



TOM ROLFES (RIGHT) WAS SURFING IN FIJI WITH HIS SON TIM (LEFT) WHEN THE PAIR AIDED A LOCAL WHO'D BEEN ATTACKED BY A TRIO OF HUNGRY SHARKS.

ONE DENTIST, THREE SHARKS, A MAULED ARM, AND SIX FEET OF FIJIAN PRINCESS

The next time you need a root canal, or for that matter, are bitten by a gang of sharks, go see Tom Rolfes in Newport Beach. Word is he works wonders. In the realm of "there's no way this really happened," here's his story:

After a day of surfing an empty reef on a desolate Fijian island with his son, Tim, and two friends, Rolfes, a dentist and lifelong surfer, was told a local fisherman had just been attacked by sharks. When he arrived on the scene, he couldn't believe what he saw. Amid a heap of bloody towels lay a man writhing in pain, his left arm mangled beyond recognition.

"I couldn't believe it ... his arm looked really bad," said Rolfes. "I knew we were a long way from a hospital."

Now enter the 6' 2" Fijian princess. "I had no idea who she was," said Rolfes. "But she overheard me ask if my son and I could help. From then on she took over the show, barking out orders at the crew of Fijian onlookers and camp workers to 'move this, grab that, or clean this off.' **Blood was just pouring out of the guy so I used every stitch I had in my medicine bag.**"

Hours later, the injured man was finally

taken to the hospital. It was then that Rolfes learned the whole story: While spear fishing, the fisherman, Rutu Meli, had three sharks attack a fish he'd shot.

Things got vicious and Meli's arm was torn up in the process. After a struggle, he made the swim back to the boat and to help. (By the way, he landed the fish.)

A week later, Meli came back to the island to thank Rolfes and, apparently, the princess had worked her magic on the locals again. "They had a ceremony," said Rolfes. "It was pretty cool — they gave me some coconut oil, a mat, and some kawa. I was just glad to help."
— Jeff Mull