

# The Jungle Book

## ACT TWO, SCENE ONE

*Kaa, the Rock Python, is stretched out on a warm ledge in the afternoon sun.*

*Ikki, the porcupine, enters and slowly moves this way and that, nibbling at plants and tree-bark.*

*Kaa watches her for a while, unnoticed.*

**Kaa** I could eat you if I wanted to.

*Ikki stops momentarily, looks up and sees Kaa, then ignores him and carries on nibbling.*

**Kaa** Your quills make you presumptuous.

*Ikki stops and looks at him for a moment, then speaks bluntly and without fear.*

**Ikki** I don't know what that means.

*Ikki turns away and continues nibbling.*

**Kaa** I'm not saying I'd enjoy eating you. And quite frankly it would barely be worth the effort. But if I wanted to, I could.

**Ikki** I'll keep it in mind.

*He continues, unbothered.*

**Kaa** *(shocked)* The cheek! The bare-faced cheek!

*(to himself/audience)* I think it's time to teach this prickly little porcupine a prickly little lesson.

*(calling over)* Oh porcupine.

*Ikki ignores him.*

**Kaa** *(calling again more forcefully)* Oh porcupine!

*Finally the porcupine turns to look at Kaa, who is staring fixedly at him as music starts.*

**Kaa** Aha! I've got you now.

*The ensemble join Kaa and Ikki on stage as music starts.*

## **SNAKE EYES**

Don't ever look into a snake's eyes,  
How mesmerising they can be.  
Cos if you look into a snake's eyes,  
They're the final thing you'll see.  
Don't ever look into a snake's eyes,  
They're there to hypnotise you  
And then immobilise your feet,  
Cos when you look into a snake's eyes,  
They're seeing meat.

Snake eyes, hypnotising.  
Snake eyes, mesmerising.  
Snake eyes, terrorising me.

Don't ever look into a snake's eyes,  
They're memorising what they see.  
So if you look into a snake's eyes,  
You'll be known eternally.  
Don't ever look into a snake's eyes,  
They're there to neutralise you,  
To revolutionise your life,  
So never look into a snake's eyes,  
Don't roll those dice.

Snake eyes, hypnotising.  
Snake eyes, mesmerising.  
Snake eyes, terrorising me.

Snake eyes, hypnotising.  
Snake eyes, mesmerising.  
Snake eyes, terrorising me.  
Hypnotising, mesmerising, terrorising me.

*Playout music: "Snake Eyes (Interlude)"*

*By the end of the song, Kaa is curled fully around Ikki and ready to squeeze when Baloo enters with Bagheera.*

**Baloo** Good hunting, Kaa.

*Kaa turns towards the voice.*

**Kaa** Good hunting for us all, Baloo. Good hunting, Bagheera.

**Bagheera** It looks like we've caught you in the middle of something.

**Kaa** This? Not at all. Just passing the time of day.

**Baloo** So you're not hungry then?

**Kaa** Hungry? I'm as empty as a dried well. But not so hungry that I'd eat this ... (*with disdain*) porcupine.

*He releases Ikki, who scurries off as quickly as possible without a backward glance.*

**Bagheera** Have pickings been slim?

**Kaa** It's the branches: they're not what they were when I was young. Rotten twigs and dry boughs. I came very near to falling on my last hunt.

**Baloo** Surely not!

**Kaa** I was only after a young ape. Nothing fancy. And the noise of my slipping waked the Bandar-log, and they called me the most evil names.

**Bagheera** Footless, yellow earthworm.

**Kaa** I beg your pardon!

**Bagheera** Their words, not mine. We heard them at the last moon.

**Baloo** That's right. And what did they say about him having lost all of his teeth and that he wouldn't face anything bigger than a young buck?

**Bagheera** They said he had lost all of his teeth and that he wouldn't face anything bigger than a young buck.

**Baloo** That's right, that's exactly what they said. I was shocked.

**Bagheera** I wasn't in the least.

**Kaa** I beg your pardon!

**Bagheera** It's exactly the sort of nonsense I would expect from a troop of palm-leaf pickers who even have the audacity to steal-away our Man-cub.

**Kaa** They never?

**Baloo** They did! Lifted him right up as we slept, and carried him off.

**Kaa** (angry) Why, those vain, foolish, chattering chimps, they've gone too far this time. You can't go around stealing man-cubs! The skies will fall in! And worse still, they called me an earthworm.

*Bill the kite enters and finds an elevated position.*

**Bill** Bagheera, I have seen Mowgli. They've taken him beyond the river to the monkey city, the Cold Lairs. I have told the bats to watch through the dark-time.

**Bagheera** The Cold Lair? I feared they might. Come, Baloo, we have half a night's journey ahead of us at full speed.

**Baloo** Don't worry, I've recently eaten.

**Bagheera** In which case, we have a full night's journey ahead of us.

**Baloo** I'll go as fast as I can.

**Kaa** And so will I.

**Bagheera** (smiling) I thought you might say that. And I'm very glad you have! (to Bill) Thank you, Bill, you've done well. I'll put aside the head of my next kill for you.

(to the others) Quickly. The monkeys grow tired of the nuts they pick, and they throw them down. We haven't a second to lose.

*They exit. Bill remains, alone.*

**Bill** (pleased with himself) I've done well. That's what he said. I've done well! I've never done well before. And a tasty head lined up just for me. Well, for me and the family. No, just for me. No, for the family. No, for me.

*He exits, still arguing with himself about the fate of the hypothetical meal.*

*Suggested scene change music if required: "Snake Eyes (Interlude)"*