

PARKLAND BY VICTOR KELLEHER
Journal by Clancy Marshall

Parkland's Characters

Victor Kelleher has developed four main characters in this science fiction novel. They are:

CASSIE: She is the only full human out of the three friends and probably the smartest. She is an extremely daring character with an enormous will to be free. She is very stubborn, like boxer, but unlike boxer is prepared to be discreet to get what she wants. She is also cunning and quick minded and has a great dislike towards authority due to having 'wild blood' included in her genetic makeup when she was bred in captivity. Her main physical abilities include being able to throw well. This becomes relevant when she has to escape from her enclosure by throwing a stone at a button or killing a deadly leopard by throwing an iron bar. She is very faithful to her two dear friends and would go to extreme lengths to ensure their safety. Although her friends are part animal she considers them to be the same.

BOXER : Boxer is half baboon half human but he has a good grip on language. He is very smart, even for a human, and is stubborn and not prepared to hold the truth even when threatened. Physically he is very fit and is great at climbing walls. This comes in handy when he is trying to find out information without being caught.

Half way through the book the keepers do to him what is known as 'deprogramming', which gives him a stroke and his skills are reduced due to the left side of him being limp. Boxer goes through a lot of pain to save his friends and never grizzles or wants anything in return which I find is very admirable. Near the end of the book Boxer commits suicide so not to slow everyone else down, this part of the book is very sad.

RALPH: Ralph is half human half gorilla and does not have the same grip on speech as Boxer does. Instead Ralph understands people by his very attuned instincts. These instincts can detect a Deadly 'Leopog' from a distance and he knows when danger is just around the corner. Physically he is very big and strong, and will go to any lengths to protect Cassie and Boxer from any harm.

LEON: Leon is a teen-age boy who is captured by the keepers and is kept against his will. He gets to escape Parkland with Cassie, Boxer and Ralph. He is a fearless hero belonging to a tribe that roam free in the mountains. Although he holds

prejudices towards Ralph and Boxer at the start (because of their differences) he is soon won over and is very thankful that they helped him escape.

At the start of this book Leon does not appear to be a very likable character but my attitude towards him changed as he stopped hating Boxer and Ralph for being different, and started to be more understanding.

Parkland's Issues

I think this book raises some important issues relating to keeping animals in captivity. The book illustrates the point of view of the captive animal and what it is like living inside an enclosure. It also shows the difference between an animal that has spent all its life locked up and an animal that has spent most of its life free and is then captured.

The reasons for zoos in our community are

1. to educate the public about a particular species.
2. captive breeding so the species does not become extinct.
3. Entertainment.

The question is, do we as humans have the right to keep animals confined just to obtain these three objectives? Yes and No. I believe it is essential to have breeding programs to preserve a species. I also think it is important to educate the public about different species, so they can make intelligent decisions relating to the preservation of a particular animal. What I think we should look at more closely is objective number three. Should we be entertained at the expense of the animals freedom? After reading Parkland I believe we should stop keeping some animals purely for entertainment and start making living conditions better for others.

In this book Leon is captured and is locked up. He has more desire to get out than Cassie because he knows what he is missing in life. Where as Cassie has been in an enclosure since birth and does not want to be let free as badly. This is why I believe it is okay to keep Domestic animals in a decent sized yard. They have been bred for generations living in suburban houses and calling it home that's why when a dog is let free it nearly always returns to it's owners house. When they escape it's just to have quick look around and then they return home. This example has similarities to an incident in Parkland when Ralph after tasting freedom returns back to the enclosures because that is where he calls home.

