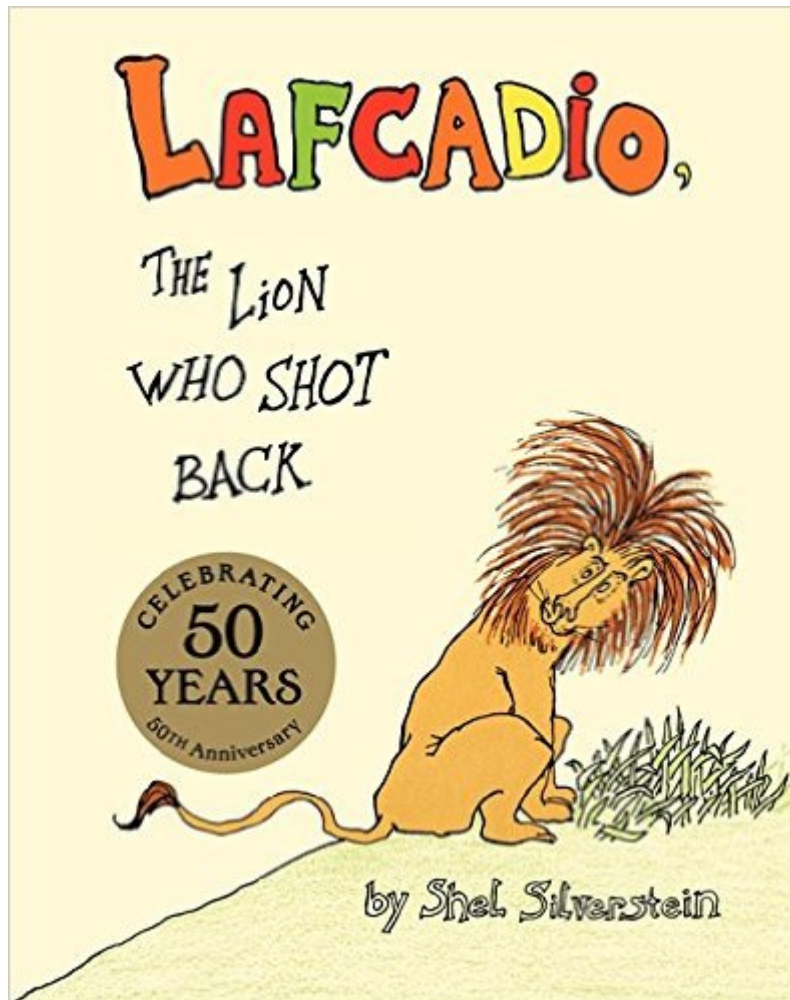


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# Lafcadio, The Lion Who Shot Back



## Synopsis

Shel Silverstein's first children's book, *Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back* "a whimsical tale of self-discovery and marshmallows" is turning fifty with a return to a vintage full-color cover. Is a famous, successful, and admired lion a happy lion? Or is he a lion at all? Written and drawn with wit and gusto, Shel Silverstein's modern fable speaks not only to children but to us all! First published in 1963, this book had rave reviews from the *New York Times*, *Time* magazine, and *Publishers Weekly*, as well as a starred review from *Kirkus*. Now celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, *Lafcadio* is being reissued with a full-color cover featuring vintage art from Shel Silverstein discovered in the archives. *Lafcadio, the Lion Who Shot Back* is the book that started Shel Silverstein's incomparable career as a bestselling children's book author and illustrator. He is also the creator of picture books such as *A Giraffe and a Half*, *Who Wants a Cheap Rhinoceros?*, *The Missing Piece*, *The Missing Piece Meets the Big O*, and the perennial favorite *The Giving Tree* and of classic poetry collections such as *Where the Sidewalk Ends*, *A Light in the Attic*, *Falling Up*, *Every Thing On It*, *Don't Bump the Glump!*, and *Runny Babbit*. Supports the Common Core State Standards.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: NC1010L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 112 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins; 50 Anv edition (September 24, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0060256753

ISBN-13: 978-0060256753

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.7 x 8.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (85 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #40,503 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #32 in [Books > Children's Books > Animals > Lions, Tigers & Leopards](#) #306 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Poetry](#) #548 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Chapter Books & Readers > Chapter Books](#)

Age Range: 6 - 8 years

Grade Level: 1 - 3

## Customer Reviews

I hadn't heard of this book until a few years ago, when I came upon it and read a few pages in the bookstore. WOW!!! Although I appreciate Shel Silverstein's other stories and poems, nothing at all is like this one. And, that's a disappointment, because after reading this one to my children, we wanted MORE. In my kids' schools, the Giving Tree was always considered such a classic, and praised as such. Lafcadio? Never mentioned! How disappointing, and oh, what those students are missing. Lafcadio isn't even in the school's library catalogue! Lafcadio tells the story of a lion who comes to the city and becomes a gentleman--losing his lionly ways. But, Shel Silverstein tells this story so hilariously, I can barely read it aloud without laughing hysterically. I used to read this to my son, and literally could not get the words out without laughing uncontrollably. This, of course, caused my son to laugh as heartily without even knowing why. . . begging me to stop laughing and to tell him what was so funny. Lafcadio is an experience, that's for sure! That said, this isn't a completely gentle book. It's probably the only book I've read to the kids that talked about eating people--and, made eating people funny. However, the unexpected quirkiness of the story is also what made it so hilarious. This is really a classic. Your kids will love it and you will love it.

I grew up thinking this was Silverstein's best book and was shocked to eventually discover that it was almost completely unknown. Subtler than *The Giving Tree*, *Lafcadio* illustrates a crucial message in delicately simple line drawings and horrible puns. While *Lafcadio* is superficially about "success," it delves into our self-definitions and the contradictions forced upon individuals by society. Despite its light, witty tone, it addresses stereotypes and rebellion in easily accessible terms. Every time I reread this book -- and I have cried over it many, many times -- I found a new level on which it related to my own life. When *Lafcadio* is ultimately forced to choose between mutually exclusive groups with mutually exclusive destinies, he realizes that he wants neither of those implicit destinies for himself. He can be neither a lion nor a hunter. Unable to decide, he walks away from both. Although it almost glosses over violence in the opening scenes, this only serves to heighten the horror of *Lafcadio*'s final quandary. Here the simplicity of the illustrations only reinforces the universality of Silverstein's message. With its disquieting ending, *Lafcadio* forms an apt parable for the dilemmas faced by adults, but especially by children in our society. It applies subtly to both classroom cliques and the former Yugoslavia, both contemporary violence and peer pressure, both finding one's path and watching helplessly as others find theirs. As such, *Lafcadio* provides both camaraderie and empathy, on a level that readers of all ages can understand.

I was exposed to this book by a 3rd grader who loved it and was reading it for the umpteenth time. I

read it with my daughters, ages 4 and 6, who also loved it. I loved it too! The story is timeless and can be read at many, many levels. The pictures throughout are wonderful, depicting Lafcadio in the absurdly funny scenarios told in the story; enough pictures to hold the interest of a young one with a challenging story for those older.

This is an exceptional book for all ages. Silversteins wonderful illustrations and humor are throughout this book. But the message is what makes this book so wonderful. It is a story about a lion but what this lion is dealing with child experience and grow up with this peer pressure and then the consequences we must pay for our action. This is a great book that everybody should read. Shel Silverstein has the most original way to get this message across and the humor with this book and how he describes " Uncle Shelby " is very insightful!

I discovered this treasure after reading Shel's poetry books to the kids. I read it to them on a long flight across the country and had the people in the seats around me listening in discreetly. It has some great morals and gems in it. About knowing who you are inside and finding your way in this world. And about the absurdity of hunting from the lion's point of view. The kids just love the bit about every lion having their own hunter's rug.

I am reading this book for the 100th time but I am reading it for the first time to my new son. My mother first read me Lafcadio in 1978. I made here reread it over and over. Now I am shareing it with my son Garrett. I hope he askes me to read it 100 times to him.

Our teacher read Lafcadio to us and we loved the story (and Lafcadio). We liked all the marshmallow parts--especially the marshmallow suit part. We thought his love of riding elevators very funny. There are also good life lessons in this book. We hope you will read and enjoy it as much as we did.

I am a sophmore and recently in our speech class we were asked to do an interpretive speech on a poem,short story or piece of lit. I immedialty chose Lafcadio, by Shel Silverstein. I simply love this book! It may be a children's book, but the message it sends is helpful and meaningful to people of all ages! The tough decisions we face everyday,peer pressure and the consequences we must pay. It is all mentioned, and it really got me thinking about my life and decisions I must make. I can't express enough how much I love this book!

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