

**BLOOD IN THE WATER**

**--Graham Vivian Lancaster**

Supposedly old diver on refresher course  
Risking everyone's lives  
With cheap kiddies make do equipment  
Drops bum first legs up  
In uncontrolled freefall  
Down to look  
Where I lie on the ledge watching  
Sharks two meters away  
Desperately trying to arrest  
His freefall with flailing arms  
Looking down  
At a two meter long fish beneath  
A panicked foot lashes out  
In the numbness of a wet pillow smash  
As my arm whips up to protect my face  
Catching my mask as it rips free  
And his heel smashes into  
The demand valve  
Ramming it back into my mouth  
And teeth  
Stunned  
But survival instinct is strong  
I replace my mask  
Blow the water out so I can see again  
Metallic copper fills my mouth

I'm breathing out flecks  
Of blood in the water  
Sharks are interested  
So I move quickly away  
But they follow  
Edging in for a close look  
As I hold my breath  
Swallowing blood  
Looking into the dead grey eyes  
Swimming slowly past.

Bruised eyes and nose  
My tongue discovers three cuts.  
Reckoning will come  
When we get back on the boat

**Bio:**

South African Writers Circle Quill Award winning author and 2010 American Pushcart Poetry nominee, 2010 English Academy of Southern Africa poetry judge, 2011 English academy of Southern Africa Gold Medal proposal, he writes in ten genres from the many eclectic facets of his adventurous life. Widely published in anthologies, with thirty five published books of his own, his teenage adventure series and poetry are being taught in schools.

One of his poems was chosen to represent South Africa at the Dec 2010 World Poetry Festival in Canada.

Translated into Spanish, Romanian, Hindi and French, read on radio in Argentina and Puerto Rico. Published in *Fullosia Press*, *A Hudson View*, *Labyrinth*, *Convorbini Literare*, *Seventh*

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