



Mouse & Lion

Rand Burkert (Retelling) , Nancy Ekholm Burkert (Illustrator)

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From the illustrator of the classic edition of Snow-White and the Seven Dwarfs

On a ridge above the Kalihari,
Lion naps, until Mouse bumbles into him,
willy-nilly, startling him awake.
After a show of teeth, Lion is softened
by Mouse's pledge of loyalty
and sets him free.

When a cold moon brings a humbling lesson,
Lion comes to recognize
Mouse's keen skill, and deeper kindness.

Mouse and Lion, Aesop's fabled duo,
renew their ancient bond
in this warm retelling by Rand Burkert,
illuminated by the authentic natural detail
of Nancy Ekholm Burkert's art.

Mouse & Lion Details

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ISBN : 9780545101479
Author : Rand Burkert (Retelling) , Nancy Ekholm Burkert (Illustrator)
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Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Animals, Folk Tales, Fables

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From Reader Review Mouse & Lion for online ebook

Jessica Harrison says

Review via Cracking the Cover

Aesop's fable about a mouse and lion is one of the most beloved and most retold stories, the most recent of note being Jerry Pinkney's "The Lion & the Mouse," which won the Caldecott Medal.

Now, another Caldecott honoree, artist Nancy Ekholm Burkert, has taken on this fable with the help of writer Rand Burkert.

Set on the continent of Africa, in a relatively unexplored area bordered Botswana and Namibia, the story of "Mouse & Lion" unfolds.

One day, as Mouse is hurrying home, he scampers over a boulder that's not really a boulder. Mouse inadvertently wakes up King Lion who promises to eat Mouse in punishment of his blunder. As Lion swings Mouse closer and closer to his jaws, Mouse finds favor with the king and promises loyalty. The Lion laughs at Mouse's bravery and sends him on his way.

A year passes, and Lion has quite forgotten the tiny Mouse and his pledge. But as the Lion stumbles into a trap set by hunters, he suddenly finds himself in need of a small friend. Mouse comes across Lion, who has been swept up in a net, and sets to work with his teeth nibbling through the rope and freeing his friend.

In this version of Aesop's tale, Mouse rather than Lion takes center stage. Mouse's bravery and ingenuity not only save the day; they leave Lion with a new appreciation of small things. It's fun to see Mouse's personality take shape as he talks his way out of being eaten.

The accompanying illustrations are beautiful. Nancy's drawings are so intricate and detailed that one almost feels as if they are seeing Mouse and Lion in real life.

While Pinkney's version of the tale is bold and brilliant in color, the Burkert's version is more muted and has an understated tone. Both books are beautiful and both hold their own, making either, or both, a great addition to your collection.

Seema Rao says

Luscious illustrations are paired with a good rendition of this classic Aesop's Fable. Similar in richness to the Pinkney version.

Sarah Gross says

Title: Mouse and Lion
Author: Rand Burkert

Illustrator: Nancy Eckholm Burkert

Genre: Fable

Theme(s): bravery, loyalty, hero, strength, good vs. evil,

Opening line/sentence: "One day, Mouse, hurrying home, lost his way on a rocky ridge."

Brief Book Summary: A mouse accidentally mistakes a lion for a mountain and proceeds to climb over him when the lion wakes up and threatens to eat him. The mouse convinces the lion that he is brave and that he should not eat him, for one day he may need him. The lion lets him go, laughing thinking that he may ever need a mouse, but the mouse eventually helps the lion out of a trap a year later that was set by hunters. The lion thanks the mouse and tells him he should go on and climb whatever mountains in his kingdom that he pleases.

Professional Recommendation/Review #1:

Publishers Weekly

In jaunty prose, first-time author Rand Burkert—the illustrator's son—retells Aesop's fable of the mouse who stumbles over a lion ("Sire, I took you for a mountain—honestly!") and pleads for his freedom ("You might need me someday, in a pinch"); the mouse fulfills the prediction by gnawing him free from a hunter's net. "You shall also be free, Mouse!" says the lion. "I grant you liberty to climb every mountain in my kingdom." Caldecott Honoree Nancy Ekholm Burkert's (*Snow-White and the Seven Dwarves*) exquisitely drafted spreads celebrate the beauty of the African savannah, often from a mouse's-eye view: a graceful blade of grass, a moth's wing, the thorns of the scrubby African shrubs. Moments of drama are sometimes represented in a series of spot illustrations, the present instant in full color, those past or yet to come in pale blue, a lovely way of expressing time on an unmoving page. Creamy paper, a spare layout, and fine typography combine to create an object that reminds readers of the physical pleasures of books; it's a gratifying addition to Nancy Ekholm Burkert's small but treasured oeuvre. All ages. (Oct.)

Professional Recommendation/Review #2:

Children's Literature - Susan Thomas

In a time when anti-bullying campaigns have become popular in schools, it seems only fitting that the mouse gets top billing in the title of this familiar fable. After awakening him by mistake, the mouse has to prove to the lion that he should live. A year later, the mouse becomes the hero of the story as he repays the lion by freeing him from the hunters' net. The illustrations have been created with careful attention to the accuracy of the setting, a landscape where the animals described really could exist. The illustrator has chosen an area bordering Botswana and Namibia, where the lion and the mouse live among baobab trees, tall grasses, and rocky ridges. Since this retelling appears on the children's book scene less than three years after Jerry Pinkney's Caldecott award-winning *The Lion & the Mouse*, it seems that another fable may have been a better choice. However it is done well, and a bit differently; Pinkney's story is told with very few words. This could lead to some interesting lessons in comparing and contrasting the retellings of Aesop's fables.

Reviewer: Susan Thomas

Response to Two Professional Reviews: I like how review #2 describes this book while also noting anti-bullying campaigns and how they are alike. This book would be perfect to use in an elementary classroom when teaching about anti-bullying or helping one another in the classroom community. Again, the wonderful illustrations in this book only add to the great detail in the words, making it a great read-aloud book for most elementary aged students.

Evaluation of Literary Elements: The book has really great pictures that cover the entire page. I think students will be really interested in listening to and looking at this picture, especially during a read-aloud. The book also has a plot that comes full circle, from the lion letting the mouse go and then the mouse returning the favor and freeing the lion. It shows that the hero of the story doesn't always have to be the character that is the biggest or strongest.

Consideration of Instructional Application: This book would be great as a read-aloud in an elementary classroom (grades K-2). It could be used to explore the benefit of helping others, even if it seems like someone is not capable of helping you at first. The book is great for building up your classroom community,

and it should be read in the beginning of the school year.

Cheryl says

(compare to Pinkney's Caldecott winner... same year?)

Ok, that was published two years earlier, recognized therefore just one year earlier and still fresh in the minds of the committee looking at this, I imagine.

That was much more intense. One can feel the heat of the climate, the power of the lion. This is almost as good, but more delicate. It has more personality, even some humor. But it has a lot of words, relatively speaking, and the other makes it clear that words are not necessary. I love the Burkert's work, but I'm not sure it's best suited to this tale. I will look for more by them.

Anthony says

An Aesop tale retold, that still teaches a moral lesson in the end. "Men are everywhere with traps to snare us, large and small."

Theresa says

Mouse and Lion is Rand Burkert's retelling of Aesop's famous fable. While hurrying home, small Mouse walks over what he believes to be a mountain. Instead it is a sleeping Lion who awakens angrily. Lion contemplates eating Mouse, but after Mouse shows his skills of jumping and a promise of loyalty, Lion lets Mouse go. A long while passes without any interaction between our two characters. One day Lion is caught in a human trap. Mouse finds him sad and defeated and, remembering his promise, Mouse helps Lion free.

The audience of this story can be most elementary grades because of its universal message of unlikely friendships and the skills of the perceived weak. I would use this in a fifth grade classroom because of the detailed, realistic illustrations. Older students would be drawn to how the story does not look like a typical children's story. Also, with the history and details of the location of the story, more can be taken from it. The way I would use this story in my classroom would be in a unit about the genre "fables." After reading the story, we would have a discussion about the message of the story. Fifth grade students would write notes on each story in their notebooks to remind them later. Students would, in groups of 3-4, pick one of the fables I presented over a week and would write a modern adaptation to the story with their group. When completed, we would share the stories with the class.

Gwen Martin says

This book teaches a very good lesson to readers about bravery, gratitude and giving people a second chance.

A mouse comes across a lion and disturbs him. The lion almost eats the mouse, but ends up letting him go free because the mouse says that he may be very helpful to the lion one day. It turns out, he is right.

"Mouse and Lion" is very well illustrated, with each picture being very realistic and lifelike. My favorite picture is of the sunset and a big tree right in the middle of it. This picture uses both sides of the page and is therefore huge and vibrant. It makes you feel as though you are actually there.

This book not only has wonderful illustrations but has a wonderful lesson intermingled in the great story. I have always loved animals, and I really enjoy books where the animals are the main characters. I feel like it adds a whole other dimension to the story.

I chose this book as my read aloud because I love the story so much and because the pictures are so wonderful. If you are going to read a book aloud to your class, it needs to have large, vibrant pictures and a great story. Also, since the main characters are animals, I think it will make children like it more. All children like to hear about animals!

David says

When I first heard of another retelling of this Aesop fable, I wondered what could be contributed that hadn't yet been done. When Rand Burkert and Nancy Ekholm Burkert combine their talents, the answer is - plenty!

Mouse & Lion by Rand Burkert, illustrated by Nancy Ekholm Burkert, is a retelling of the classic Aesop's fable, set in the area between Namibia and Botswana.

While Lion naps on a ridge above the Kalihari, Mouse bumbles into him, startling him awake. After a show of teeth and the real threat of being eaten, Lion is amused and softened by Mouse's pledge of loyalty and sets him free. A year later, when a cold moon brings a humbling lesson, Lion comes to recognize Mouse's keen skill, and deeper kindness.

Rand Burkert remakes this tale in an accessible manner for young readers, showing a very unlikely friendship forged between a tiny mouse and a regal lion. A large font makes this easier to read and adds a classic feel. In the afterward, the author of this retelling explains that mouse's traits earned the deep affection of all involved in this project, earning him top billing. A brief look at Aesop's tales regarding Lion identifies this tale as showing Lion at a midpoint: "not truly a despot, not truly a king."

Nancy Ekholm Burkert's beautiful illustrations feature soft colors and very exact details showing the illustrator's careful attention in portraying the four striped African mouse hero and its world. Lion is shown in both his regal glory and his royal rage. In her afterward, the illustrator explains the choice of the African mouse and gives credit to those who helped in her research. My favorite images include Lion dangling Mouse above his mouth, Lion offering Mouse his paw, Lion ensnared, Lion in the trap with Mouse speaking to him, Mouse and his family, and Lion dreaming of many small creatures.

This beautiful retelling of the Aesop fable, with Mouse receiving due credit, should receive many accolades and possible awards. It belongs alongside The Lion and the Mouse by Jerry Pnkney.

For ages 4 and up, fables, Aesop, lions, mice, loyalty, friendship, nature, and fans of Rand Burkert and Nancy Ekholm Burkert.

Robert Moushon says

Burkert, R., & Burkert, N. E. (2011). *Mouse & lion*. New York, NY : Scholastic.

Characters: The Mouse and the King Lion

Setting: The Kalahari Desert.

Themes: Favors, Humanity, Friendship

Genre: CSULB ETEC 545 Class 3, ETEC 545 Fable Story, Fables, Picture Book

Summary: In the Kalahari Desert, the Mouse scurries over what it thinks is a boulder, but turns out to be the back of the King Lion. He traps the Mouse and threatens his life, holding in his claws, dangling over his teeth. The Mouse, showing bravery, forces compassion from the King Lion with a promise that setting him free might come in handy one day in the future. This comes to fruition, as the Mouse saves King Lion from a hunter's trap.

Target Audience: Early Elementary, Grades K-2

Curriculum Ties: Friendship, Kindness, Debt, Favors, World Roles

Personal response: I was familiar with award winning, *The Lion and the Mouse* from Pinkney, and was interested what route in interpretation this story took. Nancy Burkert's illustrations are fantastic. They really brought to life the struggle of the mouse, and the context of the classic fable.

Allison Reilly says

Summary

This is a classic fable that has been told for hundreds of years. It begins with a lion sleeping and a mouse accidentally stepping on him because he thought he was a mountain. The lion laughs in his face and threatens to kill him. The mouse tells the lion that he may need him one day for help. Reluctantly, the lion frees the mouse laughing about how he would never need help from a feeble mouse. One day, the lion gets caught in a net and is in need of someone to get him down. The mouse comes to his rescue and chews through the net. The mouse now saved the lion.

Evaluation

This is such a classic fable with a great moral. This book in particular has soft images that would attract smaller children in my opinion. I think this is a great story for children to hear and would fit well in a first grade classroom when discussing folklore.

Teaching Point

My teaching point is having this book read as a read aloud in first grade during the folklore unit. Students

would listen to this story and other versions of the story. Independently they will compare and contrast each version and decide whether or not the moral changes even if the story is a little different.

Melissa O'Neill says

Categories/Genres for this class fulfilled by this book

Fiction/Traditional Literature/ Fables/Picture Book

Estimate of age level of interest

K-3

Estimate of reading level

3.4

Brief description

In this retelling of the classic Aesop fable, Mouse scampers over a mountain that mistakenly turns out to be none other than Lion – who decides that Mouse may make a tasty morsel. Mouse thinks quickly and convinces Lion that he is a loyal and brave mouse and that Lion might need him someday. Lion agrees and sends Mouse on his way. A year passes – Lion becomes trapped in a hunter's net. Mouse comes to his rescue, using his teeth to chew apart the ropes and free Lion. Lion grants Mouse the liberty to climb every mountain in his kingdom.

Identify at least 2 characteristics of this genre and subgenre and discuss how they appear in your book

- The animals merely represent aspects of human nature. (p. 117)

Mouse & Lion cross paths quite by accident when Mouse scampered over Lion thinking Lion was a boulder. When Lion reacts by contemplating to eat Mouse, Mouse finds himself proving his bravery – telling Lion that he may need him someday. Lion just laughs. But in the end, Lion, who represents kingliness, and Mouse, who represents meekness, trade roles and it's up to Mouse to save Lion.

- Because of their brevity, fables appear to be simple. However, they convey an abstract idea in relatively few words, and for that reason they are highly complex. (p. 117)

The moral of Mouse & Lion is to demonstrate that both Mouse & Lion learned kindness, loyalty, gratitude, and the importance of second chances.

In what ways and how well does the book as a whole serve its intended audience?

Mouse & Lion is well-suited for its intended audience because it can teach young readers (or anyone) that no matter how small [fill-in the adjective] you may be, you can overcome obstacles and do great things. Hurray for all of us mice out there!

Awards if any

Links to published reviews from professional sources e.g. ALA, Booklist, Kirkus, SLJ, etc

ALA Notable Children's Books 2012

Library Media Connection 01/01/12

Booklist starred 12/01/11

New York Times 11/13/11

Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books 11/01/11
Publishers Weekly starred 08/22/11
Horn Book Magazine 11/01/11
Library Journal starred 08/01/11
Horn Book Magazine 04/01/12
Wilson's Children 10/01/12
Kirkus Reviews starred 09/01/11

Jo Oehrlein says

Beautiful illustrations of the classic Aesop's fable.

Taylor Hartman says

Copyright: 2011
Number of pages: 32
Book format: print
Reading level: pre-k-3; Lexile measure: AD570L
Genre: fiction
Lit requirement: fable

Mouse and Lion is a fable that tells the story of King Lion and the peasant Mouse. One day, Mouse scampers over King Lion as he mistakes him for a mountain. As he goes to eat Mouse, Mouse pleads and says that he may need his help sometime in the future. He lets Mouse go, but is certain he will not need his assistance. Years later, King Lion finds himself in a bind. Will Mouse come to his rescue?

This fable is a good choice to read to young students because it gives the lesson that those you least expect can help you the most. The illustrations show the emotions of the both characters when they face trouble as well as when they find relief, so readers may be able to relate to it. For these reasons I gave this book four stars.

Gail LaVoie says

Mouse & Lion by Rand Burkert, illustrated by Nancy Ekholm Burkert, is a retelling of the classic Aesop's fable, set in the area between Namibia and Botswana. The illustrations are absolutely stunning! They appear to all be done in colored pencil with painstaking detail on all of the animals. The lion for example, each hair in his mane is penciled in; the same for the mouse's fur. Nancy Ekholm Burkert is obviously an extremely talented artist. The story itself is one that is well known but this book tells it just a little different. The last time I read this story the mouse pulled a thorn from the lions paw, in this one the mouse frees the lion from a net he had become ensnared in. So little differences, but the messages are still the same. This story is great for teaching kids about bravery, second chances, trust, kindness to others, and helping those in need. So many great messages in one story. Over all its a beautiful book and a wonderful story well worth reading.

Stephanie Koerner says

Grade/interest level: preK-3rd

Reading level: 570L

Genre: Fable

Main Characters: Mouse and Lion

Setting: African wild

POV: Narrator

Summary:

This book is an adaptation of an Aesop's Fable. In this book the two characters are a small mouse and a regal lion. In the introductory event, the mouse is first caught by the lion when he mistakes the lion for a mountain to climb over. The mouse talks his way out of being eaten by showing bravery and promising the king lion that he will someday be of service to the lion. The lion is entertained by the mouse thinking he, the great lion, will ever need the help of a little mouse. When the lion is one day trapped in a net set by the humans, mouse hurries to his rescue. Mouse uses his teeth to free the lion. They live in peace with one another the rest of their days.

Classroom Use:

I would use this book to remind young students that just because they are small, does not mean they can't be helpful and make a difference. I feel the way this book is written makes it only appropriate for young children, but I feel a more adult version of this could be used to remind students that even the least likely pair can form a mutually beneficial relationship.
