

A Story of an Orphaned Orca



"There goes Boo!" an excited girl said pointing over the railing of the Vashon Island ferry boat. Other people soon crowded the edge of the boat to catch a glimpse of the black and white baby orca swimming in the blue waters not too far away. Frequent riders on the ferry boat had given the orca the nickname of Boo which stands for **B**aby **O**rphan **O**rca. What a baby she was! She was a year old, twelve feet long and weighed close to thousand pounds. Even though she was so big, she was still a baby, on the level of a human toddler, and needed looking after by a mother and relatives.

Weeks ago she swam alone into the area. Her mother apparently died and Boo became separated from her pod or extended family of orcas. Now she was struggling to find food and keep alive. Biologists who approached the baby orca said her breath had an odor that indicated the orca was in poor health. She also had patches of flaky skin, and looked malnourished.

Many people wanted to help the orphan. They didn't want the beautiful whale to waste away and die or go into captivity and live in an aquarium. It had never been tried before but the authorities decided on a risky plan. They would try to return to the baby to her pod that was over 400 miles away and see if an adult whale from her extended family might adopt her.

Without help, Boo would surely perish.

Do you know that souls who haven't been saved by believing in the Lord Jesus are orphans too. Because they haven't placed their faith in the Son of God, they cannot know God as their Father. Not knowing God as their Father they are spiritual orphans. Boo was in trouble and in danger of perishing, and every soul outside of Christ is in danger of perishing in hell. If you are outside of Christ, why don't turn to Him Who is mighty to save. The moment a person believes on the Son of God, the blood that was shed on the cross washes away all their sins, and the Holy Spirit comes into their hearts and brings them into relationship with God their Father. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal 4:6) How happy it is whenever a soul comes to Christ and learns of the Father's love.

Let's find out if Boo's story has a happy ending. You know she had another name also. Scientists keep a close eye on the orcas in the Pacific Northwest. When a new baby is born

they give it a number and also a name. Boo's number was A-73 and they had named her Springer. They could also identify what pod of orcas Springer belonged to because each pod makes a unique chirping sound when they swim. Boo, or Springer as we will now call her, belonged to A-pod which spent a good part of the year off the west coast of Canada in Johnstone Strait.

After weeks of swimming alone, the time to take action to rescue the baby whale finally arrived. Men in a row boat coaxed Springer into a type of fish pen. Orcas are extremely intelligent and when they are young are easily managed. Enclosed in the fish pen, biologists fed her a steady diet and gave her medicine to make her healthy. Being well cared for, she rapidly put on a hundred pounds of weight.

Springer spent a month in the pen growing stronger all the time. At last the whale experts reckoned she was healthy enough to make the long journey. Men in wet suits jumped into the water and guided her into a type of sling. Then Springer was hoisted onto the deck of a waiting boat and placed in a box of water. The fast traveling boat carried the whale the long miles from Puget Sound to Johnstone Strait in Canada. The trip took over fourteen hours. Crewmembers were very careful constantly to moisten Springer's skin with salt water for the entire trip.



At Johnstone Strait, Springer was lowered into another spacious pen. A local group of Native Americans had placed salmon in the pen so Springer would have a nice meal awaiting for her when she arrived. Springer was only there a few days when she heard the calling sound of the her own pod of whales. She became so excited that she "spy hopped", or leapt out of the water and sounded back loudly. The pod of whales was curious and drew closer.

The scientists in charge figured that if ever there was going to be a good time to release Springer it was now. Would Springer find acceptance? There was only one way to find out. They opened the gate and the baby orca swam swiftly out.

For a few days the matter was in doubt. Springer seemed to follow the group of orcas from a distance. Sometimes when she would see a boat she would remember the kindness shown to her by human beings and follow it instead. Then everything changed for the better. A mature female orca without a calf of her own seemed to adopt Springer. They were seen swimming together and on one occasion the female appeared to be scolding Springer when she approached too close to a boat.

Everybody was happy when they saw that Springer was accepted by the extended family of whales and a mother whale was looking out for her. She will likely grow up to be a wild orca swimming with her pod along the Pacific Coast. This is exactly the life that God made for orcas.



God didn't make you to be spiritual orphan either. He made you that you might know and enjoy his love. In order for you to be adopted by God you must believe on the Lord Jesus and come to God the Father through him. You don't have to worry about finding acceptance with God. He says of every person who trusts in his Son, that they are, "accepted in the beloved."(Eph.1:6) Their acceptance is assured because of what the Lord Jesus has done. He is the "beloved", and every believer is "beloved" because of him.

Did you know that all heaven rejoices when one sinner, old or young, repents and finds a new home in God's love? "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." (Luke15:10) The angels know that it is not God's will "that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance".(2 Peter 3:9). Won't you be one that finds his way home to God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ so that heaven has a reason to rejoice?

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