

***Bertie and the Lion* – original version from 'The Butterfly Lion' by Michael Morpurgo.**

'The text from the significant author has not been differentiated in order to preserve the integrity of the original work.'

One morning, a week or so later, Bertie was woken up by loud animal calls. He jumped out of his bed and ran to the window. A herd of zebras was scattering away from the waterhole, chased by a couple of hyenas...It was only now that Bertie could see the lion cub. But this one wasn't white at all. He was black with mud, and he was waving his tiny paw at the hyenas that were beginning to circle him.

Bertie ran downstairs in a flash, racing barefoot across the yard, shouting at the top of his voice. He threw open the gate and charged down the hill towards the waterhole, yelling and screaming and waving his arms like a wild thing. Shocked, the hyenas turned and ran, but not far. Bertie now stood between the lion cub and the hyenas, throwing pebbles and shouting at them to go away. But they didn't. They stood and watched, uncertain for a while. Then they began to circle once again, closer, closer.

That was when the shot rang out. The hyenas bolted into the long grass, and were gone. When Bertie turned round he saw his mother in her nightgown, rifle in hand, running towards him. He had never seen her run before. Between them they picked up the muddy cub and brought him home. He was too weak to struggle, though he tried. As soon as they had given him some warm milk, they put him in the bath to wash him. As the first of the mud came off, Bertie saw he was white underneath.

'You see!' he cried happily. 'He is white! He is. I told you, didn't I? He's my white lion!' His mother could not bring herself to believe it. Five baths later, she had to.