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The Lion & The Mouse



Synopsis

The Caldecott Award-winning fable of compassion and kindness retold by acclaimed artist Jerry Pinkney. In award-winning artist Jerry Pinkney's wordless adaptation of one of Aesop's most beloved fables, an unlikely pair learn that no act of kindness is ever wasted. After a ferocious lion spares a cowering mouse that he'd planned to eat, the mouse later comes to his rescue, freeing him from a poacher's trap. With vivid depictions of the landscape of the African Serengeti and expressively-drawn characters, Pinkney makes this a truly special retelling, and his stunning pictures speak volumes.

Customer Reviews

Starred Review. PreSchool-Grade 3
•This story starts on the cover with the glorious, golden countenance of a lion. No text is necessary to communicate the title: the direction of the beast's gaze and the conflicted expression on his tightly cropped face compel readers to turn the book over, where a mouse, almost filling the vertical space, glances back. The endpapers and artist's note place these creatures among the animal families of the African Serengeti. Each spread contributes something new in this nearly wordless narrative, including the title opening, on which the watchful rodent pauses, resting in one of the large footprints that marches across the gutter. In some scenes, Pinkney's luminous art, rendered in watercolor and colored pencil, suggests a natural harmony, as when the cool blues of the sky are mirrored in the rocks and acacia tree. In other compositions, a cream-colored background focuses attention on the exquisitely detailed and nuanced forms of the two main characters. Varied perspectives and the judicious use of panels create interest and indicate time. Sounds are used sparingly and purposefully—
•an owl's hoot to hint at offstage danger or an anguished roar to alert the mouse of the lion's entrapment. Contrast this version with Pinkney's traditional treatment of the same story (complete with moral) in *Aesop's Fables* (North-South, 2000). The ambiguity that results from the lack of words in this version allows for a slower, subtle, and ultimately more satisfying read. Moments of humor and affection complement the drama. A classic tale from a consummate artist.
•Wendy Lukehart, Washington DC Public Library
END

* "Pinkney enriches this classic tale of friendship with another universal theme - family - affectingly illustrated in several scenes as well as in the back endpapers... African species grace splendid panoramas that balance the many finely detailed, closeup images of the protagonists. Pinkney has no need for words; his art speaks eloquently for itself."
•Publishers Weekly, starred review*

"A nearly wordless exploration of Aesop's fable of symbiotic mercy that is nothing short of masterful... Unimpeachable." — Kirkus Reviews, starred review

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