**Simba Goes Home to Africa**

**Source:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWSRETjIcQQ>

Born Free Foundation Narrator: We first heard about Simba a few months ago. He was living—or existing, I should call it—in a kind of circus beast wagon in France. The authorities discovered his living conditions and they confiscated him, and they said ‘he couldn’t live there anymore’ and he was rescued thankfully by a wonderful group in Belgium called Natuurhulpcentrum.

They heard about us and asked if we could take him and so we were able to offer him a good life.

Text on Screen: 09:30 Opglabbeek, Belgium

Narrator: The wonderful Helen Worth, who’s been a patron of Born Free for many, many years has come to Belgium to start the first step on Simba’s journey to Africa. Wonderful Helen.

Helen Worth: [to Simba] He is a beautiful lion! Oh, look at that beautiful boy! Today we’re going to crate him up and he’s going off to the airport and we’re going to wave him off.

Sil Jensson: It’s always a risk to transport a lion for more than 24 hours. But, the vet is with him, one of our animal keepers is with him, so we hope for the best.

Text on Screen: Can Simba be enticed into his crate?

Helen Worth: How cool is that? He walked in. Do you know, I’ve seen a few of these releases and I’ve never seen such a calm lion actually, he’s beautiful. Very soon he’ll be on board his flight to Kenya, and tomorrow he’ll be in his new home, where he belongs.

Text on Screen: 18:40 Schiphol Airport, Amsterdam

Helen Worth: It’s fantastic! A whole team effort to get him here to this today, and it’s just so exciting. He’s going back to Africa where he belongs!

[Music]

Narrator: We are very, very fortunate at Born Free to have some amazing support from two special groups of people: Land Rover. We are Land Rover’s global partner; and, Kenya Airways. We are Kenya Airways’s chosen charity and I was told two days ago that they’re going to run this for three years, which means a lot to me because I feel such a tie to Kenya, having been there for the first time fifty years ago. So, thanks to them this particular rescue and project has had unbelievable support and help. They could not have done more for us and you have to recognize in life the people who help you. ‘Thank you’ to me is two words most important in the world, and I do thank them.

Text on Screen: [as plane lands] 09:24 Malawi, Africa

Narrator: I’m so happy, I can’t wait to see him to make sure he’s OK. [to group at airport] We mustn’t make him too frightened. We mustn’t frighten him—too many people, too quickly. Give him a little space.

Everyone’s so thrilled that he’s come here. It’s a good news story from beginning to end really isn’t it?

[Music plays as Simba is transported home in vehicle]

Narrator: [to Hon. Moses Kunkuyu] How do you do, Minister? Very, very kind of you to come today. So appreciated, really, your interest and it just makes it very special to us. Thank you.

Born Free Worker: The High Commissioner.

Narrator: How do you do, sir?

The High Commissioner: Welcome back.

Narrator: I think it is a welcome back, absolutely yes, I’ve been longing to come back.

The High Commissioner: This is my wife.

Narrator: How do you do?

Wife: It’s nice to meet you.

Narrator: You as well.

The High Commissioner: You brought a little friend with you?

Narrator: Not so little! And, um, yes I think we’re longing to get him to his enclosure and open the thing, because it must be very hot in there.

Worker: [as Lilongwe Wildlife Centre staff talk, move lion] Now we’re going to try to do this as quietly as possible.

Text on Screen: 13:01 Lilongwe Wildlife Centre, 26 hours since departing Belgium Simba is finally home.

Narrator: It’s always such a thrill, isn’t it? To see them arrive somewhere like this. It always makes you feel overjoyed really, when you think of the past of these animals, very sad and difficult and tough past. And now he’s going to have a happy, quiet, contented—hopefully with a companion—good future, where he will be loved and looked after. He really deserves it. All of the animals taken from dreadful places deserve a comfortable life.

[group chats as Simba is released, African drum choir performs]

Born Free Foundation