

PEARL OF WISDOM

(AN ANIMATED STORY)

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INT. PUBLIC AQUARIUM - NIGHT

Glass encased fish tanks of various shapes and sizes imbedded in concrete walls decorated with ocean themes. All filled with a wide variety of sea creatures and artifacts.

A wide-eyed YOUNG BOY (7) presses his nosed up against the glass of one of the tanks. His MOTHER (30), standing behind him, rests her hands on his shoulders.

MOTHER

C'mon, sweetie. They're closing.

YOUNG BOY

But we still haven't seen the turtles.

MOTHER

Will see them next trip. Promise.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

I hate to do it, but I really have to ask you to leave.

The Woman and Young Boy turn around to meet the source of the voice. It's the AQUARIUM MANAGER (60), fat and bespectacled.

YOUNG BOY

What happened to the red Angel Fish you put in yesterday?

The Aquarium Manager scratches his head.

AQUARIUM MANAGER

Got no idea, son. Every time I put a fish in, it's gone by the next day.

(with a smile)

You ain't stealing them now are ya?

The boy shakes his head. The Aquarium Manager taps the face of his watch.

AQUARIUM MANAGER

Should have locked the doors ten minutes ago.

The Mother nods, takes the Young Boy's hand and slowly escorts him down the corridor allowing him to take one last peak inside each tank as they go.

They arrive at the exit door. The Aquarium Manager shoots them a polite smile as they leave.

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He takes a last glance at the room before flipping off the lights, exiting - locking the door behind him.

INT. AQUARIUM TANK - NIGHT

The same tank the Young Boy had his nosed pressed against. A BLUE BLOWFISH swims in place at the far corner of the tank.

BLUE BLOWFISH
Thank Cod. They're finally gone.

The Blowfish turns. A variety of fish, various shapes and color swarm around him. One of them an ORANGE CLOWNFISH

BLUE BLOWFISH
Where's the new guy?

ORANGE CLOWNFISH
Over there, by the coral.

The Orange Clownfish flaps his tail towards a row of multi-colored coral at the back of the tank.

CORAL AREA

A menacing looking striped JAWFISH pokes around the coral. There's an abrasion on his right gill.

CORNER OF THE TANK

BLUE BLOWFISH
Ugh. Ugly fella.
(at the Clownfish)
Well, it's your turn. Go take care of it.

ORANGE GROUPE
I can't.

BLUE BLOWFISH
Because?

ORANGE GROUPE
I don't like confrontation.
(bubbles in the water)
I'm a pacifish.

The Orange Grouper rolls one eye.

BLUE BLOWFISH
(at all the fish)
Anyone?

(CONTINUED)

Some fish avert their eye. An assortment of flatfish turn from sideways to head-on to conceal themselves. Other fish pretend they're feeding.

BLUE BLOWFISH
Fine, I'll do it myself. Again!

CORAL AREA

The Jawfish still poking around. The Blowfish approaches.

BLUE BLOWFISH
Welcome to the tank.

JAWFISH
(dismissive, gruff)
Uh-huh.

BLUE BLOWFISH
Where do you hail from?

JAWFISH
Fin-land.

BLUE BLOWFISH
A smart ass - eh?
(re: the abrasion)
What happened to your gill there?

JAWFISH
I ran into a buoy just before they caught me. You know, the classic story.

BLUE BLOWFISH
Classic?

JAWFISH
Buoy meets gill. Buoy loses gill.
Buoy --

BLUE BLOWFISH
I get it.

JAWFISH
What's your story?

BLUE BLOWFISH
It's a long one.

CLOWNFISH
Give me the watered down version.

(CONTINUED)

BLUE BLOWFISH

When I was in the open seas, I
spent my time poisoning humans.
Obviously, I don't do that anymore.

JAWFISH

Because...?

BLUE BLOWFISH

It's a tankless job.
(a bubble)
So, you want out of here?

JAWFISH

Yeah, who wouldn't.

BLUE BLOWFISH

Then all you got to do is steal
that clam's pearl.

The Blue Blowfish turns, waves his fin towards:

CLAM CORNER

A large CLAM, perched in the far reaches of the tank. It's
open, revealing a BLUE PEARL.

BACK AT THE CORAL

JAWFISH

Smells fishy.

BLUE BLOWFISH

No, it's true. The manager's a
collector. He let's any fish that
can get that pearl out of this
tank. Puts them back out in the
open sea as a reward.

JAWFISH

Okay, I'll bite.

CLAM CORNER

The Jawfish approaches - stealth manner. Just as he touches
the pearl, the clams jaws shut tight.

The Jawfish wiggles for a bit, then goes limp.

BACK AT THE CORNER OF THE TANK

The Blue Blowfish returns - puffed up in triumph.

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BLUE BLOWFISH
More food for us. One less fish to
feed.

CLOWNFISH
He fell for it?

BLUE BLOWFISH
Hook, line and sinker.

CLOWNFISH
Bless your sole.

FADE OUT