



Captain Paul Watson: Interview With a Pirate

Lamya Essemlali, Paul Watson

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The behind-the-scenes true story of Paul Watson, the world's most famous eco-pirate and marine animal rights activist.

Paul Watson became an animal rights activist at the young age of eleven, in 1962. When trappers killed a beaver that Paul had befriended, he systematically and efficiently located and destroyed their traps. This was the beginning of fifty years of animal rights activism. Among the international awards and recognition he has earned in that time, Time Magazine named Watson one of the top twenty environmental heroes of the 20th century.

In 1969, when just eighteen, Watson co-founded Greenpeace. He was also the first man to intervene between a whale and a harpoon. Watson left Greenpeace to establish the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, which uses more aggressive direct-action strategies to combat threats to the world's ocean creatures. With a goal of protection and conservation of marine mammals, their first priority is ending the illegal hunting of seals and whales. In Antarctica, Japanese whalers kill hundreds of whales each year. To circumvent the moratorium on commercial whaling, Tokyo disguises their whaling under the cover of scientific programs. Yet the environmental movement got results: Japanese whalers, who intended to kill 850 minke whales, returned with only 507 whales in 2010. The International Court of Justice was asked to require Japan to end this whaling program, and the campaigns have included sinking ten illegal whaling ships, ramming more at sea, confiscating hundreds of long lines and drift nets and making more than 250 expeditions worldwide to save hundreds of thousands of marine animals.

Captain Watson, though fighting for a good cause, is labeled by some as a "pirate" and an "eco-terrorist," including those running Greenpeace today. But for those who think that petitions and banners will not be enough to save the ocean, he is a hero. To all his detractors, Paul Watson responds, "Find us a whale that disapproves of our actions and we promise to give it up!"

In this book, Paul Watson reveals to shipmate Lamya Essemlali his motivations, campaigns, dangers and successes. Watson was recently arrested in Germany on a Costa Rican warrant that claimed he endangered the crew of a fishing vessel a decade ago. The Sea Shepherd feels the arrest is politically motivated and that he may be extradited to answer charges related to obstructing Japanese whaling activities. Watson skipped bail in Germany for an unknown destination, and is currently on the open seas.



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