

**ACTIVITY:** Diving  
**CASE:** GSAF ND.0102  
**DATE:** Prior to 1963  
**LOCATION:** Bahrein

**NAME:** Unknown  
**DESCRIPTION:** He was a pearl diver.

**NARRATIVE:** “During the years I have spent in hunting great fish in many parts of the world, I have heard a number of shark stories but few quite so horrible as the one I was told in Shuqra. I believe it to be true because, first, the most fantastic things belong to reality rather than fiction and, secondly, my informant was. . . a respected official of the Aden Fisheries Department. . . Two brothers, who were devoted to each other, were working as pearl divers in a dhow off Bahrein. One of them had plunged into the pearl beds when a great stain of blood floated up to the surface followed a moment later by half the unfortunate man’s body. Realizing that his brother had been literally cut in two by a shark, the other man, mad with grief, seized the half corpse and proceeded to impale it on a shark hook. When the nahoda (boat captain) and other crew men tried to interfere, he threatened them with a knife. No sooner had the hook, so grimly baited, sunk beneath the surface than it was seized and away sped the dhow towed by the shark which, up to now, they had not seen. It was evidently a monster for it towed the dhow for most of the day before, finally coming to the surface, the men were able to kill it with harpoons. It was a very large tiger shark. As it was dragged on board, the bereaved brother sprang on it, slashed its throat with his dagger and greedily drank its blood. One can understand his feelings perfectly well.”....A.C. Doyle

**INJURY:** Fatal

**SPECIES INVOLVED:** The incident involved a tiger shark.

**SOURCE:** Adrian Conan Doyle (1963) *Lone Dhow: Hunting the Tiger Shark*, pages 132-133  
The book describes the author’s (youngest son of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle) travels to French Somaliland (now Djibouti) and the Gulf of Aden to collect a tiger shark for a museum in Geneva.



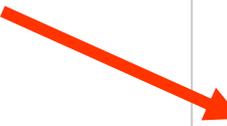
## LONE DHOW

rifle, I was able to keep on terms with the captain of the guard, but not with the Sultan. I have seldom seen such shooting. In the end, he knocked off the tops of three empty cartridge cases stuck in the sand thirty yards away.

"Your friends are my friends," I told him as I left, "and your enemies are my enemies." A man who could eat and shoot like that, I would much rather have with me than against me!

I am very pleased with my Yemenite assistant Ali who seems to be a man of courage; but I am less pleased with my left ankle where the old Aibat burns have opened out again, so once more I am hobbling like Long John Silver. Doctoring not being among my gifts, I have made up a witches' brew of every ointment I possess, one of which must do the trick.

The women are kept almost entirely locked away in this village, though I have seen the darlings peeping at me through their grated windows. Some of the mud houses have the skulls of animals built into the walls or sharks fins over the door. The coffee is magnificent. It is brewed thin and then highly spiced with ginger and cloves to make one of the most invigorating concoctions I have ever drunk.



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### A SHARK STORY

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This evening two of my shark lines were put to an unexpected use. Out of the turmoil of the sea, grey with the mists of twilight, reeled a dhow. It managed to get down an anchor just beyond the breakers and then a dugout canoe headed for the shore while the whole village came running to the water's edge. Once among the breakers, the canoe capsized and, while the heads of the two wretched men bobbed up and down in that white turmoil of surf, my crew ran to get my shark lines. Several fishermen, keeping close together, then plunged into the sea and a few minutes later the half-drowned men were dragged to the shore. The dhow, it transpired, had come from Somaliland and had run out of food and water during their stormy voyage. Both men deserted ship on the spot and swore that their nahoda and two other men still on board would do the same thing as soon as they could reach shore.

Five days now we have been held up by the south-east monsoon, blowing so hard on this open coast that we cannot even put to sea in the sambuk. My only chance is to get to Bir Ali by the camel track winding through the mountains and the desert. I learned from three soldiers of the Arwah Native Patrol that the track is quiet and that the people of Bir Ali are literally the slaves of their Sultan. By that I mean that when ordered to work for him on the