

FLASH, THE TEENAGE OTTER

Airdates: 4/30/61, 6/14/70.

Directed by: Hank Schloss. In Charge of Production: James Lebenthal. Photographers: Douglas Cox, Jack F. Ferrucci, Wallace M. Kammann, Wallace Kirkland, Austin McKinney. Technical Advisors: Mabel and Tom Beecham, Niles Fairbairn. With the Cooperation of the Wisconsin Conservation Department. Produced and Narrated by: Winston Hibler. Teleplay by: Albert Aley. Additional Narration by: Roy Edward Disney. Story by: Rutherford Montgomery. Based on a book by: Emil Liers. Production Coordinator: Robert F. Metzler. Film Editor: George Gale, A.C.E. Music: Oliver Wallace. Sound: Robert O. Cook.

Despite man's ever increasing encroachment on nature, wildlife continues to flourish, particularly in game preserves, and it's in one of these preserves that two young otters are born. Flash and Fleta begin their lives happily frolicking in a deserted mill pond under their mother's watchful eye.

This idyllic life ends abruptly when the otter family ventures downstream to a nearby dam, and Flash is swept away in an attempt to escape a bobcat. He travels far downstream before he can struggle ashore, tired and lost. Finding the scent of another otter, he follows it and finds Teena, a young female despondently sitting beside her dead mother, the victim of a hunter's trap. She and Flash decide to join forces to fend against the unknown dangers that await them in the forest.

Once again a happy time ends suddenly when Flash is trapped by a hunter and imprisoned until his pelt is suitable for sale. Time passes in slow agony for the otter until the day arrives when the hunter decides to slaughter him. Luckily, Flash escapes at the last minute, then finds a den for the winter. One day his travels again bring him back to Teena, but a gamekeeper tries to kill him before the two otters can enjoy their reunion.

Flash escapes once again, only to be trapped almost immediately. Finally, his luck changes, for this time his captor is a game warden, who takes the otter back to the preserve to enjoy life in a safe environment. Life is even better when he spots his family and Teena, for she was also taken to the mill pond.

Production Notes:

- The part of the trapper was played by Prosper Stein, and Niles Fairbairn played the gamekeeper. Orin Benson portrayed a fisherman, while Porter Dean was cast as a farmer.
- *Flash* was released theatrically overseas in 1964 and domestically in 1965.
- The book this episode was based on was titled *The Odyssey of an Otter*.
- The working title of this episode was *The Otter*.