

When the Lion Feeds (Courtney #1)

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✓ Verified Book of When the Lion Feeds (Courtney #1)

Summary:

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Part of the 'Courtney' series

'Something always dies when the lion feeds and yet there is meat for those that follow him.' The lion is Sean, hero of this tremendous drama of the men who took possession of South Africa in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

Sean and his twin-brother Garrick grew up on their father's farm in Natal. The first part of the book deals with his childhood and youth and his longing to become a successful farmer and hard-hitting fighter like his father.

The tough life of cattle-farming is brusquely interrupted by the Zulu Wars, when Sean and his brother see fighting for the first time. Wilbur Smith vividly recreates the excitement of the war for the young men-their hope of winning their own cattle, the horror of the massacre at Isandhlwana, the heroism of the defence at Rorkes Drift.

'Witwatersrand' is the name of the second part of this book and it tells the story of Sean's fabulous success in the gold rush and his rich life with Duff Charleywood and the beautiful Candy in the new town of Johannesburg, where huge fortunes were made and lost in a morning's dealing on the Exchange.

The atmosphere of this feverish, violent time is brilliantly drawn: the heavy drinking, the elaborate houses, the ruthless abandonment of the failure. Sean and Duff are caught at last in a trap laid by their rival, the sinister and clever Hradsky, and leave Johannesburg for the wilderness to seek their fortunes once more.

And now the book moves to its climax. At last it seems as though Sean will settle to a quiet married life "but fate has other plans for him. They return to Johannesburg and tragedy strikes quickly. Sean finds himself alone once more...

Filled with action scenes in war and the early heady days of the gold rush, and adventure among the vast game herds of the African wilderness, this novel is dominated by the towering compelling personality of Sean, whose life story is continued in *The Sound of Thunder* and *A Sparrow Falls*.

Reviews

* 'Plenty of incident and colour' "The Observer, 1966

* 'Pride of place goes to *When the Lion Feeds* because it is bigger, wider and more full of plot than all the others put together ...'

"The Daily Telegraph, 1966.

* 'Wilbur Smith has built up his wide-screen adventure story with energy and shrewdness.' "Sunday Times, 1966

* 'Mr. Smith is a natural story-teller who moves confidently and often splendidly in his period and sustains a flow of convincing incident without repeating his excitement.' "The Scotsman. 1966

* 'A very impressive book in its wide scope and its descriptive colour.' "Sphere

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Sean Courtney When The Lion Feeds