

= Bambi , a Life in the Woods =

Bambi , a Life in the Woods , originally published in Austria as Bambi . Eine Lebensgeschichte aus dem Walde is a 1923 Austrian novel written by Felix Salten and published by Ullstein Verlag . The novel traces the life of Bambi , a male roe deer , from his birth through childhood , the loss of his mother , the finding of a mate , the lessons he learns from his father and experience about the dangers posed by human hunters in the forest . An English translation by Whittaker Chambers was published in North America by Simon & Schuster in 1928 , and the novel has since been translated and published in over 20 languages around the world . Salten published a sequel , Bambis Kinder , eine Familie im Walde (Bambi 's Children) , in 1939 .

The novel was well received by critics and is considered a classic , as well as one of the first environmental novels ever published . It was adapted into a theatrical animated film , Bambi , by Walt Disney Productions in 1942 , two Russian live @-@ action adaptations in 1985 and 1986 , and a stage production in 1998 . A ballet adaptation was written by an Oregon troupe , but never premiered . Janet Schulman published a children 's picture book adaptation in 2000 that featured realistic oil @-@ paintings and many of Salten 's original words .

= = Plot = =

Bambi is a roe deer fawn born in a thicket to a young doe in late spring one year . Over the course of the summer , his mother teaches him about the various inhabitants of the forest and the ways deer live . When she feels he is old enough , she takes him to the meadow which he learns is both a wonderful but also dangerous place as it leaves the deer exposed and in the open . After some initial fear over his mother 's caution , Bambi enjoys the experience . On a subsequent trip , Bambi meets his Aunt Ena , and her twin fawns Faline and Gobo . They quickly become friends and share what they have learned about the forest . While they are playing , they encounter princes , male deer , for the first time . After the stags leave , the fawns learn that those were their fathers , but that the fathers rarely stay with or speak to the females and young .

As Bambi grows older , his mother begins to leave him alone . While searching for her one @-@ day , Bambi has his first encounter with " He " ? the animals ' term for humans ? which terrifies him . The man raises a firearm and aims at him ; Bambi flees at top speed , joined by his mother . After he is scolded by a stag for crying for his mother , Bambi gets used to being alone at times . He later learns the stag is called the " Old Prince , " the oldest and largest stag in the forest who is known for his cunning and aloof nature . During the winter , Bambi meets Marena , a young doe , Nettla , an old doe who no longer bears young , and two princes Ronno and Karus . Mid @-@ winter , hunters enter the forest , killing many animals including Bambi 's mother . Gobo also disappears and is presumed dead .

After this , the novel skips ahead a year , noting that Bambi was cared for by Nettla , and that when he got his first set of antlers he was abused and harassed by the other males . It is summer and Bambi is now sporting his second set of antlers . He is reunited with his cousin Faline . After he battles and defeats first Karus then Ronno , Bambi and Faline fall in love with each other . They spend a great deal of time together . During this time , the old Prince saves Bambi 's life when he nearly runs towards a hunter imitating a doe 's call . This teaches the young buck to be cautious about blindly rushing toward any deer 's call . During the summer , Gobo returns to the forest having been raised by a man who found him collapsed in the snow during the hunt where Bambi 's mother was killed . While his mother and Marena welcome him and celebrate him as a " friend " of man , the old Prince and Bambi pity him . Marena becomes his mate , but several weeks later Gobo is killed when he approaches a hunter in the meadow , falsely believing the halter he wore would keep him safe from all men .

As Bambi continues to age , he begins spending most of his time alone , including avoiding Faline though he still loves her in a melancholic way . Several times he meets with the old Prince who teaches him about snares , shows him how to free another animal from one , and encourages him not to use trails , to avoid the traps of men . When Bambi is later shot by a hunter , the Prince shows

him how to walk in circles to confuse the man and his dogs until the bleeding stops , then takes him to a safe place to recover . They remain together until Bambi is strong enough to leave the safe haven again . When Bambi has grown gray and is " old " , the old Prince shows him that man is not all @-@ powerful by showing him the dead body of a man who was shot and killed by another man . When Bambi confirms that he now understands that " He " is not all @-@ powerful , and that there is " Another " over all creatures , the stag tells him that he has always loved him and calls him " my son " before leaving to die .

At the end of the novel , Bambi meets with twin fawns who are calling for their mother and he scolds them for not being able to stay alone . After leaving them , he thinks to himself that the girl fawn reminded him of Faline , and that the male was promising and that Bambi hoped to meet him again when he was grown .

= = Publication history = =

Salten penned *Bambi : Eine Lebensgeschichte aus dem Walde* after World War I , targeting an adult audience . The novel was first published in Vienna in serialized form in the *Neue Freie Presse* newspaper from 15 August to 21 October 1922 , and as a book in Austria by Ullstein Verlag in 1923 , and republished in 1926 in Vienna .

= = = Translations = = =

Max Schuster , a co @-@ founder of Simon & Schuster , became intrigued with the novel and contracted with the author to publish it in North America . Clifton Fadiman , an editor at the firm , engaged his Columbia University classmate Whittaker Chambers to translate it . Simon & Schuster published this first English edition in 1928 , with illustrations by Kurt Wiese , under the title *Bambi . A Life in the Woods* . The *New York Times* praised the prose as " admirably translated " . The *New York Herald Tribune* did not comment on the translation .

Over 200 editions of the novel have been published , with almost 100 German and English editions alone , and numerous translations and reprintings in over 20 other languages . It has also been published in a variety of formats , including printed medium , audiobook , Braille , and E @-@ book formats .

= = = Copyright dispute = = =

When Salten originally published *Bambi* in 1923 , he did so under Germany 's copyright laws , which required no statement that the novel was copyrighted . In the 1926 republication , he did include a United States copyright notice , so the work is considered to have been copyrighted in the United States in 1926 . In 1936 , Salten sold some rights to the novel to MGM producer Sidney Franklin who passed them on to Walt Disney for the creation of a film adaptation . After Salten 's death in 1945 , his daughter Anna Wyler inherited the copyright and renewed the novel 's copyrighted status in 1954 . In 1958 , she formulated three agreements with Disney regarding the novel 's rights . Upon her death in 1977 , the rights passed to her husband , Veit Wyler , and her children , who held on to them until 1993 when he sold the rights to the publishing house Twin Books . Twin Books and Disney disagreed on the terms and validity of Disney 's original contract with Anna Wyler and Disney 's continued use of the *Bambi* name .

When the two companies were unable to reach a solution , Twin Books filed suit against Disney for copyright infringement . Disney argued that because Salten 's original 1923 publication of the novel did not include a copyright notice , by American law it was immediately considered a public domain work . It also argued that as the novel was published in 1923 , Anna Wyler 's 1954 renewal occurred after the deadline and was invalid . The case was reviewed by the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California , which ruled that the novel was copyrighted upon its publication in 1923 , and not a public domain work then . However , in validating 1923 as the publication date , this confirmed Disney 's claim that the copyright renewal was filed too late and the novel became a

public domain work in 1951 .

Twin Books appealed the decision , and in March 1996 the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit reversed the original decision , stating that the novel was a foreign work in 1923 that was not in its home country 's public domain when published , therefore the original publication date could not be used in arguing American copyright law . Instead , the 1926 publication date , the first in which it specifically declared itself to be copyrighted in the United States , is considered the year when the novel was copyrighted in America . As such , Anna Wyler 's renewal was timely and valid , thereby upholding Twin Books ' ownership of the copyright .

The Twin Books decision is still regarded as controversial by many copyright experts . David Nimmer , in a 1998 article , argued that the Twin Books ruling meant that an ancient Greek epic , if only published outside the U.S. without the required formalities , would be eligible for copyright protection . Although Nimmer concluded that Twin Books required this finding (within the Ninth Circuit) , he characterized the result as " patently absurd . "

The American copyright of the novel is currently set to expire on January 1 , 2022 , while in the European union it entered the public domain in 1 January 2016 .

= = = Sequel = = =

While living in exile in Switzerland , after being forced to flee Nazi @-@ occupied Austria , Salten wrote a sequel to Bambi that follows the birth and lives of Bambi 's twin offspring , Geno and Gurri . The young fawns interact with various deer , and are educated and watched over by Bambi and Faline as they grow . They also learn more about the ways of man , including both hunters and the gamekeeper seeking to protect the deer . Due to Salten 's exiled status ? he had lost his Austrian publisher Paul Zsolnay Verlag ? the English translation of the novel was published first , in the United States in 1939 by Bobbs @-@ Merrill , but it would take a year before the sequel was published in the original German language in Switzerland by his new publisher .

= = Reception = =

Bambi was " hugely popular " after its publication , becoming a " book @-@ of @-@ the @-@ month " selection and selling 650 @,@ 000 copies in the United States by 1942 . However , it was subsequently banned in Nazi Germany in 1936 as " political allegory on the treatment of Jews in Europe . " Many copies of the novel were burned , making original first editions rare and difficult to find .

When Felix Salten visited the United States as a member of a European delegation of journalists in May ? July 1930 , he was greeted warmly because of Bambi wherever the delegation went , as was testified by the Finnish member of the delegation , Urho Toivola . In his own travel book , Salten did not boast about this ; only when describing his visit to a ? Negro college ? of Atlanta , he mentions passingly that the children praised his books .

In his foreword of the novel , John Galsworthy called it a " delicious book " and a " little masterpiece " that shows a " delicacy of perception and essential truth " . He notes that while reading the galley proof of the novel while crossing the English Channel , he , his wife , and his nephew read each page in turn over the course of three hours in " silent absorption . " The New York Times reviewer John Chamberlain praised Salten 's " tender , lucid style " that " takes you out of yourself " . He felt that Salten captured the essence of each of the creatures as they talked , catching the " rhythm of the different beings who people his forest world " and showed particular " comprehension " in detailing the various stages of Bambi 's life . He also considered the English translation " admirably " done . A reviewer for Catholic World praised the approach of the subject , noting that it was " marked by poetry and sympathy [with] charming reminders of German folklore and fairy tale " . However , they disliked the " transference of certain human ideals to the animal mind " and the vague references to religious allegory . The Boston Transcript called it a " sensitive allegory of life " . The Saturday Review considered it " beautiful and graceful " piece that showed a rare " individuality " . The Times Literary Supplement stated that the novel is a " tale of exceptional charm , though

untrustworthy of some of the facts of animal life . " Isabel Ely Lord , reviewing the novel for the American Journal of Nursing , called the novel a " delightful animal story " and Salten a " poet " whose " picture of the woods and its people is an unforgettable one . " In comparing Bambi to Salten 's later work Perri ? in which Bambi makes a brief cameo ? Louise Long of the Dallas Morning News considered both to be stories that " quietly and completely [captivate] the heart " . Long felt the prose was " poised and mobile and beautiful as poetry " and praises Salten for his ability to give the animals seemingly human speech while not " [violating] their essential natures . "

Vicky Smith of Horn Book Magazine felt the novel was gory compared to the later Disney adaptation and called it a " weeper " . While criticizing it as one of the most notable anti @-@ hunting novels available , she concedes the novel is not easily forgettable and praises the " linchpin scene " where Bambi 's mother dies , stating " the understated conclusion of that scene , ' Bambi never saw his mother again , ' masterfully evokes an uncomplicated emotional response " . She questions Galsworthy 's recommendation of the novel to sportsmen in the foreword , wondering " how many budding sportsmen might have had conversion experiences in the face of Salten 's unrelieved harangue and how many might have instead become alienated . " In comparing the novel to the Disney film , Steve Chapple of Sports Afield felt that Salten viewed Bambi 's forest as a " pretty scary place " and the novel as a whole had a " lot of dark adult undertones . " Interpreting it as an allegory for Salten 's own life , Chapple felt Salten " [came] across [as] a little morbid , a bleeding heart of a European intellectual . " The Wall Street Journal 's James P. Sterba also considered it an " antifascist allegory " and sarcastically notes that " you 'll find it in the children 's section at the library , a perfect place for this 293 @-@ page volume , packed as it is with blood @-@ and @-@ guts action , sexual conquest and betrayal " and " a forest full of cutthroats and miscreants . I count at least six murderers (including three child @-@ killers) among Bambi 's associates . "

= = Impact = =

Liberal critics have argued Bambi to be one of the first environmental novels .

= = Adaptations = =

= = = Film = = =

= = = = Walt Disney animated film = = = =

With World War II looming , Max Schuster aided the Jewish Salten 's flight from Nazi Germany and helped introduce him , and Bambi , to Walt Disney Productions . Sidney Franklin , a producer and director at Metro @-@ Goldwyn @-@ Mayer , purchased the film rights in 1933 , initially desiring to make a live @-@ action adaptation of the work . Deciding such a film would be too difficult to make , he sold the rights to Walt Disney in April 1937 in hopes of it being adapted into an animated film instead . Disney began working on the film immediately , intending it to be the company 's second feature @-@ length animated film and his first to be based on a specific , recent work .

The original novel , written for an adult audience , was considered too " grim " and " somber " for the young audience Disney was targeting , and with the work required to adapt the novel , Disney put production on hold while it worked on several other works . In 1938 , Disney assigned Perce Pearce and Carl Fallberg to develop the film 's storyboards , but attention was soon drawn away as the studio began working on Fantasia . Finally , on 17 August 1939 , production on Bambi began in earnest , although it progressed slowly due to changes in the studio personnel , location and the methodology of handling animation at the time . The writing was completed in July 1940 , by which time the film 's budget had swelled to \$ 858 @,@ 000 . Disney was later forced to slash 12 minutes from the film before final animation , to save costs on production .

Heavily modified from the original novel , Bambi was released to theaters in the United States on 8 August 1942 . Disney 's version severely downplays the naturalistic and environmental elements found in the novel , giving it a lighter , friendlier feeling . The addition of two new characters , Thumper the Rabbit and Flower the Skunk , two sweet and gentle forest creatures , contributed to giving the film the desired friendlier and lighter feeling . Considered a classic , the film has been called " the crowning achievement of Walt Disney 's animation studio " and was named as the third best film in the animation genre of the AFI 's 10 Top 10 " classic " American film genres .

=== Russian live @-@ action films ===

In 1985 , a Russian @-@ language live @-@ action adaptation , Russian : ??????? ????? (Detstvo Bambi , lit . Bambi 's Childhood) , was produced and released in VHS format in the Soviet Union by Gorky Film Studios . It was directed by Natalya Bondarchuk , who also co @-@ wrote the script with Yuri Nagibin , and featured music by Boris Petrov . Natalya ' s son Ivan Burlyayev and her husband Nikolay Burlyaev starred as the young and adolescent Bambi , respectively , while Faline (renamed Falina) was portrayed by Yekaterina Lychyova as a child and Galina Belyayeva as an adult . In this adaptation , the film starts using animals , changes to using human actors , then returns to using animals for the ending .

A sequel , Russian : ??????? ????? (Yunost Bambi) , lit . Bambi 's Youth , followed in 1986 with Nikolay and Galina reprising their voice roles as Bambi and Falina . Featuring over 100 species of live animals and filmed in various locations in Crimea , Mount Elbrus , Latvia and Czechoslovakia , the film follows new lovers Bambi and Felina as they go on a journey in search of a life @-@ giving flower . Both films were released to Region 2 DVD with Russian and English subtitle options by the Russian Cinema Council in 2000 . The first film 's DVD also included a French audio soundtrack , while the second contained French subtitles instead .

=== Ballet ===

The Oregon Ballet Theatre adapted Bambi into an evening @-@ length ballet entitled Bambi : Lord of the Forest . It was slated to premiere in March 2000 as the main production for the company 's 2000 ? 2001 season . A collaboration between artistic director James Canfield and composer Thomas Lauderdale , the ballet 's production was to be an interpretation of the novel rather than the Disney film . In discussing the adaptation , Canfield stated that he was given a copy of the novel as a Christmas present and found it to be a " classic story about coming of age and a life cycle . " He went on to note that the play was inspired solely by the novel and not the Disney film . After the initial announcements , the pair began calling the work The Collaboration , as Disney owns the licensing rights for the name Bambi and they did not wish to fight for usage rights . The local press began calling the ballet alternative titles , including Not @-@ Bambi which Canfield noted to be his favorite , out of derision at Disney . Its premiere was delayed for unexplained reasons , and it has yet to be performed .

=== Theater ===

Playwright James DeVita , of the First Stage Children 's Theater , created a stage adaptation of the novel . The script was published by Anchorage Press Plays on 1 June 1997 . Crafted for young adults and teenagers and retaining the title Bambi ? A Life in the Woods , it has been produced around the United States at various venues . The script calls for an open @-@ stage setup , and utilizes at least nine actors : five male and four female , to cover the thirteen roles . The American Alliance Theatre and Education awarded the work its " Distinguished Play Award " for an adaptation .

=== Book ===

= = = = Schulman adaptation = = = =

In 1999 , the novel was adapted into an illustrated hardback children 's book by Janet Schulman , illustrated by Steve Johnson and Lou Fancher , and published by Simon & Schuster as part of its " Atheneum Books for Young Readers " imprint . In the adaptation , Schulman attempted to retain some of the lyrical feel of the original novel . She notes that rather than rewrite the novel , she " replicated Salten 's language almost completely . I reread the novel a number of times and then I went through and highlighted the dialogue and poignant sentences Salten had written . " Doing so retained much of the novel 's original lyrical feel , though the book 's brevity did result in a sacrifice of some of the " majesty and mystery " found in the novel . The illustrations were created to appear as realistic as possible , using painted images rather than sketches . In 2002 , the Schulman adaptation was released in audiobook format by Audio Bookshelf , with Frank Dolan as the reader .