

THE JUNGLE BOOK

A full-length adventure by
Callan Stout

Based on the stories in *The Jungle Book* by
Rudyard Kipling

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MOWGLI, a young boy.

NARRATOR, male or female, a Hindu storyteller.

MOTHER WOLF, female, a strongly protective mother.

FATHER WOLF, male, a strongly protective father.

AKELA, male or female, the aging leader of the wolf pack.

BAGHEERA, male, a panther, who was born into captivity and escaped.

BALOO, male, a brown bear, the teacher of the wolves.

SHERE KHAN, male, a tiger with a lame foot, feared.

KAA, male, a giant rock python.

RANN, male or female, a bird of prey, like a hawk.

MESSUA, female, a woman in the village.

BULDEO, male, a hunter from the village.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG, male or female, a monkey.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG, male or female, a monkey.

SMART BANDAR-LOG, male or female, a monkey.

OLD WOLF, male or female, a member of the wolf pack.

DARK WOLF, male or female, a member of the wolf pack.

YOUNG WOLF, male or female, a member of the wolf pack.

MAN VILLAGER, male, a member of the village.

VILLAGER, male or female, a member of the village.

YOUNG VILLAGER, male or female, a member of the village.

3 BUFFALO, male or female.

While pronouns are written in the script as male for convenience, the Narrator and numerous other characters may be of either gender.

Characters can be doubled as follows:

NARRATOR/AKELA/RANN
MOTHER WOLF/MESSUA/SILLY BANDARLOG
SHERE KHAN/STUPID BANDARLOG
BALOO/BULDEO
BAGHEERA/YOUNG VILLAGER
FATHER WOLF/SMART BANDARLOG/MAN VILLAGER/
BUFFALO 1
MOWGLI DARK WOLF/KAA/VILLAGER/BUFFALO 3

PLACE AND TIME

A jungle in India before the trees were cut back and turned into cities, when small villages followed the Law of the Jungle just as much as the creatures who lived under the sky, and for the most part they lived in harmony.

NOTES

This play can be performed with or without an intermission between the acts.

Where characters are described as singing, this could be anything from a chant to a fully-realized song depending on the wishes of your production.

ACT I

(The Indian Jungle. A DRUM beats through the trees. An old storyteller, the NARRATOR, draped in multicolored cloth wound around their body and head, steps out of the dense jungle. A simple FLUTE joins the drumming. The Narrator begins to chant and dance to the words.)

NARRATOR: Now Rann the hawk brings home the night
That Mang the Bat sets free—
The herds are shut in pen and hut
For loosed till dawn are we.
This is the hour of pride and power,
Talon and fin and claw.
Hear the call! —Good hunting all
That keep the Jungle Law!

(A wolf HOWLS offstage.)

The pack is returning home. If you listen carefully and follow the Law of the Jungle, their howls will become words and you too, will speak to the wolves.

(A HOWLING continues offstage, but slowly each wolf's howls become words as they enter. As the wolves gather, the Narrator becomes RANN.)

MOTHER WOLF: As the dawn was breaking the Wolf Pack
yelled
Once, twice and again!

OLD WOLF: Feet in the jungle that leave no mark!
Eyes that can see in the dark

(MOTHER WOLF and OLD WOLF greet each other, circling as they chant.)

MOTHER WOLF AND OLD WOLF: Once, twice and again!

(YOUNG WOLF bounds on stage, fake pouncing at Mother Wolf.)

YOUNG WOLF: As the dawn was breaking the buffalo yelled
Once, twice and again!

(DARK WOLF runs in, pulling Young Wolf away from Mother Wolf, who he was trying to play with.)

DARK WOLF: And a doe leaped up, and a doe leaped up
From the pond in the wood where the wild deer sup. This I,
scouting alone, beheld.

(Dark Wolf and Young Wolf circle each other. Young Wolf pounces at Dark Wolf.)

YOUNG WOLF AND DARK WOLF: Once, twice and again!

FATHER WOLF: As the dawn was breaking the buffalo yelled
Once, twice and again!

(All the wolves start to move in one large circle.)

MOTHER WOLF: And a wolf stole back,

OLD WOLF: And a wolf stole back,

YOUNG WOLF: To carry the word to the waiting pack,

ALL WOLVES: And we sought and we found and we stayed
on his track
Once, twice and again!

(The CRY of a small human baby pierces through the chant of the wolves. The wolves stop. The long CRY of a tiger who has missed his prey, comes from the same direction.)

MOTHER WOLF: Did you hear that? It's Shere Khan. He's
come back to our jungle.

DARK WOLF: We'll go see what he's hunting.

OLD WOLF: It didn't sound like any animal I've ever tried to eat.

DARK WOLF: Come on, cub.

(Dark Wolf, Old Wolf and Young Wolf bound away, leaving Mother Wolf and FATHER WOLF. As they exit, Rann the hawk flies in – the actor's arms are extended with their hands bent up and steps with high knees, flexed feet and a purposeful stride, mimicking classical Indian dance.)

RANN: I spotted him this morning stalking through the herds of buffalo in our village.

(Rann pretends to be Shere Khan stalking through high grass, picking his legs up from the knee and letting his ankles stay limp; his wings don't move.)

FATHER WOLF: This will not be good for the pack. We can't let him stay long.

RANN: I heard a rumor that he was chased from the jungle in the next valley by another pack. He broke the Law of the Jungle and attacked a cub.

MOTHER WOLF: I guess I'm lucky I don't have any cubs this season. But the other mothers are not going to like this at all and I'll fight for them, so they don't have to leave their cubs.

FATHER WOLF: The Seonee pack is stronger than the other packs. I don't think we have to worry so much.

MOTHER WOLF: I just don't want to take any chances. He is unpredictable.

(BAGHEERA, the panther, bounds in carrying a small human child, who he gently puts down.)

BAGHEERA: Shere Khan attacked a man-cub.

MOTHER WOLF: Next he will attack our own. This is as far as it goes.

(Mother Wolf starts to charge off in the direction of the tiger cry. Father Wolf holds her back.)

FATHER WOLF: He has his punishment coming to him.

BAGHEERA: He's right. Let the Jungle Law punish him. Rann, he is headed this way. Can you fly up and keep watch?

(Mother Wolf starts inspecting the man-cub and cradling it.)

RANN: Anything the honorable Bagheera requests.

(Rann flies away as before.)

BAGHEERA: We must decide what to do with the man-cub.

MOTHER WOLF: He's so helpless, so small.

(Mother Wolf fawns over the small child.)

FATHER WOLF: What happened to his parents?

BAGHEERA: They ran off.

MOTHER WOLF: We should take him back and protect him until they return.

BAGHEERA: I don't think they'll come back.

MOTHER WOLF: They're just going to leave him?

BAGHEERA: The man-cub was lucky I was close. His parents ran off as soon as Shere Khan walked in the door. They think their cub has become tiger food. Shere Khan would have eaten him.

FATHER WOLF: Shouldn't we take him back to the village?

BAGHEERA: His parents could be anywhere. What would the village do for him?

MOTHER WOLF: We can't keep him. He's a man-cub.

BAGHEERA: He's part of the jungle now. Shere Khan will hunt him forever. Men cannot protect him.

MOTHER WOLF: I will keep him. I miss the warmth of a cub. He will be my little hairless cub, my little frog. My Mowgli.

BAGHEERA: Then Mowgli he is.

MOTHER WOLF: Hi Mowgli. I'm your new mommy.

FATHER WOLF: Hi little frog. I'm your new daddy.

MOTHER WOLF: He'll be safe with us.

BAGHEERA: I'll help protect him.

(Rann swoops back in, not hesitating to land.)

RANN: Shere Khan is close.

(Rann flies off.)

BAGHEERA: Hide Mowgli.

(Mowgli is pushed into the small opening that is the Wolf cave, just as SHERE KHAN, the tiger, enters limping.)

SHERE KHAN: You have something that belongs to me.

BAGHEERA: We are not keeping anything from you Shere Khan.

SHERE KHAN: I think you are. A small man-cub I was hunting. Took a great effort to scare off the parents. You wouldn't want me to go hungry now, would you?

FATHER WOLF: The Law says you can't hunt man, Lame One.

SHERE KHAN: I never liked the Law much. How does that part go? "You should not hunt...something, something...and those uglier than yourself."

(Shere Khan gives a snort. Mother Wolf steps forward, defiant.)

MOTHER WOLF: The man-cub is mine. He shall not be killed. He shall live to run with the Pack and to hunt with the Pack; and in the end, Hunter-of-little-naked-cubs, he shall hunt you!

SHERE KHAN: Hunt me? The hairless man-cub will hunt me? He doesn't have claws or teeth.

MOTHER WOLF: He will hunt you.

SHERE KHAN: He doesn't scare me. Besides what will your pack say about taking in this man-cub. They will throw him out. Then you will beg me to eat him quick, rather than leave him to the other beasts. I'll see you when that day comes.

(Shere Khan exits.)

FATHER WOLF: He's right. The pack must accept him.

MOTHER WOLF: Then we must make him strong, so the pack will accept him.

BAGHEERA: I don't want Mowgli turned over to Shere Khan either. I will be at the pack council to speak for him.

MOTHER WOLF: Thank you Bagheera.

(Bagheera exits.)

Mowgli, little frog. I will not let Shere Khan hurt you. The pack will protect you. But one day you must hunt Shere Khan. Until then rest easy, small one. You're safe.

(Exit.)

NARRATOR: The Law of the Jungle are the rules that every animal must follow. They say many things about hunting. But mostly the Law tells the animals not to hunt Men. If an animal kills a man, the whole man village comes out with guns and fire. They fill the jungle with loud noises and kill a lot of the animals. So the animals don't hunt Men to protect themselves. So don't be frightened when you walk through the jungle; if you follow the Law of the Jungle, you won't be hurt. But Shere Khan was right when he said the pack must accept Little Mowgli. When the cubs are old enough to stand on their feet he must bring them to the Pack Council, which is held once a month at full moon. I think I see the full moon rising now. Several moons have sailed the sky since Mowgli first escaped Shere Khan. He has started walking and Mother Wolf must take him to the pack council. They are gathering now.

(The Narrator becomes AKELA as the pack enters.)

THE WOLF PACK: As the dusk is breaking the Wolf Pack yelled Once, Twice and again!

Feet in the jungle that leave no mark

Eyes that can see in the dark

Once, Twice and again!

AKELA: The Council is called tonight to recognize a cub. Will the cub step forward?

(Mother Wolf pushes MOWGLI, now about ten, forward. He resists. Bagheera lingers around the edge of the wolf council.)

MOTHER WOLF: I present Mowgli.

MOWGLI: Mother, I'm scared.

MOTHER WOLF: Don't be shy. Everyone must be recognized. Go ahead, Mowgli.

AKELA: Wolves, you know the Law. Take a good look.

MOTHER WOLF: Look at Mowgli.

(Shere Khan slinks out of the shadows. Mother Wolf pulls Mowgli back towards her.)

SHERE KHAN: Yes, take a good look. Look at the man-cub. What do you want with a man-cub?

FATHER WOLF: What do you want with the wolf council?

AKELA: Everyone keep looking. Shere Khan doesn't have any say here.

DARK WOLF: What do we want with a man-cub?

SHERE KHAN: You could give him to me.

AKELA: We can't give you a cub Shere Khan and you can't take him.

DARK WOLF: I challenge this cub.

(Mother Wolf growls.)

MOTHER WOLF: I'll give you a head start if you leave now.

(Dark Wolf turns and runs.)

SHERE KHAN: Don't intimidate the opposition. That's not fair.

MOTHER WOLF: You should leave too.

MOWGLI: Mother, what does that mean?

MOTHER WOLF: Nothing, Mowgli. Don't worry about it.

SHERE KHAN: Man-cub, that means that one of the wolves doesn't want you.

MOTHER WOLF: Don't listen to him, Mowgli.

MOWGLI: Do you want me, Mother?

MOTHER WOLF: Yes, Mowgli. I want to keep you with all my heart.

SHERE KHAN: This cub is still being challenged. Are you going to get on with the proceedings, Akela?

AKELA: I run this Council, Shere Khan. If you want to stay, you will be quiet. Who speaks for this cub?

SHERE KHAN: See, no one speaks for him. The pack does not want him. Come here little Mowgli. You are mine now.

MOWGLI: Mommy, I don't want to go.

(BALOO, the bear, enters, shouting, but in a good mood. He places himself between Mowgli and Shere Khan.)

BALOO: Don't anyone get their fur all sticking up in the wrong direction. I speak for the man-cub. Let him run with the pack. I will teach him too. He already seems like a real smart one, what teacher wouldn't want to keep a smart one.

MOWGLI: When do I get to start school?

BALOO: Real soon, Mowgli.

(Baloo pats Mowgli on the head. Mowgli swats at him, like a kitten.)

SHERE KHAN: Not if you're the only one speaking for him.

AKELA: We need one more to speak for him.

(Bagheera stalks into the center of the council.)

BAGHEERA: I know I'm not part of your Council but the Law says a cub who might not be accepted can be part of the pack for a gift.

AKELA: Bagheera is right.

BAGHEERA: I will give a newly killed fat bull to keep Mowgli in the pack.

SHERE KHAN: You will let Bagheera keep the man-cub for the price of a bull? You're wasting your bull, Bagheera. The man-cub doesn't have any fur; he'll die during the winter.

BAGHEERA: It's my bull to give away. I want Mowgli to stay.

MOWGLI: Does that mean Bagheera's my new family?

BAGHEERA: No, Mowgli, you can stay with your mother.

AKELA: I will take the payment, Bagheera. Mowgli will be part of the pack.

MOTHER WOLF: Bagheera, thank you.

AKELA: Shere Khan, we've made our choice. It's time for you to leave.

SHERE KHAN: I'll come back for the man-cub.

AKELA: We will uphold the Law of the Jungle.

(Shere Khan exits.)

The cub is yours. I hope you understand the choice you have made.

MOTHER WOLF: Thank you, Akela.

BAGHEERA: The bull is 400 paces off that way under a chestnut rose.

AKELA: Thank you, Bagheera. I'll see to that bull.

(Akela exits.)

BAGHEERA: Baloo, you must teach this one every word of the Law. Shere Khan will be back and he will challenge Mowgli again. We can't let Mowgli forget any of this.

BALOO: Bagheera, Mowgli's safe now. The day he must face Shere Khan is far off. Let him be a happy little cub and play with his friends.

BAGHEERA: But you must promise to teach him every word of the Law.

MOTHER WOLF: We're counting on you, Baloo.

BALOO: I promise, but I will not teach him without letting him play.

MOWGLI: Mommy, can we go home now?

MOTHER WOLF: Of course, Mowgli.

MOWGLI: See you in school, Baloo. Bye, Bagheera.

BALOO: He's going to be a good cub.

(Baloo scoops up Mowgli into his arms.)

Let's get out of here.

(Bagheera, Mother Wolf and Father Wolf exit. Mowgli struggles out of Baloo's hug. The Narrator enters. Mowgli runs around Baloo, making Baloo dizzy, so he has to sit down.)

NARRATOR: Just as Baloo promised, Mowgli started school. And he was smart. He was so smart Baloo starting teaching Mowgli more than he ever taught the other wolves.

(Mowgli runs off and hides behind a tree.)

BALOO: Mowgli, come back, we're not finished.

(Mowgli creeps out from behind the tree, but Baloo is looking the other way. Mowgli tiptoes over to Baloo and taps him on the back. Baloo turns around, surprised.)

MOWGLI: Baloo, you promised that if I got all the Master Words right you would sing me a song.

BALOO: I will.

MOWGLI: You promised.

BALOO: First tell me the Stranger's Hunting call.

MOWGLI: That's easy. I've known that for ages. You know that.

BALOO: I want to make sure that you haven't forgotten. You haven't forgotten have you?

MOWGLI: No, of course not.

BALOO: Then go ahead.

(Mowgli calls out.)

MOWGLI: "Give me leave to hunt here because I am hungry."

BALOO: Very good. And what's the answer?

MOWGLI: "Hunt then for food, but not for pleasure."

BALOO: You remember very good.

MOWGLI: Will you sing now?

BALOO: Please.

MOWGLI: Please?

BALOO: Do you remember that dance I taught you?

MOWGLI: Baloo, you said you'd sing.

BALOO: Do you remember the dance?

MOWGLI: Come on already.

BALOO: You won't be a really good hunter, if you don't learn some patience.

MOWGLI: I learned patience. "Patience is a virtue." Now sing.

BALOO: Okay, okay. But I want you to do that dance.

MOWGLI: Okay. I'll dance.

(As Baloo sings, Mowgli dances an awkward version of a Hindu folk dance. He trips over his feet and his arms stick out at funny angles, but he is trying hard to get it right.)

BALOO: HIS SPOTS ARE THE JOY OF THE LEOPARD: HIS HORNS ARE THE BUFFALO'S PRIDE.

BE CLEAN, FOR THE STRENGTH OF THE HUNTER IS KNOWN BY THE GLOSS OF HIS HIDE.

IF YOU FIND THAT THE BULLOCK CAN TOSS YOU, OR THE HEAVY-BROWED BUFFALO CAN GORE;

YOU NEED NOT STOP WORK TO INFORM US: WE KNEW IT TEN SEASONS BEFORE.

OPPRESS NOT THE CUBS OF THE STRANGER, BUT HAIL THEM AS SISTER AND BROTHER,

FOR THOUGH THEY ARE LITTLE AND CLUMSY, IT MAY BE THE BEAR IS THEIR MOTHER.

"THERE IS NONE LIKE TO ME!" SAYS THE CUB IN THE PRIDE OF HIS EARLIEST KILL;

BUT THE JUNGLE IS LARGE AND THE CUB HE IS SMALL.

(As Baloo sings the final lines of the song, Bagheera enters. Mowgli continues dancing a while after the song ends.)

BAGHEERA: What have you got the little man-cub doing now?

MOWGLI: Bagheera!

(Mowgli throws himself at the panther.)

BAGHEERA: I'm happy to see you too, Mowgli-frog.

MOWGLI: Did you hear Baloo's song? I think it's the best song ever. When I grow up I want to make songs just like Baloo.

BAGHEERA: When you grow up you can do whatever you want.

MOWGLI: Does that mean I don't need to learn any more Jungle Law? Baloo, you can teach me about making songs.

BALOO: You still got to learn about the Law. If you don't know the Law you can't make songs about the right things.

MOWGLI: Do I have to, Bagheera?

BAGHEERA: Yes. Because even if you want to make songs, you have to learn everything that will keep you safe from Shere Khan.

MOWGLI: I'm not scared of that old lame tiger. I'd hit him and then tie his feet up with his tail so he trips.

(Mowgli shows Baloo what he would do to Shere Khan, and Baloo becomes his punching bag.)

BALOO: Whoa! Careful there, young man-cub. We're not your enemy.

MOWGLI: Sorry, Baloo. I don't mean to hurt you.

BALOO: I know you don't. Now be a good little frog; give Bagheera and I some room to talk.

BAGHEERA: But don't go far.

(Mowgli runs off behind a bush.)

You shouldn't let him too far out of your sight.

BALOO: I don't. And he's not that far away.

BAGHEERA: He's mine, you know. I bought him with the Bull.

BALOO: Don't be silly, Bagheera. No one can own the man-cub. He can't even master himself.

BAGHEERA: But I worry.

BALOO: Shere Khan is far away now. He will not come back for many seasons. And you can still see him in the bushes.

BAGHEERA: Fine. What was that silly hopping he was doing?

BALOO: Dancing.

BAGHEERA: Dancing?

BALOO: They do it in the man village, not far from here. Some day he'll live in the village; you know that. He has to know their laws too.

BAGHEERA: I'll miss him when he grows up and forgets us.

(Mowgli calls out from behind the bushes.)

MOWGLI: I'll never forget you, Bagheera.

BAGHEERA: You're not supposed to be listening to us.

MOWGLI: Sorry.

BALOO: But Mowgli is a good student. He learns well. He learned that dance after only watching it three times.

BAGHEERA: Is he learning the Law?

BALOO: All of it. The Law of the Jungle, the Wood and the Water. He swims better than I do. You should see him go, a right little frog. I'll show you. Mowgli, come back.

(SMART BANDAR-LOG runs on stage, throws leaves at Baloo and Bagheera and runs off.)

Hey, Bandar-log. Don't throw leaves. Those naughty Monkeys, can't teach them a thing.

BAGHEERA: Baloo, don't get sidetracked. Ignore the Bandar-log. Is Mowgli learning the important stuff?

BALOO: Of course he's learning the important stuff. They don't call me the Teacher of the Law because I don't teach the Law.

BAGHEERA: I know, I know. But Mowgli's different than the wolf cubs.

BALOO: If he was a wolf cub he wouldn't still be following me around repeating what I say. Mowgli, will you come back here. I would have started my summer vacation already if Mowgli were just another wolf.

BAGHEERA: He's not a bear-cub either.

BALOO: I know that too.

BAGHEERA: He's a man-cub and he needs to be protected from Shere Khan.

(SILLY BANDAR-LOG runs out of the bush.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: He lost his tail. He lost his tail.

(Silly Bandar-log runs off.)

BALOO: Mowgli, where are you? You're giving me a headache. Will you just let the man-cub be a cub.

(Mowgli enters.)

There you are. What have I told you about going farther off than I can shout?

MOWGLI: "I'm not supposed to go farther than you can shout, because if I can't hear you, you can't hear me and if somebody takes me, you can't hear me."

BALOO: Right.

MOWGLI: And Baloo is too fat to run and get me.

BALOO: Hey.

BAGHEERA: Listen to your teacher. The same rules go for anyone you're with; it's not because Baloo is fatter than the rest of us.

BALOO: And it's not fat. I have to store up a few extra pounds for the winter when I hibernate.

BAGHEERA: You aren't exactly thin when you come out of hibernation either.

BALOO: I thought you were trying to get Mowgli to listen to me. Don't get on his side.

BAGHEERA: Where were you anyway?

MOWGLI: I was playing with a monkey.

BAGHEERA: A monkey? A Bandar-log? You shouldn't waste your time with them.

MOWGLI: They said one day I could be their leader and they will take me on wonderful journeys where we never touch the ground, not even to go to sleep.

BALOO: What is this silliness?

MOWGLI: The Bandar-log said I could be their King.

BAGHEERA: They don't have a King.

MOWGLI: Then I'll be the first.

BAGHEERA: They don't have a leader. They can't remember long enough to remember who they made leader.

MOWGLI: I'll remember I'm the leader.

BALOO: They don't have any Law. You can't rule without Law.

MOWGLI: I'll make Law.

BAGHEERA: You're not allowed to play with the Monkey People anymore, Mowgli. They don't respect the rest of the Jungle people. They eat everything and throw sticks at our heads while we're hunting.

BALOO: One just threw a bunch of leaves at us. I don't want you to talk about them anymore.

MOWGLI: But they are more like me than you. They stand on two feet and have front paws that look like mine.

(Mowgli wiggles his thumbs.)

I don't think I'm a wolf. I think I'm a monkey. You stole me from the Bandar-log.

BALOO: You're not a monkey, Mowgli. You're a man-cub.

MOWGLI: I don't want to be a man-cub.

BAGHEERA: Then don't be. But you live with the wolves, so you must be a wolf cub.

BALOO: Forget about the Bandar-log. I called you back so you could show Bagheera that you've learned the Master Words.

MOWGLI: Do I have to?

BALOO: Yes you have to.

BAGHEERA: Go ahead.

MOWGLI: I know how to say it in many tongues. Which one do you want to hear?

BALOO: Now he's showing off. Give us the Hunting-people first, great scholar.

MOWGLI: Gr! We be of one blood, you and I. Gr!

(Mowgli growls out the words.)

BALOO: Now for the birds.

(Mowgli whistles the words.)

MOWGLI: We be of one blood, you and I.

BALOO: The Snake-People. I can't even say this one. Had to take him down to see a water snake to get the pronunciation.

MOWGLI: Sshhwee be of ssssssonessss sbloossssooodsssss, shhhhuuuuuuu shhhhands sshhhhhhiiii.

BAGHEERA: Is that how it's supposed to sound?

BALOO: I hope. Just sounds like one big hiss to me.

BAGHEERA: I hope he never has to use them. You better make sure he doesn't forget them.

MOWGLI: You're not even going to say how well I did? You should hear Baloo try to say the Master Words of the Snake. He sounds like someone letting out wind. Shhhhoosshiiii shuuuuuu.

(Mowgli dissolves into giggles.)

BAGHEERA: You sounded very close to perfect.

MOWGLI: I was perfect.

BALOO: Now don't forget them.

MOWGLI: I won't, Baloo. Don't worry.

(Suddenly STUPID BANDAR-LOG and Silly Bandar-log come in and snatch Mowgli out from between Baloo and Bagheera and drag him off into the forest.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Here we go in a flung festoon,
Half-way up to the jealous moon!

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Don't you envy our pranceful bands?

Don't you wish you had extra hands?

MOWGLI: Baloo! Help me! Bagheera!

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Wouldn't you like if your tails were
Curved in the shape of a Cupid's bow?

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Now you're angry —

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: never mind,
Brother, your tail hangs down behind!

(They chant even as they run offstage.)

BAGHEERA: Come on, Baloo. We've got to follow him.

(Bagheera runs off with Baloo following behind, slower. He really can't run well. Stupid Bandar-log and Silly Bandar-log enter dragging Mowgli behind them, still chanting. They pause and play pass-the-Mowgli, as they sing.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Here we sit in a branchy row,

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Thinking of beautiful things we
know;

Dreaming of deeds that we mean to do,

MOWGLI: They're going to drop me out of a tree.
Balooooooooo!

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: All complete, in a minute or two—
Something noble and wise and good,
Done by merely wishing we could.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: We've forgotten, but —

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: never mind,
Brother, your tail hangs down behind!
Hang on!

(Bagheera enters chasing them, but they are up in a tree and bound off through the tree tops. Bagheera sits down to catch his breath. Baloo enters, panting.)

BAGHEERA: We're never going to catch them like this. I keep losing them in the tree tops.

BALOO: We need a better way to catch them.

BAGHEERA: If we ever get him back, I'm sure he won't play with the Bandar-log anymore.

BALOO: But that won't do us any good now. I hope he remembers what I taught him.

BAGHEERA: The Bandar-log are afraid of Kaa. Aren't they, Baloo?

BALOO: That's the only thing. He eats them, when he can.

BAGHEERA: Let's get him to help rescue Mowgli.

BALOO: Oh, no. He gives me the willies.

(Baloo shivers.)

BAGHEERA: Don't be silly. He's only a snake.

BALOO: He's a giant python. And you've never seen his dance. He goes all wavy and then the trees turn upside down and you feel like you're falling up.

(Baloo imitates the snake's dance, by swaying around the middle and turning little circles.)

BAGHEERA: Stop being a scaredy-cat!

BALOO: Scaredy-bear!

BAGHEERA: You're too big for a snake to eat. Even a giant snake.

BALOO: Kaa sleeps over in a clearing on a rock. This way.

(Baloo and Bagheera exit. Stupid Bandar-log and Silly Bandar-log enter with Mowgli.)

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: All the talk we ever have heard
Uttered by bat or beast or bird —

(Rann enters soaring over head.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Hide or fin or scale or feather —

(Mowgli spots Rann.)

MOWGLI: We be of one blood, you and I.

(Whistling the words to attract Rann.)

STUPID BANDAR-LOG AND 2: Jabber it quickly and all together!

RANN: Mowgli!

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Excellent! Wonderful! Once again!

MOWGLI: Quick, Rann, find Baloo and Bagheera, tell them where the Monkeys are taking me.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Now we are talking just like men!
Let's pretend we are,

RANN: Don't worry Mowgli, you're in good claws.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Brother, your tail hangs down behind!

This is the way of the Monkey-kind.

(Stupid Bandar-log and Silly Bandar-log rush Mowgli off into the next piece of jungle. Rann flies off. KAA, a giant yellow and brown rock python, is lying asleep on a sun-drenched rock. Baloo and Bagheera enter.)

BALOO: Careful, he's quick to attack if he's taken unawares. We can't seem too eager, either. Follow my lead. Good hunting!

(Kaa slithers on the spot, before he eyes Baloo and Bagheera.)

KAA: Good hunting to us all. What does Baloo the teacher want of disturbing my sleep?

BALOO: We were hunting and just happened to come up to you. I thought I'd say hello.

KAA: I'm much in need of a meal. I'm so hungry I could eat a buffalo. How goes the hunting?

BAGHEERA: Nothing too good, yet. Just a few monkeys stopping our progress.

KAA: Shhhh. The Bandar-log. They are horrible creature. Call me names. "Footless, yellow earth-worm." They are good hunting.

BALOO: Are they?

KAA: When I can get up into a tree. The branches fall more easily than before. All dried twigs and rotten boughs.

BAGHEERA: Your weight can't help either.

KAA: Yes, I've grown to a great—sssshh—length.

BALOO: If we were to promise you a meal, would you help us find something we lost?

KAA: What did you lose?

BALOO: A cub.

KAA: And I can eat the cub?

BAGHEERA: The Bandar-log stole him from us. You can eat them, if you help us get the cub back.

KAA: Sshhh. They have moved their gathering.

BAGHEERA: We couldn't keep up to follow.

(Rann enters.)

RANN: Bagheera, Baloo. I come from following the Bandar-log; they have taken your Mowgli.

BAGHEERA: Where are they?

RANN: They have taken up residence in the old ruins.

BALOO: We must go at once.

(Bagheera and Kaa take off at once. Kaa moves quickly, for not having legs. Baloo, again, trails behind. Mowgli and Stupid Bandar-log and Silly Bandar-log enter the old ruins. Smart Bandar-log meets them. The ruins were once the summer residence of a great Mughal emperor, but the stone walls and stairs are falling apart. Trees and vines have grown through the cracks and the Bandar-log have taken up residence.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Then join our leaping lines that scumfish through the pines,

SMART BANDAR-LOG: That rocket up where, light and high, the wild grape swings.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: By the rubbish in our wake, and the noble noise we make,

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Be sure, be sure, we're going to do some splendid things!

MOWGLI: Let me go!

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: The man-cub has strong lungs.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: He got through the trees good too.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: He really must be one of us.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: But he hasn't got a tail.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: Maybe it fell off.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Maybe he lost it.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: We could help him find it.

MOWGLI: I never had a tail.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: What a pity no tail.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: A tail is a wonderful thing to have.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Maybe we can make him a tail.

MOWGLI: I don't want a tail.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Doesn't want a tail?

SMART BANDAR-LOG: What kind of Bandar-log are you?

MOWGLI: I'm not a Bandar-log.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: He's funny.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: When a farmer is walking through the jungle, what does he look out for?

MOWGLI: I don't know.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Ma-hog-an-me.

(The Bandar-log laugh uproariously.)

MOWGLI: I don't think that's funny.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: He's never met your hog.

(They laugh some more.)

MOWGLI: I have to get back to Baloo and Bagheera right now.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: That old bear? I saw him once eating ants out of a log and the ants climbed all over him.

(As the Bandar-log tell the story of Baloo, they pantomime the story, becoming caricatures of the real animals.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: And he started jumping up and down to get them off.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: Then he ran through the forest

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: It was the funniest run I've ever seen. He looked like this.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: Then he jumped in the river right on top of this snake.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: And the snake got all twisted up around the bear.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: They were splashing water all over the place.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: Bagheera had to untangle them.

(The Bandar-log continue laughing.)

MOWGLI: I have to get back to them right away.

(Mowgli starts to leave.)

SMART BANDAR-LOG: Oh no you don't. Not until you show us how to weave things together.

MOWGLI: Is that all you want?

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: You have to teach us how to do it.

MOWGLI: OK. But then I have to go.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Of course you do. We can't keep you forever.

(The Bandar-log laugh.)

SMART BANDAR-LOG: Unless you want to be our King.

(Smart Bandar-log puts a giant flower on Mowgli's head as his crown.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Our King. Praise the King.

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: King, tell me how to be a good Bandar-log.

MOWGLI: No, no, I can't be your King.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Here. Get started weaving.

(Silly Bandar-log hands Mowgli a bunch of vines.)

MOWGLI: It's easy. Even you Bandar-log can remember it. You line up three pieces of vine right next to each other; then you take another piece and put it on top of the first one, under the second and over the third. Then you take another piece and put it under the first, over the second and under the third. You try.

(The Bandar-log scramble to get vines and grasses and each other's tails.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Look I got it!

(Silly Bandar-log braided their tails together.)

MOWGLI: No no no. Over, under, over. Then the next piece under, *over*, under.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: I did it.

(Smart Bandar-log has a big pile of vines.)

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: I don't care.

(Stupid Bandar-log throws flowers and leaves at the other.)

SMART BANDAR-LOG: I did it.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Here we sit in a branchy row,
Thinking of beautiful things we know;
Dreaming of deeds that we mean to do,
All complete, in a minute or two —
Something noble and wise and good,

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Done by merely wishing we could.
We've forgotten, but – never mind,
Brother, you tail hangs down behind!

(Stupid Bandar-log tags Silly Bandar-log.)

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: You're it!

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Come back here.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: I get the man-cub all to myself. I
get the man-cub all to myself. Ha haha haha ha.

(Silly Bandar-log tags Smart Bandar-log.)

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: Now you're it!

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: And I get Mowgli.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: No. He's mine.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: But you're it! Now you have to chase
us.

*(The three Bandar-log leave Mowgli and chase each other.
Mowgli gets up to leave.)*

SMART BANDAR-LOG: I don't think so, man-cub. You're a
Bandar-log now.

(Stupid Bandar-log tags Mowgli.)

STUPID BANDAR-LOG: And you're it!

MOWGLI: I can't play. I have to go home.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: The little man-cub wants to go home.
He doesn't like tag.

MOWGLI: I'm not supposed to play with you.

SMART BANDAR-LOG: He's not supposed to play with us.

SILLY BANDAR-LOG: No one's supposed to play with the Bandar-log.

(Mowgli tries to run away from the Bandar-log, but they run around him keeping him from escaping. Bagheera and Kaa enter, hidden from the Bandar-log and Mowgli.)

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