

DAWN PATROL





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created by Benj Thall

When you paddle out past the break into the surf you shed the trappings of modern life. The worries and distractions drift away and you can see things clearer among the waves, learning to react moment to moment to your surroundings.

Surfing, it can be a superpower if you embrace it. One not limited to the water.

For thirteen year old Dawn Pettit struggling to connect to her family & friends the ocean becomes her guide through trials of adolescence. As she becomes a better surfer, Dawn adapts the lessons learned in the water to solve the crisis in her life.

Yes, this will be a sports show complete with competitions, rivalries, failures and triumphs. But it'll also be about a group of friends, The Dawn Patrol, discovering how to face their fears, whether they be crashing waves or the terrors lurking around high school halls.

Dawn is our guide, and her voice over, on diary videos, stitches together the show.

Beyond The Break

(pilot episode)

We first meet DAWN PETTIT (13) underwater floating, tranquil. Her disembodied voice over tells us, "It wasn't always like this... this calm." We flashback to weeks earlier, at the end of the summer. Her older brother is joining the marines and Dawn is anxious. He has been her rock and her mom VERONICA'S pride since her father disappeared. Now he is leaving. Dawn's family unit is cracking. Veronica has a hectic schedule as an EMT that leaves little time for their relationship.

For Dawn, the added pressure of starting high school brings new responsibilities. When her brother ships out, he leaves her an unused surfboard, teasing "that if she ever were to need him, all she need do is swim across the pacific."

Dawn's best friend JULIE, budding filmmaker and troublemaker, sets out to document their first day of high school. It's a disastrous day for Dawn, the unwitting subject of Julie's film. The streaming video is downloaded by another student, KYLE, a local surfer. He re-edits the video into a hilarious parody, branding Dawn the freshmen princess. The prank is blasted out to the whole school.

After school, upset, she grabs her brother's surfboard and heads out to the beach. Kyle and his friends exit some dangerous surf, but Dawn heads right in. She has never surfed but her heart is set on proving herself. A local surfer, CRASH (40's) recognizes the danger and scolds the boys for letting her paddle out. A large set wave knocks her down and Dawn is pulled under, near drowning. Crash pulls her to safety. He is furious at Dawn for almost getting killed. Her reaction surprises him. She's excited, as if she's come alive. "Did I catch a wave?" she asks. "No." Crash turns to leave, "you broke your board." The board, snapped in two, washes up on the beach. Dawn scans the waves with a new fire burning in her eyes.

"Well, I'm going to."

The next day at school, the talk of Dawn's video has turned into the talk of her near drowning. She's building quite the reputation for herself. Julie discovers Crash is an ex-pro surfer who hasn't been in the water in years. They come up with a plan to rope him into teaching them to surf.

The girls find Crash's pad unlocked pad. He is missing so they explore. The place is a virtual surf museum with photographs and boards of all sizes. Crash returns wearing a gas mask, scaring them. He was wearing it to protect himself from the fumes while fixing some boards. He initially tries to throw the girls out, but they are insistent in their request for lessons. As a last ditch attempt to get them to leave, he agrees to teach them under one condition, that they return before dawn. He is convinced they wont return at 5:30 am.

The next morning Dawn and Julia are banging on the door, waking Crash. A deal is a deal. First things first, if they want to surf, they have to learn to swim, hold their breath, and about wave dynamics. Crash sets out a plan that has them doing everything he can think of but paddling out. It's the Mr. Miyagi school of surfing. They stick to it for a week, impressing the old surfer. Veronica, brushes off her suspicions of this new school club, The Dawn Patrol, her daughter has joined. At least it has her getting to school on time.

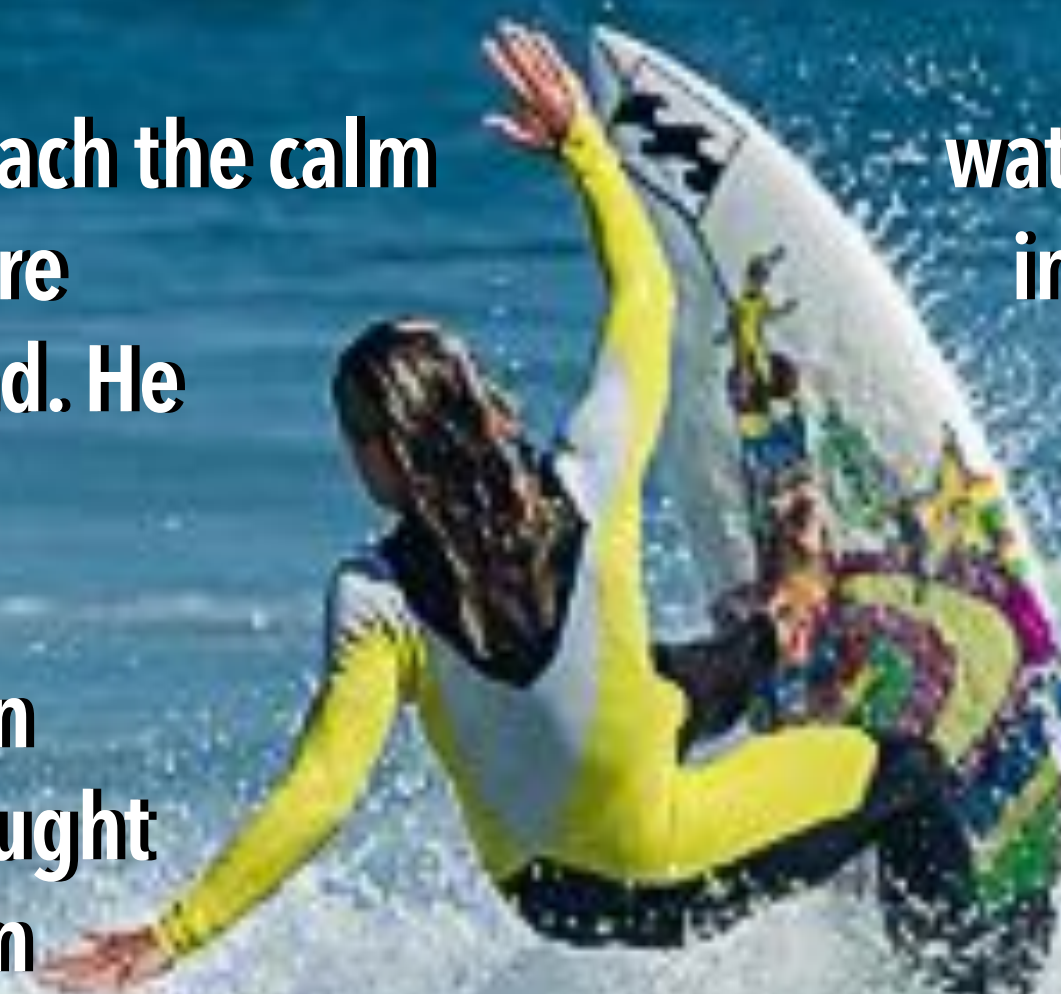
Finally Crash gives in. He's ready to take them past the break. Once they reach the calm water beyond the break line, Dawn discovers it's a peaceful place. That the waves are like her problems, they are her real first lesson about surfing from Crash. Now, she has to learn to stand. He promptly flops off the board.

water beyond the break line, Dawn impermanent and pass quickly. It's guides her into a wave and she

The voice-over returns, and we realize the audio is taken from a video Dawn brother, with Julie's editing help. She tells him that learning to surf has taught high school. The princess name has finally washed away. We cut away from in the ocean, the same underwater shot from the beginning of the episode. She opens her eyes and laughs.

recorded to send to her her to navigate the halls of the video and find Dawn back Julie pops down, filming her.

A wave approaches and she takes off on her first real ride.



The Story

Each episode of the show will be anchored and recapped by Dawn's video messages to her brother. Messages framed by a lessons she learns surfing. The new club The Dawn Patrol grows and Crash comes into his own as a teacher revealing that the loss of his wife is what stopped him from surfing. Through becoming a mentor to the kids, he's also healing himself. The Dawn Patrol rolls out to more than just surf in their tricked out surf van. The group also finds themselves wrapped up in the ecological issues surrounding their local break as well as surviving the trials freshman year of high school. It's through surfing they become mindful and respectful of mother nature.



Episode Thematic Ideas

Duck Diving

In Surfing - If you can't paddle over a wave, sometimes you have to go under it.

In Life - Sometime the only way to overcome a problem is to find a new way around it.

The Right of Way

In Surfing - If someone has taken off on a wave, you don't cut them off.

In Life - Waiting your turn is not just polite, sometimes it has surprising benefits.

The Suckback

In Surfing - Sometimes a wave you thought you paddled over, sucks you back in.

In Life - Sometimes a problem you thought you overcame will grab you back into it's maw.

Feeling It

In Surfing -Catching a wave is simultaneously about planning you line and clearing your mind. The moment you think you're gonna fall... you fall.

In Life - Realizing you can't control everything is a hard lesson. Often doing less when attacking a problem is actually doing more.



Characters

DAWN PETTIT

If you asked Dawn what she wanted to do when she grew up she'd answer - everything. She lacks fear but needs guidance. Always eager to take on too much, the focus and serenity that she gains from time in the ocean helps her see ways in which she can get out of situations often of her own making.

CRASH

Crash sees something in Dawn's persistence and craziness. A little of himself perhaps. Crash's return to the water brings out some of his demons. The loss of his wife and his past failures continue to haunt him. It's through teaching he rediscovers his joy and passion for the ocean. The wealth of ocean and surf lore he's collected over the years provides inspiration and endless tales and mysteries to inspire the kids.

JULIE

Julie is Dawn's best friend and documentarian of the Dawn Patrol. She's always known she's wanted to tell stories, but hates turning the camera on herself. The confidence she gains from surfing allows her to speak her true voice, even though it's often loud and surprising even to herself.

KYLE

Initially Dawn's rival, and a boy who challenges her in the waves, he becomes friends with the group when he reveals the perfect life everyone thinks he has is just a front. For Kyle surfing is an escape from his overbearing parents, but is it the right escape or one he's being forced into? As he becomes a better surfer, competition becomes less important than friendship.

VERONICA

Dawn's single mother is worried about Dawn's new passion. As an EMT she's seen trauma first hand and doesn't like her daughter surfing. She seeks order in her life and tries to steer Dawn away from the ocean until a first competition win convinces her maybe there is more to her daughter's newfound passion.



DON'T THINK GIRLS ARE TAKING OVER SURFING & SURF CULTURE?

Here's some videos that will change your mind!

The Flying Squirrel - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aizVVLXK0Ms>

Surf Girl Lifestyle - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nul-5lt3zyo>

Kids Who Rip - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0vHovke9hc>

Bethany Hamilton (soul surfer) - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FX8tW5z_aik



This show is about inspiring girls and boys to face their fears.
To approach life like a surfer paddles into waves,
with knowledge, experience, and
a willingness to tune into the gifts nature offers.





Heroes don't always wear capes, sometimes they wear wetsuits.