

ROAR!

by Ken Bradbury



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SYNOPSIS: A young man named Daniel is dropped into a den of lions and tries to talk his way out.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(5 males)

DANIEL (m) *(17 lines)*

ROARY (m) *(29 lines)*

TAB (m) *(20 lines)*

FANG (m) *(19 lines)*

MORTIMER (m) *(8 lines)*

AT START: *Four lions, ROARY, TAB, FANG, and MORTIMER, are found lying around their den. MORTIMER is snoring viciously.*

ROARY: *(Waking.)* Excuse me. *(A long pause, then.)* I said EXCUSE ME!

TAB: *(Waking.)* What's the problem?

ROARY: *(Pointing to MORTIMER.)* Him. How can I sleep with that racket?

TAB: It's always after he eats a Frenchman. Italians don't seem to bother him but one good French meal and he roars all night.

ROARY: Mortimer! Mortimer, wake up! *(MORTIMER continues to snore.)*

FANG: *(Waking.)* Is it morning?

ROARY: It's the middle of the night, for goodness sakes. But I can't sleep with him snoring! Mortimer, wake up!

TAB: Put something over his muzzle. Stuff your paw in it.

FANG: I'm going back to sleep. Too much supper. How many did we eat tonight, anyway?

TAB: Seven men, two women. Counting the little guy.

FANG: I wish they'd take their armor off. I nearly broke a molar. *(MORTIMER snores a blast.)*

ROARY: Oh good grief! I can't take this anymore! *(Crawls over to where MORTIMER is sleeping.)* Hey! Mortimer! Wake up!

MORTIMER: *(Slowly rising ... a not-too-bright lion.)* Uh ... *(Yawns.)* ... Is ... is it time to eat again?

ROARY: Would you be quiet when I'm trying to sleep?

MORTIMER: Uh ... aren't you the one who woke me up?

ROARY: Your snoring, you idiot! You probably woke up the king! Roll over or something. We've got a big day tomorrow and I need my rest!

MORTIMER: Tomorrow?

ROARY: Twelve prisoners thrown into the lions' den in one day! And some of them are extremely large. We'll be eating 'til nightfall. Now shut up and go to sleep.

MORTIMER: *(Yawns.)* Okey-dokey ... *(Immediately falls asleep and begins to snore.)*

ROARY: I'm going out of my mind!

FANG: Hey! You hear something?

ROARY: Of course I hear something! That's why I can't sleep!

FANG: Up there. Voices.

TAB: They've got another prisoner!

ROARY: At this hour?

TAB: Midnight buffet!

ROARY: This is beginning to wear on me, you know that? I mean one or two meals a day, fine, but the king is getting carried away. He must hate everybody in the kingdom.

FANG: Hey, it's a job. We're well fed. All we do is sit here and eat whoever gets thrown our way.

ROARY: I know. I know. But it's all so ... I mean ... well, I mean where's the challenge? In the jungle we got to stalk our prey ... it took cunning and courage. This ... this smorgasbord is ruining my spirit.

TAB: You are starting to put on weight.

ROARY: Just once! Just once I'd like to have a little challenge! Something to work for instead of having all our meals handed to us.

FANG: Too late! Here he comes!

"Dropping" into the lions' den comes a startled DANIEL ... the lions scramble out of the way as he comes crashing through their home ... He rolls to a stop then stares at them. They stare back. The lions smile an evil smile. DANIEL'S eyes widen. Slowly ...very slowly the lions approach DANIEL, inching their way toward him. Just when the tension becomes unbearable, MORTIMER lets out with a mighty snore and DANIEL screams.

ROARY: Oh good grief. Mortimer, wake up!

MORTIMER: *(Slowly waking at the foot of Daniel.)* Huh? ... oh. Dessert. *(MORTIMER belches loudly.)*

ROARY: Mortimer!

MORTIMER: *(To DANIEL.)* Are you new or are you a leftover?

ROARY: Mortimer, take your position!

MORTIMER: Okay. *(He falls asleep.)*

ROARY: I give up. I really give up.

TAB: Are you wearing armor? If you are, please take it off. It hurts our teeth.

DANIEL: No. No armor. You can talk.

ROARY: What do you think we are, beasts? Just because we rip human beings to shreds and swallow their body parts in vicious displays of bloody carnage, that's no reason to think we aren't civilized.

DANIEL: Oh.

TAB: "Oh." We sit here discussing gastronomy, philosophy and the intricacies of the digestive system and you say "..... Oh." So much for the superior race.

DANIEL: Are you?

ROARY: Are we what?

DANIEL: Are you going to eat me?

ROARY: Of course we are. What a ridiculous question.

DANIEL: I'd rather you wouldn't.

FANG: *(A pause, then.)* No one's ever said that before.

TAB: You're right.

FANG: I mean we've had a few *(Screaming.)* Oh no! Oh help me! Help!!!! *(Calmly.)* and a couple of rather good *(Screams, then calmly.)* but we've never had anyone actually come out and ask.

TAB: In their defense, they're usually distracted.

FANG: And hysterical.

TAB: Yes, and hysterical. You know this is the first time we've actually had a conversation with one of our meals. I think it's a delightful change of pace.

FANG: Sort of like dinner theatre.

TAB: Exactly.

DANIEL: I ... I mean, it seems logical. Someone wants to eat you, you ... I don't know ... it's just something you'd like to discuss.

FANG: Point well taken.

TAB: Exactly.

FANG: So ... what do you want to say? I mean, where do we start this little ... appetizer?

DANIEL: Well, to begin with. Why do you want to eat me?

ROARY: Now that's a ridiculous question.

FANG: Then answer it.

ROARY: Uh ... you answer it.

DANIEL: Are you hungry?

TAB: Not particularly.

DANIEL: Do you hate me?

FANG: We hardly know you. In fact, you seem a nice enough chap.

DANIEL: Then why do you want to eat me?

ROARY: Well ... because it's out JOB for goodness sakes! Why do birds fly? Why do kings king? It's just what we do! We're lions!

TAB: Well put.

FANG: Yes, quite well put. We're lions. That settles it. Let's get it at it. *(They start toward DANIEL.)*

DANIEL: Wait!

ROARY: Now what?

DANIEL: Is that a good enough reason?

TAB: I know men who kill lions!

DANIEL: And that's just the point! I don't! We aren't all alike!

FANG: You wouldn't be saying this just to avoid becoming a little Israeli sushi, would you?

DANIEL: Well, I must admit that being swallowed whole leaves a lot to be desired, but no ... no, I'm not just saying that. I mean it. We aren't all alike! And you don't have to be like all other lions!

ROARY: I'm not, thank you very much.

DANIEL: Then act like it! Strike out on your own! Be an individual! Take a stand for independence!

FANG: If he starts singing, I may get sick.

DANIEL: How can you live with yourselves, being fed and cared for without having to hunt your own prey?

TAB: Okay. I'll give you count of three. Take off running and we'll make a sport of it.

ROARY: He's got a point.

TAB: Roary!

ROARY: How can we respect ourselves when we're ... kept like this. How can I call myself the king of the beasts when I get room service every day? Look at you, Fang! A lazy lion! You couldn't catch a lame antelope if your life depended on it! And you, Tab! Growling if your supper is a mere two hours late! Think of your cousins out there in the wild who must hunt and track and ambush just to stay alive! How can we call ourselves lions if we live like kitties? You sir! Your name?

DANIEL: Daniel.



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