

WHALE OF A TALE  
EPISODE: A STACK O' SEALS

Written by

Taylor Peck

taylormariepeck@gmail.com  
903.209.8996

Concept:

"You are never too small to make a difference" - Greta Thurnberg, COP24 in 2018

*Whale of a Tale* dives into the adventures of a crew of Australian researchers following a small pod of humpback whales as they migrate across the Pacific ocean. Penelope (7) and her mother Dr. Skyler study the whales while their Maori friends, siblings Finn (6) and Maia (7) and their grandfather Captain Hau sail the research vessel, an eco-conscious catamaran named Whale of a Tale.

Because of the close bond between the crew kids and the whales Odis, Cici, and calf Macho, the kids are allowed a special privilege not offered to other humans- the ability to breathe underwater by swimming inside giant air bubbles blown from the whales' blowholes. Using their special gift, Penelope, Maia, and Finn help keep the whales safe from the dangers that threaten them along their migration route, like boat traffic, entanglement, pollution, and whalers, as well as learn about the oceanic cultures they encounter and the exciting wonders of the ocean ecosystems.

As they learn to become better stewards of the whales' environment, they learn lessons that help them become better friends, siblings, and helpers in their everyday, amazing life.

Consisting of episodic 11 minute episodes, *Whale of a Tale* is best suited for children in the 5-7 bridge age range. Comparable shows include adventure and nature-centric shows like the *Octonauts*, *The Wild Thornberrys*, *Ridley Jones*, and *Molly of Denali*.

The show uses real-world technology and biology, and the solutions to problems the characters encounter are solved by learning what the ecosystem needs and responding with empathy and teamwork. *Whale of a Tale* is upbeat, action-packed, and hopeful about our future.

EXT. WHALE OF A TALE RESEARCH CATAMARAN - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. KIDS CABIN - DAY

PENELOPE (7, science-minded), MAIA (7, diver/whale expert), and FINN (6, sailor-in-training) are below deck playing a game of GO FISH. Penelope and Maia sit on the tiny bed next to the porthole while Finn swings from his hammock.

PENELOPE

Do you have any Queens?

FINN

Go fish!

Penelope groans.

MAIA

I thought you had him that time!

Dr. Skyler CALLS from above deck.

DR. SKYLER (O.S.)

Crew! Who's on chum bucket duty?

Penelope and Maia quickly put their pointer fingers on their noses.

PENELOPE

Not me.

MAIA

Not me.

Finn puts his finger on his nose, but he's not quick enough.

PENELOPE

Go fish, Finn.

Finn groans.

INT. ABOVE DECK SALOON - DAY

The kids rush up the stairs and immediately double over and hold their noses, gagging. CAPTAIN HAU (Maia and Finn's grandfather, Maori, jolly) holds the CHUM BUCKET and DR. SKYLER (Penelope's mother, researcher) opens the doors to air the boat out.

PENELOPE

Ugh, I'll never get used to that smell!

CAPTAIN HAU  
What? You don't like the fresh  
aroma of fish guts?

DR. SKYLER  
You're the only one that does,  
Captain.

FINN  
Can someone hold my nose while I  
hold the bucket?

MAIA  
Just go!

PENELOPE  
Before we all expire.

FINN  
Ok, ok!

Finn grabs the chum bucket and heads for the deck.

EXT. CATAMARAN DECK - CONTINUOUS

Finn dumps the chum bucket overboard. He watches the chum  
float down.

FINN  
So... disgusting...

DR. SKYLER  
Rinse it out good!

Finn leans over to rinse out the bucket, but a SEAL pops out  
of the water right where he's headed. He startles.

FINN  
Ah!

Penelope and Maia rush over.

PENELOPE  
A seal!

MAIA  
It's SO cute!

The seal munches on the chum.

DR. SKYLER  
Glad to see someone's enjoying our  
waste!

Another seal pops up and starts munching.

FINN  
Another one!

Penelope points.

PENELOPE  
And another one!

Suddenly there are SEVERAL SEALS surrounding the boat, playing and munching until the chum is gone.

FINN  
Can we play with them? Please!

DR. SKYLER  
Okay, but we've got to get sailing soon or the whales will leave us behind. They've got migrating to do.

MAIA  
Yippee!

Penelope, Finn, and Maia throw on their life jackets and plunge into the water.

The seals ARF! ARF! ARF! In excitement as Captain Hau tosses a BEACH BALL in after them.

CAPTAIN HAU  
They'll love this!

EXT. OCEAN SURFACE - CONTINUOUS

A seal leaps out of the water and bounces the beach ball.

Finn bounces it and another seal tosses it back.

Maia volleys it and another seal slaps it back.

Suddenly, the water underneath them rushes away and the kids find themselves on the wide back of ODIS (giant papa whale), surfacing in the middle of the party and blowing a cloud of mist.

MAIA  
Odis!

PENELOPE  
Did you feel left out?

FINN  
You can play too!

The kids dive off Odis's back into the water, but are immediately lifted up out of it again on the back of CICI (graceful mama whale).

PENELOPE  
Cici, stop!

FINN  
You're interrupting our game!

They dive off again, but are nosed through the water by little MACHO (spunky whale calf), who drops them off at the ladder.

MAIA  
Hey! What's the big idea?

FINN  
We don't want to get back on the boat!

PENELOPE  
We want to play! Don't be jealous.

Dr. Skyler and Captain Hau help the kids up the ladder, back onto the boat.

EXT. CATAMARAN DECK - CONTINUOUS

DR. SKYLER  
I don't know if they're jealous, Penelope, they may have a reason they want you on the boat instead of in the water.

PENELOPE  
What reason? To ruin the fun?

Penelope throws her beach ball out into the water in frustration, but instead of landing with a splash, it POPS. On a FIN. A sharp SHARK FIN. The kids are thrilled.

MAIA  
Whoa! A shark!

FINN  
Wow! I've never seen one so close!

CAPTAIN HAU  
See?

PENELOPE

Ohh...the whales were just trying to keep us safe!

DR. SKYLER

They probably didn't want you mistaken for food.

MAIA

Are the whales in danger?

DR. SKYLER

Sharks tend to leave whales alone-- you don't pick a fight with someone bigger than you.

FINN

But what about the seals?

DR. SKYLER

Well... they may be in trouble.

Suddenly A SEAL lands smack dab in the middle of the conversing group with a SPLAT and an "ARF!"

MAIA

Hey, little guy? Where did you come from?

FINN

Look out below!

ANOTHER SEAL lands on the boat. The crew looks out and sees Odis's tail flipping a THIRD SEAL out of the water and on to the boat.

PENELOPE

They're saving the seals, just like they saved us!

Cici flips a FOURTH SEAL onto the boat.

CAPTAIN HAU

That's great for the seals... but how many guests should we expect? The boat won't hold all of them.

FINN

There's not that many, there's only-

They look in the water and see at least THIRTY MORE SEALS swimming around the boat, dodging the zigzagging shark fin.

FINN (CONT'D)  
Ok, we may have a problem.

MAIA  
We need to get rid of that shark.

PENELOPE  
I think it's time to test out the  
Electroshark-o-meter.

FINN  
The *what*?

Dr. Skyler moves Finn aside as ANOTHER SEAL comes raining down on what would have been his head.

DR. SKYLER  
The Electroshark-o-meter-- it's a device that sends out an electric pulse that confuses the shark's ampullae of Lorenzini--

FINN  
Ambulance of Linguini?

DR. SKYLER  
Ampullae of Lorenzini. It's the sensors in a shark's nose that help it find food.

Behind them, a SEAL presses a button with its nose and the MAINSAIL starts to raise.

PENELOPE  
So the electrodes mess up the--

MAIA  
--Ambaby Lamborghini--

DR. SKYLER  
--Ampullae of Lorenzini--

PENELOPE  
--so that the shark reacts like we did when we smelled the chum bucket and goes away.

CAPTAIN HAU  
Duck!

FINN  
Where?



DR. SKYLER

Get down!

The BOOM SWINGS wildly as the crew DUCKS, narrowly missing their heads.

CAPTAIN HAU

Hey mate, get away from there!

Captain Hau tries to shoo the seal away from the controls, but TRIPS over another one.

The deck is now COVERED IN SEALS, with more being flipped every second.

DR. SKYLER

How many seals can we hold, Captain?

CAPTAIN HAU

Not many more than this--

Captain Hau leans over the edge to check the water level.

CAPTAIN HAU (CONT'D)

We're already too low as it is.

DR. SKYLER

I'll get the Electroshark-o-meter--

PENELOPE

Here it comes!

The shark fin zigzags past the boat, spooking the seals. They all flop to the other side.

CAPTAIN HAU

No, no no!

The boat tips, listing to the STARBOARD side and the crew grabs on to things to keep from falling over.

DR. SKYLER

Hang on!

The whales toss a WHOLE PILE of seals on the PORT side and the balance evens out, but now there is no clear deck space.

CAPTAIN HAU

We can't take any more seals, we'll go under. Dr. Skyler, can you hold the wheel while I drop the anchor?

DR. SKYLER

If I can get over there! It's like wading through jello... or seals.

Dr. Skyler fights her way over to the WHEEL.

PENELOPE

We can get the Electroshark-ometer!

DR. SKYLER

Thank you! It's the yellow device in the hold below your cabin.

PENELOPE

Got it!

Penelope, Finn, and Maia scramble over seals and force the SALOON DOORS open.

INT. CATAMARAN SALOON - CONTINUOUS

The kids run into the saloon and down the stairs.

INT. KIDS CABIN - CONTINUOUS

The kids run into their cabin and LIFT A HATCH to reveal a storage compartment.

PENELOPE

Ok... yellow box... yellow box. It's too dark, I can't see anything.

Maia tosses Penelope a FLASHLIGHT.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

Thanks!

Penelope turns it on and it SHINES right in Finn's eyes.

FINN

Aggghh! You're confusing my ampickle of Linoleum!

MAIA

Amputate of Zamboni.

PENELOPE

Ampullae of Lorenzini. And you don't have those. Not whales, not seals. Only sharks.

MAIA

There it is!

Penelope shines the light on a YELLOW BOX. Maia hops in and lifts it up and out of the compartment.

PENELOPE

Perfect. Now all we have to do is--

FINN

Whoa! There's the shark!

Finn points across the below deck hallway to the PORTHOLE on the opposite side. They watch the shark swim by.

PENELOPE

Uh oh. You know what that means.

FINN

What?

MAIA

The seals are coming to our side.  
Run!

The kids start running, but before they reach the stairs, the boat tips heavily to PORT and they fall over, slipping back into the cabin. Finn FALLS in the open storage compartment.

FINN

Ack! It's wet!

They hear an engine sound turning on.

FINN (CONT'D)

The bilge pump just turned on. The boat is taking on water!

MAIA

It's tipping too much!

PENELOPE

Wait. Did anyone close the saloon doors?

FINN

No.

MAIA

No. Why?

ARF ARF ARF! Seals start spilling down the stairs into the hallway, blocking their passage.

PENELOPE  
We're trapped!

FINN  
Get me out of here, it's filling  
up!

Penelope and Maia pull Finn out of the storage compartment,  
but it's filling up with water fast.

PENELOPE  
Quick! Climb into the hammock!

They climb into Finn's HAMMOCK.

MAIA  
Help! Help!

EXT. CATAMARAN DECK - DAY

Dr. Skyler and Captain Hau are straining at the wheel, trying  
to keep the boat from capsizing. They can't hear the muffled:

ALL KIDS (O.S.)  
Help us! Help!

INT. KIDS CABIN - MOMENTS LATER

The WATER is now up to the BED.

FINN  
What do we do?

MAIA  
We could phone a friend.

PENELOPE  
Better be a big friend.

FINN  
To the porthole!

The kids TAP loudly on the PORTHOLE.

Through the porthole they see Macho coming to check out the  
sound. They mime pushing the boat by pressing their noses  
against the porthole.

MAIA  
Come on! Come on! Give us a push,  
Macho!

FINN

You can do it!

Macho PUSHES up against the boat with all his might. It LIFTS the boat slightly, the water level going down a little.

MAIA

*Tino pai!* Now we need your parents!

FINN

Come on Cici! Come on Odis!

Cici approaches the boat, and puts her weight into it. It lifts just a little bit more.

PENELOPE

Where are you, big guy?

MAIA

He's probably making sure the last seals are safe.

PENELOPE

But what about us! Odis, come on!

Odis appears in the porthole. The kids CHEER. He CHARGES up against the boat and with a jolt, it rights itself again. The seals TUMBLE, now evenly distributed.

MAIA

Thank you!

EXT. CATAMARAN DECK - MOMENTS LATER

The kids climb out onto the deck, soaked, but safe, holding the yellow box.

Dr. Skyler dives at them.

DR. SKYLER

There you are! Not a moment too soon.

MAIA

Thank the whales.

PENELOPE

Let's get this thing turned on.

The kids UNPACK the DEVICE: a Roomba shaped head attached to a long, thick cord with two sensors. Dr. Skyler TURNS IT ON and it makes a whirring sound. They attach it to the side of the boat.

DR. SKYLER  
Throw the cord into the water.

Penelope tosses it out into the water.

DR. SKYLER (CONT'D)  
Now watch.

The kids watch as the SHARK FIN approaches the ship, then suddenly, as though it ran into a wall, TURNS AROUND, and with a great SPLASH, ZIPS OFF into the distance.

CAPTAIN HAU  
Ok, seals, the shark is gone, now  
*haere ra*, GET OFF MY BOAT!

Captain Hau starts shoving seals off. Others jump off.

The whole crew shoos the seals off the boat.

DR. SKYLER  
Shoo!

MAIA  
Shoo!

The ship rocks back and forth as the weight shifts.

Finally, there are no more seals. The crew collapses and takes a few recovery breaths.

DR. SKYLER  
Ok! Boat chores done, seal and  
shark removal complete, shall we  
continue our journey?

A whale SPOUT in the distance catches their attention. Then another. The whales are moving away from the boat.

FINN  
Hey! Why are the whales going that  
way?

PENELOPE  
Aren't they supposed to be going  
South?

MAIA  
I think they want to follow the  
seals to shore and make sure  
they're safe!

DR. SKYLER

When the seals are far enough  
beyond the range of our  
Electroshark-o-meter then they'll  
be in danger again. They must want  
to protect their new friends.

CAPTAIN HAU

Soo... What's our heading?

PENELOPE

I say we escort some seals to  
shore.

DR. SKYLER

Where the whales go, we go.

CAPTAIN HAU

To your stations, crew!

The crew runs to their respective stations.

EXT. CATAMARAN - FROM ABOVE

From a BIRD'S EYE VIEW, the ship follows behind a pod of seals, with the three whales on either side. Behind the ship is the floating Electroshark-o-meter, and a shark circling at a distance, bonking into the electric waves in a fruitless effort to reach the protected seals. In the near distance is the rocky shoreline.

From the ship we hear:

DR. SKYLER (O.S.)

Boy oh boy. Call me a shark,  
because I've sure scrambled by  
Ambaloney of Limousine.

ALL KIDS (O.S.)

Ampullae of Lorenzini!

DR. SKYLER (O.S.)

Like I said.

END OF EPISODE