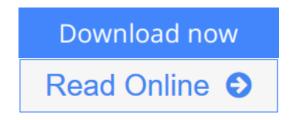
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# The Butterfly Lion

By Michael Morpurgo



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ILLUSTRATED BY CHRISTIAN BIRMINGHAM. A lyrical and moving tale of a young boy growing up in Africa, and his lifelong friendship with a white lion. "All my life I'll think you you, I promise I will. I won't ever forget you." Bertie rescues an orphaned white lion cub from the African veld. They are inseparable until Bertie is sent to boarding school far away in England and the lion is sold to a circus. Bertie swears that one day they will see one another again, but it is the butterfly lion which ensures that their friendship will never be forgotten.

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# **Editorial Review**

#### From School Library Journal

Grade 4-8. Elements of fantasy and fiction are woven into this fast-paced adventure. A student runs away from boarding school and meets an elderly lady, whom he later discovers is a ghost. She tells the story of another boy, Bertie, who grew up long ago in Africa and eventually became her husband. Lonely and neglected by his parents, he rescues an abandoned white lion cub and cares for it, gradually forming a close bond. After some years the boy's parents abruptly decide to send him to school in England and sell the lion. Bertie attempts to save the animal by returning it to the jungle, but it has lost its ability to survive in the wild and returns to the only home it has known. A French circus owner buys the lion, and the boy vows never to forget him. Twelve years later, Bertie fights in World War I and is decorated for rescuing wounded comrades. In a small French town he finally finds his lion, starving and near death, and the two friends are reunited. Heartened by the woman's tale, the student returns to school. This touching story is well written and emotionally satisfying. Readers will be drawn to this fascinating tale of a unique friendship between boy and beast. In addition to being a successful adventure story, the book demonstrates the value of character?of keeping promises, standing up for one's beliefs, and courage under fire.?Gebregeorgis Yohannes, San Francisco Public Library, CA

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#### From **Booklist**

Gr. 4-6. In this story within a story, readers listen along with a 10-year-old boy as a friendly old widow, Millie, tells about her dead husband, Bertie, who grew up in South Africa with a white lion as his pet and only friend. Devastated when his father sells the lion, Bertie vows to find the beast again one day. The story sounds hokey, but Morpurgo evocatively captures the South African landscape and presents young, lonely Bertie's heartbreak and his blossoming friendship and love for Millie with genuine emotion and tender poignancy. Eventually, a reunion does come after Bertie goes off to fight the war in France. When the lion finally dies, Bertie and Millie honor it by carving a monument that attracts beautiful blue butterflies. With just the right mix of tension and romance, this short, sophisticated novel will appeal especially to animal lovers. *Kathleen Squires* 

#### From Kirkus Reviews

A runaway schoolboy finds a magnificent monument to a magnificent animal in this ghost story, at once marvelous and matter-of-fact, from Morpurgo (Robin of Sherwood, 1996, etc.). The author casts himself as the ten-year-old narrator, whose attempt to run away from a miserable boarding-school existence ends in a dusty house, where a friendly old widow shows him a great lion cut into the chalk on a hillside--the butterfly lion. She tells him how it came to be there: Her Bertie, a lonely boy in South Africa, found and began to raise a white lion cub, tearfully saw it sold to a French circus owner, reclaimed it years later during the Great War, and brought it to England to live. When it died, Bertie spent the next 40 years carving its likeness on the hill. Astonishing in itself, the chalk lion becomes even moreso after a rain, when thousands of Adonis Blue butterflies gather on it. Urging him to come again, the old woman takes the boy back to school; only later does he learn that she died--as her husband did--years ago. This dreamlike story is suffused with a man's lifelong love for a rare, gentle animal friend. (Fiction. 9-12) -- *Copyright* ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

### **Users Review**

From reader reviews:

#### Marie Velasquez:

Book is to be different for each and every grade. Book for children until finally adult are different content. As we know that book is very important for people. The book The Butterfly Lion had been making you to know about other expertise and of course you can take more information. It doesn't matter what advantages for you. The publication The Butterfly Lion is not only giving you more new information but also to be your friend when you feel bored. You can spend your current spend time to read your e-book. Try to make relationship using the book The Butterfly Lion. You never truly feel lose out for everything in case you read some books.

#### Cindi Russell:

Your reading sixth sense will not betray a person, why because this The Butterfly Lion guide written by well-known writer who knows well how to make book which might be understand by anyone who have read the book. Written in good manner for you, dripping every ideas and producing skill only for eliminate your current hunger then you still hesitation The Butterfly Lion as good book not merely by the cover but also by content. This is one publication that can break don't assess book by its include, so do you still needing an additional sixth sense to pick this kind of!? Oh come on your studying sixth sense already told you so why you have to listening to one more sixth sense.

### Linda Griffin:

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