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Review: The Lion & The Mouse

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Pinkney, Jerry (adapter and illustrator), *The Lion & The Mouse*. Little, Brown and Company, 2009. ISBN: 9780316013567

Description:

In his first wordless book, the multi-award winning Pinkney reflects the large hearts of two vastly different animals. Intriguing indeed is the relationship between the king of beasts and one of the tiniest species. Against the backdrop of the Serengeti of Tanzania and Kenya, Pinkney has ingeniously placed only animal sounds for his text. Sweeping full page illustrations paint realistically the setting that may give a first look at Africa for his youngest audience. Through vivid illustrations, children are drawn into the tall grasses, trees, and watering holes while learning valuable lessons about caring for others who are different from themselves.

Critique:

Even Aesop himself would be charmed by this understated, yet majestic, retelling of his timeless story of courage and kindness. Pinkney has included the element of family connections for both the lion and the mouse, which adds significance for the younger audience. Facial expressions on both the main characters provide an element of anthropomorphism that will also appeal to the beginning reader. Each full page spread begs for prediction before turning the page, engaging the emergent reader. Taken as a whole this is a rich addition to any folk literature collection.

Awards: Caldecott Medal 2010

Related Subjects: Africa, Animals, Fables, Lions, Mice

Character Themes: Boldness, **Caring**, Friendship, Initiative