He knew that people change, but Ian had changed the most of anybody he knew. He was becoming like a mad scientist from a cheap horror movie. His experiments could lead to the death of everyone on board the ship.

* * *

It was a little past seven when Marlin finally reached his room. He opened the door and stepped inside, and flipped on the light. Tomorrow was going to be a long day, and he had a lot of work to do yet. He hurried over to the bed, and grabbed up his tablet, once again switching it on. It lit up seconds later, but didn't start up until a few *minutes* later.

Once the main screen was up, he typed in the password, and the sonar image came up again. He tapped on the small X in the corner,

and the image disappeared. Then, he swiped through some files on the screen and soon found the small g-mail icon, and tapped on it. His email opened up seconds later, and he tapped on the new email from the captain. Another sonar image flew onto the screen, and he saw the same thing he had seen in the lab; the weaponry maps of the ships. The weapons flashed orange below and on the deck. He tapped on the little magnifying glass icon, and the image zoomed in on the bottom weapons.

The missile launchers were the most numerous of them all. They lined the entire bottom edge of the ship, and he guessed were the good type. The old ALD 59'ers. He didn't know for sure, but it was just a guess. The launchers were loaded with up to sixteen large and powerful missiles that could easily destroy a small enemy vessel. He could now see why both the captain and the Navy itself wanted to upgrade the weaponry. It was all so small numbered as far as quality, but he imagined the performance was much better. He moved the screen around and re-zoomed in on the bigger weapons, that were visible here and there along the bottom of the ship. They were special underwater canons, or so he was told. They were all designed in a heavy armored steel that was going to be hard to replace. The sensors were picking up heavy rust along the sides of the weaponry, a big thanks to the water.

The missiles were aligned perfectly with the canons, with every weapon on board the ship pointed east, and the launchers were heavily guarded by steel caps that slid open when they were ready to fire. It was just another guess, but he imagined that they hadn't had to use the weapons for a long while now, given the overall appearance of the weapons. He exited the image and went back to his digital schedule list. First thing tomorrow was to look over the blue-prints. Second thing to do was get the materials from the delivery chopper. Third thing was to begin the building aspect of everything. He and Ian would begin putting the weapons together based on the already existing weapons. But, these new ones would be bigger, better, and a lot easier to use. And much more powerful, as Ian put it. Despite all of this good news and happenings, he still was worried about the Megalodon. The shark scared the crud out of

him, and he wasn't ashamed of that. Fear would be the main element in the lab as long as that thing was alive.

But, what worried him even more was the tooth that came from something even bigger.

Chapter Four

Dr. Arlo Conworth reached up and gripped the cold and wet railing, and pulled himself upward. His hand slid back down, along with his entire body. He tried again, but had the same results. This time, he crouched down, and tried springing up. He grabbed the upper railing, and tried one last time to hoist himself up. But, once again, he fell back down. The stairway was blocked at the base by shattered pieces of cement and rock that had shattered when the hit occurred, and he had spent the last hour trying to get past the heavy debris.

Before that, he had been knocked out cold, which he guessed was the condition of most other people on board. He had been cramped in that small space in his lab for hours, not sure where he was or who he was. Then he finally came to. After that, he had crawled out from the darkness and found everything just like the way it was now, which was cluttered and shredded. The air in the room was oddly damp, and had a misty smell to it that was stronger than any other smell he had encountered before, and it made him very nauseous. Everything was quiet all around the ship, and it felt like a ghost town. The waves were gently pulling the boat from side to side in their own, unusual rhythm.

It wasn't until recently that Arlo had come to like being on board the ship. The captain and crew all seemed trustable people, and he was beginning to blame himself for the captain's doubts on his work. He was a marine biologist, and he had been called on personally by Skith. But, just days earlier, the same man that invited him on board had lost all trust for Marlin, and that haunted him. What did he do to lose such a trust? The captain knew very well what he was doing, and he had shown good interest in it. But then, the old man suspends him from his work. But of course, Marlin had to consider the type of work they were dealing with. It was the types of work only government labs do, or some mad scientist from a horror film. He had done it. It was truly amazing what he had done, but, considering the current circumstances, it had gotten out of hand.

At that moment, he heard voices from somewhere above him, on

the next floor up. He sprung to his feet and, once again, reached up for the railing. But this time, he gripped it even harder and performed the same function he had been performing for a long time now. And this time, it worked. He swung up onto the stairway, and then listened. The voice had vanished. But that didn't stop him. He hurried up the stairway, and rounded the corner. He tried his best to follow the voice due to how much of it he had actually heard. He rounded the corner, only to fall backwards onto his tailbone.

The sight of the body was the most gruesome he'd seen. He'd seen the insides of all sorts of fish which came close, but not wasn't quite as bad. The body lay stretched across the base of the stairway, the face's dead gaze glaring up at the ceiling. He had no idea whose body it was, considering the fact that it really wasn't easy to tell. He waited a for more seconds before heaving himself back up onto his feet, holding his breath tight as he took another step towards the body. The face was the most punctured. The rest was still in one piece with an occasional blood leak or flesh wound. But the face appeared to be caved in, with most of the flesh missing. Despite him holding his breath, the smell still made it into his nostrils, and he couldn't help but feeling nauseous again. He carefully stepped over the body and continued up the stairway.

He almost fell right back down at the sound of the voice again, making him jump. It was coming from the control room. He hurried through the doorway and entered inside only to be greeted by a field of dead bodies. But, like many other things, that didn't stop him. He hurried past the horrid sight and grabbed up the radio.

"Hello? Is anyone there?" he asked, and then waited.

Seconds passed before someone replied. "This is the USS Tulsa, what do you have to report?"

"We've been hit by. . .something. Requesting help."

"Who is this? Captain Skith?"

"No, this is Dr. Arlo Conworth, I'm a guest on the USS Freedom."

"Please put captain Skith on the line."

"I'm afraid. . .that won't be possible."

"What do you mean?"

"Everyone on board this ship is dead!"

"Even the captain?"

"Yes! Something hit the ship, and killed them all! I'm the only survivor!"

There was a pause. "We're sending help your way as soon as we can, Dr. Conworth."

"Thank you."

"Stay calm, and don't mess with the ship's control."

"Got it."

He let go of the radio and set it back down. But then, he froze. He heard a loud groaning noise from behind him, and spun around to find captain Skith standing up.

"Captain! You're alive!" he sputtered.

"Y-y-y-eah, I am," came the slow reply.

"How badly are you hurt?"

"Not too bad."

He quickly helped the old man up.

"I called out for help to the USS Tulsa, and they're sending help in about thirty minutes, I'm guessing."

"No. . . we can't. . . wait that long."

"What do you mean?"

"That thing that hit us. . . was a shark!"

"Shark?"

"You heard me. . . a shark. . ."

* * *

Liam Dob opened the door to his corders and stepped out into the hallway. Shutting the door behind him, he glared around hazily and tried his best to look awake. He had hardly slept the previous night due to checking on the computers now and then, and doing various bits of paperwork. He hated to admit it, but the ship still had insurance issues that hadn't been dealt with just yet.

He made sure no one was looking before he quickly reached up and rubbed his eyes and his temples. It felt good, but it was a shame he had to do it. He should've stopped before twelve, but he just had to get caught up on everything. Thanks to Dr. Lissiter and Dr. Jacob's arrivals, he had been over-worked and too busy to deal with the smaller and maybe even simpler stuff. He let his arms drop back

down to his sides, then turned and opened the door to the control room. Jane spun around in her chair and greeted him with a wide smile.

"Good morning sir," she said.

"Morning, Jane. What's to report?" he asked in reply.

"Nothing major, besides the computers are still acting up."

"I thought Robinson fixed that."

"Well, so did I. But now, I'm not thinking so."

"Get him back down here around ten o'clock and have him fool with it some more."

"Yes, sir."

He paused and looked out the window. Unlike the previous morning, bright sunlight shone through, and slightly blinded him. He squinted deeply for a moment, but then decided to just turn away. That didn't work much better, though.

"Sir, I tried to contact the *USS Freedom* this morning, but haven't had a response," Jane's voice made him jump.

"Why did you contact them?" he asked.

"I need this week's status report on Dr. Conworth's work. They've been sending me one every Tuesday."

"Oh, well try again."

"I've tried twice already."

His face lit up with worry. Skith, the captain of the massive combat vessel, was always good about responding or at least having his guys respond.

"Well, just be patient. They'll respond."

He turned and glared out the open doorway when Jane didn't respond. The sound of the yells sent off by the commanding officers below on the deck echoed off the metal walls of the bridge, and soon reached his ears. It was faint, yet it was also loud in some ways. To him, it was both faint and loud. To someone like Jane, it was probably just loud. He stepped out and took in a deep breath. Compared to the stuffy and hot stuff inside, it was heaven. He squinted hard until his eyes adjusted, then he looked around. The water sparkled in the bright, refreshing sun like diamonds on a gym mat, and the sky was clearer than a freshly cleaned glass. He walked forward a little more and peered over the railing to see the

trainees doing their duties, as some might call it. All they were really doing was everyday workouts such as sit-ups and some push-ups. He didn't see the purpose of this, but the commanding officers seemed to know otherwise. They were the guys with the experience in such a thing as handling trainees.

"I don't know sir, they're just taking too long," he heard Jane call out.

"Jane, stop worrying. Skith is just busy, or something. You never know," he had to yell for her to hear, thanks to her station being so far away.

He turned and watched her nod, then turned back to watch the trainees. His eyes shifted from one man to another, and saw them all doing different exercises. That was almost too far. If one man did a push-up, all of the men should do em'. Or at least, that was his take on it. When he had first joined the Navy, he had been a trainee like everyone else, and had to do everything these men were doing. Only every other man did it at the same time. Really, it was a silly thing to worry about, but he didn't have much else to do.

The fact that Skith hadn't replied still bothered him. The guy was a well-organized, well-trained, and very experienced guy. He knew what to do about lots of different situations, and had saved the lives of countless people. But now, he couldn't respond to a small thing like a checkup call. That was worth worrying over.

"Okay, what is it Larsson?" Jane's voice came in suddenly. Her tone made him even more jumpy. It was filled with fear.

"Yes, yes," she went on. "Okay, got it," she turned to him.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Larsson has made contact with someone on board the *USS Freedom*, and they need help. Fast."

"Help?"

"They were hit yesterday morning, and have been on backup power ever since."

"Get a few SEAL's out there to get them back here."

"This person that contacted us is the only survivor, Liam."

He gulped. Something BIG must have hit Skith's ship. Something really big. Only one word popped into his mind at the sound of Jane's words. Megalodon.

* * *

Ryan Skoth was the head of the Navy SEAL's VBSS team. He had lead them against countless life-or-death situations and missions, and had done his best to keep them from harm. He had almost seventeen highly-trained men who were nothing but ruthless killing machines ready to strike.

He stood at the top of the staircase, watching the commotion down below him. His men trained daily for any task that might come up, and he wasn't going to stop for anything smaller than just that reason. At the moment, his men were doing the same thing the guys on deck were doing; exercising, weight-lifting, working out. Whatever you wanted to call it. He just knew it at training. There hadn't been a task for his men to commence for weeks now. The last thing he and his men were ordered to do was to take out a small terrorist rig off the coast of Washington D.C. just a few months back, but ever since then, things had been quiet. He couldn't help but light up a cigarette. For him it was so addictive to smoke, and he knew it was a nasty habit. He took long drags of black smoke, then took it from his lips and exhaled. His face disappeared behind a cloud of smoke for just a moment, then re-appeared.

"Sir," a voice called out. He turned to see Lieutenant Cling Driff approaching him from the right. He smiled and nodded a greeting.

"Morning, Driff. What's new?" he asked.

"We have orders from the captain to send off a VBSS team out to the *USS Freedom*. Apparently they need some serious help."

"Excellent. Get the men ready for action. Prepare the boats and weapons, and let's get going."

"Yes sir."

The younger Lieutenant hurried away to carry out his orders. Ryan watched as he began rounding the men up, one-by-one as he ran around the room. The guy was un-experienced and nervous, two things that bothered him. He hated men who couldn't pull it together and buck up to the bar. The experience he had with Lieutenant Driff was not the best one, and he imagined it would only get worse.

He took another deep drag from his cigarette and puffed out smoke seconds later. It felt so good that he smiled. The best part was, smoking was now allowed down on the bottom level of the ship. Mainly because no one really cared about that part of the ship, and they had too many smokers on board as well. He turned and marched swiftly down the stairs himself, and headed straight for Driff, who was at last standing still. The man smiled as he approached, but it was the typical nervous smile.

"Driff, do you have the mission report yet?" he asked.

"Oh, yes sir. Sorry I totally forgot," Driff replied, handing him a few pieces of paper stapled together at the top right edge.

"Thank you."

He turned away and began flipping through the three pages that consisted of the document. He read each page carefully, and soon understood. It was a real simple mission; nothing too exciting, but his men needed something to do. All that was required of them was to get over to the *USS Freedom*, rescue some people, and make it back with them alive. It was almost too simple. He turned back to Driff and handed the sweaty Lieutenant the papers.

"Are the men ready?" he asked.

"Two more minutes, sir," came the reply.

"Right. We need this done quickly. From what the papers say, those aboard the *USS Freedom* are in deep trouble."

"Got it, sir."

He eyed Driff for a moment, then took one last drag of his cigarette before tossing it to the ground and stomping it out.

"You really shouldn't do. . ."

"Shut your mouth, Driff."

The nervous smile returned. "Sorry, sir. I'm sure you know I'm into the no pollution thing."

"Oh please, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, Driff."

"Right."

"We're ready, sir," another deep voice cut in.

They both turned and saw their head soldier, Dean Avon, standing stiff and firm just a few feet away.

"Excellent. Gather them all up here and I'll explain the mission."

"Yes, sir." The solider turned and whistled to every man in the room that was dressed in battle clothing, and moments later they all regrouped in the center of the room.

"Now men, we have today a simple but important task," he began. "We must get over to the *USS Freedom* and check things out. Something's gone wrong over there, and we've been called to take care of it. Now, we're going to all board two separate boats, and one of them has to be a little less crowded. We're bringing back some people with us, and we need to be as prepared as possible. Now, get the rafts set up. Two of them."

The men didn't reply, but went right to work. The rafts were set up within thirteen minutes, and everyone was inside of them three minutes after that. Ryan sat at the front end of the first raft, and Avon sat at the front of the second raft, along with only two other men. The door opened up, and the rafts were sent out into the waves, sending out a large splash behind it. The air was warm and crisp, and the sunlight shone brightly through the thin clouds. It was so much better compared to the foggy mist of the previous morning. He could see the *USS Freedom* clearly now, and he could tell something had happened. The windows that lined the bridge were all shattered, and the pace the ship moved at seemed to be more of a drift than anything.

"What the heck happened?" one man asked.

"I don't know, solider. Looks like we've got more of a mess to clean up than I thought."

The men began to scowl behind him. They all hated "cleaning up" stuff. They preferred making the messes. He lit up another cigarette, and took in a few more drags before removing it from his lips. The slight breeze that whiffed through blew the smoke that escaped his mouth around for a moment, then carried it away. It was then that he saw it, rising from the depths. The gigantic dorsal fin rose higher and higher into the air, stopping only seconds later. Then, it cut through the water, and headed right for the tiny little raft.

He tried to let out a scream, but nothing came out. His eyes were glued to the fin as it came closer and closer, getting bigger as it did. The other men saw it too, and he heard gasps. Those gasps then turned into screams as the fin hit the raft, sending them all into the

water, except for Ryan. He couldn't take his eyes from the fin. It slowly began to circle around, and headed for the raft again. Blood began filling the water below. He watched as the shark began devouring his men, swallowing them whole. Then, it hit the raft again. This time, he plunged forward, and into the cold water. He opened his eyes, and water evaded in. Despite this, he could still see the massive shark swimming right for him. It's grey skin reflected the sunlight from above, and it's length was beyond measure.

The creature opened its massive jaws as it neared him. The last thing he saw as the thing's tail swooshing past him, and making its way towards the second raft.

* * *

Avon couldn't believe what he had just seen. The large shark had just come out of nowhere, oddly un-detected despite its horrifying size. And now, its dorsal fin was cutting through the water, headed straight for him.

"Turn back! Turn back!" he yelled out.

The men were just as frantic as he was, and immediately started the motor up, and began steering the boat in a circle. He was praying nonstop that the beast wouldn't follow them back to the *USS Tulsa*, only to cause even more havoc. He couldn't peel his eyes away from the dorsal fin. It slowed for a moment, which made him let out a relieved sigh. But that was far ahead of its time. The fin turned and began following them at a steady, rising pace.

A quick "Oh lord" raced through his brain as he began to panic. The shark was getting so close now, that even he could almost see the detail of its scaly skin. He turned to the men and opened his mouth to scream, but then thought it better to speak.

"Men, don't give up! Keep that engine pounding!" he said.

The only other men in the raft nodded in reply. He imagined that they were speechless, just as he almost was. He could feel the raft being pushed forward a little more, implying extra speed. The men had cranked it up to its full potential speed, and the fin was still gaining on them. By this time, he was as pale as a sheet. Multiple thoughts rushed through his head, all of them focused on the ship,

and keeping it safe. The shark's body began to scootch underneath the raft, pushing its dorsal fin even closer to the raft.

Now, the fin was only inches away from hitting them. He shut his eyes, and prepared for the hit. It came moments later, knocking him and his two men two the floor of the raft. One of the men's elbows hit the steering rod, and turned the raft hard to the left, and the shark continued to follow. He stood up and saw the fin headed yet again for their tiny raft, but this time at a much faster speed. It was hardly a minute before the raft was hit again, and they all went flying into the water.

The men were the first to die. The shark swallowed them down in one whole bite per man. He watched the entire thing with sheer terror and amazement. He couldn't believe a shark this big would even be thought of to exist. But this thing did exist. That was for sure. After the shark swallowed the second man, it turned to him, and began swimming rapidly towards him. He looked up towards the surface, and looked for options of escape. All he saw was Ryan's body, floating face down in the water. He couldn't believe there was any of it even left. He didn't have time to look back down before the shark's mouth engulfed him, and everything went dark.

Chapter Five

Marlin quickly slipped on his lab coat. It was getting late, and he needed to get started with Ian. He had slept in way past the ring of his alarm clock, and now he was regretting it. Every second he now spent fiddling with his sleeve was precious time he could be spending at the lab, designing weapons. But, the stupid sleeve just wouldn't work with his constant flipping of the wrist. A few curses came out of his mouth as he took off the coat, and retried. Still, it didn't work. He took it off again, and looked over the sleeve. There it was. The problem. A small piece of string hung from the edge of the sleeve, pulling it tight. Too tight to fit. He used his teeth to take it off, and then slipped the coat completely on. He sent up a prayer of thanks before turning to the door and opening it.

He stepped out into the hallway which, as usual, was empty and quiet. The door made a slightly *squeeeeeek* as he shut it, but that didn't bother him. He was late, and nothing stopped him when he was late. He hurried around the first corner, and then sprinted down the hallway. He knew anyone watching him would giggle, but no one was watching, so he began to sprint even harder. It was a few minutes past ten, and he had planned to start over two hours earlier. But, like everything else, that hadn't worked. He shuddered to think how upset Ian must be, to wait that long inside that lab with nothing to do but hum some various tune. He rounded the second corner, hurried down another hallway, the minutes ticking by at the sound of his heartbeats.

He rounded one last corner, and finally arrived at the staircase. He trudged down as quickly as he could, and finally stepped up to the big, tan-colored doors. He straightened his tie and his hair before pushing them open and stepping inside. Then he turned around to find Ian smiling, but looking down.

"Good morning, Ian," he said in a rushed tone.

The crazy scientist didn't respond. He turned and eyed Ian, but still got no response.

"Ian?" he asked. "Hello? Mr. Mad Scientist?"

Ian looked up briefly and at last noticed he was even there. "Oh, morning Marlin. Please excuse that. I was deep in thought."

"Ah, I see. What are you staring at?"

"Oh, nothing. Just the table. How are ya this morning?"

"I'm okay. I stayed up really late last night looking through things."

"Good. Want some coffee?"

"Yes please, I really do need that."

"Just a moment."

Ian turned and hurried over to the corner of the table, and picked up a large, glass coffee pot that was full of delicious brown liquid that made both of their mouths water. He grabbed a glass from the table, and poured some into it, then handed to Marlin. He took a long sip, and let out a relieved sigh as he swallowed. He couldn't help but smile too.

"That's better. Now, shall we begin?"

"Not yet. The materials still haven't arrived, but I do have something for you to do."

"What's that?"

"I need you to use this computer over here to unlock the security pads on the deck weaponry."

"Right."

He hurried past Ian and around to the computer, opened up the lid, and hit the small POWER button. It took a few minutes to start up, but those minutes passed quickly. The sonar screen lit up and glowed onto his glary face as he tapped on the "ACTIONS" buttons. Now, another screen came up. It showed all of the weaponry on the deck. He tapped on the small button that said UNLOCK, and then waited. Moments passed before everything was unlocked.

"Got that done," he called out to Ian, and then returned to the main sonar screen.

"Alright, now cut the power to them," came the reply from the back room where the shark swam.

He turned it back to the "ACTIONS" page, and tapped on the little POWER icon, and waited a few more seconds. Then, the weapons powered down to a stop. The power levels lowered to 0% bars, and everything shut down. But then, a red light beamed over the screen.

A sonar image of the ship reappeared, and showed a large object headed straight towards it. His face then lit up with worry.

"Ian! Come look!" he cried out.

"What is it?" Ian replied, rushing over to the computer.

"Look at this!"

They both stared down at the small screen, and saw the horrid giant shark that was gliding towards the ship.

"Oh my gosh! That's a big shark! Warn the captain!"

He picked up the radio and hit the button.

"Captain Dob, come in," they waited.

"This is Dob, report Marlin," the reply came at last.

"Check your sonar screens."

"What? Why?"

"Just do it."

"Now, Marlin, come on, what's going on?"

"Captain, check your sonar screens."

* * *

Liam let the small radio slip from his hands and clunk down on the computer station. The odd, short conversation he had just been through with Marlin worried him right to the bone. He stood there for a moment before turning to Jane.

"Jane, check the sonar. . ."

"Sorry to interrupt so suddenly, but the SEALs never made it!"

"What?!"

"Both rafts aren't anywhere around here!"

"Get a search party out there, now! And check the sonar!"

She did as she was told, and in order. She switched channels on her ear radio, and began chatting with the head of security. Something had gotten Marlin pretty worked up, and he knew it couldn't be good. He began to pace, waiting impatiently for Jane to finish and get on with the Sonar. But now, something else had come up. The SEALs never even made it over there. Their rafts weren't showing up on the Sonar. Two things all at once, just too much to take.

Moments later, Jane finished and looked back to the sonar. He heard her gasp, and just had to look or himself. He was afraid to, but he did it anyway. He saw the shark heading straight for them, and it was a big one too. He found himself gasping.

"That's a shark, sir!"

"Yeah, it is! That's one bloody big shark!"

"What should we do?!"

"Maybe it'll pass by. Just wait. . ."

"Sir, it's on a direct course or the ship!"

He paused for a moment, and looked through the options.

"Fire the missiles at that thing!"

Jane hit a few keys on her keyboard, and sent three missiles into the hard skin of the shark. It slowed for a moment, but then rose back up in speed. Liam spun around and raced outside, and looked over at the water. Then, he saw it. The terrifying vision of a dorsal fin, headed right for the ship's hull. Alarm claxons began ringing loudly throughout the ship, and men began scattering about on the deck.

"One minute collision, sir!" Jane screamed.

"The missiles didn't stop it?!"

"No sir!"

He turned and watched the fin continue to edge closer.

"Brace for impact!"

Chapter Six

The *USS Tulsa* was hit, and hit hard. She lurched forward, and her engines blew. Thousands of men died when the explosion happened. Its sound rumbled through the ship, and awoke Ian. He sat up, and shook his hair free of dirt, then looked around. All the lights were out except one, and everything that had once been on the table was now on the floor, along with Marlin. He could hear Marlin groaning and moaning, but he couldn't see him.

He sprung to his feet, only to fall right back down. His leg was hurt. Pain shot through every nerve, bone and vessel in his body, and it made him clench his teeth. More clumps of dirt and gravel fell down and made a loud "CRAAASH". The sound hurt his ears. He shut his eyes tight, and continued to listen. Marlin moaned again, and he could hear the man rolling over on the floor, somewhere around the corner of the table. One question still lingered in his mind . . . *what happened?*

"I-i-i-ian. . ." he heard a voice cry out.

He tried again to get to his feet, with much better success. He limped over to the table, and peered around the corner. Marlin lay on the floor with a gigantic gash in his left side, and blood littered the floor around him.

"Marlin, are you alright?" he asked.

"Y-y-yeah, I'll b-b-be o-okay. . . get the c-c-computer. . . ."

Ian turned and hurried as quickly as he could around the opposite corner, bent down, and began searching for the small DELL laptop through loads of clutter. It took a few moments for him to find the laptop, but he at last found it. It wasn't broken up too badly, but it still was damaged. He set it up on the table and opened it up, and the previous screen returned. Everything appeared to be in check.

"What h-h-happened?" Marlin asked from across the room.

"We were hit by something."

Suddenly, Marlin stood up, making him jump. "Something?" he asked. "It wasn't another one of those sharks, was it?"

"Oh, come on. It couldn't be."

"You saw it, Ian. That thing on the radar."

"How do you know that was even a shark?"

"That's what the computers identified it as, that's why!"

The ship was hit again, but a little softer this time. Both men went crashing to the floor. Luckily enough, the computer took no further damage.

"Don't deny it Ian! You knew all along," Marlin shouted through the dying rumble.

"Knew what?"

"That there was another shark out there."

"Alright fine. . ."

Another loud rumble interrupted their conversation.

"Look, we have to put everything else aside and get to the captain!"

"Why, Ian?"

"We need to make sure he's getting rid of that thing, or it'll destroy this ship!"

Marlin thought a moment, and soon nodded in agreement. They both got to their feet, and headed for the door.

* * *

Liam sat up very slowly, rubbing his head. Intense pain was shooting through, making him slightly moan. Red alarm lights flashed all around the room, and blinded him for a few seconds as he tried to get his eyes to adjust to everything. He grabbed the ridge of the chair above him, and hoisted himself up onto his feet, and staggered over to the sonar screen, where Jane lay at the keyboard.

"Jane," he whispered.

She mumbled and groaned for a minute before finally answering.

"W-w-what h-h-appened. . .?"

"We were hit by something. Can you get the computer back up?"

"I-i-i think I c-c-an..."

"At least try."

She slowly leaned back in her seat, allowing him to see the horrid gash on her forehead. She started up the computer, and returned to the sonar screen. It took a while, and in that long time, he gritted his teeth. That shark was still out there.

The sonar showed the massive creature headed back for them again, off to the side of the ship.

"Oh my lord, it's coming back! Fire the missiles at that thing!"

She hit a few more keys, and sent two more missiles towards the shark. But, not much to anyone's surprise, the shark veered away from the missiles, sending them off into the eternal water. Now, the shark came up again, headed on a direct course for the ship's edge.

"Thirty s-s-second contact!" Jane called out.

The loud, blaring alarms began sounding off once again, and the flashing, red lights began flashing more rapidly. Seconds later, the ship was hit. The shark rammed into the edge, and sent everyone on board her either in the water or onto the floor. Liam watched in horror as the fin rose again out of the water, and began circling the ship.

But then, Ian and Marlin both burst into the room, both of them panting and out of breath. He spun around and greeted them with a weak smile.

"Good morning, doctors. How's everything going?" he asked.

"Not very well, capt," Marlin replied.

"I assume that's because of the shark trouble we're having."

"Indeed, it is. Are you even trying to fight that thing off?"

"Yes, I'm sending missiles into it, and all the weaponry on the ship is active."

They were all interrupted by the sound of a helicopter approaching from somewhere in the distance. Liam ran out and looked up into the sky, and saw the small chopper circling around to land.

"What is it?" Ian called out.

"It's the supply chopper," he replied.

He heard Jane begin to speak behind him. "Sikorsky H-34, you are clear to land, over."

They all watched as the massive chopper began to lower down towards the dock. It came about 13 feet of landing, and then it happened. The shark leaped out from the water and opened its massive jaws. They grabbed the chopper, and brought it down into the ocean.

Ian's mouth hung open.

"I don't believe that! Did you see that, captain?!"

"Y-y-yes, I d-did. . ."

"Now how are we supposed to build the weapons?" Marlin chimed in.

No answer came. Every other person in the room was too shocked to reply. The shark continued to circle around the ship, its gigantic dorsal fin cutting through the water.

"Fire missiles," Liam roared.

Jane quickly followed the command and sent even more missiles into the crazed shark. They exploded on contact with the creature, and stunned it greatly. Then, after a few seconds of shock, it swam away from the ship, and soon disappeared off the sonar screens.

"It's gone, sir."

He let out a relieved sigh, as did everyone in the room.

"Keep a really close watch on the waters surrounding this ship, and alert me if that shark comes back."

"Yes, sir. What about the supply chopper?"

"We'll just have to get more on the way after we deal with this thing."

"We can't wait that long!" Marlin was furious.

He turned to him, glancing at Ian as he did.

"Marlin, we have no choice."

"We might. Get some more coming now."

"Dr. Jacobs, no one gives me orders," he glared at Ian now. "And Dr. Lissiter, this better not have been one of *your* sharks."

"Sir, I honestly don't know where this shark came from."

"Good. Now, both of you to your cabins until further orders."

They both nodded, and hurried out into the hall. He turned to Jane one last time.

"As I said, keep a close watch on those screens. I'll be in my corders if you need me."

"Got it, sir."

* * *

Liam shut the door to his corders behind him, then hurried over to his desk. He shuffled around and cleaned it up a bit, then took his

seat behind the desk. Then, he tried to relax. But it was almost impossible, knowing that monstrous beast was still lurking somewhere out in the ocean. He didn't know what it really was, or what to call it, but he knew it needed to be stopped.

He opened a drawer and took out a pack of cigarettes, and then lit one up. He had always kept the habit at bay, but it had recently overthrown him. He pretended to have broken it, but it was still frequent. He took a long drag, and let it out slowly. Warm, foggy smoke entered out from his lungs, and dispersed into the room. He couldn't help but gag a little on the stuff as it came back around and towards him. He switched on the small desk fan, and waved it in the air, clearing it. He set it back down, but kept it on. He liked the sound of it. It soothed him.

Now, he began thinking. He knew they hadn't seen the last of that shark. It un-doubtfully would return, and continue to destroy the ship. He needed plans, and he needed them fast.

"Sir!" Jane's voice shattered the silence.

"What is it?" he yelled back.

"The shark. . .it's returning!"

He sprung from his chair. He had been right the whole time. They hadn't seen the last of the Megalodon.

Chapter Seven

Marlin and Ian strode down the long, never-ending hallway. Step after step they took, hoping to make it back to the lab to begin recovering their crumpled papers, samples, and everything else that had just hit the floor when the shark hit the ship. Their footsteps echoed off the now very empty hallway. Marlin wore a scowl on his face as they walked. Something was really bugging him, but he had no idea what.

He had a strange feeling Ian knew about the shark that lurked in the waters outside, but only asking a question would find out for sure.

"Ian, is there something you're not telling me?" he asked suddenly, disturbing the peace.

"What about?" Ian asked in reply.

"About the shark."

"I'm positive, Marlin."

"Oh really? I hate to be nasty, but I have my suspicions."

Ian spun around and faced him.

"Now Marlin, I caught that Megalodon with a heavy fishing equipment. I didn't create it."

"And your point is?"

"If I had *created* that monster out there, it wouldn't even be out there. It would be in a large glass tank, like the other one."

"I see. That is a good excuse..."

"Excuse? My word no!"

They were both interrupted by the sudden blow to the bottom of the ship. They went flying to the floor, and one of them let out a scream. For a second or two, Marlin thought it was his scream, but then he looked up, and realized it had been Ian's scream. He saw the old scientist lying on the floor with a pool of blood surrounding his left leg.

"Ian! Are you alright?"

The man didn't respond for quite some time. The same look of pain and misery was stuck on his face for a few minutes.

"Ian! Can you hear me!" Marlin cried louder.

"Y-y-yes. . .I-i-i can. . . ."

"Answer me then! Are you alright. . ."

The ship was hit again, but with less force.

"Y-y-yes! I-I'm f-f-fine!"

Marlin didn't respond to Ian's last sentence. His mind was focused on a different topic; getting Ian to safety, and medical care. He quickly jumped to his feet, and made his way towards Ian, who lay bleeding to death just nine feet away. The pool of blood was spreading very quickly, fear was sunk deeply in his eyes. Marlin ran over to him, and knelt down next to him.

"Ian! I'm going to get you to help!" he yelled over the blaring sirens and alarms.

He shoved his two arms underneath Ian, and heaved upward. The weight was almost too over-barring, but Ian managed. He carried his friend slowly down the corridor, and around another corner, keeping his eyes to the ceiling, searching for an attic-like door. He took step after agonizing step, with Ian seemingly taking advantage of his carrier. He rounded another corner, and at last found it. A short, whit string with a plastic ring attached to the end of it hung down from the lock, which, as luck would have it, was unlocked.

He reached up and grabbed the ring, still keeping Ian's back up straight. As the door came unfolded, he backed up a few steps, and then hurried up the steps. He knew this wasn't the best place to keep Ian while trying to find help, but he was panicking slightly. When he was panicky, like anyone else, he didn't think. He took it slow as he climbed the rickety ladder, and up into the damp storage compartment. As he finally slammed his body down onto the creaky floor, he couldn't help but look around. The place may have been dark, but he could tell it was a dump. Lots of suitcases, briefcases, and other modern necessities that naval personnel require. He shifted Ian into a fairly comfortable position against a large suitcase, and carefully tore a strip of cloth from his dark blue jacket, and wrapped it around Ian's leg.

Hopefully that'll hold, he thought to himself. He took one last look at Ian's pale face before scampering back down to the floor below.

"I'll be back soon, Ian," he called up as he shut the small door. Then, he took off down the hallway.

* * *

Liam wiped sweat from his forehead, and let his soaked arm drop to his side. The alarms themselves had stopped, but the blaring red lights hadn't. That as a sign there was still danger near-by. The shark had disappeared from the area, or so it seemed. He didn't think it was gone though, it was just messing with them.

No one had said a word or made a sound since the last attack, and the room was filled with an odd and eerie silence. They all stared down at the sonar screen, gritting their teeth tightly. Liam was gripping the back of Jane's chair, expecting almost anything. What he didn't expect was Marlin blasting through the door. He jumped two feet in the air, and glared at the scientist for just a moment before realizing who it was and what was happening.

"Captain. . ." Marlin was out of breath, and panicking. "Ian. . .needs medical. . .help. . ."

"What do you mean? What happened?"

"Out in the hallway, when the shark hit. . .he was wounded very badly. . ."

"Right, I'll get the doc."

Liam turned to the radio, and picked it up, and then pressed the button.

"Dr. Mirdick, Dr. Mirdick, please report to the control room."

He let the radio slide out of his hands, and hit the metal. He turned back to Marlin, and nodded. His face was beginning to show anger.

"What about the shark?"

"It has disappeared, Dr. Jacobs."

"Alright. Please keep watch. . ."

"We are! What do you think we're doing!" Liam interrupted in a slight rage.

"No need to get huffy! I'm just afraid. I'm fearful."

"We all are, Dr. Jacobs!"

Marlin shut up, at last. Liam turned his back to the scientist, and listened until the door was slammed shut.

"Jane, glue your eyes to that screen. We haven't seen the last of that shark."

Chapter Eight

Marlin wasn't sure what to do or where to go. He had to wait for the doctor to get here, and wondering around in that maze of hallways sure wasn't gonna help that in any way. He finally decided to stay put, and lean against the wall opposite the control room entrance.

He let out a sigh of grief, and impatience. He was so worried about Ian. Maybe he really didn't know what this shark menace was about. Maybe all of Marlin's suspicions were wrong. Or maybe not. He just didn't know. There was so much that they didn't know about this whole thing that confused him. He kept his eyes and ears open for any sounds. All he hear was muffled talking in the room in front of him, and the eerie silence of the hallway beyond. The problem was, he couldn't handle that silence. He wanted desperately to hear the doctor's footsteps begin to inch close.

But no sound came, except the sudden rumble of metal breaking.

...

* * *

Liam stared out the window. His expression full of horror and shock. The shark was back, and it had just hit them hard. His eyes darted down to the sonar screen. The gigantic beast was right beneath them, and threatening to hit again.

"Jane! Send more missiles into that thing!" he cried.

She said nothing, but went right to work, and momentarily sent three large missiles into the creature's tough frame. But it didn't faze it. A look of terror swept over Liam's face as the shark hulled forward and smashed into the bottom of the ship. They all went flying to the floor as he shut his eyes tight, trying to think despite his panic.

It was only seconds before an idea hit him. His eyes flew open, and darted around until they found Jane. He sat up and crawled toward her. Once he reached her, he helped her up from the hard, metal flooring.

"Jane, wake up!" he yelled.

"What. . .What is it? . . ." she asked.

"We need to get over to the opposite side of the bridge. There's a station there that holds the ability to fire larger missiles!"

"Let's go, then."

They both turned, and hurried toward the door.

* * *

Marlin jumped when Dob and Jane burst through the door and nearly fell to the hallway floor. He himself had hit the red carpet when the shark had hit previously.

"Why are you out here? You need to be trying to stop that thing!" he cried.

"We've sent all our Scud-B missiles. We need to get to the Taepo-doing-1 Station!" came the reply.

Marlin said nothing further, but followed them as they rushed down the first hallway. They all rounded the first corner, Liam in the lead. The man was sweating worse than a farmer that had been driving a tractor all day in the blistering heat. He stared straight ahead, determined to get to his destination. A vein on the right side of his forehead was inflamed with stress and worry.

Their footsteps echoed as they rounded another corner, started down another hallway. Marlin's eyes were glued to the floor. He was deep in thought over the situation. As he stared, he saw broken pieces of wall. . . . torn strips of carpet. . . the dead, lifeless body of the ship's doctor. . . He jumped back, and ended up landing on his back. Both Jane and Liam spun around, and let out gasps.

"What the. . .That's the doctor!" Liam screamed as he bent down and examined the body.

Jane couldn't speak. Her pale hand covered her mouth in shock. Liam checked the man's pulse, and moments later shook his head. Marlin hung his head in sorrow. The doc's lifeless eyes wondered off into nothing, but seemed to stare at the ceiling. Marlin only shot glances at them. He just couldn't bare to look.

"There was nothing we could do," Liam said softly, grabbing Jane's shoulder. "Come on, we can't let this slow us down."

They all said nothing further, but pushed on. They rounded almost eight more corners and hurried down seven more hallways before at last arriving at the door to the opposite control room. Liam swung open the door, and immediately peered out the window. That's when he saw it. The horrid dorsal fin was rising up again, and headed straight for the dock. There was only moments before it would smash into the dock, and finish them off. Liam jumped to the controls and began hitting buttons. Marlin couldn't tell what buttons they were, but he imagined they were important.

A loud boom thundered over the waves, and a gigantic burst of sea water erupted in an explosion. The dorsal fin disappeared. On the radar, they saw the shark veer away, and lowered down towards the depths. They all smiled wide, and let out a sigh of relief. But that was short-lived. The shark rose straight up, and smashed into them. A loud creaking noise sounded. The ship began to roll onto its side. .

Chapter Nine

The metal that lined the bridge began to snap and curve. The doors flew off their hinges. The window shattered into thousands of tiny shards of glass. Liam ducked back down onto the floor once again to cover himself from the burst of death. Marlin and Jane also lay on the floor, hands on the back of their heads, hopefully ready for anything.

Liam could feel the ship moving down, towards the water. He didn't know about the others, but he felt threatened greatly. He looked up and threw the open doorway, and all he saw was blue. He couldn't hold on anymore. He slid right out the doorway, but was caught by the railing. He looked over to his right, and saw the monster shark, its dorsal fin high above the surface. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. It had looked so small on the radar screen, but now that he laid eyes on it, the thing looked as big as an iceberg, or maybe bigger.

The shark circled around the ship numerous times, then suddenly stopped. It heaved itself towards the falling deck, and wrapped itself around the siding. Gigantic bits of rocks, cement, and railing came off, and floated into the depths. The shark then grabbed a hold of the corner, and tore off even more debris. But, by now, the ship was almost completely underwater. It was only a few minutes before Liam would be drowning, gasping for breath. Reaching for the surface. He would die, lungs full of water, and inside the monstrous beast. Now, he knew what to call this shark. There was only one name for it. A name that it had been known by for years. The Greek word for hell, he imagined. It truly was a living hell on earth.

Megalodon.

Chapter Ten

Captain Charles A. Brogh was sitting in his command chair, biting his nails. Commotion was happening, and he didn't like it. For the last nineteen minutes, he and his entire crew had been hearing the most horrid of sounds. It sounded like metal creaking and snapping, but he wasn't sure. The radar and sonar screens were going nuts with beeps and blabs. Something was seriously wrong.

A fog was starting to roll in, and the crew on deck couldn't see the other ships. They had lost contact with the *USS Freedom* earlier, and he had been shaking with worry ever since. It wasn't normal for Skith to just not reply. Something was afoot there as well.

"Sir!" His XO, Eric, said, making him jump.

"What?! What is it?" he asked.

"We've lost contact with the *USS Tulsa*!" Eric came back.

He couldn't reply. He couldn't even speak. They had lost contact with both ships now, and that was not good. Enough was enough. He had to try once more to contact Dob, just to calm himself a bit.

"Eric, try again to contact them!" he called out from his corders.

"I have sir, many times now, with no response!" came the reply.

The inside of the *USS Billings* was much like the inside of the other shoreline patrol combat ships in the DESRON. Just across the hall from his corders was the main control room, and from then on was nothing but a maze of hallways. It drove Brogh nuts, but it was the ship. But, right now, his mind was on other things. The communication problems were just a small slither of the things he was worried about. He knew what crazy scientific happenings were taking place aboard the *USS Tulsa*. He knew about the Megalodon those scientists had in their hidden tank, and he knew that was a possible threat.

But how could that monstrosity possibly have escaped? Surely they didn't build some kind of doors leading to the depths right underneath it? He knew something was out there for sure, but he wasn't sure what. They had seen something large on both their sonar and radar screens, but it seemed to be larger than the shark that they supposedly had in the tank.

"Sir!" Eric blurted out.

Brogh jumped to his feet.

"What is it now?!" He screamed.

"The *USS Tulsa* is no longer on the radar screen!"

"What about the sonar screen?" he asked.

"Actually, it is on the sonar screen, but. . ."

"Why would it be on the sonar, and not the radar?!" Brogh interrupted his XO

"Well, sir, it's sinking right now, that's why."

His XO could barely speak as he said the horrid words, and now Brogh himself couldn't speak. His throat went dry, his lips went numb. What on earth happened had happened? Sure, not malfunction was normal. Computers no longer working properly was normal. But such a catastrophe that was bad enough to sink the bloody ship? That wasn't normal. Now, his worry was at its worst.

"T-t-try to c-c-contact. . .S-Skith. . ." he managed to blurt out.

"Yes sir."

His mind blocked out his XO's worried voice for a long moment. What was out there in that salty water? And was it headed for them? The answer came soon enough. A loud beeping sound pounded into the room. Sirens and red lights swarmed the hallways. Something was coming straight towards them.

He flew into the main control room, and peered out the window that lined the dash. His mouth hung open. His eyes widened. A gigantic dorsal fin was circling them, and it was moving fast. His XO stopped talking at the sight of it.

He could only muster up to say one word; "Shark!"

Chapter Eleven

The monster shark came right at them suddenly, veering off to the side, and smashed into the corner of the hull. Pieces of broken metal shards flew into the roaring waves below, having been stirred up by the beast. Both Brogh and Eric flew to the floor, as well as nearly everyone else on board.

The shark circled around again, and repeated the process, making more damage as he went. Brogh didn't waste time. He jumped to his feet, and ejected small missiles toward the shark. It veered away from them, and a huge explosion summited up the water a little ways ahead of the ship. Brogh didn't give up. He sent the larger missiles towards the shark, with the same results. Then, the shark turned towards the last missile, and crushed in it's jaws. The small rumble from the explosion made the floor of the ship vibrate. By this time, Brogh was wide-eyed and sitting like a hot hamburger. He sent the last of the missiles towards the shark, and they hit something, but it wasn't the shark.

There was something else out there in the water, but it was a bit smaller than the shark. He glared down at the sonar screens, and saw another shark on it. There were two large sharks out there. But one was smaller than the other. He couldn't believe what he was seeing. He ran out onto the railing, and flew down the stairs. Moments later, he was on deck. He ran a little further before stopping. Gigantic waves were splashing onto the deck, and beneath the waves, a war was going on. He could now see both sharks clearly. The larger one smashed into the other shark's side, and sent it swaying the water.

Now, they clashed. They bit into each other's skin. Blood began filling the water. The two sharks fought for a moment, then separated. Both of them smashed into the ship's hull, their dorsal fins rising high above the surface. Now, they both circled around again, surrounding the innocent ship. Brogh was now as pale as a ghost. The sharks met up again, and bit into each other some more. The blood churned red with water.

The larger alpha shark grabbed the smaller shark in its jaws, and shook. He imagined the smaller shark would be dead after this blow, but it swam away, barely moving its tail, but moving. The alpha shark followed it close, and soon opened its jaws wide. It grabbed the tail, and tore it clear off. Brogh couldn't help but heave after witnessing that. It was such a gruesome sight.

The two sharks clashed again, and this time, the alpha finished the smaller shark off. Its lifeless body floated down into the depths. Brogh turned and ran back towards the bridge, but he was too late. The shark rammed into the ship, and knocked him down. He heard a crack, then the world beyond the deck became dark.

Chapter Twelve

The shark glided through the water for a few moments, then spun around, and headed for the ship again, at full force. It rammed into the side, and bits of cement and railing came crashing down. Then, the shark repeated the process. This time, the ship rocked over towards the side a bit. Everyone inside the ship flew to the floor.

The shark rammed the ship again, this time rocking it to the side even more. The shark prepared again to ram the ship, but something else rammed into it first. This thing was bigger, much bigger. The shark flew off course a few feet, then turned to meet its gigantic enemy.

It was another shark, but it was huge. Its dorsal fin was taller than a skyscraper. It glared down at the shark with its beady, black eyes. Its jaws opened, it lunged forward, and it bit into the shark. This was the real alpha. This was the real Megalodon. Everyone on board the ship was dead now, but the shark didn't care. It tore into the other shark, shaking it, killing it with its rows of massive, sharp teeth. Blood trickled into the water, and soon filled it. The shark was dead.

The Megalodon turned and smashed into the ship, creating enough impact to finish it off. Then, it sank down into the inky depths, and vanished.

Epilogue

Captain James Hutch was captain of another Littoral Combat Ship in the DESRON, the *USS Detroit*. The crew, however, just called it the LCS-7. Like all the other combat ships in the DESRON, it was a fine ship. Fine for patrolling the shorelines, that is. Hutch stood right outside the main control room, taking a deep breath of fresh air. He needed it to calm down his stress. He and his crew had gotten a very late start, and were far behind the other ships.

It would take another two or three days to catch up with the others. He was worried they wouldn't make it on time. The worst part was, he couldn't get anyone to respond. He had sent message after message to Skith, Dob, and Brogh. None of them had responded, yet. He turned and walked back inside the main control room. His XO, Aaron, turned and smiled at him.

"Good morning sir," Aaron said.

"Morning to you, Aaron," he replied. "What's on the schedule?"

"Nothing much, sir. Just a few meetings with the head of security."

"Good. I need to relax a little."

"Permission to agree, sir?"

Hutch laughed. "Permission granted."

"So, do you think we'll ever catch up with the others, captain?"

"I would certainly hope so."

They both paused.

"You know, they say the Megalodon is supposed to haunt these waters."

"The what?" Another man chimed in.

"The Megalodon. The king of all sharks. It's said to be over sixty feet long, and has jaws large enough to swallow six human beings whole."

Both Aaron and the other man seated next to him were wide-eyed.

"Pretty scary stuff, ain't it? Course, it's nothing but legend."

"True, sir, true."

Hutch turned to the open doorway, and stared out at the sea. The waves were fairly calm today, and the sun was shining brightly, making the water sparkle. This was his favorite kind of day. Anyone who didn't enjoy this weather was a nut in his eyes. The beauty of it made him smile.

But, that smile vanished quickly as a strange beeping sound filled the room. Their eyes flew to the sonar screens, and soon, both pairs of eyes widened. On the sonar, they saw a large moving object. A very large object. It had the shape of a shark, but it was just so large, it was hard to believe it was really a shark. Hutch looked up and out the window, and squealed in fear. The waves were being cut through by something. Something big.

"Fire missiles!" he screeched.

Aaron followed the command, and boomed out three gigantic missiles towards the object. But, despite the fact that they hit the target straight on, it didn't faze the target. Then, something hit the ship, and send it lunging forward. Everyone went to the floor. Blood drizzled down from Aaron's head.

The last thing Hutch saw, was the horrid sight of a very large dorsal fin.

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