



A Stranger at Green Knowe

L.M. Boston, Peter Boston (Illustrator)

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L. M. Boston's thrilling and chilling tales of Green Knowe, a haunted manor deep in an overgrown garden in the English countryside, have been entertaining readers for half a century. Now the children of Green Knowe--both alive and ghostly--are back in appealing new editions.

The spooky original illustrations have been retained, but dramatic new cover art by Brett Helquist (illustrator of *A Series of Unfortunate Events*) gives the books a fresh, timeless appeal for today's readers.

A Stranger at Green Knowe Details

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Author : L.M. Boston , Peter Boston (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review A Stranger at Green Knowe for online ebook

Lexi says

I love this book so much. I cried at the end.

C.E. Murphy says

I re-read all of the Green Knowe books repeatedly as a child, but reading them again as an adult has been a revelation. The descriptions and the ability to reveal the world the way a child sees it are unparalleled throughout, even in RIVER, which is less a novel than a series of vignettes strung together on the back of a river.

STRANGER is the most powerful and heartbreaking of the four I've re-read so far; it's the story of Hanno the gorilla, captured in the Congo as a baby, and Ping, an orphan who befriends him. The first fifty or so pages are entirely from Hanno's viewpoint and are simply magnificent. When we return to Green Knowe and Ping's story, we're brought back to the delight and charm and simplicity of youthful storytelling, which is maintained all the way up through the relentless and inevitable end. It's masterfully done.

And, in counterpoint, there are also moments of dreadful racism, made all the worse by the utter beauty they're surrounded by. In this, they're a product of their time, which is not to forgive the flaw, but to acknowledge what may be the only aspect of the books that (thankfully) isn't timeless.

P.D.R. Lindsay says

I love this book. It well deserved that Carnegie medal and is relevant today when we have all those millions of refugees desperate for a home. The novel makes one think about displaced people, what they have lost and what they need. Although Lucy Boston is talking about the 1950s and not the 21st century.

Ping is a displaced boy. Returning to his jungle home in Burma from a morning's adventuring he finds it burnt, his family killed or vanished and nothing of their little community left except one little boy who hid. They find their way to a Mission and soon Ping is moved from camp to camp until he ends up in London.

Hanno is a displaced gorilla all alone in his London Zoo cage. He was snatched from his family, they were killed, and he is now a prisoner.

Meanwhile at Green Knowe Mrs Oldknow is without Tolly. His stepmother has taken him to Scotland. She welcomes the suggestion that a displaced child should come and so Ping gets freedom at Green Knowe. And Hanno makes his bid for freedom.

This is a great book for children to read, or have read to them. There is so much depth and understanding about being displaced, about cruelty and what is right. It is a complex book yet an easy read. A delightful part of the Green Knowe series and certainly a five star read.

Ivan says

Boston is a very fine writer. At the same time I was reading this I was reading something else as well and I was struck by the difference in good writing and great writing. Boston's prose is lyrical and seemingly effortless. Once again she communicates the special relationship between the older woman and the child with pathos and eloquence. This is a theme that my emotions are susceptible to - ever since A Christmas Memory by Truman Capote, and right on through to The Witches by Roald Dahl. I don't usually read "series" books. However, this is the third I've read of these 'chronicles' (the fourth in the series) and I feel as though I'll eventually read the others.

Michael Fitzgerald says

This is a bizarre series. As far as I can tell, there is hardly any "magic" (a essential of the first book), and instead, we get a rather unbelievable "realistic" story that is all rah rah animal-rights. It had the feel of (well-written) propaganda.

The first part of the book is very much in the style of Bambi: A Life in the Woods. We get a good sense of how gorillas live in the Congo, and we get some supposition about what they feel and think.

The rest is in England, and so many parts of this just did not seem plausible. I think I could have accepted it better if it were in a magical setting!

I did not like how Ping lied over and over for his own purposes, regardless of how "uncomfortable" we are told that it made him feel. Not only does he lie to police and other authorities, but he lies to his ridiculously gracious and generous and open hostess. She trusts him so much (welcoming a total stranger into her home and giving him the run of the house and grounds), and he, in return, deceives her and steals from her and puts her in a bad position with the authorities.

Robin_R says

The fourth book in this wonderful series. Loved it!

Clare Trowell says

Just re read this and finished it - how appropriate it is to today. All kids should read this book - also Teresa May and Trump (if he can read)!! It's about a young refugee from Burma called Ping and a n escaped gorilla. Covers themes of family, sanctuary, home and freedom from repression - in short it is about Human Rights and maybe also animal rights

Toni Wyatt says

After reading this, the fourth book of the series, I do believe that the author is getting better as she goes along. The first couple of books tended to ramble and be a bit disjointed in places, making them hard to follow, especially for the audience for which they were intended. This offering was more enjoyable for me. I like the character of Ping, and I'm happy that he was asked to stay at Green Knowe. I'm looking forward to the last two book of this series.

Liz says

Not bad for the racism (book published in 1961). I missed the mystical feeling of the past 3 books, but this was an enjoyable book all the same with very strong views on animal protection.

TOM says

Follows the exploits and escape of Hanno, a gorilla from the Congo living in a London zoo. He manages to free himself from the confines of his small cage and so begins a journey across the countryside to Green Knowe.

Ping who is an orphan is staying with old Mrs Knowe for the holidays, he has previously visited Hanno at the zoo and is thrilled to think he has made a bid for freedom. Once the two meet in the grounds of Green Knowe an unlikely friendship blossoms.

An enjoyable children's book with beautiful illustrations. It doesn't come close to the magic of the original Children of Green Knowe though.

Momoka Yamaguchi says

1. Oxford level2
2. 11/23=85minutes
3. A gorilla- a boy-a stranger-escape- zoo- refugee-help-
4. A) Ping lay down on his back like a dog, to show that he was only a small, friendly animal.
B) The scene was surprising me. If I was the boy, I thought I would die.
5. I was moved by the love between the gorilla and the boy. I think animals which are in the zoo are not happy. Animals should live freely.

Ivonne Rovira says

The eponymous stranger may be a primate, but he's no human.

A Stranger at Green Knowe begins in equatorial Africa amongst a family of gorillas, far from the beloved

mansion of Green Knowe. There, a 2-year-old gorilla and his sister are captured and their parents and baby brother killed. The gorilla, named Hanno by his captors, lost his sister, too, who wasted away on their journey from the Belgian Congo to England. Poor Hanno ends up, alone and lonely, at the Monkey House in a zoo near London's Regent's Park. There Ping — one of the three children in the lackluster *The River at Green Knowe* who has returned in this fourth book — first sees Hanno while on a school field trip to the zoo.

Like Hanno, Ping, himself an orphan and a refugee, knows firsthand the loss of home, family and a beloved forest, and the difficulty of adjusting to a very different way of life. On his own since age 6, Ping immediately feels a connection to the gorilla. Ping feels pity for the miserable Hanno in his too-small cage and his mind-numbingly dull life.

Due to a lucky intervention, Ping returns to Green Knowe to spend the summer with Mrs. Oldknow at Green Knowe. When Hanno, now 13 and weighing 2,000 pounds, escapes, it's a foregone conclusion that he will make his way from London to Hertfordshire and Green Knowe. What makes the book magically are the adventures that Ping and Hanno will have once they chance upon one another again, about halfway through the book.

While I bemoaned yet another novel without Toseland (nicknamed Tolly), the unforgettable protagonist of the first two Green Knowe books, I greatly welcomed the return of Tolly's great-grandmother Mrs. Oldknow, and I enjoyed seeing Ping developed as a character. But what made *A Stranger at Green Knowe* better than *The River at Green Knowe* was strong bond between Ping and Hanno and between Ping and Mrs. Oldknow, sweetness without sentimentality. While *A Stranger at Green Knowe* lacks the magic of the first series' first two books, *The Children of Green Knowe* and *The Treasure of Green Knowe* — both literally and figuratively — readers will still enjoy yet another visit to the world created by L.M. Boston.

Cathy says

This was a childhood favorite of mine. I loved the first one of this series "The Children of Green Knowe," and this one, "A Stranger at Green Knowe." (I do know, and knew even then, that the theology of the series was not quite right, but the first book was a strange and beautiful mystery.)

"A Stranger at Green Knowe" had almost nothing to do with the earlier books in the series and could be read alone. The older ghosts of Green Knowe are not in this book, and instead, it was an animal lover's book about a gorilla, escaped from the zoo, who takes refuge in the thicket, and the friendship he formed with the boy, Ping, visiting for the summer.

I gave this book to my oldest child, an animal lover, who probably read it sometime during the later elementary school years and was not as impressed as I was. (I think, though, it was at the age where any book suggestion I made had started to lose merit, and was not the fault of the book.) I loved the descriptions of the giant and powerful gorilla, the things he did, and that strange friendship.

Now, I have just finished reading the book again with the youngest child, middle school age, who is probably a little old for the target age for this, but nevertheless, loved it. This child also noted that in this book, evolution was assumed, and that Hanno appeared as half-human at times. I think that part of the story escaped me during my childhood read. I was so entranced with the gorilla himself.

And now, years later, the story touched on the issues brought up in the real-life story of the Harambe

shooting.

I've always thought that readers who enjoyed "A Stranger at Green Knowe" would also enjoy "The Summer of the Monkeys," but "The Summer ..." was funnier. "A Stranger..." was more serious, and some of it was sad.

Sirpa Grierson says

Originally published in 1961, I first read this book in the series as a fifth-grade student in White Rock, BC, Canada. It reintroduces a main character, a displaced refugee boy named Ping from the third book in the series. This book has all of the ingredients of a well-written children's novel, including a satisfying but unexpected ending. The attitudes and prejudices of the characters reflect the time period wherein the story takes place (WWII), and there is no mollycoddling of the reader.

The strong sense of responsibility and fascination for Hanno, the gorilla, that the protagonist, Ping feels, is something many children will relate to.

Kailey (BooksforMKs) says

In this story, a gorilla escapes from the zoo and hides in the thicket behind Green Knowe, where Ping befriends and hides him.

This is not my favorite of the Green Knowe books, because I'm very "meh" about monkey stories, especially when monkeys are constantly being compared to men. Monkeys, gorillas, or any other primate are NOT like men. Seriously? They are animals. They work on instinct. That's pretty much it. Are they interesting and majestic? Yes, sure! But it gets so annoying after the first 100 pages to constantly hear how the gorilla's expression was just SO human. bleh.

But of course, I adore the old house of Green Knowe, and the delightful grandmother Mrs. Oldknow, and the enigmatic Ping!

I loved that Ping was the main character for this story. He's such a shining character, and he has a beautiful soul with deep and open thoughts. There's so much to explore in his character, so I'm glad he has his own story to bring out more of his personality and everything.

And naturally, the writing is so incredible that I can feel just what Ping is feeling. There's a spell of words woven around the Green Knowe stories that is really something special and true. I feel that I know that old house. I have lived there and slept there and playing in that garden. I've been swimming in the river, and come in for a late tea with Mrs. Oldknow.

I love this series so much!

Brennie Mahoney says

Very long Audiobook. I honestly didn't want to listen to it, but my son insisted...and I'm glad. This was such a sweet tale of a young orphan boy, Ping, and his instant love and respect of a Gorilla, Hanno, he met at the

zoo...who escapes! I really like the vivid details. Every word I heard, went straight to a picture in my head.

Stephen Bigger says

Story of a refugee, Ping (no one could pronounce his Chinese name) meeting a gorilla, who he recognized as a similar imprisoned refugee. The idea at least is brilliant. Ping could change the world by thinking it. I wish.

wychwood says

Boston is kind of amazing; I didn't read the Green Knowe books until I was in my late teens, and I always forget how good they are because they're not part of my childhood. Her prose is astonishing and subtle, and her stories are sharply insightful. This one, in particular - it falls into a bunch of racist traps, but for something written in 1961 it's so *aware* of Ping as an individual, and of the issues of exile and entrapment that it deals with. It doesn't pull its punches; for all the strong sense of mythology, there's so little in the way of rounded-off corners and sanitised childhood. The ending, in particular, is powerful and unexpected. I really need to get all of these - I picked up this and another in a library book sale, and they really are so good.

T.E. Shepherd says

I was not sure that I was going to like this book, the fourth in the sextet of Green Knowe books, because from the beginning - indeed for the first 50 or so pages - it is decidedly un-Green Knowe-ish.

The original *Children of Green Knowe* has been a firm favourite for most of my life, and is still the best of them all with its story of Tolly in the strange house by the river with the floods, the storms, and the ghosts. *A Stranger at Green Knowe* begins in Africa and is almost anthropological in its tale of how Hanno the gorilla comes to be in England. Even after we meet Ping again, re-entering the story from the Mrs Oldknowe-free *River at Green Knowe*, we are not sure how the story is going to get back to the old house in the Fens...

But the story does return to Green Knowe, and the pace of the story accelerates, building and building to an all too hasty, shocking, and believable end. Be prepared for a rollercoaster and tears.

Austen to Zafón says

I liked the other Green Knowe books, but this is a complete departure. The writing is still good, but instead of revolving around the house and its inhabitants from past and present, this story is about a gorilla escaping from the zoo and the ending is tragic. I could see it coming a mile away, but somehow I was compelled to keep reading even though I normally avoid books in which animals are killed. I'm sure that's because of the good writing, but I wish I had stopped. I wouldn't recommend this for children who are traumatized by the death of animals.
