



The Last Leopard

Lauren St. John

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Martine is looking forward to the holidays and riding Jemmy, her white giraffe, until an accident sends her and Ben on a journey to the Matobo Hills wilderness in Zimbabwe. It is a lawless land, where nothing is as it seems. When they uncover a plot in which the fate of a magnificent leopard and the lost treasure of an African King are mysteriously linked, their friendship faces its greatest test. Far from home and the help of Grace and Tendai, and with Gwyn Thomas languishing, under false accusations, in jail, Martine and Ben must use every survival skill they possess. They'll come face to face with Griffin, Mercy, Mr Ratcliffe (known as Rat), Magnus the hornbill, and a witch doctor, not to mention Khan, the last leopard. They must decide who their friends are, and who are enemies, as they race against time to save the world's rarest leopard and each other. This third African adventure is written with all the zest and skill that have endeared so many readers to THE WHITE GIRAFFE and DOLPHIN SONG.

The Last Leopard Details

Date : Published August 1st 2008 by Orion
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Author : Lauren St. John
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From Reader Review The Last Leopard for online ebook

Norah says

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maria F says

Love it

I'm an intense reader, but I've never read a book that gives me such a lovely calm feeling quite like this one when reading a book. I love the story line which is exiting and comparable to real life yet still gives you the amazing sensation of reading a story. I suggest this book to children of all ages.

-Maria F 12

Erin and Jim says

This was my least favorite book in The White Giraffe series thus far. The actual climax of the book was filled with adventure, but the first half of the book failed to captivate me. The new characters in this book are not particularly interesting, and Martine has fewer interactions with animals than in the previous two books. The last installment in this series comes out in June.

Paige.s says

I thought this book was inspiring of what we should do in real life. This book was about Martine going to another country to help her grandmother's friend with a broken leg. When she finally gets there she learns all the secrets of the area like this one about a leopard that is one of the last of its kind. She wants to do something about it so she goes to find it with Ben, her friend, and an instructor there. The two men go into the leopard's cage and Martine is left alone. At last she saw the leopard a couple feet away from her. It was so beautiful and magnificent to look at. It then all of a sudden pounced on her and knocked her to the ground. It stood on top of her and she screamed for help. The two guys ran out, but by then the leopard was gone. She later finds out about a guy that was illegally killing animals for fun and she almost got killed herself. She then wants to find out more about him so she sneaks in and finds that he wants to kill the last leopard. Martine decides to do something about it. Can Martine save the leopard? What will she do if she can't? All these questions will be answered if you read the book.

John says

This is the second Lauren St. John book I have read aloud to my grand-daughter and like the first, we both enjoyed it enormously. The book is at times thrilling, at other times, moving, and always interesting. As well as telling a great story the author brings into the book a number of serious themes; this time they include, the corruption in Zimbabwe, the evil that is big game hunting and alcoholism. All quite strong topics for a pre-

teen book, but included in a non-preachy way. I found it an easy book to read aloud, the writing flowed, the dialogue was tight and I could make a reasonable effort at the African words. We are now looking for another Lauren St. John book to read!

M. says

Excellent book, 3rd in the Animal Healer series by Lauren St. John.

Orphaned Martine, who lives with her grandmother on a game preserve in South Africa, has special abilities as an animal healer (think dog whisperer). She can tame and help animals which would normally not want people near them. She and her friend Ben accompany Martine's grandmother to the Black Eagle Resort in a remote region of Zimbabwe where the proprietor, a family friend, needs help because of a broken leg. While there the kids learn about the huge leopard that roams the hills and is threatened by a greedy game ranch where captured animals are restrained and then shot at close range by trophy collectors. In the meantime, the Black Eagle Resort is also threatened by someone who wants its land for minerals and there's a mystery about a hidden treasure buried somewhere on its land.

The kids meet tribesmen who mostly see the leopard as sacred and a few who want to find the treasure at any cost. They meet the leopard and Martine is able to communicate with it. They survive a kidnapping and being lost in underground tunnels. In the end good prevails and it all turns out well.

Lots of action, exotic setting, puzzles and mysteries to be solved, and kids who reason out what needs to be done next. Late 3rd or 4th grade and up, girls and boys.

Donna says

I am 46 years old and love these books. Lauren St. John writes in magic ink. I want to read every book she has ever written, minus the golf books. I just can't get excited about those little balls. White giraffes, dolphins, leopards etc are a different story. I think everyone should read these books. Her stories are pure magic.

Jasper says

The latest book I have read was The Last Leopard by Lauren st. John. The book is about two teenagers and there grandma going to help a friend in Zimbabwe. When they arrive they realize the real reason that their friend needed help. The story follows the two teenagers as they search for Khan, the last leopard.

I really liked this book. I really liked this book because it is packed with adventures and action. For example, the main character comes face to face with the biggest leopard on record. Another reason is that the story is very fun to read. Lauren St. John all ways keep you from leaving the book. She includes many cliffhangers and very exciting parts.

I would recommend this book to anyone. This is because it is very fun and action-packed. I think all kids and adults would enjoy the book. I love Lauren st. john's books and will be reading her next one very soon.

Lara says

As usual, I really enjoyed Martine's adventures with African wildlife. In this, the third book in the series, Martine and Ben travel to Zimbabwe with Martine's grandmother in order to help out an old friend of hers who has broken her leg. Once there, they find out that a broken leg is not all that's amiss--treasure hunters and trophy hunters, an angry witch doctor and a giant leopard are some of the dangers Martine and Ben must face. Martine and Ben's bonds to and respect for one other continue to grow, and St. John does a wonderful job of bringing the beauty of the African landscapes to life. I'm looking forward to reading the fourth and final book!

Michaela says

I read this a few years ago but I remember enjoying it fondly. Being from South Africa, I really enjoyed the story line, characters and animals.

Vicki says

Book 3 in Lauren St. John's series about a young girl growing up in South Africa on her grandmother's wildlife reserve. This one took us to Zimbabwe, a country where animal protection is practically nonexistent during their difficult political upheaval. Some disturbing but eye opening references to "canned hunting", where a foreigner can pay big bucks to shoot an animal in an inclosure and prove what a big man he is. I love all the characters in these books, very believable, but the magic that happens between Martine and the animals is the best.

Mysti Parker says

This review is about "The Last Leopard". My first grader brought this home from the school library. We read it together, along with my 4th grade daughter.

Beautiful narrative, exquisite, realistic detail. At times, it got a little heavy-handed which led to some very long sentences and paragraphs. My girls got bored at times as we read. But the magic and adventure of Martine and Ben in Africa was enough to keep us reading through.

I'd recommend this series for any kids and/or adults who enjoy a detailed, advanced middle-grade story.

David says

This was the best of the first three in this children's series and a very engaging read for the most part. St. John includes more history, geography and African tribal culture than previously and this makes for a compelling read. In addition it is somewhat less preachy regarding respect for the environment and the conservation of wildlife species. Too bad about the bizarre epilogue which tries to close all loops very quickly through the personified voice of the rescued male leopard. A laughably absurd self-indulgence that

weakens everything that precedes it. Even my daughter winced!

Ryan Johnston says

Page 122 of 199-This book didn't exactly start off as I expected, but 40 pages in the book got very interesting. So far two children who live in South Africa were forced to go a different country to help a injured friend of theirs. When they get their, they find out the place they are used to is a much safer country then the new one they have to live in for a month. There are rumors of buried treasure and they are determined to find it.

So far this book has seemed like a children's book until the last 20 pages or so. The book is just starting to get interesting and could take 3 or 4 more twists and turns by the time i get to page 150! I would ask anybody to read this book if they want a quick and easy read!

Laura says

Once again St John has done a wonderful job of bringing the wilds of Africa to life, with great descriptions of the landscape and the animals inhabiting it. This book has a more serious tone with detailed descriptions of the caged hunting.

Again I thought that the story would have been just as good without the fantasy elements, although I did come to realise that without Martine's healing touch very few of the animals in any of the three books would have survived. I was interested to read in the author's note that other reviewers have described St John's books as magical realism; meaning they have a blend of real life facts and fantasy. However, St John points out that for many native Africans 'cave spirits and the prophesies and healing powers of witchdoctors and sangomas are not the stuff of fantasy, but part of everyday life.'

This book followed the same sort of storyline as the first book in the series, in that they both featured a rare animal which was the only one of its kind and poachers were after it. This therefore had the predictable outcome in that Martine was bound to win against the poachers and save the leopard.

Mary says

I enjoyed this 3rd book in the series but not as much as I thought I would. I think that's because the storyline was slightly predicable based on the other two. However, it still made for a good read. The author's note at the end helped to better understand some things in the book related to African culture and traditions.

Eliza Sheasby says

Lovely story

Beth Bonini says

This is the third book I've read in this series, and although there are certain consistent elements -- adventure, suspense, the natural world in peril, the young protagonist using her "gift" of communicating with animals -- the author does a great job of adding new elements to each book. In this case, Martine, her grandmother, and her friend Ben (who appears in all three novels) travel to the Matobo Hills in Zimbabwe to help an injured friend. When they reach their isolated destination, they discover all sorts of unexpected twists: a legend about lost treasure, an elusive leopard, and a serious threat to the local wildlife. St. John never underplays the more dangerous aspects of this part of the world, and at times it feels like slightly too-strong stuff for her intended audience, but this is mitigated by the wonderfully detailed descriptions of a place/culture that will be exotic to most readers -- not to mention the happy endings in which the good guys (and the animals) prevail.

Dane Cobain says

At first, I wasn't too sure what to make of this -- I almost wanted to dislike it, but it rose through the ranks from a rating of 6/10 to a rating of 8/10 by the time I finished, and now I'm tempted to check out more of Lauren's work.

See, Lauren's books follow a young girl called Martine who lives on a wildlife resort in South Africa, a girl who has a special gift with animals and who rides around on the back of a white giraffe called Jemmy. At first, I could only pick up on the clichés that are sprinkled throughout the manuscript, as well as the occasional unlikely plot elements that made me unsuspend my disbelief.

But then I got drawn in by the characterisation and the rollicking story-line that doesn't stop for a heartbeat. It turns out, this young adult novel has a lot to say on the subject of wildlife and animal rights, and I can get on-board with anything from an author like that, who's changing the world for the better by showing our children how beautiful the natural world is.

Sarah Donovan says

canned hunting, Zimbabwe, girl power, friendship, healers
