



SURVIVORS THE CHIMPANZEES OF KIBALE FOREST

4K

1 x 50 min.

4K, 5.1 and Stereo

Written and directed by **Herco van Houdt** and **Joe Kennedy**

Produced by **Katharina Pechel**

Executive producers: **Sabine Holzer, Walter Köhler**



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The dense tropical rainforest of Kibale National Park in Uganda is home of one of the last and largest populations of wild chimpanzees in Africa. Like many other wild habitats, this is also a forest under siege.

This character-driven story observes a troop of chimpanzees in Kibale. Our main characters are Max and Bono, who both have lost limbs and almost their lives repeatedly to snares and other forms of poaching. Their survival is nothing short of a miraculous heroic story, as the ongoing conflict between wildlife and human population is taking its toll. However, Max and Bono are not only surviving albeit having lost feet and hands at a young age, they have also succeeded in siring offspring over the years.

On the human side, we will accompany Paul Mugisha, the head of the local Snare Removal Team who tirelessly defends his troop of chimpanzees. Every day, he and his team risk their lives in the rainforest, searching for snares and poachers. Paul made it his mission to educate the villagers about the forest and the wildlife. Most important of all though, he teaches the local school kids that these chimpanzees and the forest are their natural heritage, their future. Here, he achieves spectacular results.

And now, a group of highly specialised vets have joined the team.

These vets are first responders. Once they get an emergency radio call, they rush off into the jungle to either apply first aid to the injured animal or, if needs be and they discover a life-threatening situation, they can in fact operate right then and there in the forest. This more often than not provides its own challenges which the determined team has to overcome.

Ronan Donovan, today a National Geographic Explorer and Photographer, studied this chimpanzee group when he was a biology student 9 years ago. Back then he "lived" with them in the treetops and got accepted into their group. He developed some close relationships with them to a point where they trusted him enough to fall asleep right in front of him! He was even allowed to accompany them on their hunts.

This year, Ronan will return to Kibale and the troop. Will they recognise and accept him again? What changes and challenges has the chimpanzee group overcome in the past years? He will join forces with Paul and the vet team in their quest to take care of the chimps and find out about new dynamics, the conflicts and possible solutions between human population and the wild habitat.



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