

Welcome anyone! This is one of our unfinished episodes. The script is mostly unrevised, so any grammar check/sensitivity reading will have come after. You may see some highlighted parts, which are usually notes to check accuracy or pronunciation notes for our cast. Here, you get to see our writer's stream of thought, so please be kind and remember that what you see in the final product is never a first draft! With that, enjoy the story!

EPISODE 9 - WHALE HUNT

[RADIO TUNE-IN SOUND]

CHARLIE. Kass? Are you there?

KASS. Oh, hold on. Charlie, I'm here.

CHARLIE. Oh good. Hi.

KASS. Hey. I uh, heard about your job. Sorry about that.

CHARLIE. Oh, yeah. It's alright, I'll figure it out. That's actually what I wanted to talk about, if you have a minute?

KASS. Yeah, yeah of course!

CHARLIE. Well, uh, two things. One, I don't really know how we'll be able to keep communicating, I won't have access to this room after today.

KASS. Actually, um. I can hear you in other places too.

CHARLIE. What, really?

KASS. Yeah.

CHARLIE. How?

KASS. Like I said, it just comes through Arcadia.

CHARLIE. Right. Weird magic thing.

KASS. Radio.

CHARLIE. Okay, so maybe that's not too big of a concern. Good. Great.

KASS. What was the other thing?

CHARLIE. Oh, ah. Hah. This is a little awkward.

KASS. What is it?

CHARLIE. Mm. I just don't know how to tell Peaches I got fired.

KASS. Just... tell them?

CHARLIE. But they're going to want to help, or offer to let me stay with them or do some other kind thing I won't know how to accept or deal with. I'm stable enough for now, I don't need to lean on them, and I also don't want them to think I'm expecting them to help me, you know?

KASS. Woah, Charlie. You're way overthinking this. Just tell them. Be honest. If you let them know that you'll be okay on your own, and you *will* actually be okay, they'll understand. I'm sure they will.

CHARLIE. Probably...

KASS. Will you be okay? It's also fine to ask for help-

CHARLIE. I will be. I made preparations in case this ever happened.

KASS. Well, if I can do anything as well, let me know as always.

CHARLIE. Thanks. I'll tell them tomorrow. Uh, could I try and contact you when I get back to my place? I want to see if your magic listening radio can go there.

KASS. *(laughing)* Alright. Yeah, try and get in contact. I'll see if I can connect on my end.

CHARLIE. Cool. Bye Kass.

KASS. Talk to you soon.

The Gannon diet is just as varied as its landscapes. Alongside the community gardens, diets are often supplemented with foraging of the natural resources around them. Some Gannon diets were largely plant-based, with only a small portion of it being [WORD] by hunting or family livestock.

However, the cold landscapes of Island 8 left much of the countryside devoid of plant life for a significant portion of the year. Certain portions of the land were exposed to warmer fluctuations of temperature, allowing for a longer foraging period, but Malik's village was on the rocky northern coasts where no such fluctuations came. Much of their food came from wrestling it from the slate blue waters of the ocean. And today they were hunting a whale.

Malik looked up to the sky. It was a dome of solid grey, the same color of slush in the warmer months before it became brown with mud. There wasn't enough sun to use the solar sails they had traded for at Island 7. Any movement they made would have to be with the oars. Nothing that they weren't used to. Sails could get in the way of more precise movement, but they were at least nice to have as a backup in case they had to move fast. Malik

caught how Lizzie's eyes kept flicking nervously to the northern horizon.

The canoe they were in was sizable enough to fit the eight or so people of their hunting party alongside their gear. Rope, harpoons, and some rations to tide them over through the hunt.

Next to Malik, Yrsa's lips were set into a tight line as her oar sliced through the water with single-minded determination. Yrsa had moved in from another village on Island 8. This was her first whale hunt with the community. There had been a bit of hesitation allowing her on the hunt, but Yrsa was about as strong as a bear and no one could really argue she wasn't an asset to the rowing team. There was gossip among folks that she would be able to row for two men on her own. Watching her now, Malik might believe that.

The sky above is clear and dotted with clouds. The water is calm, accompanied by a light breeze. It is a good day, weather wise, which makes it ideal for embarking on a whale hunt.

That is one of the first facts Malik learned when he was taken on his first whale hunt when he was 17, a rite of passage in his village. His father, who had taken him on that first hunt, had told him weather was an important factor when deciding on a day. Go when the time was right, lest a storm roll in and delay you for who knows how long. And if you happened to be running low on food, you couldn't afford a setback like that. Living on an

island that had a very meat based diet, these sort of things were vital to the people that lived there.

Malik had been on several of these hunts since his first so long ago, and by this point he had plenty of experience. Most everyone else on the crew were experienced members as well. This time, however, was a little bit different. This time he had not one, but two newcomers to the crew on board.

The first was his nephew, Katjuk. He was at last at the age where he could participate in this important ritual, and as such, this was his first hunt. He was currently looking out over the water; watching sea birds fly and watching the land grow smaller the further the boat moved away. The second was a young woman by the name of Yrsa, currently on rowing duty. She hadn't originally been on the crew roster, but had stepped forward to take the place of another who could not make it. She was new to the experience as a whole, having come from a village that did not partake in whale hunts at all, but had showed a willingness to learn and to assist where she could.

Malik called out to Yrsa, asking if she was faring well with rowing. She paused briefly to give him a thumbs up and returned to her task. Malik then turned his attention to his nephew, crossing over to the side of the boat he was currently at. Katjuk looked unsure about what he should be doing, so Malik figured that until a whale was found, he might as well teach Katjuk how this all worked, like Malik's father did for him on his first hunt.

Though Katjuk is probably aware of this, Malik starts by informing him of the purpose of why they are out here, or at least the basics. He tells him about how you need to be mindful

of the weather when choosing a day. Tells him the roles of everyone in the crew. Katjuk listens, paying attention to what he's being told. He asks Malik if he has a specific role in all of this, and Malik suggests that if he can keep an eye out for any whales that would be helpful. He then explains to Katjuk what to look for when looking for a whale. Katjuk assures him, although a bit hesitantly, that he'll do his best. Malik knows he will.

Malik is happy his nephew has agreed to come along, and there's a sense of pride with being able to bring him onboard for such an important event. It wasn't part of the plan originally, but he's happy it's worked out this way.

Now they just need to find a whale, while the weather was still good like this, and while there was still daylight.

* * *

BEGINNING OF SEGMENT [1]

[OFFICE SOUNDS. A DOOR OPENS.]

ASPHODEL. We need the script for the anti-bullying campaign by the end of the day, today. No later.

EMPLOYEE. Of course, Ms. Russel.

ASPHODEL. Get to work then.

[FOOTSTEPS, THEN THE DOOR CLOSSES. THE SOUNDS ARE MUFFLED A BIT. THE PHONE RINGS.]

ASPHODEL. Great.

[SHE PICKS UP THE PHONE.]

ASPHODEL. Yes, I am busy. *(beat)* Madame Russel has told you-
(beat) I don't care what your workers think. They aren't being paid to have *opinions*, they're being paid to build the stupid thing. *(beat)* I don't care. That's your job, not mine.

[THE PHONE SLAMS DOWN ON THE RECEIVER JUST AFTER THE DOOR OPENS.]

AXEL. Am I interrupting?

ASPHODEL. *(sigh)* No, Ms. Moore. Come in.

AXEL. I got your schedule sorted out, and I felt the need to remind you that you have a meeting upstairs in five minutes.

ASPHODEL. Oh dock it, I almost forgot. Thank you.

AXEL. Of course.

[A COUPLE BEEPS FROM THE PHONE ON THE DESK.]

AXEL. You also have someone waiting on the phone. Are you going to answer it, or should I tell them to call back later?

ASPHODEL. *(irritated)* Tell them not to call me again this week. I hung up on them for a reason.

AXEL. Is it about the dam?

[ASPHODEL SHUFFLES SOME PAPERS.]

ASPHODEL. That is none of your business.

AXEL. It IS my job to know who's calling you, and why.

ASPHODEL. It is, I'm sorry. I'm a bit stressed.

AXEL. What do they want?

ASPHODEL. The lead engineer is getting pushback from his underlings and for some reason he's decided that that's *my* problem. I should have gone into music.

AXEL. Do you still play?

ASPHODEL. Yes, of course.

AXEL. Then you still could, someday.

[PAUSE]

ASPHODEL. Do you?

AXEL. Do I what?

ASPHODEL. Do you still play the trumpet?

AXEL. Oh gods, I don't think I've touched one since grade school.

ASPHODEL. What, really? You were good!

AXEL. I- no I wasn't.

ASPHODEL. Well, no, you weren't.

AXEL. I have other skills!

ASPHODEL. Uh-huh? Such as...

AXEL. Hey, don't you have a meeting to get to?

ASPHODEL. I think YOU have a meeting to get to.

AXEL. I think a meeting has to you to get.

ASPHODEL. I think getting has you to meet.

AXEL. Or does meeting have getting to think.

ASPHODEL. Maybe having has thinking to get. Never thought about that, huh?

AXEL. Babe, I thought about that for breakfast.

ASPHODEL. I'm going to be late.

AXEL. Yeah, you should run. I've sent your notes to your tap-pad.

ASPHODEL. You're a tide gift. Bye.

[ASPHODEL RUSHES OUT OF THE ROOM]

[END OF BUG SEGMENT]

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Some time passes on the water. The sky has grown partly cloudy, the wind has picked up from the gentle breeze it had been back on land, but the waters are still relatively normal.

Katjuk is the one that spots a whale first, calling out the sighting to the rest of the crew and pointing to somewhere in the water. Malik looks over the side of the boat and in the direction that his nephew is pointing. Searching the surface of the water, he spots a shape under the surface. It looks sort of like a grey blob from this vantage point, but Malik is able to recognize it as the shape of a sleeping whale.

With a grin, he pats Katjuk on the shoulder and praises him for spotting the whale. The boy has a keen eye; a good skill to have for these hunts. Letting him be a lookout was a good choice.

Malik directs the crew to row the boat as close as they can without waking the whale. It's a difficult and careful balance; to not wake the whale, but at the same time trying to get close

enough that the kill will be easier. Also if they can get this done without waking the whale, this will go a lot smoother.

Once the rowers get the boat in position, Malik gets one of the harpooning spears and gets close to the edge of the boat.

Locating the whale within the water, he tightens his grip on the spear and readies his aim. He has to be precise. He has to be swift. If he can land this shot, then they will have what they came for and the hunt will have been a success. It will mean a great deal to those back home.

Suddenly, just as he's about to throw his spear, Malik catches movement in the water; from below. He holds, spear still at the ready, and scans the water. The waves might have been playing tricks on his eyes. Then he sees movement again, and realizes it's the whale. Yrsa, who had been watching this all from her position at the oars, also notices, calling out that she thinks the whale has woken up.

It's as she said this that the whole boat shudders and rocks. The whale had come close and brushed up against the boat, meaning that it's definitely awake now. A moment later Katjuk catches sight of the whale again, telling Malik it's moving away from the boat. The only thing they can do now is give chase.

Setting the spear aside, Malik gives the order to follow the whale, and asking Katjuk to keep an eye out for the whale as well. This isn't how Malik was hoping things would go, as this made things more difficult for their hunt. At least the stronger winds are moving with them as they give chase and will help them keep up with the whale.

The stronger wind does work to their advantage, and the rowers work the oars as hard as they can, as they'll need to get

alongside the whale now to be able to have a chance at getting it. Malik has faith in his crew though, and this wouldn't be the first time a hunt hasn't gone according to plan. Experience has taught them to be prepared for these situations.

After some minutes of attempting to keep up with the whale, Malik notices something concerning. At some point during their time out here finding the whale and then having to chase after it, there's been a change in the weather and sea conditions. It's not just that the wind had gotten stronger since leaving the shore. The water has also gotten a bit rougher and grey clouds are starting to cover more of the sky.

It occurs to Malik that there might be a storm developing, which had not been expected today. If that was the case, this could get bad.

With this in mind, Malik tells the rowers to pause. They give him confused looks, but comply anyway. A rower named Lusa asks why they've stopped; if something is wrong.

"The weather," He starts to say. "Something's changed-" And he stops there, trying to gather the right words.

Malik is torn. Going headlong into a possible storm would be bad and put the whole crew at risk. They're vulnerable out here with only this boat separating them from the ocean depths. But on the other hand, if they turn back now, this will all be for nothing. This will delay getting a vital necessity for the village. Catching even just one whale will provide enough food for months. That's why these hunts are so important. They had to make this hunt because the food stores would be starting to run low soon.

It's either take a risk, or turn back and forfeit much needed food resources. He knows what he should choose, thinking of everyone back home in the village, but it's unfair to impose that decision upon the crew without letting them have a say in it. They should make this choice together.

So, Malik addresses the crew. He reiterates the reason they're out here; to bring food back for the village. But he informs them that given the shift in the weather conditions, it's very possible they could be sailing right into a storm if they continue to chase after the whale. While he is of the opinion the situation regarding food is too important to ignore, he will not force them to continue. He doesn't want anyone getting hurt... or worse. Especially with his own nephew out here with him.

After a moment of silence, one of the crew speaks up, saying that he knew what he was signing up for when he came out here. Others, including Yrsa, echo similar sentiments and ultimately agree to keep going, for their home that so desperately needs this catch. Malik looks to Katjuk, wanting to hear his opinion, and slowly, he nods, saying he agrees with everyone else. He understands the why they are here.

So it's decided, and Malik gives to order to continue the hunt. They are going to find a whale, for the village.

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AXEL. Kass?

KASS. Hey, Axel. What's going on?

AXEL. I need advice.

KASS. Well, Arcadia seems to be the hotline for that today. Show your code.

AXEL. Huh?

KASS. Oh, it just means you can tell me, I'm listening.

AXEL. Oh, okay. Uh, well. I have this friend. Sort of. We're not really friends...

KASS. Asphodel?

AXEL. Yeah. Of course you know her.

KASS. Only a little.

AXEL. Well, she's, um. She's being nice to me.

KASS. Yeah?

AXEL. And that's... weird, right?

KASS. Axel-

AXEL. I mean, it makes sense. I'm her employee. She's got to be nice to me or I'll want to quit, right? But she's not nice to her other employees. Plus, I mean, we've known each other for a really long time. We drifted apart and I'd love to be friends with her again but I feel so awkward about it because I'm only doing this job to get information on her mom.

KASS. That does make things complicated.

AXEL. And, I don't know. Sorren would tell me not to get sidetracked and focus. But I miss her, even though I haven't seen her in years. And we've only really had these weird, hostile, short interactions recently. Till now. And I want to be friends with her again. Is that weird?

KASS. *(quietly)* No, of course not. I mean, you two used to be pretty close, right?

AXEL. Yeah. We were.

KASS. Talk to her, Axel. There's a good chance she wants the same thing. And if not, then you're right back to where you started, right?

AXEL. I guess...

KASS. I know it's not the best outcome, but there's a fair chance she'll respond in a good way. You might as well take it if it's there.

AXEL. But I don't know if she wants to be close again.

KASS. Then ask her.

AXEL. You make it sound easy.

KASS. Mhm.

AXEL. Alright. I'll think about it. Thanks for listening, that was a little more off-topic than what we usually talk about.

KASS. I don't mind, Axel. It's really cool to be able to have normal conversations like this.

AXEL. I agree. Well, I'll let you get back to your radio thing. Sorry if I interrupted anything.

KASS. That's okay, I was just finishing up. It was really good to hear from you.

AXEL. You too. Talk soon. And, thanks.

* * *

The wind is gusty and the water has grown choppy, and yet here they are, searching the rough waters for either the whale they

had been chasing or another whale in general. The rowers are hard at work and Katjuk is scanning the water for any sight of the whale. Malik, meanwhile, stands ready, also looking for the whale.

Malik asks Katjuk if he's seen anything yet, to which his nephew replies that he's made no sighting yet and asks the same of Malik. He hasn't seen anything either. What if another whale doesn't show up? What if a storm actually does come in before they can find one?

Then Katjuk spots the whale again. Malik grabs a harpooning spear and looks for the whale, based on his nephew's direction. He catches a glimpse of movement under the waves and the rowers try to get the boat close to the whale. Once he feels they've gotten within range, Malik tries to get a clear shot. He throws, but the choppy water affects his aim and he misses. He sees the whale change direction, trying to go under to avoid the boat, but as it reappears on the other side of it, the tail hits the underside of the boat.

Malik almost loses his footing, along with his nephew. However, the force of the whale hitting the boat combined with the rough water is enough to send Natsiq, one of the rowers, overboard.

Malik, along with Yrsa who had been closest to Natsiq, spring into action and the two of them work together to retrieve Natsiq. Once they're back aboard, Malik tells Katjuk to get one of the blankets and a thermos of hot water for the rescued rower. His nephew quickly fetches one of the requested blankets for Natsiq, asking if they're okay after having fallen into the water. Natsiq gives a bit of a joking response, but thanks

Katjuk for the blanket. He smiles as he hands over the thermos, saying he's glad they're okay.

Malik wants to comment on his nephew's kindness in making sure their fellow crewmember is okay, but there's no time, as the whale makes another appearance. It's briefly shows up on his side, but moves around the boat just as he grabs a spear. While the whale is still close, he realizes he's not in a good position for this, as the whale has moved to the other side of the boat.

But Yrsa is on the same side as the whale; in perfect position.

Knowing there might not be another chance, Malik says to pass one of the harpooning spears to Yrsa. She looks confused, but Malik, urges her to take the shot. She holds his gaze for a moment before giving a hard nod and taking the spear that's being passed to her. She adjusts her grip, looks for an opening, and then throws the spear in a swift movement.

The spear lands its mark and sticks. A round of cheers goes up from around the boat and a sense of relief passes over Malik. The celebration is brief, as they must still secure the whale; tending the line attached to the harpooning spear to make sure it doesn't slip away. Fortunately, the whale has pulled back in toward the coast, making it easier to finish the work.

Afterward, as the crew is making use of the tide and wind to steer the whale back to shore, Malik takes his nephew aside. There is another thing he much teach him now that this is at its end and their goals have been accomplished.

He tells Katjuk that it is alright to be sad for the whale; it was a living creature they hunted for resources. At the same

time, however, they must be grateful for the food that this whale will provide, and that they all will be returning home safely and successful. He asks Katjuk if he understands, and his nephew replies that he does, and that he too is grateful.

Malik smiles, also grateful that the hunt was successful and that everyone is safe. He's looking forward to get back to shore, to see the look on everyone's faces when they see that they will have food until it's time for another hunt once again.

Notes on the ep:

- Concept: Whale Hunt
 - Big epic thingy like in greek myths
 - Moby dick vibes (but we gotta be distinct enough)
 - Clear beginning/middle/end and conflict
- Conflict:
 - Battle to catch the whale
 - Desire to feed ppl back home
 - food situation a bit dire, and the whale would feed the town for months
 - They've picked a good weather day, may be the last chance for a while before a big storm sets in
 - Island 8 is cold, very meat-based diet
 - Stormy weather!
 - and it's only going to get worse from here, so there's a time constraint
- Plot
 - They set out - scene setting. It's a good day for boating.
 - Malik teacher is nephew, telling him what to expect. Everyone will help with spotting the whale, rowing, cutting up the whale, but Malik will be the one to land the killing blow to make sure it's fair on the whale / successful. (It's a big deal!)
 - They find a whale (the nephew spots it! Win for him), and for some reason the whale wakes up and now they have to chase it. Aw fuck. But the wind picks up and they're able to keep up with it. Action chase!
 - The winds continue to pick up... sea getting choppy... oh no
 - Malik has to make call to keep going and risk getting caught in the storm, or return empty handed. Establish the stakes of needing food, not hunting very often.
 - Malik puts the question to the crew, says he doesn't want anyone getting hurt/dying on this trip, but they trust him and are down to keep going. So he agrees to keep chasing.
 - Storm keeps picking up...
 - The whale brushes against the boat (in combination with the storm) and someone falls overboard!! The person is rescued by the group as a whole but Malik is on the situation right away, and makes sure they're safe.
 - Malik instructs nephew to help warm up the guy, they have a thermos of hot [drink]. (water? tea?) and blankets
 - The whale kill!
 - A moment comes up... Malik is on the other side of the boat but Yrsa is just in the right position. In a last minute change of plans, he yells for her to take the plunge, as they might not get another chance.
 - She successfully makes a clean kill, and they get the whale!!

- Denouement:
 - Sad for the whale's death, grateful for food, relieved to be able to return safely and successfully.
- Characters:
 - Perspective character: Malik (he/him)
 - Seasoned whale hunter - this isn't his first rodeo
 - Yrsa
 - Her first whale hunt - she moved from a village where they don't do whale hunt
 - Very strong - on the rowing team
 - Took the place of a more experienced whale hunter who got sick
 - Malik's nephew
 - Malik's nephew - 16/17 ish
 - First whale hunt - he's basically a trainee. Right of passage thingy.
 - There are other characters, most of them are rowing, they have all been on at least one whale hunt before, probably more.
- Whale hunting
 - The goal is to sneak up on a sleeping whale, which is why they use a rowboat instead of a motorboat.
 - 4-5 ppl rowing
 - Normally you'd only have one new person, this time there's 2 because someone got sick and couldn't make it so they took Yrsa
 - A degree of reverence for the whale
 - Do a little research to be accurate

Episode 9: Gannon

- Radio: whale hunt
- ~~At the start, Charlie calls Kass and rants a bit, asks for advice - how to tell Peaches he's been fired, reveals some insecurities about his leadership skills, etc. Kass is like "why meeeeee" but it's a good character moment.~~
- Bugs: 1) Axel at her job helping Asphodel. Axel fishes.... for information. We see them kind of regaining a bit of their friendship. For a moment the stilted awkwardness falls away and they laugh together/have a good moment. Maybe reminisce on old moments in their friendship?
 - ~~Asphodel is in charge of communications dept. She usually has to communicate with sponsors and businesses, like the construction company working on the dam.~~
- ~~After the gannon bug: Axel also calls the station to ask for advice.~~