

Clapcast 62: Neon Tetra

Transcriber: robotchangeling

Jack: Fuck, it happened again, Ali! It's Fishteen Minutes!

Ali: What's happening?!

Jack: We were trying to do a Clapcast! We sat down— well, you sat down to edit it.

Ali: Uh huh.

Jack: And then I was just in a Discord call with you.

Ali: Right.

Jack: And Audacity, it deleted it all and replaced it all with Fishteen Minutes. I think this is PBS's fault, and I hate to say it, *[Ali laughs quietly]* but since the contract came into effect yesterday, I'm starting to feel less and less sure about their ability to control your editing workflow.

Ali: You don't think that PBS is able to maintain a podcast feed and not cross the streams and get the signals all messed up?

Jack: I'm concerned. Frankly, I'm concerned, and we just moved into the new studio too. *[Ali laughs quietly]* Welcome back to Fishteen Minutes, a podcast about your time of the day to take off, to take out from your hard work. Fishteen Minutes: the time of the day when you stop your hard work and think and listen about fish.

Ali: Welcome.

Jack: I'm Jack.

Ali: My name is Alicia Acampora.

Jack: This podcast is sponsored by PBS vending machines. You can access PBS vending machines in the lobby of any PBS depot.

Ali: *[laughs]* And yes, on any PBS vending machine, you can stream your favorite shows such as *Sesame Street*.

Jack: *Sesame Street*.

Ali: Or *Downton Abbey*.

Jack: The two shows. *[Ali laughs]* Well, and now Fishteen Minutes. They really were trying to

broaden their portfolio by adding a fish-based show to their two other shows.

Ali: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm. Don't they also do like operas? What does PBS do?

Jack: What does PBS do?

Ali: What does PBS do? Public...

Jack: PBS. Public Broadcasting...

Ali: Public Broadcasting Service.

Jack: We've been providing a Public Broadcasting Service for years.

Ali: True.

Jack: And that might be why they reached out to us.

Ali: Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: PBS... *[Ali laughs]* Oh, I like their logo.

Ali: Yeah, the little face and the like...that are like nestled into each other. It really lets you know it's for the people.

Jack: Two pointy-faced people.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Maybe three pointy-faced people, actually. *[laughs quietly]* They distribute shows such as *Frontline*, but I misread that as *Fortnite*, and I was like, "What the fuck? What?"

Ali: *[laughs]* I'm also pleased to announce our *Fortnite* collab coming up in the month of October.

Jack: Oh, yes!

Ali: You'll be able to play as me and Jack in *Fortnite* with our... *[both laugh]*

Jack: What's your Back Bling?

Ali: My Back Bling is a LOONA lightstick.

Jack: Oh. Oh! Oh, I see. So it's not Fishteen Minutes themed, it's Alicia Acampora— *[both laugh]*

oh, I see. Wow, this is a wild crossover in that we've been put in—

Ali: Well, okay. Well, so, because they're gonna have the Fishteen Minutes event where you can, through doing the event tasks, which is going to different lakes and rivers and lagoons on the *Fortnite* map to fish, to eat fish to regenerate your health... *[laughs]*

Jack: Dune slacks.

Ali: You will get more Fishteen Minutes branded things such as a little spray paint thing of a fish, an exclusive fishing pole.

Jack: Yeah.

Ali: A shark that you can glide on.

Jack: Yeah. You know, *Fortnite*, of course, prior to this point, has 33 fish that you can find and catch per season. I'm happy to announce that as part of the Fishteen Minutes crossover, they've added the other 35,966. *[both laugh]* So, see if you can get all of them.

Ali: An incredible effort by Epic Games. We're very proud to be collaborating with them in this way.

Jack: I think you're picking the fish today, right, Ali?

Ali: I believe I am, yeah. Today's—

Jack: Well, let me start the timer.

Ali: Yeah, please.

Jack: Well, I'll get the timer ready.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: And then you holler when you're ready to go.

Ali: Okay, yeah.

Jack: Ready to go?

Ali: Yeah, okay. I'm gonna link you this fish, and then we're going to be ready.

Jack: Yeah, let's do it.

Ali: Today, we're talking about a recognizable fish. We're talking about a humble fish.

Jack: Oh.

Ali: We're talking about a mundane fish.

Jack: Yeah, we're talking about beautiful fish.

Ali: But we're talking about a beloved fish nonetheless.

Jack: A lovely fish.

Ali: *[laughs]* Today we are focusing on the freshwater neon tetra.

Jack: Oh, the freshwater neon tetra, a beautiful, beautiful...a standby. Is this your favorite fish, Ali?

Ali: *[decisively]* No.

Jack: Oh. *[both laugh]* Fuck this fish.

Ali: Okay, but like, you're not gonna— like, I'm not gonna be like, “Oh, my favorite food is broccoli, because I eat it every day.” That might be true, but...but... *[laughs]*

Jack: Your favorite food is broccoli? And you eat it every day?

Ali: *[laughing]* I don't. I would. I could. I'm just saying: the standbys, the things that you keep with you...

Jack: Oh, the great standbys, yeah.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: Totally.

Ali: This fish is like eating toast in the morning, you know? Like, you just...

Jack: Mm.

Ali: It's a delight. You're glad that it's there.

Jack: Mm.

Ali: But when you think of best or favorite, it doesn't come to mind, because you think of like

more exciting things.

Jack: Yes.

Ali: And this is the Fishteen Minutes reminder to pay love and appreciation to your everyday fish.

Jack: Yeah, absolutely. A hundred percent. I feel this way sometimes about musicians like Ariana Grande. *[Ali laughs]* Is she my favorite? No. Is she just like a great standout everyday pop performer whose tunes I'm almost always happy to hear? Yes, absolutely.

Ali: Yes. Yes. There—

Jack: The neon tetra— oh, go on.

Ali: *[laughs]* No, I was gonna go more into Ariana Grande, who's great, by the way.

Jack: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm a big Ariana Grande...I wouldn't call myself a big Ariana Grande fan. I'd call myself a normal Ariana Grande.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I have a normal opinion about Ariana Grande, which is she's a great singer. *[Ali laughs]* She's a little affected, but that's fine. Who among us isn't?

Ali: True, true, true. Have you heard her Christmas album?

Jack: Uh, she has a Christmas— I've heard a Christmas song by her, which is like “Santa Tell Me”?

Ali: She has an entire Christmas album, and it is actually sort of good. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: I would believe that. What's it called? Ariana Christmas.

Ali: I think it's like In the Snow or something?

Jack: *Christmas & Chill?*

Ali: Yes, *Christmas & Chill*, right. It's... *[laughs]*

Jack: Christmas— oh, no, she's made two Christmas albums!

Ali: What?

Jack: Her first one was in 2013, *Christmas Kisses*.

Ali: Mm.

Jack: And her second one was in 2015. It's called *Christmas & Chill*. She has continuously called it her favorite body of work. I mean, good for her.

Ali: I'm a fan of *Christmas & Chill*, I've gotta say.

Jack: I'm a fan of Christmas. *[Ali laughs]* I know some people like it less, and that's fine.

Ali: Sure.

Jack: I understand it's a difficult time for people.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: But I think I like Christmas quite a lot. I live in the wrong city for it, because it never gets cold here.

Ali: Oh, but people are gonna get— you're gonna see. People are gonna get...you're gonna be in the Christmas spirit out there.

Jack: Okay, good. I'm glad. I'm glad.

Ali: Uh huh.

Jack: Well, back to the neon tetra. Real quick, though. I do just really want to call out “Santa Tell Me”, Ariana Grande’s 2014 Christmas single. *[Ali laughs]* You know, it does the rounds every year. It's not like a rare song. It's not like a new song.

Ali: Right.

Jack: But I think it's a really good Christmas pop song, and those are like hard to come by.

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: And I think she's also saying something new about Santa. She wants— she's asking Santa if her relationship is real with her beau, you know?

Ali: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: And like, if we could ask Santa for for non-present things, that would really open the box up.

Ali: That would really change Christmas, wouldn't it?

Jack: Yeah, I would like– Santa, can we abolish the wage?

Ali: *[laughs]* Now, hold on.

Jack: Yes?

Ali: How am I gonna spend my money on goods and services?

Jack: Oh. Shit.

Ali: If I don't get a wage?

Jack: *[conspiratorially]* Santa, let's abolish goods and services.

Ali: *[laughs]* No!

Jack: Speaking of goods and services, did you know that the neon tetra is one of the most popular aquarium fish, with about 2 million sold in the US every month?

Ali: Every month?

Jack: Okay, so, let's get back down to business here.

Ali: That's looking dire for these guys, because that's not– I mean...

Jack: There's some weird stuff coming. I read ahead. It's exciting.

Ali: *[laughs]* Okay.

Jack: A neon tetra is a small fish.

Ali: So small.

Jack: It's about the size of two joints of your finger, maybe one and a half of your index finger. I'm holding it up to the screen.

Ali: Yeah. Uh huh.

Jack: It's bigger on my screen, because I'm looking at a crisp JPEG.

Ali: Right.

Jack: Is this fish see-through or is it just very silver and very shiny?

Ali: I think it's very silver and very shiny. I think there's one very bright blue strip, there's one very bright red strip, and then the rest of it is like a duller silver, not like a transparent gray.

Jack: Right, right, right. And that's— the white strip is not bioluminescent. It's actually just extremely bright.

Ali: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Jack: Wow, that's really— I guess that's why it's called a neon tetra, because it's like neon, innit?

Ali: Right. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. They...

Jack: *[gasps]* No, it does change color! "The fish is characterized by an iridescent blue horizontal stripe alongside each side of the fish from its nose to the base of the adipose fin... During the night, the blue and red become gray or black as the fish rests. *[Ali gasps]* It reactivates once it becomes active in the morning." This fish is like when you turn your PC on, and you've got sick LEDs in there. *[laughs quietly]*

Ali: This fish goes to bed at night and turns its decorations off?

Jack: This fish goes around to make sure that the Christmas tree lights are turned off before it goes to sleep, *[Ali laughs]* because leaving them on overnight is not just a waste of electricity, it presents a fire risk? You're telling me that this fish does that?

Ali: I had no idea about that, and I feel like I've probably owned one or two of these in my day, but...

Jack: Do you...the only fish I have ever owned are goldfish.

Ali: Really?

Jack: But it seems like you have a history of owning a variety of fish.

Ali: I do indeed. I do indeed. Well...okay, so I told you about the story when I was in high school, and I kept the fish that got pregnant, and those were spotted guppies. And then when I was a kid, my parents were running a hotel in San Clemente that was across from the ocean, and we got a fish tank with seahorses in it.

Jack: Oh, wow!

Ali: *[laughs]* Yeah.

Jack: That's great. I had no idea that you were a seahorse owner in the past.

Ali: Uh huh, and that was a very exciting time. They were beautiful fish. I think one of them also got pregnant at some point. There was like an— this is a story that my mom says that I don't know if I believe, but when I think about it, I know that my father is capable of doing this. She had said that what he would do is he would walk to the end of the pier and get like a bucket of seawater to change the water, instead of like... *[both laugh]*

Jack: That's really sweet.

Ali: I don't know, like, getting distilled water and some sort of saline solution or however else you would like care for a saltwater fish.

Jack: It's real big “Fish live in the ocean. The ocean's over there. Why don't I get some of the ocean for the fish?” type beat. It's great.

Ali: I mean, yeah. Especially like in the 90s, I'm not thinking of my dad like on Google Maps, like, “Where do I get...” *[both laugh]*

Jack: The nearest...

Ali: “How do I care for a freshwater aquarium or a seawater aquarium?” I think of him being like, “Sure, water's water.”

Jack: Yeah, water's water.

Ali: Uh huh.

Jack: And besides, you might get some bonus fish.

Ali: True. True. Yeah.

Jack: Here is what I read about the neon tetras.

Ali: Mm-hmm.

Jack: It is one of the most popular aquarium fish, with about 2 million sold in the US each month. During a single month—the Wikipedia page says later—an average of 1.8 million neon tetras with an estimated value of \$175,000 are imported into the US for the aquarium trade. This means that it's unsustainable, because more fish are being sold than are being imported. 2 million sold, 1.8 million neon tetras being imported. We are rumbling towards a neon tetra shortage.

Ali: Wait a minute. Wait, okay. *[laughs]* Well...mm.

Jack: Let's say you're America's neon tetra salesman, Ali.

Ali: Right, okay. Yeah, yes.

Jack: You've got 2 million neon tetras that you're selling to the good people of the USA.

Ali: Okay. Yes.

Jack: I am your supplier. And so, you sell 2 million every month. Every month.

Ali: Uh huh.

Jack: And every month, I give you 1.8 million neon tetras.

Ali: I'm seeing the problem. *[laughs]* I'm recognizing the problem here. But...okay, you give me 1.8 million fish, right?

Jack: Yeah.

Ali: And then, while I'm selling them throughout the month, there's some babies being made, right? *[laughs]*

Jack: But how quickly?

Ali: There's 200,000 fish that just get... *[laughs]*

Jack: 200,000 babies? It's like interest, fish interest. *[Ali laughs]* It adds up. It doesn't seem like a lot.

Ali: I mean, that's the circle of life.

[0:15:00]

Jack: That's the circle of life: fish interest. But what if, in an attempt to make you rely on my fish supply, I only give you nonbreeding fish? Then you have to buy from me.

Ali: Well, but then that's a shame, you know?

Jack: It's profit, Ali. Santa hasn't decided yet to abolish goods and services, so I...

Ali: *[laughs]* Yeah, what are we doing to these fish? Why are we selling so many of them?

Jack: People— I mean, look at them.

Ali: I mean, because they're great to look at. I mean, that's true. We need them in our homes. I'm understanding that much.

Jack: They're beautiful.

Ali: But we're just going through them like that? You'd think you would sell 2 million in one month, and then the next month, it would be like, eh, 4,000, you know?

Jack: Right, right, right. You'd think they— 2 million? Has America always loved neon tetras? When did they show up? They were first imported from South America. An ichthyologist, George S. Myers— who was the same guy who talked about the ghoul!

Ali: *[gasps]* Really?

Jack: He is a renowned ichthyologist, George S. Myers. He basically discovered a load of fish, but— *[laughs]* oh no! A snake and a lizard were named after him, but no fish, as far as I can tell.

Ali: Aww! *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: What the fuck?

Ali: He discovered some great fish, though.

Jack: Yeah, the flame tetra, the black-winged hatchetfish.

Ali: The ram cichlid.

Jack: Wow. That fish looks a little smug. *[Ali laughs quietly]* Let me see. We got three minutes left, so I want to make sure that if there's anything we missed, and we don't want to miss on the neon tetra. They can have a lifespan for as long as 10 years, but they normally live just two to three in an aquarium, because most people don't know how to look after fish, I guess.

Ali: Yeah. Unfortunately, people do not know how to look after fish. We're learning that with the neon tetra.

Jack: Yeah, we have to keep getting more of them. And I'll keep selling 'em. *[both laugh]* They eat all kinds of things. They eat all kinds of things: "Brine shrimp, daphnia, freeze-dried bloodworms, tubifex which can be stuck to the side of the aquarium, and micro pellet food to supplement their diets." And they get—

Ali: I like that they're omnivores. They're not picky, you know?

Jack: Yeah, totally.

Ali: “I’ll go where you’re going” type.

Jack: And they won’t poison me. Yeah.

Ali: And they won’t poison you.

Jack: If I touch them. Which the other one absolutely will, and it might even kill me.

Ali: True. True.

Jack: But this fish couldn’t kill me at all.

Ali: I think a nice thing about this fish is that they like to hang out.

Jack: With each other [*Ali: “Right”*] or with the humans?

Ali: Well, both, I guess. I guess, I mean, we certainly like to look at them and have created an economy around that. [*laughs*] But usually you see these fish in groups. They’re fun little decoration. You see three or four of them, five or six.

Jack: They zoom around.

Ali: They zoom around. They chase each other. They hang out.

Jack: Yeah, because they’re little.

Ali: They’re really little.

Jack: They have so much room to chase each other about, right? Which you don’t get with a bigger fish unless you have a much much bigger tank.

Ali: Mm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

Jack: And fish chasing each other around is one of the best things to see in the aquarium, IMO.

Ali: [*sighs*] It’s so good. It’s so good. How many of these fish would you want to put in a tank?

Jack: Do you mean is advisable? Or are you asking me as sort of personally?

Ali: As a preference. Yeah, preference.

Jack: Oh.

Ali: You say how many you want, and then we'll figure out how many gallons you need.

Jack: Six.

Ali: Six.

Jack: Oh! They must be kept in groups of at least six. *[Ali gasps]* So. But they will be more active in groups of eight to 12 or more!

Ali: Wow.

Jack: Wow!

Jack: Wow, look at—

Ali: Neon tetras only reach a maximum adult size of 1.5 to 2 inches. They are active fish that like to dart around and swim all over the place.

Jack: All over the place. *[both laugh]*

Ali: That is why it is a good idea to keep them in at least 10 to 20 gallon fish tanks. Wow.

Jack: Okay, look at this image of the neon tetra that it looks like we made. *[Ali laughs]* This is a bright blue image that says “neon tetras,” and then there's a very sort of blocky vector image of a neon tetra.

Ali: This is gorgeous.

Jack: And then underneath it, it says, “Everything you need to know,” with like a lot of deep fried artifacting around the letters.

Ali: *[laughs quietly]* I like that it's like very much a vector image of a fish, but there's like a gradient on the vector so it looks like it's a watercolor, *[Jack: “Yeah”]* despite being very divided lines.

Jack: It's very beautiful. And that's the end of our timer.

Ali: Wow.

Jack: This fish is a classic.

Ali: A classic.

Jack: This fish is the “All I Want For Christmas Is You” of fish.

Ali: It's true. It's true. It's true. It's a delight to hear. Sometimes they can be out of place, for instance, in a less than 10 gallon fish tank.

Jack: It's the same with the song, Mariah Carey's “All I Want For Christmas Is You”. *[both laugh]*

Ali: But in the right time and the right place, a beautiful addition to any home aquarium or the rivers and lakes of South America.

Jack: Yeah, the other place where they're from. What is your favorite Christmas standard, Ali?

Ali: My favorite Christmas standard? Oh, boy.

Jack: *[quietly]* Oh, what is my favorite Christmas...?

Ali: *[sighs thoughtfully]* I mean, “All I Want For Christmas Is You” is up there. It's really up there. There's always Wham!'s “Last Christmas”.

Jack: Yeah. That's a sad one, though.

Ali: Yeah. Yeah, it is.

Jack: Because he won't– he's changed how he feels about how he's going to offer his heart this Christmas.

Ali: But, you know, it's important to learn lessons and grow up.

Jack: And then make a– yeah, yeah.

Ali: I think part of Christmas is that too.

Jack: Yeah. Oh, definitely. I like Bublé when he sings some of his Christmas songs.

Ali: Sure.

Jack: When he sings like...uh, the songs he sings. *[both laugh]* I can't think of them. Uh, sleigh bells ring. The one about talking to the snowman about whether you're gonna get married. *[laughs quietly]*

Ali: Wait, which one is that one?

Jack: What's that song called?

Ali: Talking to the snowman about whether you're gonna get married?

Jack: *[singing]* "Sleigh bells ring, are you listening? In the rain, snow is glistening." You know that one?

Ali: *[singing]* A beautiful time, ba-da-ba-ba-ba.

Jack: *[singing]* "Ah, we're happy tonight." *[snaps]* Walking in a winter wonderland!

Ali: Yeah.

Jack: That's what it's called. Yeah!

Ali: Okay.

Jack: Yeah, they ask the snowman if they should get married. *[singing]* "In the winter, you can build a snowman.

Ali: *[singing]* "You can build a snowman."

Jack: *[singing]* "Let's pretend that he is Parson Brown." They're pretending he's the vicar.

Ali: Oh.

Jack: *[singing]* "He'll say, 'Are you married?' We'll say, 'No, man, but you can do the job when you're in town.'"

Ali: That's not ask—

Jack: Yes?

Ali: That's like...okay, I thought you were saying they were being like, "Hey, snowman. We've been together for a couple years now, and we're thinking of getting together, but we were wondering if we should get married." *[Jack laughs quietly]* But what it really is is like, "Hey, snowman. Will you officiate our wedding?" *[both laugh]* Which is...

Jack: Hey, snowman. Pretend to be the priest. You, pretend to be the priest.

Ali: *[laughs]* "Baby, it's Cold Outside" is a good song.

Jack: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. That one's like...I've seen a lot of people online be like, "That song's creepy," and I can understand why people might think it's creepy, *[Ali: "Right"]* but I think it's two people who are just flirting and having a fun time.

Ali: Sure. Yeah.

Jack: They're being like flirty and cheeky.

Ali: Right.

Jack: Uh, what else? I like songs about the fire.

Ali: Oh, sure, sure, sure, sure, sure.

Jack: Being near the fire, but I don't much like "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire."

Ali: No.

Jack: And then like, it's about your nose or something, right? Then they sing about your nose.

Ali: They sing about your nose?

Jack: *[singing halfheartedly]* "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire." Like, Jack Frost—

Ali: Oh, snow nipping at—

Jack: *[laughs]* Yeah, I think it's snow nipping at your nose. I was about to say, "Jack Frost creeping down your nose," which is not the line.

Ali: No!

Jack: No, I don't like that.

Ali: That's a nip.

Jack: Yeah, that's a nip, not a creep. *[Ali laughs]* Well, this has been Fishteen Minutes, late summer edition. We're very excited about our Christmas stuff coming later this year. Thank you for listening, and, you know, we won't see you again on the Friends at the Table feed. This has been good, but we're gonna get all our stuff fixed, and...

Ali: Mm-hmm. And we'll see you all over on fishteenminutes.org.

Jack: [Fishteenminutes.net](http://fishteenminutes.net). Bye! *[Ali laughs]*

[PALISADE end music]