

## Level 3 Fiction – Reckless

Kane took the long way home from school – around the bay. He dragged his feet putting it off as long as he could. By the old wharf, he stopped to pick out rocks flat ones for skimming, the stones warm. It took a few tries to get one to jump. The stone leaped over the swell like a kahawai.

Then Kane’s eyes were drawn across the water, out beyond the few boats moored in the bay. Some people were flopping around in the sea by the headland. Shrieking and laughing, the sound carried in broken pieces on the wind. A wave of worry flowed through Kane’s chest. Did they know what was below them, gliding in the shadows?

Kane knew. He’d been out with Uncle Max in his tinny last month. Uncle Max had taken some of his friends fishing. Kane had baited hooks and washed down the boat afterwards for pocket money. When Uncle Max had dropped anchor to gut the fish they’d caught the sharks came up quick. Maybe four, maybe more – it was hard to tell because they were circling. Bronzies nearly as long as the tinny was wide. Right there by the headland. Exactly where the swimmers were now.

“Do the sharks always come?” one of Uncle Max’s friends had asked.

“We all clean our fish here,” Uncle Max had replied. “They come.”

Written by Paul Mason, featured in School Journal November 2014