

Modern-Day Jonah? Lobster Diver Scooped Up, Spat Out by Humpback Whale

Veteran lobster diver Michael Packard experienced an accident of biblical proportions Friday off the coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, when a humpback whale took him into its mouth, then spat him back out into the ocean.

"I just felt this truck hit me and everything just went dark," the modern-day Jonah told reporters following his release the same day from Cape Cod Hospital in Hyannis, Massachusetts.

The accident happened just before 8 a.m. as Packard, 56, was diving for lobsters about 45 feet down. At first, he feared his assailant was a great white shark, but then he realized it didn't have teeth.

"I was completely inside; it was completely black," Packard said. "I thought to myself, *There's no way I'm getting out of here. I'm done, I'm dead.* All I could think of was my boys—they're 12 and 15 years old."

Packard said he remained in the whale's mouth for about 30 or 40 seconds, fearing the worst. "I knew this was a massive creature; there was no way I was going to bust myself out of there, but all of a sudden, I saw light, and I could feel his head shaking, and I just got thrown out of his mouth into the water." He lay there, "in extreme pain," floating on the surface of the water as the whale disappeared.

Packard's mate, Josiah Mayo, followed his progress and pulled up alongside to rescue him. With the assistance of another boater, he hauled Packard back to safety.

Doctors diagnosed the whale-whacked diver with a dislocated

knee and extensive soft tissue damage, but he expects to be back out in the ocean—and avoiding humpbacks—as soon as he can. {eo}

Follow breaking news like this and more in our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.