

Sharkmaids (Mershark Story)

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A commission for danio13

Oscar is adrift on a makeshift raft following the sinking of his shipping vessel. As he becomes more hungry, thirsty, and desperate, he attracts a pack of sharks that begin to circle his vessel. But these sharks are not all that they seem at first glance, and it may well be that this initially terrifying experience ends up a far more thrilling encounter with magical shark mermaids.

Sharkmaids

Oscar was alone and terrified. It had been nine days since the ship he had been serving on, the *Silver Kite*, went down to Davy Jones' locker. It had been a fine vessel, with a kindly captain, but not all crews are as loyal to their leader as he is to them: the crew's nest spotter had gotten far too hearty on the hidden reserves of rum, and failed to spot the pirate armada in the distance, flying the Jolly Roger. The *Silver Kite* had not been equipped with anything more than two meagre deck cannons: it was a cargo vessel. And so the white flag had been run up, only for the pirate crew to show no mercy. They blasted the ship to smithereens to send a message to the Governor back in port, and left the scattered remains of the crew to die. Oscar had survived. He had lashed a number of deck segments together and erected crude sail to give him direction, but the sea in all her capricious power had sent him sailing ever deeper across the wide blue, to a region of the ocean that was off the edge of any sailing chart.

Nine days of being blown about by the vengeful four winds, with nought that he could do about it. The sea had provided him with a few gifts, however; detritus and debris from other wrecks floating by had allowed him to bolster his raft against the pitiless waves, and give him a crude form of shelter to hide within. Still, such small mercies were not enough. His food had diminished, and the small store of pickled fish he'd kept was in danger of spoiling entirely. Water was running dry, with only two skins left and a bowl that had caught the previous night's rainfall. The same rainfall that had allowed him to clean his skin and hair, but had also obscured any sight of land.

Oscar took the sodden journal he carried, and inscribed another entry. He had no inkwell, but instead had ground some charcoal in a makeshift mortar and pestle, and he used a small stick to crudely update his entries.

'It has been now nine days, and I fear I shall not again see the land of my home, nor any land at all. Whatever gods of the sea may exist have taken me to the farthest reach of their dominion. I remember my mother always told me stories of such places. She said that beyond the reach of even the bravest of sailors were magical lands filled with fae wonder. She spoke tales of strange creatures and spirits and hidden paradise islands. I see no

such place now. I fear all that I shall come to see is the endless blue, and finally, the darkness rising to greet me.'

Oscar put away the journal, feeling too morose to continue. He took some cod and hardened biscuits and nibbled at them together, before downing a little water. It was only when he raised his head again to inspect the water that he saw something terrible indeed. Something a lot more immediate than some waiting darkness in the future.

Fins.

Shark fins in the water.

They circled and undulated through the water, disappearing beneath the waves only briefly, creatures on the hunt. They were not small fins either, belying a much larger form beneath the surface. Oscar stood on the raft so quickly that it shifted to one side. He yelped, clinging onto the fragile mast, as a dark shape passed close by the raft. It was a beast of fifteen or more in length, grey on top, but it shifted to reveal a white underbelly. There was no mistaking the King of the Sea: the Great White Shark.

"By God and glory," he muttered, eyes wide, "please don't take me this day. To all the gods of sea and sky and land, let them pass me by."

He made a number of signs, each to conflicting deities and several others to old sailors' superstitions. It was said a shark would pass a desperate man by with nothing more to lose.

The saying was wrong. And his prayers were useless.

Another shark passed by, a slightly smaller fin snaking through the water, its colour black as night, like the waiting shadow in his dreams. He dared to peer over the raft, and suddenly its great head surged above the waterline and snapped silently at the air.

"By the seven seas!" he proclaimed. It was a hammerhead shark, sleek and dark. He'd never known such beasts to mingle with the great whites, but then these were strange waters, and anything could be possible.

Another shark came by, this one nibbling into the side of his makeshift raft. He panicked, raising an oar to push it away, but even in his desperation he didn't want to draw blood from them and start a frenzy. This shark was the smallest yet, and to his surprise appeared to be a common sandbar. He recognised it as the same kind that trawled the shallows of his home, though it was still an impressive nine feet in length.

"Are there shallows nearby?" he wondered aloud.

His thoughts were confirmed as a sleek, thin thresher circled the raft, seemingly sniffing at the ropes that held it together. It was almost beautiful, the way it moved. Oscar decided that violence would condemn him, particularly among such a strange shiver of sharks. Clenching his eyes for a moment, he released a sad sigh, before moving to his stored food. He could only hope it would be enough. He grabbed enough pickled cod, preserved meat, and even some biscuits, and threw them out like chum behind the raft's

wake. It would not put blood in the water, but he could only hope it would gain their interest.

“Please take these gifts, friends,” he called between cupped hands. “I am adrift and can offer no more, as my own time grows short while supplies dwindle. I give my apologies to you, kings and queens of the deep. Please grant me passage.”

It was just another application of sailor’s superstition, but it was all he had left. He watched, hopeful, as the pack of sharks moved off to inspect his offered sacrifice. The raft kept moving away, and he observed with baited breath as they moved and tossed and turned the waters where he’d hurled the food.

And then the great white turned around.

And so did the other sharks.

And four fins began to race directly to him, the great white in the lead.

Oscar readied himself, grabbing his makeshift oar and planting his feet wide. He knew he couldn’t survive this, and could only hope that his end would be short, and the afterlife be as kind as the priestly men claimed it would be. The lead fin raced ever quicker, then melted into the water. There was no time to even think about where it could have gone, for suddenly the great white in all its majestic, awe-inspiring, and *terrifying* size leapt up into the air, its enormous maw wide open, hundreds of sharp teeth on display. It launched overhead, straight towards his raft, and Oscar screamed hurling his hands up to shield his eyes from his coming fate.

There was a light, almost gentle thud on the deck of his raft. He was too nervous to move his hands, but something wasn’t right.

A very female giggle came from right beside him.

“Hello, strange one! I’m not going to eat you, I was just having a little fun!”

Oscar opened his eyes. He blinked. Rubbed them again. Blinked one more time.

“Sealion got your tongue?” the sensual voice asked.

Oscar had no idea how to even reply. In front of him, lying languidly on his raft, long grey and white tail dipping casually into the water, was a beautiful mermaid. She was unlike any mermaid he had ever heard of, though. Instead of possessing a fleshy human torso and fish scales, she was more akin to some sort of ‘sharkmaid.’ Her entire skin had the smooth grey surface of a shark, while her belly and perky A-cup breasts were coloured white. This colouration extended to her lower half, which was a powerful shark tail complete with large fin. She shifted position, showing off her lithe upper half, and smiled, revealing a cute snaggletooth. Her hair was ebony black and extending down her back, but was parted by a large grey dorsal fin. Her arms, slender and feminine, nevertheless had small grey fins that curved outwards from her forearms to her elbows. A pair of gill slits were on her neck, almost invisible, and her fingers were connected by a thin grey membrane for ease of swimming. Despite being shark-like, she was

astonishingly beautiful, and her grey-white face and dark eyes had the expression of goodwill, albeit somewhat cheekily so.

"You're . . . you're a mermaid," he spluttered.

She briefly made an irritated expression. "Not at all, kind stranger, my friends and I are not nearly so stuffy and superior as those beings are. We are sharkmaids! Observe!"

She grinned, and her teeth sharpened, even as her neck swelled. Her arms folded into her body, melting in to become powerful directional fins, while her petite torso widened, becoming barrel-like. Her face extended, dark eyes becoming pitch black and stretching forth menacingly. In moments, a terrifying great white was halfway onto his raft, snapping right near his leg. Oscar cried out, stepping backwards in fear. The shark stopped snapping instantly, and slowly reformed back into the beautiful sharkmaid: its teeth became less sharp, its torso thinning greatly to become a lithe human woman's, and its head shrank and rounded, growing long wet strands of perfect black hair. She posed, bringing up a thin arm to sweep her hair to either side of her impressive dorsal fin, before placing both hands upon her hips, where her large shark tail began.

"See the difference?"

"I do," he managed. "You look . . . I'm sorry, I feel I am imagining things. Are you truly real?"

The sharkmaid giggled, extending a hand. "Feel, if you must. I am as real as the ocean depths and close as the waves themselves."

He felt her hand, and his heart skipped a beat. Her skin had the dermal scales of a shark, albeit much smaller and much smoother, giving it an almost sensuous feeling.

"You are indeed real, I am sorry I thought you might not be. My mother always told me stories of mermaids and other wondrous creatures, but you are beyond compare."

She giggled playfully, pulling her hand back. With her other, she raised the pickled cod he had thrown out. It had a large chunk out of it.

"You are such a flatterer! And a giver of presents, too! It is a rare thing for ones such as us to encounter your kind. Are you truly one of the creatures known as human?"

He nodded. "I am. I hail from a land far from here, above the surface of the water. My ship, much bigger than this mere raft, ran afoul of pirates, and I survived by this raft."

He began to tell the story in full. She lay down on the raft, her tail still splashing off the side while the other sharks circled them in the water. She was enraptured by his story, dark eyes gleaming. It made the longer version hard to tell: Oscar found himself more and more distracted by her unconventional and pretty looks, from her mischievous grin to her grey-white skin to her powerful lower half.

"And truly you have survived this long?" she said, as he finished.

"I have. My name is Oscar."

“And I am Baquaria.”

“That is a beautiful name.”

Another giggled, and this time he saw the faintest hint of a blush upon the white of her cheeks.

“Are all humans this courteous? Giving us food and prayers, offerings and wonderful stories, and such compliments?”

Oscar was flattered, and blushed a little himself, to her amusement. He couldn't believe that he was talking to a real life magical creature, and moreover one of such astounding beauty and good will.

“Not all, not most, perhaps. I was raised to be kind and compassionate by my departed mother, most of all to a good woman, such as yourself.”

She beamed, shuffling a little awkwardly into a sitting position, so she could press her flesh against him. It occurred to him that she was completely naked, and totally fine with it. It made him blush again, and also stirred a movement in his loins, a hardening at the sight and feel of a beautiful woman.

“Well,” she said, playing with his hair and feeling over his clothes, curious. “I was raised to eat and dominate the waves, as fitting a shark. For we are shark shifters: predators who can change our forms like you see before you. But we are also taught to be compassionate to lonely sailors, especially ones who make an offering. This is our way.”

Oscar nodded, understanding her words despite their strangeness. The world was filled with tales of fae and fantastic creatures with strange rules and expectations that, if met, would lead to great reward. He tried not to hope too dearly for safety from the ocean, though if anyone could provide it . . .

“So, Oscar,” Baquaria asked, leaning against him and drawing her cute face closer, “as you have fed us and given us prayer, and regaled me with such stories, what can I give you in return?”

Oscar was in shock, and feeling strangely shy right next to this woman. It had been months since he had been near a female presence; a woman on ship was a bad omen, at least so they said. But this shark shifter couldn't be bad luck, truly?

“Thank you, kind lady,” he said, and she pulled closer, enjoying his courtesy, “I suppose I have but one request, if you can make it. If there is an island close by that could support me, I would like to reach it.”

Baquaria grinned, and to his surprise clapped her hands. He had never met a woman so informal and full of life, a far cry from the corseted and demure women back home, closeted away so often in their housings.

“Oh, I can certainly help you with that, Oscar! There is a place of paradise that only we sharkmaids know of, but you have pleased us, and so we can allow entrance to that

place. The fruits that hang from the trees are delicious and sweet, and there is much game to hunt for those of us who can make legs, and the shade and sun is brilliant, with clear streams and ponds to bathe in and drink from.”

Oscar’s heart leap. “Yes, if you may take me there, even for a time?”

“Oh, we certainly can!” she said, in her surprisingly sweet voice. “And we can show you other . . . pleasures of that island, as I see you already desire?”

She raised her great tail, curving it so that its upper fin pointed directly at his crotch, where his manhood was straining at his pants. She giggled playfully, before licking her lips.

“Don’t be shy, handsome human. You will find us most . . . compatible.”

“Um . . . us?” he managed, as she stroked his chest with her grey fingers.

She laughed, before turning and giving a strange call to the other sharks circling the raft. Suddenly, before his eyes, each shark rose to the surface: the thresher, the sandbar, the hammerhead. And each began to change, bodies altering and reducing and becoming more lovely and shapely, revealing four more sharkshifter women, each with uniquely gorgeous looks. The hammerhead shark became an alluring woman with black dermal skin and a curly afro. Her figure was astonishingly curvy, with wide hips and a generous bosom. Unlike Baquaria, she had two human legs, albeit covered in that same dermal skin, and a large shark tail protruded from above her naked behind. The sandbar shark appeared to be a gorgeous woman of eastern origin, with pale skin and almond-shaped eyes and long, straight hair. She had no tail at all, but her legs ended in fins instead of feet, allowing her to glide through the water, just as her hands were also fin-like, albeit with further dexterity. Lastly, the thresher shark became a sharkmaid, or mershark, just like Baquaria. She too was lithe, but with a figure that was more like a ballerina’s, with a long tapering tail that moved almost like an eel’s behind her. She had a mid-grey colouration with mottled spots along her stomach, with alarmingly short hair. A sailor’s hook was caught in her eyebrow, an ornamental piercing that revealed her sly and rebellious nature.

Oscar was overwhelmed; the sharkshifters around him were in different forms, some humanoids, some like sharkmaids, others a mix between. But all were shockingly beautiful, and despite his gentlemanly spirit, he couldn’t help but continue to harden between his legs, causing them each to giggle and smile.

“He’s very cute,” remarked the Sandbar sharkshifter.

“Oh, very handsome. Make me want to eat him up! Figuratively speaking,” cooed the Hammerhead.

“I think he’ll come to like us,” the Thresher said, drawing closer and feeling his firm leg. “A man who knows how to treat our kind should be well taken care of.”

Baquaria smiled, and it was an attractive smile indeed. She reached out to Oscar, and he did not pull away as she pulled him closer, drawing him into a deep, sensual kiss. Her

mouth tasted salty, but somehow that made it all the more attractive. One of her wandering hands met at his hardness, and he groaned a little as she teased him.

"I agree, sisters," the great white said, "let's take him to our island paradise." She took Oscar's arms and placed them around her thin waist, allowing her beautiful figure to press more closely against him. "And as thanks, you can take your turns pleasing us, for as many days and nights as you like. Who knows, perhaps you will choose to stay, and not be rescued at all?"

She gave him a light peck on the cheek, before rolling off the raft with a gleeful laugh. With the strike of a fin upon water, she positioned herself behind the raft, and the other three of her sisters joined her, beginning to shift it in a new direction.

Oscar looked at the beauties as the hours passed. Each lifted their heads at intervals to see him more closely. He couldn't believe his luck. The sun was coming out, and a beautiful land was just appearing on the horizon; a verdant isle filled with life-nourishing fruit and clean waters, and beautiful sandy beaches to relax upon. He was entering a land of magic and mystery, and four curious sharkmaids who were intent on plumbing the mysteries of their new human, in all the most exciting and sexual ways. As they approached, he heard them begin to bicker, arguing over who had the right to enjoy his body after Baquaria.

The great white sharkmaid was right, he thought.

"I don't think I'll ever want to leave this place," he said.

The End