

The story of the jungle

Chapter 1: A new start.

Once upon a time, in a village of India, there was a young girl, her name was Anita, that ran away from an arranged marriage with a man much older than she was. After a few days of walking, she was very tired and fell asleep on a rock. Once awake she realized she was in the middle of the jungle without knowing where she was. And she whispered:

"Where am I?"

From afar she heard strange noises and hid behind a bush, and a voice asked her:

"Who are you? I'm Mowgli, don't be afraid of me, I'm here to help you, get out of there".

Anita looked at the strange figure in front of her and walked out slowly and she said:

"Hi I'm Anita. Do you know where we are?"

Mowgli replied: "Yes of course, we are in the jungle, the most beautiful place in the world. Do you want to know this place?"

The frightened girl drew back.

"Why should I trust?"

"Take it easy" smiled Mowgli in answer, "I know this better than anything in the world, and I don't mean to hurt you".

She thought that rather than being alone in the jungle it would have been better to go with Mowgli and she replied:

"Okay, I'll come with you".

Then he held her around the waist, and they began the tour of the jungle moving from vine to vine.

"How long have you been in the jungle?" Anita asked.

"I don't know exactly how long I've been here; I just know that I grew up here and now this is my home. And what are you doing here?"

"Actually, I don't even know how I got here, I was running away and I found myself here!"

"Why were you running away and from what?"

There was a moment of silence and when the girl was about to answer, a voice called Mowgli and interrupted them.

Chapter 2: A new meeting

"Mowgli! Come down from there, you know it's dangerous." Mowgli snorted but cautiously got off the vine with Anita.

"Hi Baloo, I'm happy to see you again."

Baloo looked at Mowgli and saw the girl with him.

"Mowgli, what's that, aren't you going to introduce us to your new friend?"

"Oh, I'm sorry, this is Anita. Anita they are Baloo and Bagheera".

Anita stared at Mowgli, dazed, not knowing what language he was using, but the thing that shocked her most was that he was talking to a bear and a black panther. In fact, she was quite frightened, because in front of her she found a huge brown bear with large teeth and sharp nails and a black panther with large yellow eyes. Bagheera took a close look at her and this intimidated her and made her feel uneasy; the only thing that she really wanted to do was to run away..., but in any case, if she did that, she would not know where to go.

Mowgli, seeing Anita scared, asked her:

"Hey, are you okay?"

"Oh, yes, yes I'm ok" she answered. Bagheera then asked Mowgli if Anita knew their jungle language and he replied she didn't but that he would soon be teaching her. Mowgli started talking to Anita and Bagheera instead turned to Baloo and said:

"I don't trust this girl, what do you think?"

"Oh no, she's just a girl; indeed, I think it's good that she is with Mowgli".

"Oh well, it will be as you say".

Chapter 3: Anita

Three weeks later...

"Get some wood to feed the fire" Bagheera said.

"Yes, I'm on my way" Mowgli answered.

As evening came and the sun was setting down, Anita and her two bizarre new friends were around the fire waiting for Mowgli to return with the wood, everyone took their places at the bonfire; Anita was immersed in her thoughts, thinking back to how beautiful those three weeks had been, and how she started feeling loved again.

"Are you ok Anita? I see you very thoughtful" Baloo said.

"Yes sure, I was just thinking about the last few weeks we spent together", Anita replied.

"Do you remember that time when Baloo was teaching Anita the language of the jungle, and then Bagheera arrived at full speed running over Baloo and together they fell to the ground hitting a tree and dropping 1000 coconuts over their heads?" Mowgli said; and all of them laughed as they remembered that very funny moment. Anita found herself thinking that in recent weeks, in addition to having learned the language, the laws and the various aspects of the jungle, she felt again that she is part of a family. In fact, in all that time, with the help of Mowgli, Anita managed to bond with Baloo and Bagheera. With the latter it was more difficult as she always had a mysterious and suspicious air but after a week everything was already resolved. In fact, they went out together to go hunting, several times after having had a nightmare Anita found herself going to Bagheera to sleep peacefully and this also happened with Baloo. Now she loved her bizarre friends. But, despite the beautiful relationship created with Baloo and Bagheera, Mowgli remained the person Anita felt most at ease with.

"Baloo and I are going to sleep, tomorrow we have a tiring day" Bagheera said, and with these words Anita returned to reality.

After Baloo and Bagheera retired to their lairs to sleep, Mowgli asked Anita:

"I still remember our first meeting in which you told me you ran away from your village, why?"

"It's a long story ... you must know Mowgli, that the world out there is populated by bad people; to survive I would have had to marry one of them."

"What does 'to marry' mean?"

"It means to love a person and swear loyalty to him lifelong; but I didn't love him, so I ran away".

"How do you know that it was a bad person? And if it was as you say, why should your parents want you to marry a bad man? "

"Well, before coming here my life was very messed up. You know, my family lives in poverty, that's why my father accepted this marriage: he knew that this man would not only have to support me, but also my whole family."

"And what did your mother think?"

"In the place where I come from, women have no say; it was my mother who told me to run away."

"I'm so sorry" Mowgli said, hugging her "now it's better to go to sleep, don't you think so?" Anita nodded and hand in hand they walked into their lairs.

Chapter 4: Everything has an end.

The next day Baloo and Bagheera woke up early in the morning to go and do some chores, but they left Anita and Mowgli's breakfast ready.

As soon as she woke up, Anita decided to go out of her den and look for the others. She found Mowgli peeling a banana.

"Hey Mowgli, good morning, how are you? Have you seen Baloo and Bagheera?"

"Hi Anita, good morning to you too, how are you? Anyway, I haven't seen Bagheera and Baloo, but they left us something ready for breakfast, so I think they'll be back soon.... in the meantime, what about if we go to play?"

"Sure, okay. Where would you like to go?"

"Umm ... how about wandering around the jungle a bit without a specific destination?"

"Oh Mowgli, I should have expected you didn't know where to go, but... that's okay. Give me time to finish my breakfast and then let's go!"

After having finished breakfast, they both got ready and decided to meet at their vine, the one with which they had landed to Baloo and Bagheera on Anita's first day in the jungle. When Anita got to the meeting point, Mowgli was already there. "Shall we do like the first time?" Mowgli asked the girl.

"Sure, why not?!" Anita answered with a hint of irony. At that point, Mowgli, with a smile on his face, encircled her waist and they began to jump from vine to vine while enjoying the view that remained, at least for Anita, always spectacular.

All the way they didn't speak but Anita didn't pay too much attention because she was busy admiring the beauties of the nature around her. She was moved from her state of trance by Mowgli who asked her: "We are about to arrive; prepare for landing! At my three we jump, okay?"

Anita nodded.

"Well, one, two and three!" and together they jumped and landed on a meadow with no trees but full of flowers. A place that Anita had never seen before, in fact she was enchanted.

"Do you like it?" Mowgli asked with a note of nervousness in his voice. Anita turned to him with still adoring eyes and answered with a joyful "yes!" and then she hugged him. Then, Mowgli bent down to take a small flower and put it behind the girl's ear. Afterwards the two started running along this lawn that seemed infinite. Exhausted from the race they lay down on the ground and began to play the angel that is usually made on the snow. Anita turned to Mowgli and asked him: "Mowgli tell me a little about yourself; yesterday I told you about me. Now I think it's your turn, don't you think so?"

Mowgli turned to Anita, sighed and said:

"Well, actually there isn't much to say about me. I don't remember much about my human family, since I was a little child I was raised by Baloo and Bagheera and honestly I like living the jungle, I feel at ease."

"Oh, I believe this place is beautiful!" Anita replied. They both watched each other until a strange noise distracted them.

"Don't worry Anita, I'll go and see, wait here, okay?"

Anita nodded.

Mowgli, a bit anxious and worried, went to the source of that noise and realized that there was....nothing! He was just about to open his mouth and say that he had not found anything, when a suspicious scream of a girl did blow up in fright. Immediately he turned and shouted: "ANITA! Anita, where are you ?!"

There was no answer. Anita had disappeared and he owed all the blame because he had not been able to protect her! But from a distance he noticed a group of men holding Anita and carrying her away.

Chapter 5: It does not end here.

Anita woke up a little stunned in a hut which seemed familiar; she immediately tried to free herself, but she was tied to a chair both her feet and hands, and she could not. She heard voices approaching, but she was unable to understand where she was. She realized that the last thing she remembered was that she was lying on the lawn waiting for Mowgli and that two men grabbed her. Then she heard a door slam and she saw a group of men entering the room. One immediately seemed familiar to her, she was sure she had already seen him. As soon as she heard his voice, she realized who he was; he was the very last person she wanted to see, the man she was supposed to marry.

"Hello princess, do you recognize me?"

"Of course, Ishan. What am I doing here, where am I?"

"Oh, my dear, not even time to say hello that you already think bad of me? Are you afraid? You know I would never touch my little bride. By the way, why did you run away from me? And don't tell me it's not true because your mother told me everything."

Anita's blood froze, she realized that all the efforts she had made to escape from him, and her life were done in vain and that she would be forced to live a submissive life. Her heart tore thinking she couldn't even say goodbye to the

family she'd met in the jungle. Without realizing it, the tears began to streak her face and no matter how hard she tried to push them back, she couldn't. She hated how he made her feel weak, but she couldn't help it, as she felt like the world had collapsed on her. She didn't even know where she found the courage, but she managed to answer:

"I have always thought bad of you and no, I'm not afraid but I feel disgust for the person in front of me. Do you really want to know why I ran away?! Look at yourself, how can you expect a girl to be next to you?"

"Stop it, you are disrespectful!" Ishan slapped her.

In the meantime...

Mowgli saw the men approaching a car and decided to follow them. After driving a long way, the car stopped near a shed and he saw the men drag Anita into it.

"I'm too weak to deal with them alone, I need help", he thought.

Back in the jungle he immediately found Baloo and Bagheera. He called them and told them everything and added that they had to free Anita. So, they devised a plan which was to distract the men inside and then take Anita. To implement it they also asked for Kaa's help and they headed towards the shed in which the girl was trapped.

By now Anita had lost hope. She didn't know what to do but stay there and suffer violence of all kinds, until she heard a roar. At first she thought it was all a dream, that she was starting to go crazy but then she saw a boy and realized that they had come to free her. Baloo entered the room with Mowgli, and together they untied her, but Anita, exhausted, passed out.

She woke up in her den with the people she loved around her and immediately asked what had happened. They told her that her "husband" and the bad men were gone and that it would no longer be a problem. She was so glad! But after a few days, unexpectedly, she took Mowgli aside and said:

"Mowgli, I love being here, but this is not my place. I want to tell you first because you are the one with whom I have bonded the most and also because I think you can understand me. You understand me, don't you?"

She felt Mowgli stiffen under her grip.

"Anita why? Why do you want to leave me? What have I done wrong?"

Anita was taken aback by such an answer but calmly replied:

"Mowgli you didn't do anything wrong, in fact you made me feel loved again and I'm grateful for it. Here I found a family and the love that for a long time I thought I didn't deserve, but thanks to you I realized that it doesn't matter who we are but that we all need love and to be saved. I miss my family and now I know I can share what I have learnt from you: the simplicity, the ability to appreciate what you have from day to day, but above all the love that you have given to me and that I will be able to pass on to others".

Mowgli understood Anita's needs but made her promise not to forget him and that they would meet again in the future. Together, hand in hand, they returned to Baloo and Bagheera and explained the situation to them.

The next day they all found themselves on the border of the jungle and the city.

"I will miss you all", Anita said and then they hugged each other and said goodbye knowing that no one had the courage to bid farewell forever. She moved away. As she walked towards the city, she thought that she would probably never see her beautiful and bizarre friends again. But who knows? She turned for a last goodbye and then headed towards a new life.

THE END