



# **The Wreck of the Whaleship "Essex": A First-hand Account of One of History's Most Extraordinary Maritime Disasters**

*Owen Chase*

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The morning of 20 November 1820 was a doomed one for the whaleship ESSEX. More than 1,000 miles from land in the South Pacific, the ship was sunk, rammed by a sperm whale. Twenty sailors managed to collect some bread and water before pulling away in three frail boats, but only eight survived what was to follow: three months of despair and debilitating exhaustion at sea. Owen Chase was one of those survivors. After returning to Nantucket, his journal of the ESSEX's perilous voyage was published. But Chase only lived to tell the tale because he had eaten his dead ship-mates...

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