



As a young cub, Boy (standing) and Girl played a beach scene in *Born Free* with actors Bill Travers and Virginia McKenna

A 'Born Free' Star Is Saved from Freedom



Mangy and emaciated, Boy dozes after surgery that saved his life

The story sounds like an old Hollywood script—a down-on-his-luck film star, injured and half starved, is rescued by the person who first made him famous. The protagonist is a 350-pound lion named Boy, who starred (opposite a feline named Girl) in *Born Free*, the film version of Joy Adamson's best-selling book about lions. Boy had been raised in a Kenya barracks as a tame mascot for a regiment of Scots Guards. But after completing his film role, he was set free in Kenya's Meru Game Reserve as a reward. Though Mrs. Adamson's husband George had previously put Boy through a survival course to teach him how to fend for himself in the wilderness, the lesson apparently never took. In the bush,

Boy turned out to be a paper lion. A clumsy attack upon a fierce buffalo left Boy with a broken front leg, a gored abdomen and a hernia. Desperate from hunger, Boy finally did something a cub scout wouldn't do. He bit into a porcupine and received an eight-inch quill through his upper lip. Then just before he was a goner, and right on cue, along came Joy Adamson. He looked more like a worn-out rug than the sleek king of the beasts she remembered from the movie, but Mrs. Adamson recognized him and rushed forward shouting his name. And Boy, recognizing Joy, docilely allowed her husband to remove the quill from his lip.

That night, George stayed with the lion to

protect him from ravaging bands of hyenas. The next morning he lured him into the back seat of his Land-Rover and drove him to his base camp at the foot of Mugowngo Hill, while Boy gorged himself on a dead goat. Then two veterinarians, flown by small plane into the nearest airstrip, made bush history by X-raying Boy with a portable unit, sewing up his abdomen and inserting two 13-inch steel pins into his broken limb.

Today Boy is alive and well and living where he really belongs—in captivity. Soon he will be transferred from the Meru Reserve to the Nairobi animal orphanage, where, as a happy dropout from the school of hard knocks, he should live happily ever after.

An old friend rescues the scarred fugitive



After surgery Boy was cared for by George Adamson, who has spent years in the bush as a game warden. Adamson stayed by the wounded animal's side during the complex 3½-hour operation which was performed after

Boy had been anesthetized with hypodermic darts. Above, he examines the fresh scar on the unconscious lion's shoulder. At right, he waits for him to recover consciousness. Below, Boy perks up, ready to devour an entire goat.

