

Monologue Mania!

The Adventures of Rikki-Tikki Tavi

Adapted by Tim Kelly

Male / Late 60+ / Late 1800s

About the play: A storyteller from India weaves a tale about a wily mongoose named Rikki-Tikki-Tavi. A British family in old India is in jeopardy from marauding cobras in league with Shere Khan, the arrogant tiger. Only Rikki can save them, and he does so in a surprising way.

About the scene: Puran Bhagat, an elderly holy man, makes his introduction as he offers his blessings to India, remarking on the stories that he knows and the feasts that he enjoys. This is an excellent monologue to practice an aged voice as well as pantomime skills.

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PURAN BHAGAT:

O, Best Beloved, I offer my blessings. For I am the holy man Puran Bhagat. I walk from one end of the jungle to the other, year in and year out, under the warming sun of Mother India. There is not a creature I do not know or who does not know me. Ah, the stories I could tell. Wondrous stories. The rich and the poor, the strong and the weak. The good and the vile. The creatures that live on the earth and the birds that fly in the skies above. Such wondrous, magical, delightful stories— *(Sadly.)* But, alas— *(Looks into his begging bowl.)* My begging bowl is empty. See for yourself. Is it not sad? Not even the holy man Puran Bhagat, peace be upon him, can tell a good story when he is hungry. Perhaps you could spare me a morsel of something? A bit of fish, a scrap of meat. What is that tantalizing aroma? *(Sees the fish.)* It's a trout. A rather thin trout, but a trout nevertheless. I particularly like a trout when there's a little rice to go with it. *(Holds out bowl as if someone ladles some cooked rice into it. He then picks up and drops some fish into his begging bowl.)* Was there ever such a delicious meal? A million blessings be upon you. *(Hungrily eats some of the rice with his hands.)* It is a feast. A veritable feast. What's that you say? *(Listens.)* Story time? *(Annoyed.)* Can't I even finish my meal? My fish and rice. *(Resigned.)* Ah, well. What must be must be.