Impact 3
Unit 2
Main Video Script
Scene 2.1: Face to Face with a Leopard Seal

Paul Nicklen: My name is Paul Nicklen, and I'm a contributing photographer for National Geographic magazine. I wanted to go down to Antarctica and get in the water with as many leopard seals as I could. We pulled up in the Zodiac and we saw this massive leopard seal. My guide, Yudan, who has a lot of experience with them, said "That's the biggest leopard seal I've ever seen. Time to get in the water, ya." I slipped into the water, terrified of what might happen, and I swam up to this leopard seal. My legs were shaking and I had dry mouth. And right away, she dropped the penguin, she came up to me, and she opened her mouth. And her head's twice as wide as a grizzly bear's head—she's huge. She took my whole head and camera inside her mouth and did these threat displays, but then the most amazing thing happened. She went off and got me a live penguin; she came up and she started to feed me a penguin, and she kept letting these live penguins go. And the penguin would shoot past me and she would look disgusted as she'd go by me. She did this over and over. And then I think she realized I was this useless predator, in her ocean, probably going to starve to death. And I think she became quite panicked and she started to bring me weak penguins, then dead penguins, then she showed me how to eat the penguins. She would offer me partially consumed penguins. She started to take penguins and actually push them into my camera. I think she thought the camera was my mouth, which is every photographer's dream. This went on for four days. So here I came to Antarctica, to photograph this potentially vicious animal, to have this predator—this top predator in Antarctica—take care of me and nurture me and feed me for four days straight. It was the most incredible experience I've had as a National Geographic photographer.

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