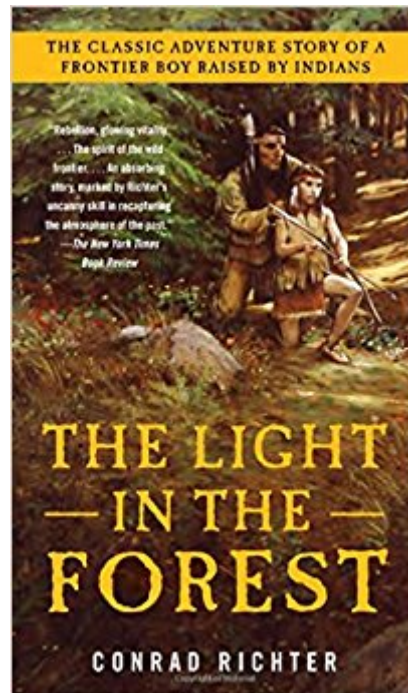


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# The Light In The Forest



## Synopsis

An adventurous story of a frontier boy raised by Indians, *The Light in the Forest* is a beloved American classic. When John Cameron Butler was a child, he was captured in a raid on the Pennsylvania frontier and adopted by the great warrior Cuyloga. Renamed True Son, he came to think of himself as fully Indian. But eleven years later his tribe, the Lenni Lenape, has signed a treaty with the white men and agreed to return their captives, including fifteen-year-old True Son. Now he must go back to the family he has forgotten, whose language is no longer his, and whose ways of dress and behavior are as strange to him as the ways of the forest are to them.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 271 customer reviews

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## Customer Reviews

Richter's (The Awakening Land) classic tale of a boy torn between families and cultures makes for a compelling audio adaptation. When he was just four years old, John Cameron Butler was captured by the Lenni Lenape Indians. He has since been adopted by the Indians, who named him True Son, and has grown to love the only family he has ever known, as well as the ways of his people. But now it's 1765 and in order to make a land deal, the Lenni Lenape and other tribes have agreed to return all their captives to the white Army, including now-15-year-old True Son/John. When he arrives at the Butler home in Paxton, Pa., True Son chafes at his white family's speech, customs and clothing, acting defiant and depressed. He soon manages (with help from his cousin Half Arrow) a dangerous escape and rejoins his Indian relatives. But once back among his people, True Son commits an act of betrayal that forces the Lenni Lenape to disown him forever, leaving him a young man unsure of where he belongs. Bregy's assured, crisp delivery gives extra resonance to Richter's

careful scene-setting, quickly transporting listeners to a distinct, long-ago era. Ages 10-up. (Jan.)  
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Grade 4-8-A classic in its own right, this novel by Conrad Richter (Knopf, 1953) lends itself well to the dramatic reading by Terry Bregy. John Butler, born in a small frontier town, was captured at age four by the Lenni Lenape Indians and raised by the great warrior, Cuyloga, who named the boy "True Son." He grew up thinking, feeling, and fighting like an Indian. Now rescued and restored to his family because of a treaty to return all white captives to their own people, John Butler rebels against this civilization and desires to return to the tribe. Escaping from the family farm in Pennsylvania, he discovers the eternal and irreconcilable conflict between the two worlds. "True Son"/John Butler asks, "Who am I? Where do I belong?" The narrative reading is replete with emotion; it reflects the harshness and the eloquence of the story as it is revealed. The benefits of listening to this moving tale are many; expression and dramatic reading aid understanding. For a sense of history and a sense of conflict between two different cultures, this novel is a masterpiece by one of America's finest writers. School and public libraries will want to make this a priority purchase. Patricia Mahoney Brown, Franklin Elementary School, Kenmore, NY Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

This is a typical Conrad Richter book, with skillfully-rendered dialects and a plot that rings true, coming from the eastern United States a couple of centuries ago. Without spoiling it, Richter deals with the hardships of repatriated Indian captives. Personally, I liked his "Awakening Land" trilogy more, but this was an authentic read.

Perhaps somewhat dated in terms of its handling... but much has happened which has changed the way we think since the 60s... This book was well suited for me as a budding adolescent, and it still touches me in my late 60s... I believe that I described the book as 'Provocative' when I was 12 years old.

Conrad Richter spins a powerful tale in a short time. His writing style reminds me of Richard Connell ("The Most Dangerous Game") in that he can deliver so much with so few words. This is as much about the collision of vastly different cultures as it is about a boy caught between them. John Butler, the son of a prominent Pennsylvania frontier family was kidnapped as a child by Delaware Indians during a massacre; Indians who were seeing their homeland usurped by white settlers and were

making a last stand against them. The Indians brought up the boy as an Indian, giving him the name True Son; his own acceptance of the new way of life began to grow and deepen within him, so that when he was brought back to his own family eleven years later, he had formed distinct opinions of his own against the whites; in his own mind, he was not White, but Indian. He loved and appreciated all things Indian; the forests, the rivers, the animals and birds of the woods; the religion of the Great Spirit. Richter's descriptive passages delve deep into the psyche of a youth torn by opposing forces between two worlds, while one single world is the one he has accepted as his. As his birth family struggles to reclaim him, it drives all of them against each other, in a fierce battle of wills that none of them will truly triumph over when all is said and done. Another excellent novel with a similar, more modern theme regarding a childhood friendship between two boys, one white, one red, until adulthood intervenes, is "Crazy Weather" by Charles McNichols. Another Conrad Richter tale I highly recommend is "Sea of Grass" which is also about the frontier, (New Mexico) but with an entirely different context. "Sea of Grass" and "The Light in the Forest" are both slim volumes, but with a lot in between the pages.

A coming of age drama of a 15 year old boy forced to make serious decisions about himself and his future. My son liked it. He did not love it.

I read this book in 20 minutes, and ended up wishing someone would just kill the kid already. I'd have murdered him for blowing the ambush in the river. Just sayin..

Beautifully written, A Light In the Forest is the tale of a young boy torn between worlds, fiercely prejudiced against each other. True Son, a fifteen year old white boy was taken in by a Native American tribe when he was only four years old, and sense then his hate for the white people has grown stronger and stronger. But now that he is forced to return to his original family, he learns that his " Delaware " people are just as flawed as any culture or civilization. This book is both a coming of age story as well as a tale that blurs the lines between right and wrong. A surprising page turner, I thoroughly enjoyed this book.

Such a poignant description of how we live disconnected from the Earth. I read this book back before high school and it had a profound impact on my view of the world, so I decided to read it again about 30 yrs later and I still enjoyed the book and felt its messages very clearly. Simple but good reminders!

This is a lovely, riveting story of frontier life and the bitter tension between the native people and the early settlers. I read it cover to cover in one sitting as I didn't want to put it down and separate from the story

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