



Surprisingly Human

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**ANIMAL PLANET'S *THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP*,
HEADLINED BY MARTIN SHEEN, TELLS THE HAUNTING, TRUE STORY
THAT INSPIRED "MOBY DICK"**

- *Two-hour Feature Film Also Starring John Boyega of Star Wars Episode VII, Charles Furness of 24: Live Another Day and Jonas Armstrong of Robin Hood Recounts the True Story of the Sinking of The Essex –*
- *The Primeval Struggle Between Man and Whale Always Tilted in Favor of Humanity, Until The Whale Had its Revenge –*

(New York) – Once upon a time, millions of whales swam free and unthreatened in peaceful waters. But in recent centuries, humanity has placed a price tag on these majestic animals, sought after for their blubber and meat. This mortal quest for wealth left many species of whale on the verge of extinction...

The feature film **THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP**, which premieres on Animal Planet **Wednesday, November 26, from 9 - 11 PM (ET/PT)**, travels back in history to a time when some of the sea's most epic and bloody battles were waged against magnificent creatures of the deep, and young men dreamed of returning home on a ship full of slaughtered whales telling valiant tales of victory. But one voyage ended differently when a whale refused to meet its demise and sought to claim the ultimate and most brutal revenge.

Animal Planet's **THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP** is a two-hour feature film based on true accounts of one of history's most haunting stories of survival: the sinking of the whaling ship "The Essex." **Martin Sheen** stars as Old Thomas Nickerson, who reminisces about his emotional maiden voyage on board the doomed ship. Just a naïve cabin boy with dreams of matching his grandfather's bravery, he recounts days and nights battling brutal storms, crippling waves, the scorching sun and grueling hunger. After "The Essex" sinks, the men are forced into a gripping struggle for survival, and eventually, desperation and starvation lead to cannibalism. The hunters turn their slaughter upon each other, and only then do they feel the full weight of one whale's revenge.

"Paul Watson (of Animal Planet's *Whale Wars*) is a great friend of mine and one of my heroes. It is gratifying that I get to do a project like **THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP**. It's a voice

from the past telling us whaling is not a good idea and reminding us that we've depleted tremendous whale populations to a fraction of what they once were," says Sheen, a keen conservationist and activist.

"For years, Animal Planet has been following the whales' modern-day fight for survival through its Emmy®-nominated series **WHALE WARS**," says Rick Holzman, general manager and executive vice president of programming for Animal Planet. "The scripted project **THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP** takes viewers back to a time when man's greed decimated this once plentiful species, creating the present-day necessity for conservation. Antiquated whaling traditions caused massive devastation – not only for those aboard The Essex but for the whales species that suffered in our seas."

Sheen leads a talented cast along with Charles Furness (*24: Live Another Day*) as young Tom Nickerson and John Boyega (*Star Wars: Episode VII*) as Bond. **THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP** also features Jonas Armstrong (*Robin Hood, The Street*) as First Mate Owen Chase; Adam Rayner (*The Hunted*) as Captain Pollard; Paul Kaye (*Game of Thrones, Stella*) as Joy; David Gyasi (*Cloud Atlas, War Horse*) as Peterson; Jolyon Coy (*The Hollow Crown*) as Lawrence; as well as Jassa Ahluwalisa and Ferdinand Kingsley. The film is a BBC Factual Productions and Animal Planet drama inspired by Chase and Pollard's real-life accounts of the ship's sinking. These memoirs are said to have inspired Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* and the nonfiction book *In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick.

Beautifully capturing the events that led to the sinking of The Essex and its crew, **THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP** was filmed on location in Malta and England, which is home to the world-renowned Mediterranean outdoor water SFX facility with tanks that are amongst the largest in the world.

In honor of the continuing quest to replenish the world's whale population, Animal Planet has made a monetary donation to the **National Wildlife Federation** (NWF). Animal Planet has adopted a whale for every member of the media receiving a press kit containing the film. NWF a long-time partner in Animal Planet's R.O.A.R. initiative and dedicated to protecting wildlife and habitat and inspiring the future generation of conservationists, is a voice for wildlife.

THE WHALE: REVENGE FROM THE DEEP is a production of BBC History with Animal Planet. The original screenplay was written by Terry Cafolla. For BCC, Eamon Hardy and Ruth Caleb are executive producers with Mike Dormer as the producer. For Animal Planet, Mick Kaczorowski is the executive producer.

About R.O.A.R

Established in 2006, Animal Planet's R.O.A.R., is dedicated to improving the lives of animals in our communities and in the wild. The R.O.A.R. partners benefiting from this program help wild and domestic animals in the U.S. and abroad. The campaign aligns Animal Planet with a powerful roster of leading animal and environmental organizations. R.O.A.R. is a key component of Discovery's overall Impact initiative which strives to celebrate, support and sustain the majesty of the earth's people, animals and natural beauty through innovative programs and events. For more information about how Discovery is making an impact, please visit: <http://impact.discovery.com>.

About Animal Planet

Animal Planet, a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers

animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. Animal Planet consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 94 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; Animal Planet L!VE, the go-to digital destination for round-the-clock, unfiltered access to the animal kingdom; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service, and merchandising extensions.

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