

## Dogfish

Basking in the afternoon sunlight, she sat and thought about her husband. Since the last ultrasound scan he *had* been acting odd; his nostrils seemed permanently flared in that over-studied smile. *It's just nerves*, Mummy had reassured her. *Men are all the same whatever colour their blood.*

She sighed. The staff had been awfully kind. Though the doctors seemed to avoid her gaze. As if hiding something... Perhaps I make them uneasy, she reasoned, I *am* carrying the country's most important baby, after all. She was tired. But things would soon be different: not all that overseas travelling and dashing about. After the press calm down... Her mind wandered back to that lovely day out at Sydney Aquarium. It *would* be nice to take him there once he's grown a bit. Assuming it's a *he*. It had certainly been moving around a lot; clearly a sporty type like his father.

Later that evening her waters broke, flooding the satin bedcovers. Her husband had left the room in quite a hurry. *Typical bloody men*, she thought with gritted teeth, as she gave the final push and the thing slipped out. The cord was cut and the creature quickly swaddled. She lay back, listening out for the cry. Instead, she heard a sound like a vessel being filled, followed by a smooth 'plop'.

*Is it a boy?* She ventured.

Someone shuffled towards her, carrying what looked like a large glass bowl filled with water.

*Not exactly, ma'am...*

Her eyes focused on a movement; a quick, darting gesture. She slowly made out a long, dun, speckled thing, flat-headed, with a dorsal fin

protruding from its sleek body, and two more at the side, finished off with two unblinking, yellow eyes.

*I'll call him George,* she croaked, losing consciousness.

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