



# The Happy Lion

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The lion at the little French zoo is a favorite of all the townspeople. Every day they stop by to feed him tidbits and say, “*Bonjour, Happy Lion.*” Naturally, when the lion finds his door open, he decides it would only be proper to visit all his friendly neighbors in return. But, wait—*sacré bleu!* Why is everyone fleeing in terror?

“Louise Fatio’s timeless tale about friendship still sparkles and Roger Duvoisin’s elegant illustrations are as engaging as ever in this 50th Anniversary edition.” —*School Library Journal*

## The Happy Lion Details

Date : Published March 9th 2004 by Knopf Books for Young Readers (first published 1954)

ISBN : 9780375827594

Author : Louise Fatio , Roger Duvoisin (Illustrator)

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# From Reader Review The Happy Lion for online ebook

## **Sarah Middlestead says**

Written in 1954, this book boasts the classic text and illustrations of an era gone by. Set in France. Great discussion starter for what makes a true friend.

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## **Ann says**

I love this lion! He's sweet, kind, innocent and optimistic. And the illustrations of him are great!

The story is basically about a lion who lives in an enclosure in the middle of the city. Now, I'm not a fan of zoos, cages or things like that, so already it's a hard story for me to be "okay with". But, in the story the lion likes his home and likes all the nice people that come and say hi to him.

One day his door is left open and the lion decides to go say hi to all his friends. He thinks it would be nice because they always come see him so he wants to return the favor.

But, once he's out on the street, all the friendly people who visit him aren't so friendly. In fact, they run away from him.

Poor lion, it appears that he's going to meet with a pretty tragic end. But, perhaps there's one person that will be nice to him...

SPOILER(view spoiler)

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## **Min says**

The afternoon adventures of a lion in a small village in France, when the keeper forgets to close the cage. This Weston Woods Studios video production brings this classic to wonderful life. The illustrations inspire the animation. The narrator's soft tones keep the light-hearted tone, and pleasure of the lion's day out in the city meeting all of those that pass his enclosure daily--and their inevitable shock, and fear, until Françoise greets him, and all is well.

I love what Weston Woods has done for many children's books.

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## **Brian Rosenblat says**

enjoyed reading this to my daughter. a classic. only thing i would change is the premise - not sure that I agree that the lion is so happy because he's in a nice French zoo instead of the wilds of an African savannah. But I

suppose it's a bit dated.

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## **BC Batcheshire says**

A fun jaunt with lovely illustrations, once I got past my reflexive distaste for the thought of a lion confined to a zoo.

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## **Manybooks says**

I have always adored Roger Duvoisin's expressive illustrations (their muted, yet nevertheless glowing colour scheme, and a lion with sweet, pensive facial features), but even as a child, the entire premise of Louise Fatio's The Happy Lion (or Der glückliche Löwe, as it is called in German) always did manage to rather feel at best a bit unnatural and at worst quite troubling even for a small child like me (that the lion resides in zoo, all by himself in his rather sparse enclosure, completely solitary, and that he is seemingly more happy with this kind of an existence than on the plains of Africa, which are actually presented by the author as being hot, dangerous and perhaps thus even unsuitable for lions). And although I still very much enjoyed the general plotline and the antics of the lion on his romp through the picturesque and nameless French town when my grandmother read the German version to me (around 1971 or so), she certainly could not (or perhaps would not) answer my questions as to why a lion residing in a zoo all by himself was supposedly content and happy (and seemingly more contented, more fulfilled than if he lived in freedom in Africa).

And upon now rereading after more than four decades (and this time, in English), The Happy Lion is definitely a picture book that has for my personal tastes, quite massively lost much of its potential charm (the solitary lion in a smallish zoo enclosure is really so completely not what I would consider a contented and in any way satisfied and naturally kept lion to be that I can only now rate The Happy Lion with two stars at best, the brilliance of Roger Duvoisin's illustrations and even the often inherent sweetness and gentle humour of Louise Fatio's narrative notwithstanding). And while I do realise that this book was originally written in the 1950s, it does not really change my reaction to how the lion is being housed and kept all that much (especially considering that I actually had a very much similar reaction as a small child, in the early 70s). And while I would not necessarily suggest not reading The Happy Lion to and with children, I do leave the in my opinion necessary caveat that there are most definitely issues that should be discussed, that must be discussed and that some if not perhaps even many children might have the same types of questions that my childhood self had regarding the lion and its (for me so massively problematic) living conditions.

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## **Ivan says**

Another gift for the kids - and another favorite from childhood.

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## **Valentin Eni says**

Un leu de la gr?dina zoologic? a ie?it la plimbare pe poarta l?sat? deschis? din ?nt?mplare. Leul este mirat de ce toat? lumea care ?l saluta ?i se comporta frumos la zoo, acum ?ip?, fuge, arunc? ?n el cu ce apuc? ?i chiar

au venit pompierii s?-l prind?. "Probabil a?a se comport? ei mereu atunci când nu sunt la zoo" se gânde?te Leul Fericit. Doar Francois, fiul supraveghetorului de animale, îl salut? calm ?i îi propune leului s? fac? o plimbare împreun? înapoi la gr?dina zoologic?. De atunci, chiar dac? las? cineva poarta deschis?, leul nu mai vrea s? ias? în ora?, se simte mai bine aici, la zoo.

Povestea e interesant?, cu multe în?elesuri, aproape filosofic?. Dar ilustra?iile sunt, dup? gustul meu, îngrozitor de urâte ?i neatr?g?toare.

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### **Tricia says**

Originally published in 1954, this title falls into the realm of classic picture book literature that the librarian in me cannot deny. A happy lion (as the title may suggest) lives in a zoo in a park where he is visited by friends. One morning his house door is left open so he decides to go visiting his friends in their homes. How curious a world it is outside of his zoo home! This is a timeless story that my early elementary daughters enjoyed. Charming!

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### **Derrick Schneider says**

What happens when a member of the oppressed class leaves the carefully conscripted walls society has lain around him and tries to mingle with his oppressors as equals?

They freak out of course, until he's back safe in his place. Then everyone is all nice again.

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### **Christy Hathcock says**

I really enjoyed The Happy Lion. It had a cute twist on it that can be related to society today. Everyone was friends with the Lion at the zoo, but outside of the zoo he only had one true friend that stuck with him. It kept me interested and had a positive vibe that would be fun to share in a classroom. I would highly recommend this folktale to all ages.

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### **KidsBooksWorthReading says**

"Bonjour, Happy Lion!" the people call to the lion in the zoo. The zoo is in park in a lovely French town. He was a very happy lion. All of his friends would come to greet him on their way through the park. One day, his door to his house was left open by the zoo keeper. The lion decided he would take a stroll through the town and return his friends' visits. I think you can guess how that went.. ??? This bright classic was first published in 1954. #kidsbooksworthreading #kidsbook #kidsbooks #kidlit #childrensliterature #picturebook #kidsbookstagram #happylion #louisefatio #rogerduvoisin

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### **Brennan Wieland says**

Louise Fatio (1904-1993) might have been hinting towards stereotyping when he wrote this book. When the lion escapes from his looking looking for friends, he can't figure out why the humans aren't treating him like they do when he is at the zoo. Once he is out everyone runs away from him, when all he wants is people to say hello to him like they do at the zoo. Later in the book when he finally finds a friend in the zookeepers son, who takes him back to the zoo.

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### **Skylar Burris says**

Good vocabulary and sentence structure, as is often the case with children's classics when compared to the modern stuff. My daughter didn't appreciate the humor in this one; perhaps she is not yet old enough. I won't mentio to my husband that I read it because he gets grumpy about all those children's stories that teach kids that ferocious beasts are cuddly creatures to be petted. Nevertheless, I don't think she'll be leaping the moat at the zoo.

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### **Kalynda says**

One day the happy lion sees an open door and decides to go visit all of his daily friends, but he just can't understand why they seem so startled to see him.

I checked this book out from the library, because it was recommended as a good "H" read for Kinder. I agree. It has additional "h" words to be on the hear out for, as well as good opportunities for prediction and understanding.

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