

## AN ADVENTURE IN SHARK-FISHING

By KANA CHIN ONG \*



SHARK-FISHING is an important occupation of our Samal friends of the Moroland. Shark-fishing is a very exciting adventure.

One calm day, after having prepared several baskets of cassava for our provision, and having sharpened our harpoons, my father and I set out for the far horizon. My father steered the vinta while I served as cook. In the meantime I would bait the hook, and fish for our food during the trip. You see, a shark-fishing trip often takes several days. But we do not feel any fatigue. The cool sea breeze carried our vinta smoothly, and so we did not spend our energy in rowing the oars.

When we arrived at the place noted for its many schools of sharks, we set anchor and waited for our first victim. Our harpoon had been tied to a rope about two inches in circumference and set to a long pole which look like a javelin. The waiting is sometimes tiresome, but in this favorite habitat of the sharks, we didn't have to wait long.

I was looking at a sailboat about two miles away when I noticed a bubbling about three meters from our vinta. "There's one," my father said briefly as he kept ready his harpoon. It was a big shark. With the thrilling expectancy in my heart, I felt a little fear. Should our vinta capsize, my father and I would surely be a good meal for that man-eating fish. My father stood with his feet planted firmly on the little platform in the prow of the vinta. He aimed, and then there was a swift whizzing sound as the harpoon flew from his arm. I couldn't at once tell whether the shark was hit, but soon the rope which was tied to the harpoon began to tighten. My father loosened the rope so as to prevent our vinta from being brought down under the water with the shark which had dived into the depths. In a very short time about fifty meters of rope had been released, but we could still feel the strength of the shark. Pretty soon the end of the rope had gone, and our vinta was dragged along by the wounded shark. I was scared, but my father only laughed when he saw the frightened look in my

\* First Year Student, Zamboanga Normal School, Zamboanga City.

(Please turn to page 121.)

## BIRTHDAY GIFTS FOR . . .

(Continued from page 102)

"Well, anyway it's just what I'm going to give her," insisted Juanita with determination.

"That's all right, Juanita," said Pedro. "We are just pretending. We don't have any money to buy things. It would take lots of money to buy this dress."

All the children looked very sad. It was too bad for Mother to have a birthday and not get any gifts."

Suddenly Pedro's face lighted up with a smile.

"Dolores," he cried. "Let's cut out these pictures and give them to Mother and tell her they are what we'd give her if we had the money. Then she'd know we didn't forget her birthday."

"Oh, yes, Pedro," said Dolores. "We could paste them on cardboard and put them on the breakfast table. It is a splendid new idea."

The children went right to work. Very carefully they cut out the wrist watch and the handbag and pasted them neatly on white cardboard.

"Juanita," coaxed Dolores, "won't you choose something else for Mother instead of a wedding dress?"

"No," said Juanita firmly. "This is a beautiful

dress—just the kind I want to give her. I'm going to give Mother the bride's dress."

So the picture of the bride in her white satin gown with the train and the veil and the flowers had to be cut out.

"We could have a birthday cake, too," said Dolores. "Here's a picture of one covered with candles in this housekeeping magazine."

"We don't know whether or not it has the right number of candles," objected Pedro.

"That doesn't matter, Pedro," said Dolores. "There are just enough candles to make it look pretty."

The children got up early the next morning, slipped into the dining room, and arranged the pictures around Mother's plate. They put the picture of the birthday cake in the middle of the table.

How surprised Mother was when she came to the table!

"These are the gifts we wanted to give you if we'd had the money to buy them," explained Pedro.

"What a beautiful watch!" said Mother. "And such a lovely handbag!"

She laughed when she saw the wedding dress. "This is the most beautiful dress that I have ever had,"

she exclaimed.

"We're sorry we didn't have the money to buy real gifts," said Dolores.

"Why, these are lovely," insisted Mother. "It isn't the gift itself that counts, but the loving thoughts that make us want to give gifts."

"You didn't see your birthday cake," said Dolores.

"That's a very beautiful cake," exclaimed Mother. "I'm going to make one exactly like it today and we'll each have a piece for supper."

## AN ADVENTURE IN . . .

(Continued from page 101)

face. When I heard his laughter, I laughed also, and began to enjoy the free ride which the shark was giving us. For about three-fourths of a mile the shark pulled our vinta with unabated speed. My only fear was the possibility of the rope breaking. "Don't fear, son, our rope is very strong," my father said. "It is strong enough to send us to Borneo," he added, laughing merrily.

After almost two hours, the rope began to loosen, and our boat began to lessen its speed. We knew that the shark was losing strength. Shortly after, our vinta stopped moving. My

(Please turn to page 125.)

## SHARK FISHING . . .

*(Continued from page 121)*

father then began to pull the rope. In a considerably short time the dead shark which was bigger than our vinta was brought to the side of our boat. "This is the biggest shark I have so far caught," said my father.

I noticed that the shark was hit on its side about three feet from its tail, and about one-fourth of the harpoon was buried into the flesh of the fish.

Sailing homeward was quite slow because besides the fact that we were dragging along a very heavy weight, there was no favorable wind. I had to help my father row the boat. "Father," I said, "I wish that the shark swam homeward. He would have saved us a lot of time."

My father chuckled because he thought that my remark was clever.

Even if I had to help him row, I didn't feel so weary because I knew that the shark would give us some money, and my father would buy me a new pair of trousers and a shirt, as he had promised. "This is my first trip with him, and I have brought him good luck," I said to myself. "And so I can also ask him for a pair of shoes."

We arrived home two days later. My mother

## THE TYRANT . . .

*(Continued from page 116)*

tail, and weigh about 500 pounds.

The chief difference between the tiger and the lion is in the coloring of their skin and the fact that the tiger has no mane. The skeletons of the two animals are almost exactly alike.

In habits, also, the two animals are much alike, except that tigers, unlike lions, hardly ever hunt in pairs. Tigers are also good swimmers, which is unusual with the cat family. If a tiger is hard pressed by a hunter, the animal will sometimes climb a tree.

Tigers prefer to hunt at night by stalking their prey, but they also prowl about in the daylight. They prey upon all kinds of wild animals, and destroy a large number of cattle, horses, sheep, goats, and other domestic animals. A cattle-eating tiger will kill an ox or a cow about every five days, or from 60 to 70 a year.

Unless he is cornered or greatly provoked, the tiger avoids the elephant, and seldom attacks a large buffalo or a bear. In fights with a bear or a buffalo he is frequently killed. In beamed with pride and joy when I told him about the exciting trip.

some respects the tiger is cowardly. He will eat decaying flesh rather than attack an enemy that is capable of making a successful defense. In the search for prey and in efforts to avoid hunters, the tiger is cunning and bold. In his native wild state he is the most blood-thirsty of beasts, and in captivity is treacherous.

It is said that when a tiger once tastes human blood, the animal becomes a confirmed man-eater, preferring human flesh to all others. Man-eating tigers are greatly feared by the natives of India.

A case is recorded in which a single tiger killed 127 persons in a single year. On an average 1,000 people are killed each year by tigers, mostly in India. The young tigers are far more destructive than the old ones.

Tiger cubs number from two to five in a litter, but more than two are seldom reared to maturity. The cubs remain with the mother until the third year while she teaches them to hunt.

The tiger will be found upon the earth long after the lion has disappeared. He is far more clever at hiding, he is a more skillful hunter, he is less given to taking foolish risks, and

*(Please turn to page 126.)*