

Mother Wolf looked around the hilltop. Who would speak for man son? A sleepy bear stepped forward. His name was Baloo. He taught the wolf cubs the laws of the jungle and was the only animal allowed to attend wolf meetings.

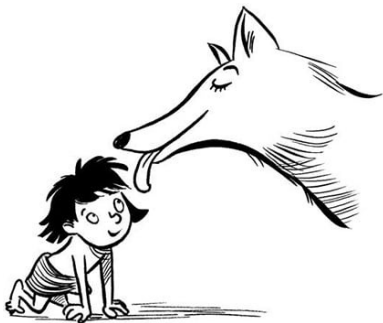
“Let him stay,” he said. “I shall be his teacher.”

“But we need another to speak for Mowgli,” said Akela. “Who will it be?”



There was a rustle in the trees, and Bagheera, the black panther, slunk out. “I have no right to be in this meeting,” he purred. “But I couldn’t help overhearing. To prevent a cub from joining your pack because he has no fur is a mistake. It is not his fault he is hairless. Accept him, and I shall be a teacher to him, too.”

Mother and Father Wolf looked at each other and smiled. At last, Mowgli was part of the pack.



CHAPTER 2

Beware of the Monkeys

Time passed, and Mowgli grew into a strong, healthy boy. Father Wolf taught him how to recognize the sounds of the forest. Baloo showed him how to pick nuts and how to climb up trees for fruit. When Mowgli wanted a treat, Baloo helped pick honey without disturbing the bees.

Often, Mowgli would go fishing in the river. On sunny days, he swam in the cool water and slept on the rocks in the sunshine. Bagheera would tell him stories of the village where the people lived. Bagheera

often went there at night, looking for hens to steal. He didn't always come back with prey, but he learned a lot about how people behaved and what they did.



“I have to be very careful when I’m hunting,” he said. “Man has a precious red flower that is hot to the touch. He calls it fire. It scares me.”