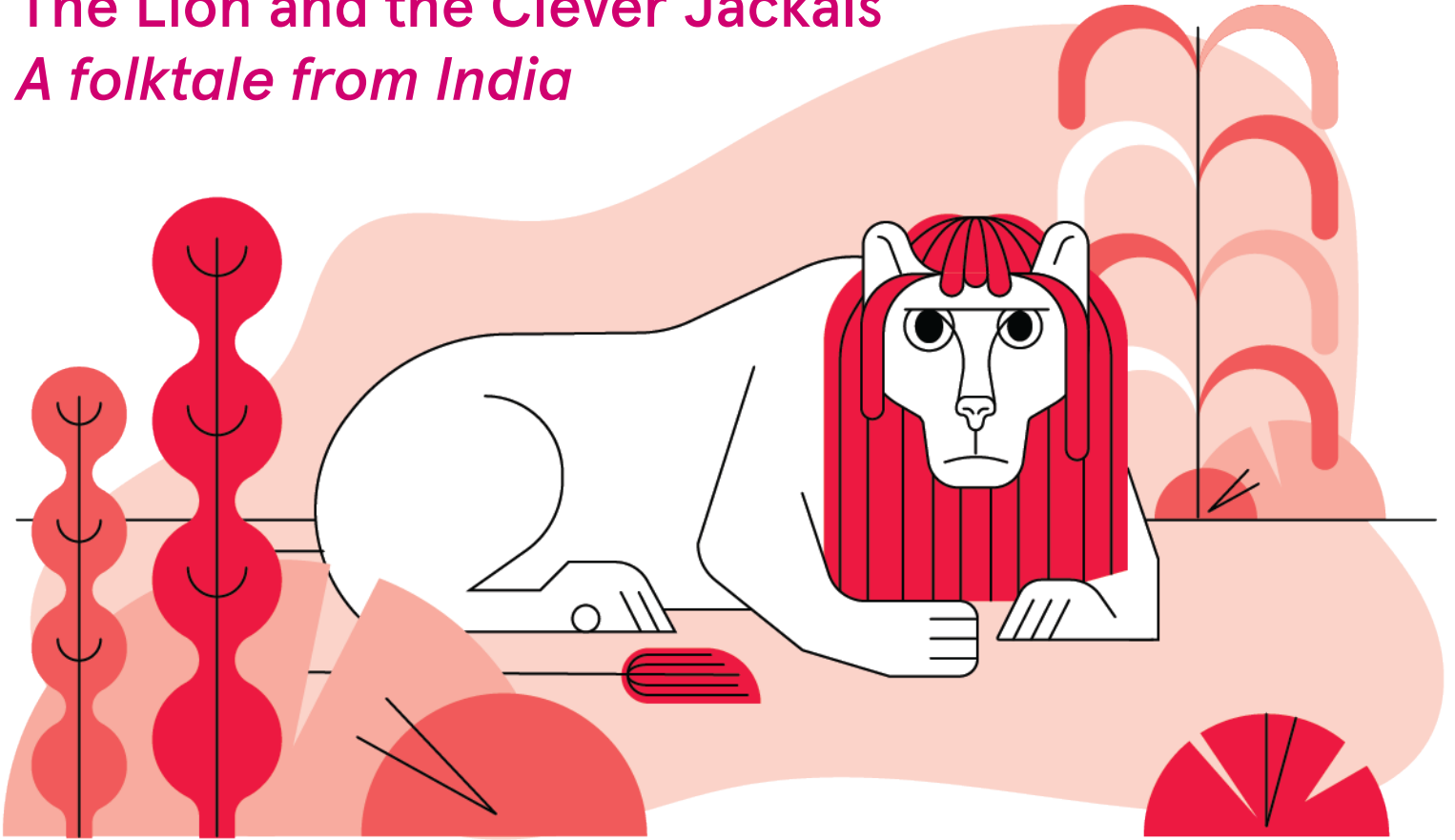


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# The Lion and the Clever Jackals

## *A folktale from India*



Deep in the jungle, there lived a fierce lion. No animal had ever escaped his mighty claws, and today, he was hungry for the two young jackals that lived nearby.

Lucky for the jackals, they were very quick and kept the lion chasing them all day and all night. But with each minute that passed, the lion grew hungrier, angrier, and more determined to catch them.

After nearly a week of close calls and daring escapes, the smaller of the two jackals said to his sister, "I can't keep running anymore. I'm tired and need to rest."

If they stopped, they would be eaten, but the older jackal knew her brother couldn't keep running forever. She'd have to come up with a plan.

"Come with me," she said, leading her brother deeper into the jungle, and much to his surprise, straight into the lion's lair. "Be brave," she whispered as they approached the very annoyed and hungry-looking lion.

"It's about time," said the lion. "It was rather rude of you to keep me running through the jungle all day and all night."

"We would have come to be eaten much sooner, but there was another lion in the jungle who wouldn't let us pass. If you don't mind my saying so, he was much bigger and scarier than you."

"Impossible!!!" roared the lion. "No one is more terrifying than me!" A jealous fire grew in his eyes. "Take me to this foolish challenger, and we'll see who is the more powerful creature."

The jackal obliged, leading the lion and her brother deeper into the jungle. After walking many miles, she pointed towards a well. "That's where he lives, but I warn you, he's quite strong and will surely eat you."

The lion scoffed and approached the well. Sure enough, when he peered over the side, there was another lion there.

The lion shook his mane and glared menacingly at his rival. His rival glared back. The lion bared his pointy teeth at his rival. His rival bared his pointy teeth back. The lion roared ferociously at his rival. His rival roared ferociously back.

Full of rage, the lion shouted, "This is MY jungle" and leapt into the well to attack his rival.

But there was no rival. There was only a reflection at the bottom of a well so deep that the lion was never heard from again, and the clever jackals lived happily ever after.

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# The Dancing Turtle

## *A folktale from Brazil*



Many moons ago, on the banks of the Amazon, Turtle played her flute. She played so beautifully that she couldn't help but dance. She shimmied and shook, and after she was done, she tucked her flute into her shell and laid down to rest.

No sooner had Turtle fallen asleep when she was picked up and carried deep into the forest by a man who thought she'd make an excellent soup for him and his family.

When Turtle awoke, she found herself locked in a cage that was being watched over by the man's children. She knew that if she didn't come up with something quick, she would be soup by nightfall.

Suddenly, she had an idea. She took out her flute and began to play. She played so beautifully the children couldn't help but notice.

"Children, if you let me out of my cage, I'll show you my dance. You've never seen a turtle move like this," she said with a twirl. The children couldn't resist. They made Turtle promise not to run away and let her out of the cage.

Turtle played her flute and danced the most joyous dance the children had ever seen. She shimmied and shook, and then, she asked the children if she might rest. "When I wake up, we will continue our dance."

The children agreed and laid Turtle down to rest under a shady tree. As the children played, Turtle crept ever so slowly through the underbrush, away from the children, and all the way home to the bank of the river! She was safe.

When the children discovered that Turtle was missing, they panicked! They knew their father would be angry, so they found a rock shaped just like Turtle, painted it to look like a shell, and placed it in the cage.

When the man returned home, he placed the painted rock into a pot of boiling water, but it didn't take long for him to realize what had happened. Rock soup doesn't taste anything like turtle soup, but the man knew that turtles could be tricky.

"It's alright, children," he said, "We'll catch Turtle tomorrow." But he didn't catch Turtle that next day or the day after that or the day after that. In fact, he and his children never saw Turtle again.

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# How the Kangaroo Got its Pouch

## *A folktale from Australia*



Kangaroo was watching her joey play when a blind old wombat appeared. The wombat was all alone and looked weak from hunger and thirst.

Kangaroo's heart broke for the poor old wombat. "Take hold of my tail," she said, "and I will take you to the creek, where you will find water to drink and grass to eat."

Kangaroo called out to her joey to join them, "Stay close, my sweet child, for my arms are too small to carry you."

Kangaroo led the wombat to the creek, where he got his fill of food and water. But her joey, being full of curiosity as joeys are, had wandered off.

Kangaroo began to look for him, but in the distance, she saw a hunter eyeing the defenseless wombat. She stamped her feet to attract the hunter's attention and then bound into the bush to lead him away.

The hunter followed her for many miles but soon became tired and gave up his hunt for the day.

When Kangaroo returned to the creek, she was relieved to see her joey asleep under the gum tree. But the wombat had vanished.

Then, to Kangaroo's surprise, the Sky Spirits appeared.

"Our Sky Father came here disguised as a wombat to find which creature had the kindest heart. You alone cared for him, so he has sent you this present."

The Sky Spirits gave Kangaroo an apron made of eucalyptus bark. When she tied it around her waist, it became a pouch to carry her joey.

And every Kangaroo mother has had the very same pouch ever since.

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# The Ugly Duckling

## *A folktale from Denmark*



On a beautiful spring morning, 10 ducklings were hatched. Correction: nine ducklings were hatched and one something else. If it was a duckling, it was the biggest, oddest-looking duckling anyone had ever seen.

It didn't take long for the other ducklings and chickens and pigs and everyone else on the farm to start picking on him for being different from the others. The teasing grew meaner and meaner by the day. The farmer's cat was especially cruel, swiping at the duckling with her claws.

It wasn't safe for the duckling to stay, so he ran away. He ran as far away from the barnyard as he possibly could. Deep in the woods and near the banks of a lake, the duckling fended for himself quite nicely—that is, until winter arrived.

It was hard enough being alone, but the cold made things worse, and there was so little to eat. The duckling came close to freezing to death that winter, but, fortunately, spring arrived—and not a moment too soon.

Still alone, but now fully grown, the duckling watched in amazement as a beautiful flock of swans descended from the sky and into the nearby lake. The duckling was entranced. He drew closer to the lake, where he could better see these happy creatures and pretend that he was one of them.

One of the swans saw the duckling trying to hide and caught his eye. "Come closer," said the swan. The duckling was afraid, but as he swam towards the swans, he was shocked when they greeted with a warm embrace. Each of the swans took turns stroking his neck in greeting.

And as the duckling bent his head downward, he saw his reflection. He wasn't a duckling at all. He was a swan—a lovely, majestic swan. The other swans motioned to him, and together they spread their wings and took to the air as a family.

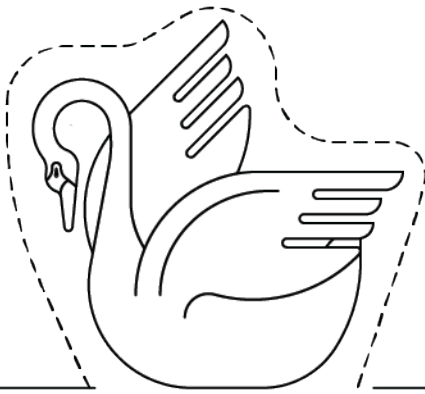
That day, the duckling learned something he wished he had known all along—it would have kept him warm on those hard, cold winter nights: "No matter what you look like or how mean others can sometimes be, there's a flock out there for everyone—you just need to find them."

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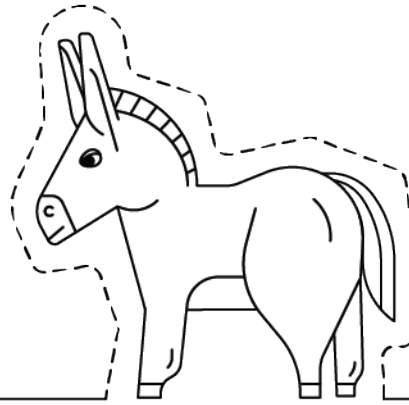
# The Carnival of the Animals

## Character Cut-Outs

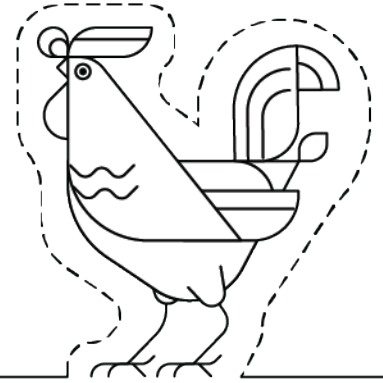
Color and cut out the characters to perform your own puppet show. Fold the paper along the base to make your puppet stand on its own. If you don't have a printer, you can create your own puppets with blank paper.



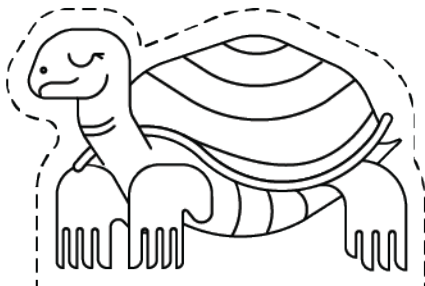
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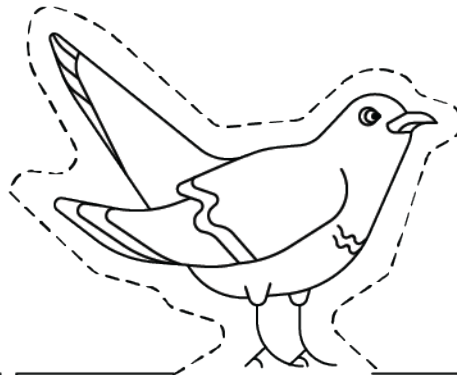
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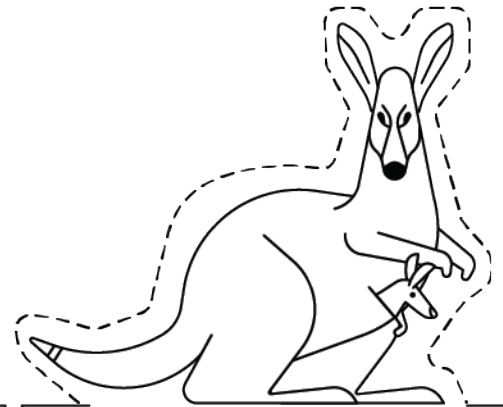
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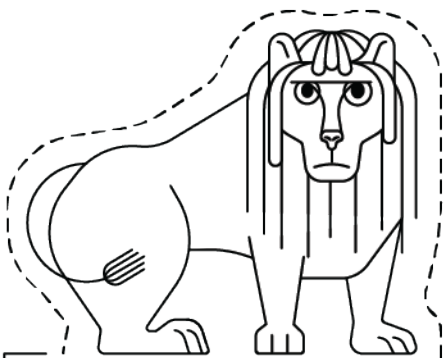
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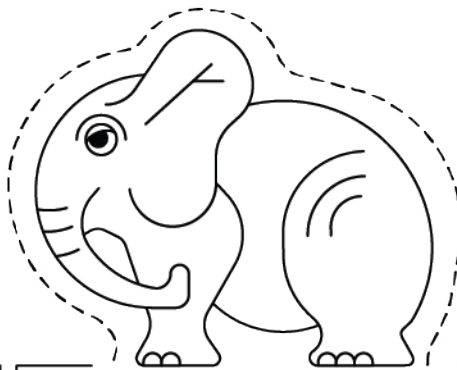
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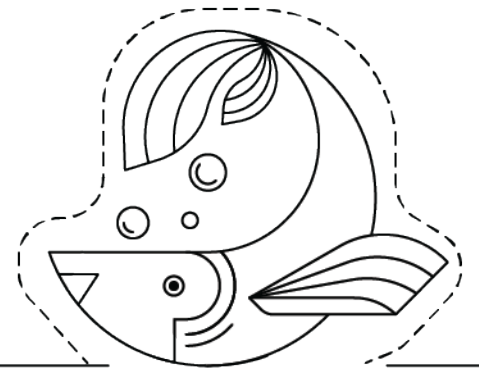
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