

Of Megalodon and Men – Full Walkthrough

PREFACE (WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?)

This is a tabletop escape room adventure. It's like an escape room, where you search for clues and solve puzzles to escape from a room before time runs out. But, instead of actually going to a room, a "Game Master" (GM) with this script guides players along an adventure using story and description, all from the comfort of your kitchen table, or wherever you want to play. This format was popularized by Dani Siller and Bill Sunderland, hosts of "Escape this Podcast."

As the GM, prepare by reading this entire script thoroughly. Start the adventure by reading the Intro and Surroundings to the players. From there, they can observe and interact with specific things. Actions that further the adventure have scripted responses here; otherwise, ad lib and have fun! Give hints as needed. Allow about 60-90 minutes.

INTRO

"I've got two words for you, my main man," Jimmy says with an awkward-yet-beaming smile. "Megalodon sighting."

You think to yourself: The giant prehistoric sharks that were thought to have gone extinct with the rest of the dinosaurs? "That's right," said Jimmy. He already knows what you are thinking. You guys have been close since you were kids, well before he became an eccentric billionaire. "I've been down there in my new, custom-designed deep-sea submarine. I'm on the brink of capturing undeniable evidence that these creatures still exist." Jim looks you straight in the eye. "Today, you and I are going down there. Today, we will make history!"

He poses in a triumphant "dab" and struts onto the sub. Despite your trepidation, all you can do is chuckle and follow. Jim was always quirky, even before PTSD left him with paranoia and memory loss issues. But he's always done you right.

Six hours later, you and Jimmy are God-only-knows-how deep underwater. You catch glimpses of some rather large figures in the distance, but Jimmy shrugs them off as merely giant squid. Because, y'know, those aren't anything to be completely and totally freaked out by. "Besides," Jim continues. "I have a cloaking device built in to this sub—though now that you mention it, I don't think I ever turned it o—."

Suddenly: BOOM! Something collides with the sub. The force of the blow knocks you off your feet, and everything goes dark. When the auxiliary power kicks in, you see Jim lying on the ground. You rush over to check on him. He's unconscious, and a rather large welt is forming on his forehead. He'll be okay—aside from the whole part where he is trapped at the bottom of the sea on a barely-operational hunk of metal drawing the attention of some enormous denizen of the deep. Just like you.

For as long as you've been in this cabin, you hardly paid it any mind, focusing instead on what's outside the walls. Now, you survey the room as if seeing it for the first time. You know Jim sometimes hides little notes and puzzles for himself to help him with his memory loss. Maybe you can use them to find a way safely back to the surface.

SURROUNDINGS

You are in the main cabin, where you've been this entire voyage. You climbed in through a hatch in the ceiling. At the front--or the bow, as Jim called it-- is a porthole and a large console with a bunch of complicated-looking buttons and lights. In the rear of the room are three doors.

On the port side hangs an assortment of emergency equipment and a wooden display case. Jimmy lies motionless on the floor near the display case. On the starboard side are a footlocker, some kind of large book, and some city names.

You definitely don't want to break anything in the room, nor mess with anything without some level of confidence about what it does. As bad as things seem right now, pressing the wrong button could certainly make them worse.

OBSERVATIONS AND ACTIONS

This section lists all the things that the players can observe and interact with. As players ask to look at the objects or take key actions, read the text, adapting when needed to fit the overall context. Each key action is grouped with its object, and the objects are grouped by areas in the room.

When players ask to do things off script, improvise answers that keep with the story and theme. Be careful not to contradict any existing elements. Most importantly, have fun!

Port (Emergency Equipment, Display Case, Jimmy) & Aft (Doors)

Emergency Equipment – You find a few life vests, a First Aid kit, a fire extinguisher, and a box labelled “Marshal.”

Life Vests – They look like ordinary life vests. [*Tease if they don't put one on Jimmy, especially after flooding.*]

First Aid Kit – You see standard supplies. One item stands out to you as odd: a small circular mirror with a yellow plastic rim, almost like it was the lens to a toy camera.

Fire Extinguisher – Seems like a traditional fire extinguisher. You note that for safety reasons aboard the sub, it is loaded with compressed water, as opposed to foam or some other kind of chemical.

Marshal Box – Inside the box you find two large handheld beacons, sort of like mini orange lightsabers. They are the kind that air marshals use to direct traffic on airport runways. They seem lighter than you would have expected.

Try to turn on or use: Nothing happens, but as you move them around, you do hear a faint rattle inside.

Open battery compartments: One contains a crumpled-up note reading “o1 01 13” (see Supplement).

Display Case – Hanging on the wall is an ornate oak display case with a variety of shark teeth sitting proudly in individual velvet-lined cubbies, each accompanied by a small plaque identifying the species.

Open case/Examine teeth: The case swings open easily, providing access to the teeth. Picking up a couple at random, you see that the teeth are embossed with some kind of identification code.

Iterate one-by-one: Under the stress of the situation, you are not inclined to read through them all. You might come back when you have something specific to look for.

Look for hammerhead shark: You find the tooth of a hammerhead shark. Quite nasty looking. ID# “II.4(b)”

Look for tiger shark: Sure enough, there is a tiger shark tooth. The ID# is “XII.2(h)”

Look for great white shark: Oddly, you do not find any great white shark teeth in this display. [*If they look for other GW sharks:*] Nope. You find it really, really suspicious that Jimmy wouldn't have this tooth in his collection.

Jimmy – Jimmy lies unconscious near the main controls. He does not appear to be in any immediate danger.

Search Jimmy: You don't want to invade Jimmy's privacy, but things are dire enough to give him a quick once-over. His pockets are empty save for a small pack of cough drops. The top couple buttons on his shirt are already open (he's one of *those* guys). On a chain around his neck is the largest shark tooth you've ever seen. Tattooed on his chest is a little picture of Darth Vader's helmet, with the characters “V8R” underneath. Jimmy does like Star Wars—though, not as much as sharks. [*If asked, the cough drops are jujubes. Hint as needed that the tooth is a Great White tooth.*]

Rear Doors – The door on the left is labeled “HEAD” in large block letters. You know it's the bathroom, since you used it a couple times earlier in the trip. The middle door reads “ENGINE” in similar block letters, and on the right is a closet marked “CALMING TOOLS.” The entire back seems to have taken damage from the impact, showing dents and disruption. None of the doors will open, and you don't expect that to change any time soon. Hope you can hold it.

Try to get calking tool (after flood): With the door even more buckled, there is space to reach through a gap. You pull out what looks like some sort of high-tech cross between a calking gun [*also spelled caulking*] and welding torch.

Wash with Fire Extinguisher: You give the doors a good pressure washing with the fire extinguisher, not exactly thrilled about causing even more water to fill the floor. The black block letters labeling the doors seems to have washed off, revealing colored versions underneath. (See supplement.)

Bow (Control Panel & Chair, Porthole)

Console - The main navigational console looks like a desk, covered with buttons, lights, and knobs. At present, it seems to be humming in some sort of stand-by mode. Most of the lights are dimmed, save for one box labelled “startup key.” There is a very small circular hole in the center of the box. There is a chair pulled up to the console.

Press random buttons: Not a good idea.

Insert peg (prior to E1 loading): The peg fits like a glove, but nothing seems to happen. Perhaps there is something you need to do with the Battle Boats stuff first?

Insert peg (after E1 loading): You hear a computerized female voice announce, “State authorization code.”

Say “main man” (after solving): Again you hear the female voice.

*Exiting stand-by mode // Excuse me while I reload // Whatever the task // Feel free to ask //
Though my answer might be in code*

The board springs to life, widgets and gizmos fully-flashing, intimidating as ever. Displays that were previously blank are now alight. One immediately catches your attention, though: A big shiny button labeled “Auto Resurface.”

Press Auto Resurface: Three dials light up next to the button as another limerick fills the room.

*Here are the next ports of call // It's time to visit them all // Toronto sounds fun // Dublin has sun
Then Melbourne will sure be a ball*

[If asked:] The indicator lines on all three circular dials are currently pointing straight up *(like 12 on a clock)*.

Set dials to 5-10-8 positions: You hear some gears cranking below. It seems too good to be true.

Meanwhile, you notice that the water out the front porthole seems to be a different hue than it was before... a bit more... grey. Perhaps it’s just your mind playing tricks on you down here. You lean in to get a closer look... when suddenly, a gargantuan eyelid gives way, and you find yourself staring into a giant eyeball that takes up the entire front porthole! You stagger back in sheer terror. The eye slowly moves away as well, and the dim light shines on the rest of the beast. It is so big, you can’t begin to see it all while this close, but you can make out what is unmistakably a huge dorsal fin atop the creature’s back. So Jimmy was right!

Next, you feel the sub start to ascend. You’ve longed for that feeling pretty much since this voyage started, but now, you would just as soon not do anything that might draw attention. Your fears are answered as another collision rocks the ship. The rear wall buckles even more, and you brace for what might come next, but it is just silence. Silence, and a slight hissing sound.

Your eyes follow the sound up to the porthole. The hiss grows a bit louder, then POP! A jet of water shoots out of the edge of the porthole. The computer exclaims: *Warning please be advised*

You're probably all gonna die // Hold on a sec // Let me check //For a way to keep you alive

You hear some strange sounds near the leak, and the ship seems to have stabilized it. You aren’t losing cabin pressure and the leak isn’t getting worse, but there is still a stream of water filling the cabin. Your current priorities are to stop this leak, ensure the safety of everyone aboard, and somehow get this shark off your tail.

Look/ask for a way to stealth, cloak or otherwise hide from the shark: Some colored lights light up on the console, and you get a response. The Limerick Lady is back with more:

*To keep the ship secure // Pressure wash all the doors // Lest the grime // Over time // Makes them not work anymore
[If asked, the colored lights, from left to right, are GREEN PURPLE YELLOW BLUE RED.]*

Say “Reengage Cloaking Blinds”: No sooner do you say “reengage cloaking blinds” when the voice states, “Cloaking device engaged. Exterior threat neutralized.” You dare to look outside. Fortunately there is no sign of the megalodon... for now. However, with the added weight of all the water you’ve taken in, the sub is no longer ascending. In fact, it seems to be slowly sinking further into the depths of the ocean. Fun times.

An area on the console flashes. You give it a closer look—it’s labeled “Expunge Cabin” and has two dials. Again, both dials have a little orange indicator lines facing straight upwards. The voice says:

To make the water abate // You need to revisit a date // Two by two // Squish them to //See which signals relate

Come on, Jimmy! You are so paranoid that even if the cabin is flooding, you have to obfuscate your clues in these riddles!?! As his still-unconscious body floats by, you are seriously tempted to slap him.

Rotate overflow dials to “dab” positions: You rotate both dials so that the orange lines face the same direction as the orange beacons in the dab pictures. *[Read Conclusion, p. 6].*

Porthole – The porthole is roughly two meters wide. The few shadows you can see out there look big, shark-like, and downright terrifying.

Use calking tool (after leak): *[Optional]* It’s pretty easy to use, and patches up the leak quite swimmingly.

Starboard (Footlocker, Manual, Clocks) and Bridge

Footlocker – Towards the back is a large military footlocker. It's dark in that corner of the room, but you can see the clasp is locked with a somewhat unusual padlock: it requires a date to open. [If inquired, specifically, there are two 0-9 dials, then a dial reading JAN, FEB, MAR ... DEC, and finally two more 0-9 dials].

Enter 1 JAN 13 on padlock: The footlocker opens! Inside you find a variety of naval-related toys and games—too many to sort through without knowing what you are looking for. On the underside of the lid, writing is scratched into the paint. (See supplement)

Look for Periscope (or something to match yellow mirror): You find a small, bright-yellow toy periscope. It's far from military grade, but it looks like it should serve its intended purpose, though there seems to be a piece missing.

Look for Battleship: You see a game board called “Battle Boats,” strikingly similar to a naval game you played as a kid. In a tray inside the game are the five typical boats used in this game, as well as one white peg.

Examine peg: Examining it more closely, you see some golden metallic leads engraved in the thinner end of the peg.

Insert peg into (either) E1: The entire game board flashes green, then you hear what sounds like a disk drive churning. A moment later it stops.

Large Book / Manual – Sitting on a rather barren shelf up towards the front console is a spiral-bound manual, hundreds of pages long and well-weathered. On the front cover is scribbled this note: “chew on this: HHS TS GWS”.

Flip through manual: It is way too dense for you to get anything out of it without some specific direction. You see that it is laid out like a typical government publication, organized by article, section, paragraph, etc.

Go to II.4(b): You flip to this section of the manual, and a piece of paper with some sort of fill-in-the-blanks puzzle falls out! (see Supplement).

Go to XII.2(h): The section discusses the nautical flag alphabet. Near the very bottom the page, there are 14 boxes, in pairs. The boxes look very similar to the boxes written in the first section. The first two boxes both have a “J” scribbled into them. The next two contain “I” then another “J.” Another handwritten note reads “using chart on bridge wall, make code”.

Go to V.8(r): Here you find a Morse code translation key. (See Supplement)

Cities –In the center of the wall, near the ceiling, are written the following cities: London, New York, and Sydney. Above each is a four-digit digital display. All are blank.

Look at cities or display clocks (after reboot): London has 1000. New York reads 0500. Sydney shows 2000.

Bridge Hatch - The only notable feature on the ceiling is the hatch from which you entered. On it is stamped BRIDGE, in similar block letters to the other doors. The ceiling is just out of reach.

Use something besides chair to reach hatch: Nearly everything in the room seems to be bolted down.

Use chair: Dragging the desk chair under the hatch, you find you can stand on it and access the hatch just fine.

Open hatch: You gingerly spin the airlock wheel, testing to see if any water seeps through, just in case there was a breach in the room above. Fortunately, the hatch swings down to reveal a dry room. However, it seems that in the collision, some large piece of equipment must have fallen otop, and it all but completely covers the opening! Try as you might, this thing will not budge. You have barely enough space to fit a few fingers through. You'd think they'd secure stuff better on a ship? I know, right.

Use lens/mirror to look in bridge: You really think you are on to something with this idea, but the mirror alone cannot get the proper angle given the small opening and rather thick width of the hatch.

Use periscope (with lens): The periscope fits through the opening, and you are able to see into the room above. Three large items hang on the wall. One is a translation of nautical flag alphabet (see Supplement). Another is a chart of air control marshal hand signals. There sure are a lot of them [*too many to read through without looking for something specific*], and some of the poses look to be downright funky. The third is a large world map.

Look for “Dab” in marshal signals: Scanning the custom hand signals, there are two pictures of guys who are unmistakably “dabbing!” The captions read “Left release position” and “right release position.” [*The beacons point at 2 o'clock and 10 o'clock respectively, as you face them, though players can just say “point valves in same direction....”*]

CONCLUSION

After what feels like an eternity, you notice the water level fall. You give another glance over to Jimmy to make sure his head is still above water, and then simply allow exhaustion to overcome you as you fall into a back float. Before long, you gently touch down on the floor of the cabin, as nearly all the water has drained away.

You turn and look out the porthole, and see the sub is once again ascending. You did it!!

Back on the surface, Jimmy finally comes to, and you fill him in on everything he missed. He asked if you got any pictures. He sighs as you shake your head. “Nice try, my main man, you almost had me fooled. But everyone knows that sharks don’t have eyelids! Still, I appreciate the thought. But hey, tomorrow, we can go back down there and see one for real! What-da-ya say?”

PUZZLE SCRIPT/FLOW

1. Observe surroundings, find key items:
 - a. clue on manual cover
 - b. tooth and “V8R” on Jimmy
 - c. note in beacon
 - d. mirror piece in first aid kit
2. In either order:
 - a. SHARK TEETH => MANUAL
 - i. Aha! Letters on “chew on this” clue stand for sharks; Find first two teeth and their codes
 - ii. Aha! Jimmy wears the missing shark’s tooth, and V8R is the code
 - iii. Aha! The codes are manual references; Find manual sections
 - iv. Process seven-word puzzle in 1st manual section
 - v. Aha! Boxes are all I’s and J’s and there are 14 boxes, same as the seven pairs in the 2nd section
 - vi. Aha! The chair can be used to reach the hatch
 - vii. Aha! The yellow lens could match a toy in the locker; or, a periscope could see into the bridge
 - viii. Use repaired periscope to see nautical alphabet (also finding signal chart and world map)
 - ix. Aha! Nautical I and J look like Morse dot and dash, relating to third manual section
 - x. Process Morse to get console activation code.
 - b. BATTLESHIP
 - i. Open footlocker with date code (from marshal’s beacons); get ship logic clues
 - ii. Aha! Relate to battle boats and find game board
 - iii. Process logic clues to arrange ships
 - iv. Aha! Ships spell a certain coordinate on game board
 - v. Aha! Peg is console key
 - vi. Aha! Insert peg at solved coords (to load activation code), then insert peg in console
3. CLOCKS
 - a. Aha! After activating console, ask about surfacing; hear “ports of call” limerick
 - b. Aha! Cities on wall are close to cities in limerick
 - c. Aha! Digits above wall are (military) times, and dials can be pointed like a clock
4. Hear flood transition. Optionally, use life vests and put one on Jimmy. Optionally, aha! Caulk/weld the leak.
5. DOORS
 - a. Aha! This sub has a stealth mode. Ask about it; hear “wash the doors” limerick
 - b. Aha! Use fire extinguisher as pressure washer, get door anagrams
 - c. Aha! Need to anagram letters, ordering words like flashing lights
 - d. Process anagrams, then find/ask and press stealth button.
6. MARSHAL
 - a. Hear “revisit a date” limerick
 - b. Aha! “Date” refers to the note found in the beacon.
 - c. Aha! Squishing the characters two by two makes letters.
 - d. Aha! Letters spell an action that could be on the only unused item remaining—the signal chart.
 - e. Find actions on chart, set dial positions, release water, win!

PUZZLES

Below are explanations of the major puzzles in the adventure.

SHARK TEETH

From basic observation, players find “chew on this: HHS TS GWS” on the manual cover. From “chew” and/or guessing the acronyms, they connect it to the shark teeth in the display case. They hopefully can work out the initials of these commonly-known shark species themselves, but if they get too stuck, you can allow them to skim the names on the display case.

Side note: Grammar Nazis may object to “HHS,” feeling it should be just “HS” for Hammerhead Shark. They can bite me. Pun intended. Besides, grammar is not always Jimmy’s forte.

Players find the Hammerhead and Tiger shark teeth, and notice the engraved IDs. There is no Great White, though. After searching Jimmy and finding the biggest tooth, they must deduce it belonged to a Great White, and the tattoo on Jimmy’s chest represents the code. Depending on order that players find things, and overall flow, you can make it obvious that Jimmy’s tooth is a Great White, or you can let them riddle it out.

The players deduce that the codes, such as “II.4(b),” are references to sections of the manual. “V8R” is not just Darth Vader; it also represents V.8(r).

BATTLEBOATS

Players deduce “YOU SUNK” and the clues about ships refer to Battle Boats (which is strikingly similar to Battleship). They use the logic clues to plot the ships, which draw out an E-1. Freely tell them the sizes of the ships if they ask or seem to not know. If they think of the letters “E1” instead of the coords “E1,” hint with something like “This is Battle Boats, not Old McDonald.” They don’t have to put the ships in any particular set of cells on the board, so long as they are correct relative to each other (though they don’t necessarily know that, at first).

The 5-peg Aircraft Carrier is the long vertical line in the capital “E”. The two 3-peg ships (Cruiser and Submarine) are the top and bottom horizontal lines of the E, and the 2-peg Destroyer is in the middle. The 4-peg Battleship is the 1.

MANUAL

This is designed to be the climax of the main phase, and the most involved puzzle in the adventure. Solving it provides access to the console and—after the short CLOCKS puzzle—triggers the shark attack event that transitions to the high-octane, limerick-centered “escape” phase. To tackle this puzzle, players must find all three sections of the manual (per the shark teeth codes), and see up into the hatch using the periscope.

In the first section, as provided by SHARK TEETH, players must solve the crossword-like clues to get seven-letter words. From relative softballs like “JACUZZI,” they should see that the boxes will contain the letters I and J. The words are:

JUJUTSU – HIJACKS – DIGITAL – JUNIORS – JUJUBES – INJURED - JACUZZI

“Jujubes” are the type of cough drops in Jimmy’s pocket. “Jujutsu” is the original spelling, though many westerners say “Jujitsu.” If the players need help getting any of these words, I recommend letting the hints flow freely.

The big a-ha moment comes from solving the hint in the second section: “using chart on bridge wall, make code.” After coming up with all these I’s and J’s, they need to notice that the nautical flags for I and J are basically a dot and a dash, then infer that those dots and dashes connect that with the third referenced section of the manual: Morse code.

Players translate I’s to dots and J’s to dashes, then use Morse code. This gives a phrase that Jimmy used: “mainman.”

```
JJ IJ II JI JJ IJ JI
-- *_ ** -* -- *_ -*
m a i n m a n
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CLOCKS

A relatively simple one, easing into the transition. Players are told: “Here are the next ports of call // It's time to visit them all // Toronto sounds fun // Dublin has sun // Then Melbourne will sure be a ball” They must relate the ports of call to the cities on the clocks, based on proximity. They can use the world map to verify if needed. The pairings are: New York & Toronto; London & Dublin; Sydney & Melbourne. Players turn the three console dials in the direction of the clocks (translating military time to analog clock hour-hand direction), in in the order specified by the “ports of call.”

Note: Even players do not specifically re-examine the clocks after the reboot, if they are looking around the room, you can mention that there are now numbers above the cities.

DOORS

To keep the ship secure // Pressure wash all the doors // Lest the grime // Over time // Makes them not work anymore
They may recall from the intro that the ship has a cloaking device, but Jimmy never turned it on; that’s how they got into this mess in the first place. (Many players zone out during the intro, so they may need some extra hinting for this.) From the limerick, they need to use the fire extinguisher as a pressure washer on the doors, revealing the colored versions of the letters.

BRIDGE
HEAD
ENGINE
CALKING TOOLS

The fact that CALKING uses an alternative spelling may help hint that players will be doing something with the letters. Separating the letters by colors, in the order of the colored lights on the panel, gives:

RGEEEEANG IANGCKOL BDLINS TO IDHE

This anagrams to:

REENGAGE CLOAKING BLINDS TO HIDE

As soon as the player says “reengage cloaking blinds” the computer will pick up on it, solving the puzzle.

MARSHAL

To make the water abate // You need to revisit a date // Two by two // Squish them to // See which signals relate
Based on the clue to compress the date, players must revisit the only date that they’ve encountered this entire time: the “o1 01 13.” They should be drawn to the way the first o1 is different from the second 01.

o1 | 01 | 13

Squishing the pairs of numbers (“two by two”) gives:

d o1 B

If players don’t know what “dabbing” is, help them along. Or, if it seems too silly to really be part of the solution, remind them that Jimmy is a corny guy (and he dabbled earlier, before boarding). Clueing on “signal” and the fact that the date clue was found in the marshal beacons, players relate “dab” to one of the only remaining unused items on the sub: the marshal signals chart. Find the guys doing a dab, which gives the clue to tie it back to the actual release values. Position the orange lines on the valves in the same direction and the orange beacons on the dabbing men, and win!

SUPPLEMENTS

These can be cut out and given to the players at appropriate times. Alternately, if conducting a fully audio-only adventure, you can use them to help answer any questions the players have about the content.

A ● -	J ● - - -	S ● ● ●
B - ● ● ●	K - ● -	T -
C - ● - ●	L ● - ● ●	U ● ● -
D - ● ●	M - -	V ● ● ● -
E ●	N - ●	W ● - -
F ● ● - ●	O - - -	X - ● ● -
G - - ●	P ● - - ●	Y - ● - -
H ● ● ● ●	Q - - ● -	Z - - ● ●
I ● ●	R ● - ●	

NAUTICAL ALPHABET



