

## ADAPTED: THE JUNGLE BOOK (1894)

### QUICK THOUGHTS

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### AUTHOR BACKGROUND (Rudyard Kipling)

- English author
- Received the 1907 Nobel Prize in Literature.
- Rudyard Kipling was born on December 30, 1865, in Bombay (now called Mumbai), India. He was educated in England but returned to India in 1882.
- In 1882 Kipling left the Services College, bound for India to rejoin his family and to begin a career as a journalist. For five years he held the post of assistant editor of the *Civil and Military Gazette* at Lahore. During those years he also published the stories that became *Plain Tales from the Hills*, works based on British lives in the resort town of Simla, and *Departmental Ditties*, his first major collection of poems.
- Married Caroline Balestier and settled in Brattleboro, Vermont, where he wrote *The Jungle Book* (1894)
- For Kipling, India was a wondrous place. Along with his younger sister, Alice, he revelled in exploring the local markets with his nanny. He learned the language and, in this bustling city of Anglos, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Jews, connected with the country and its culture.
- His mother Alice took her son placed him in a new school in Devon. There, Kipling flourished and discovered his talent for writing, eventually becoming editor of the school newspaper.
- Suffering from insomnia, he roamed the city streets and gained access to the brothels and opium dens that rarely opened their doors to common Englishmen.
- Kipling's experiences during this time formed the backbone for a series of stories he began to write and publish. They were eventually assembled into a collection of 40 short stories called *Plain Tales From the Hills*, which gained wide popularity in England.
- In addition to *Plain Tales From the Hills*, Kipling published a second collection of short stories, *Wee Willie Winkie* (1888), and *American Notes* (1891), which chronicled his early impressions of America. In 1892, he also published the poetry work *Barrack-Room Ballads*.
- First child, a daughter named Josephine (born in 1893), and a second daughter, Elsie (born in 1896). A third child, John, was born in 1897, after the Kiplings had left America.
- In 1902, the Kiplings bought a large estate in Sussex known as Bateman's. Kipling's books during his years at Bateman's included *Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906), *Actions and Reactions* (1909), *Debts and Credits* (1926), *Thy Servant a Dog* (1930) and *Limits and Renewals* (1932), and *Just So Stories*, which were greeted with wide acclaim.
- In 1915 during World War I, traveled to France to report on the war from the trenches. He also encouraged his son, John, to enlist.
- Kipling suffered from a painful ulcer that eventually took his life on January 18, 1936. Kipling's ashes were buried in Westminster Abbey in Poets' Corner next to the graves of Thomas Hardy and Charles Dickens.
- "*Rikki-Tikki-Tavi*" and "*The White Seal*"—have often been filmed and adapted into other media.

### DEVELOPMENT/CONCEPTION

- Purposes behind the stories were meant to be fables to illustrate moral lessons with the various animal characters as anthropomorphic teachers.
- Some academics have argued that the stories also carry political allegories for the time of publication.
- First published edition of the collected stories included illustrations by Kipling's own father, John Lockwood Kipling.
- A letter written and signed by Rudyard Kipling in 1895 was put up for auction in 2013 by Andrusier. In this letter, Kipling confesses to borrowing ideas and stories in the *Jungle Book*:

"I am afraid that all that code in its outlines has been manufactured to meet 'the necessities of the case': though a little of it is bodily taken from (Southern) Esquimaux rules for the division of spoils," Kipling wrote in the letter. "In fact, it is extremely possible that I have helped myself promiscuously but at present cannot remember from whose stories I have stolen."

## STORY POINTS

- No through-line, stand-alone stories
- The book is arranged with a story in each chapter. Each story is followed by a poem that serves as an epigram
- Chapters:
  - Mowgli's Brothers
    - A boy is raised by Indian wolves in the Indian jungle with the help of Baloo the bear and Bagheera the black panther, and then has to fight the tiger Shere Khan. This story has also been published as a short book in its own right: *Night-Song in the Jungle*.
  - Kaa's Hunting
    - This story takes place before Mowgli fights Shere Khan. When Mowgli is abducted by the Bandar-logs, Baloo and Bagheera set out to rescue him with the aid of Chil the kite and Kaa the python.
  - Tiger! Tiger!
    - Mowgli returns to the human village and is adopted by Messua and her husband who believe him to be their long-lost son Nathoo. But he has trouble adjusting to human life, and Shere Khan still wants to kill him. The story's title is taken from the poem "The Tyger" by William Blake.
  - The White Seal
    - Kotick, a rare white-furred northern fur seal, searches for a new home for his people, where they will not be hunted by humans. Many names in the story are Russian, as the Pribilof Islands had been bought (with Alaska) by the United States in 1867, and Kipling had access to books about the islands.
  - Rikki-Tikki-Tavi
    - Rikki-Tikki the mongoose defends a human family living in India against a pair of cobras. This story has also been published as a short book.
  - Toomai of the Elephants
    - Toomai, a ten-year-old boy who helps to tend working elephants, is told that he will never be a full-fledged elephant-handler until he has seen the elephants dance. This story has also been published as a short book.
  - Her Majesty's Servants
    - On the night before a military parade, a British soldier eavesdrops on a conversation between the camp animals.
- The Law Of The Jungle
- Characters: Mowgli, Shere Khan, Wolf Pack, Bagheera, Baloo, Kaa, Bandar-Log
- The White Seal
- Rikki-Tikki-Tavi
- Toomai of the Elephants
- Her Majesty's Servants

## FILMIC ELEMENTS

- Fun & developed characters (monkeys, panther, wolf, man, snake, etc)
- Anthropomorphism
- Natural conflict
- Red Flower
- Moral Lessons

- Family Dynamics
- Class Systems
- Coming of Age
- Discovering Personal Identity
- Poems as Songs

### STORY LEGACY

- Disney exposure- Disney's first animated version was so successful that they got to create a cartoon TV spinoff series with the character Baloo called *TailSpin*, which premiered in 1990.
- There was also a DisneyToon animated sequel called *The Jungle Book 2*.

### MOVIE(S) DEVELOPMENT

- 1942 First live action
  - Hungarian filmmaking brothers.
  - Directed Zoltán Kord
  - Produced (in Technicolor) by his brother Alexander, and starred Sabu Dastagir as Mowgli.
  - The plot is loosely based on the story "Tiger! Tiger!"
- *The Jungle Book*, a 1967 animated musical loosely based on the original tale
- 1967 - 1968 a series of short films was put out by Soviet Union (Maugli. Raksha, [Maugli. Pokhishchenie](#), [Maugli. Poslednyaya okhota Akely](#), [Maugli. Bitva](#), [Maugli. Vozvrashchenie k lyudyam](#))
- *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* 1975
- Disney's Stephen Sommers 1994 *The Jungle Book* (live action, Mowgli grown up)
- 1997 - *The Second Jungle Book: Mowgli & Baloo* (Pre-teen jungle boy Mowgli gets to human world and is pursued by P.T.Barnum circus scout Harrison who wants to take him to circus as curiosity...)
- 1998 - *The Jungle Book: Mowgli's Story*
- A live-action/CGI version in 2016
- Upcoming 2018 (Directed by Andy Serkis)

### SIMILARITIES/CHANGES/ADDITIONS

- Usually *The Jungle Book* encompasses Mowgli's story, *The White Seal*, *Rikki-Tikki-Tavi* are individual stories.
- Disney 1967-
  - Kaa the python certainly didn't have any psychedelic rainbow eyes. In the books he was even another wise companion and protector of Mowgli, who helps rescue him from the monkeys.

### WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE PORTRAYAL FOR EACH CHARACTER?

- Mowgli
- Baloo
- Bagheera
- King Louie
- Kaa
- Shere Kahn
- Colonel Hathi
- Akela

### WHY ADAPT INTO MOVIE?

- Adventure
- Takes us into a different world
- Fish out of water story

- Natural conflict
- Open to interpretation

**NEXT ADAPTED:** *The Prestige* - Christopher Priest (1995)