



FROM CUBS TO KINGS

1 x 50 min.

Written and directed by Virginia Quinn

HD, 5.1 and Stereo

Executive producers: Susanne Lummer, Sabine Holzer



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A packed beach in Spain: an unlikely attraction is drawing the crowds. Thousands of miles from their native home of Africa, a pair of tiny, newly born cubs, hollow-eyed, weak and malnourished, are posing for tourist snapshots. They are nervous and stressed by the sounds and sights they are forced to endure in this alien environment. But then, with nothing but a life of misery in store, a remarkable chain of events suddenly turns their pitiful lives around—and lion whisperer Kevin Richardson comes into play.

An animal rights organisation is tipped off that the two lion cubs are being used as a tourist attraction on Spanish beaches. The authorities intervene. Because of their poor state of health the cubs are eventually impounded and sent to a sanctuary. An expert team led by wildlife vets now takes care of the two feline youngsters. They now have names: Yame and George. Numerous tests and x-rays reveal bacterial infections, bad kidney and liver function, hair loss, lice and an overall poor body condition. Further examinations reveal that their eyes and even bones have suffered from their maltreatment.

With the cubs finally receiving the care they need, the big question remains: what will happen to them in the long

term? Because Europe's zoos are already overpopulated with lions, it is decided to approach Kevin Richardson. Despite routinely turning down rescued cubs from the cub pet industry, he agrees to take in Yame and George. It's a lifelong commitment. Even their initial transfer from Spain to Africa involves massive amounts of paperwork—and requires the cubs to be strong enough to endure the plane trip.

But the cubs regain their strength; after the bureaucratic ordeals are overcome, they are off to their new home in a more than 1,000 hectares big reserve in South Africa.

A healthy diet for the lions includes feeding from a larger carcass, with meat to rip off, bones to chew on, skin to bite through. Working for their food and being moved around into different environments on a regular basis, keeps them fit and stimulated. It's something that Kevin Richardson takes special care with.

Doctors, scientists, rangers and dedicated helpers all play their crucial part in this rescue mission. From a miserable existence as a tourist sideshow in Spain to the wild plains of Africa—'From Cubs to Kings' accompanies two lion cubs into a better future.



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