

The Merchandise King.

The Time: *Present*

The Place: *An uncivilized savanna in Africa*

Characters:

SIMBA. *A young, naïve lion cub destined to one day rule the land.*

DAD. *Simba's father, the current king.*

MOM. *Simba's mother, the current queen.*

SCAR. *The evil uncle of Simba. He is determined to wrest control of the kingdom from his brother.*

RAFIKI. *Crazy Buddhist monkey, adviser to Simba and Dad.*

TIMON. *A mongoose-like creature who lives outside of the kingdom.*

PUMBA. *Timon's faithful warthog companion.*

CHARLES. *An exploited sea cucumber.*

LAWYER. *One of many who run wild in packs on the African plains.*

RAPPER. *Lays down phat beats.*

ANTELOPE. *An offstage rabble rouser.*

STEVE ERWIN, CROCODILE HUNTER. *Fearless Australian explorer.*

WALT. *Evil corporate tyrant and theme park builder.*

WILL. *Victimized playwright.*

Various featured animals may or may not be included, such as the squirrel, the octopus, and additional antelope.

Set:

The play is designed to be carried out on a relatively empty stage. Different parts of the stage should represent different places. Anything which adds to the correlation between the play and a certain animated movie is encouraged. However, copyright laws are strict, so the ties must be loose. African scenery is not required, as the play focuses on character interaction more than actual action. Fake blood is suggested for violent scenes.

Scar enters to make preshow announcement.

SCAR. Oh, you all look like such delicious people! Good evening. I'm Scar, your evil villain and irresistible corporate sellout figure. Before we get started here tonight, there are a few things you need to be reminded of in the case of an emergency. If, for some awful reason, you spill the bootleg whiskey you smuggled past the minimum wage ushers, t-shirts can be purchased in the lobby. If you simply cannot bear to be without plush imitations of any of the adorable animals in tonight's performance, dolls and stuffed animals can be found at Emergency Compulsion Aid Stands in the lobby. If the person next to you seems uninterested in buying any of our merchandise, feel free to beat them mercilessly until they do. Everything is priced exorbitantly, of course, because how else can you get that free market fix you so desperately crave? Food from the concourse shops must be purchased and eaten quickly, as all food inside the theater must come with a special pass, which can be obtained for a large premium. If you're a big eater, as I see several of you are, we'll be selling antelope ribs for 15 dollars per pound! Just kidding, we'd never sell them for less than twenty five. We will also stamp your hand for five dollars. This stamp does nothing but put the words "I am special" on your skin in a medieval gothic font, but I'm sure people will think you're important anyway. And tonight, as a special treat for you, you can buy an actual piece of Walt Disney's frozen skin from our ice cream vendors. Now, you may find it suspicious that we have 37 square miles of old Walt's skin to sell, but let me assure you: he was indeed larger than life. Well, it looks like our performers are ready to come on, so without further ado, I give you the awesome, expensive spectacle that is The Merchandise King. *(Begins to walk off, stops.)* Oh, Sir? Excuse me, it looks like your wallet is too

fat for theater regulations. You're going have to empty most of it into my paws. It's for everyone's safety, especially if you consider me buying a third house in Barbados essential to your safety.

GUY. Not really

SCAR. *(pulling gun)* Oh believe me, it is. *(Guy in audience empties bills, credit cards.)* Thank you, and enjoy the show.

Imitation of Lion King music, "The Circle of Life," begins. Interrupted by DJ scratching.

RAPPER. *(To the tune of Paul Revere by the Beastie Boys)*
Now here's a little story that I've got to tell,
About one bad lion you know so well.
It started way back in history,
With Scar, Simba, and his mommy and his daddy.
Then disney got the rights and it all went to hell,
Soon Pumba's pushing Wendy's and Simba's eatin Taco bell.
Yeah so we're here to straighten out all this messed up crap
In a simian satire and a bad rhino rap.
(spoken)
Word to your herd, fool.

(lights fade from RAPPER. SIMBA and DAD enter from right.)

SIMBA. Dad?

DAD. Yes, Simba?

SIMBA. We lions rule over all the animals, right?

DAD. Yes, my son, the lions rule over all the animals of the pridelands, from the mightiest elephant to the tiniest grasshopper.

SIMBA. Even the african clicking squirrels?

(squirrel appears)

DAD. Yes, son, even the african clicking squirrels.

SIMBA. And the octopus?

(octopus appears)

DAD. Oh yes.

SIMBA. Including Uncle Feelyhands?

(octopus pretends to feel someone up with tentacles)

DAD. Even him, son.

SIMBA. But...but what about the antelope?

DAD. Well, of course the lions rule over the antelope.

SIMBA. But don't we eat the antelope?

DAD. Yes, and that is the circle of life. Kinda brings a tear to your eye, doesn't it?

SIMBA. But dad, my best friend Jeffrey is an antelope.

DAD. (*nervous*) Oh, don't worry, I'm sure he'll be fine.

SIMBA. Okay. Say, speaking of which, can I go over to Jeffrey's to play?

DAD. Of course. Oh, but be sure to ask your mother first.

SIMBA. Okay (*walks*) Hey mom, can I go over to Jeffrey's to play?

MOM. No!

SIMBA. Why not?

MOM. Cause I ate him.

SIMBA. (*disturbed*) Oh, okay.

DAD. Gee, that's too bad, son. I know, why don't we go for a walk around the kingdom. I'm sure that'll cheer you up. (*they walk*). Oh look son, a horde of lawyers! You know, we never did get an ok for this satire. Why don't you go ask them about it?

SIMBA. Ok, pops. Uhm, excuse me, Mr. Lawyer Esquire Sir?

LAWYER. Yes, how may I extort AHEM help you today?

SIMBA. Yeah we're doing this satire, and we want to know if it's legal. (*hands over script*)

LAWYER. Ok... (*takes script*) What's this a satire of?

SIMBA. A disney movie.

LAWYER. (*suddenly desperate, high pitched*) A disney movie?!

SIMBA. Yeah, why are you so scared?

LAWYER. Have you ever been beaten by a six foot tall man in a mouse suit?

SIMBA. No...

LAWYER. Have you ever been dragged across a briar patch by seven doped up elves?

SIMBA. Well, I can't say that I have...

LAWYER. Have you ever been tied to a chair and forced to listen to Angela Lansbury sing for hours on end about being her guest?

SIMBA. No...

LAWYER. (*quiet, intense*) Keep in mind that Angela Lansbury is dressed like a dancing clock.

SIMBA. Uh..

LAWYER. *(in Simba's face, loud)* A clock!

SIMBA. Ahhhh! *(runs away)*.

DAD. What'd they say, my little yellow radabaga?

SIMBA. They said, uhm... They said... They said that it was such a good idea, Angela Lansbury would sing about it!

DAD. Excellent. Let's continue our walk. Oh, look, the Sea Cucumber tank!

SIMBA. Why do we have sea cucumbers in the savana?

DAD. Oh, it's not that unusual. Why don't you ask Charles over there?

CHARLES. Hello, I'm Charles the... *(sigh)* sea cucumber.

SIMBA. Charles? That's an odd name for a sticky urchin.

CHARLES. Well, gotta relate to the little kids somehow. Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to stick to your leg.

SIMBA. Ahh... Ahhh! Get off my leg! *(tries to shake him off)*

CHARLES. No, I'm afraid non-toxic mucus squirting is just one of my many gimmicks.

SIMBA. You were created just for gimmicks?

CHARLES. Yes. I can't wait to be mass produced and covered with suction cups.

SIMBA. Wow, I didn't know my kingdom was so capitalist.

CHARLES. You haven't seen anything yet. Ok, now I have to slug off to my next victim... or perhaps an actual ocean.

SIMBA. Good luck Charles! I promise, when I'm king, your life will have meaning!

DAD. Did you learn something, son?

SIMBA. Well...

DAD. Good! Well, here we are in this narrow, secluded valley with no hopes of escape. Why look, here comes a herd of antelope. They must want to greet us.

SIMBA. Gee, I dunno, dad. They look like they're coming at us pretty fast.

DAD. Um... yeah, you guys might want to slow down just... a... little...

ANTELOPE. Down with the bourgeois lion oppressors!

(Sounds of antelopes charging grow louder. Lights fade as they reach the lions. When they have passed, the lights come up again, and SIMBA is alone.)

SIMBA. Dad! No! Ooh... Ow... *(flinches and wipes blood off)* Geez... *(during the next lines, Simba looks at many different spots, obviously conveying the fact that his dad is in many different pieces.)* Dad are you? Dad... oh no dad... Dad are you ok? *(Scar appears from behind him)*

SCAR. Hello, Simba

SIMBA. Oh, hi Uncle Scar. I'm sure that despite your obviously evil name and appearance that you're really a good guy.

SCAR. ...Right. Simba, you killed your father.

SIMBA. Um... but what about the antelope?

SCAR. Shut up! If you don't get out of here you'll be... shot dead by evil German poachers.. Now go! Now, you miserable little prarie rat!

SIMBA. Okay, fine, I wouldn't want to have to talk to any Germans, I guess. *(runs)* Geez, this really sucks. I guess It's necessary plot development *(stops)* Oh, hi there

TIMON. Hey there, man, I'm Timon. *(takes a drag on joint)*

SIMBA. Hi, Timon, I'm Simba.

TIMON. And this is Pumba.

(PUMBA snarls)

SIMBA. Agh! Heh.. heh.. hi, Pumba. You guys must make excellent plush toys... I mean, uh, supporting characters.

TIMON. You got it, dude.

SIMBA. Say, what's that you're holding, Timon?

TIMON. This? This is... uh... hakuna matata! Here, *(offers pot)* try some.

SIMBA. Okay. *(takes pot, inhales deeply)* Wow! This is better than sniffing zebra dung! Dad? *(SIMBA has seen his father in a hallucination)*

DAD. Simba.

SIMBA. Hi dad! *(waves energetically)*

DAD. Luke, I am your father.

SIMBA. Uh...

DAD. This is CNN.

SIMBA. Okay...

DAD. Simba, you must return to the pridelands to avenge my murder at the hands of your Uncle Scar.

SIMBA. But... but didn't the antelope...

DAD. Quiet! Along the way you will meet a monkey who is insane. He will guide you on your quest. Goodbye, my son.

SIMBA. Wait! Dad, before you go there's something I want to tell you.

DAD. What is that, my son?

SIMBA. Mom already knows.

DAD. I'm your father, Simba. Tell me.

SIMBA. Well... dad... I'm gay.

DAD. *(pauses)* I'm sure you're just confused.

SIMBA. Oh, okay. Bye dad! *(waves energetically)* Okay, I'm pumped. I'm gonna kick Scar's ass. I'm gonna...

RAFIKI. Hello, Simba! I am Rafiki!

SIMBA. Oh, hi, you must be the monkey my dad told me about... *(he is hit)* Ow! You hit me!

RAFIKI. Rafiki test Simba!

SIMBA. Ok, what do I have to do?

RAFIKI. See funny man over there?

SIMBA. Where?

STEVE ERWIN, CROCODILE HUNTER. Oh my goodness! We are right here in the lion's den, with no medical help in sight. I have covered myself in bloody elk meat, in order to attract as many of the ferocious cats as possible! Let me reinforce again that I am in no real danger.

RAFIKI. Simba, Where is killer instinct?

SIMBA. I dunno, I've never liked hurting people. All those guts are kinda mushy and ucky.

RAFIKI. Simba a wuss then?

SIMBA. I think it has something to do with my mother eating all my best friends when I was young.

RAFIKI. Whine whine. Let me dial whine one one for freakin' whanbulance. Child abuse is lame excuse! Kill the silly australian!

SIMBA. Well here it goes nothing *(leaps at him)*.

STEVE ERWIN, CROCODILE HUNTER. I am in absolutely nooooooh! My legs! I'm being ruthlessly devoured! My liver is lying exposed on the hard jungle floor. But folks, I am not in any danger of physical harm.

SIMBA. Mmmm... Tastes like egret. *(attacks again)*

STEVE ERWIN, CROCODILE HUNTER. Let's see if the little bugger will let me pet him... Oh god, my hand! My hand has been chewed off like a kitty's play toy! Now the beast is batting my stomach and intestines as if they were a ball and string! But I remind you that I will be completely ok.... *(dies)*.

SIMBA. That was relieving. What's next?

RAFIKI. Most important lesson. Look over there!

SIMBA. *(Looks away from Rafiki)* Where?

(Rafiki laughs maniacally, beats Simba with cane)

SIMBA. Ooh, eeh, ow, eeh, ooh. *(rubs head in daze)* Geez... *(feels pocket)* he took my wallet. Ooh... I've gotta get that bastard. That's it! That's the monkey's lesson! I've gotta get that bastard, Scar. That's a pretty vengeful lesson. I guess the other lesson is "never trust a monkey with a stick." Come on, Timon! Come on, Pumba! We're gonna get my uncle! *(runs, arrives at prideland)* Gee, that was fast and convenient. Wow, that's a lot of hienas!

TIMON. Come on, Pumba, let's get them!

SIMBA. Yeah! Go Timon! Go Pumba! Beat those... Ooh.. Ow... *(flinches and wipes blood off)* Geez... Heh... heh... this might be harder *(undergoes puberty, voice gets much deeper)* than I... Wow! I just went through puberty! These hienas have got nothing on me. Growl. Grr. *(kicks hyena ass)* Hey ladies, wanna stroke this mane?

SCAR. So, Simba, you have returned as I knew you would: hairy and strangely arousing.

SIMBA. Yeah, and I'm here to end your evil rule, Scar. Lions and inferior hienas should be segregated! Prepare to die.

SCAR. Wait! Before we battle there is something I must tell you. I am not your Uncle Scar, *(removes mask)* I am Ulysses S. Grant, Commander of the Northern Army.

SIMBA. You might have been a good general, Ulysses *(bites Scar in "nads")*, but you were a terrible president.

SCAR. Ooh! There goes the Union. *(dies)*

SIMBA. *(young voice)* Yeah! I did it! I beat the bad guy! I saved the day! I... I... I regressed through puberty.

DAD. Simba, you have avenged my death. Thanks. I may now ascend into heaven.

SIMBA. Gee, this plot sounds familiar. Only in what I'm thinking of, I should die in the end.

WILL. Damn straight it soundeth familiar. I'm William Shakespeare, and this is the exact plot of my play Hamlet, evil uncle and all. Give me backeth my script.

WALT. Not so fast, Shakespeare, I bought the rights to you fair and square.

WILL. Walt Disney! Oh Anne, how couldest thou sellest me outeth?

WALT. In fact, I may even swing you around my head as a plaything, if I choose. It says here right in my contract.

LAWYER. That's correct sir.

WALT. Quiet you, or it'll be Lansbury *and* Robin Williams next time.

(LAWYER cringes)

WILL. Only a beast as foul as you, Disney, could make me sayeth "eth" after all my verbs henceforth. How cheesy thou art.

WALT. Now, I take great pleasure in ending this story... MY story... myself. Come here, Will. I shall now wield you as a saber. (*throws WILL over shoulder, wields leg or arm as a saber*)

WILL. Careful! That doth be my writing hand

WALT. Now Simba, will you return to the cheap, commercial script my writers have contrived?

SIMBA. No. I stand by my beliefs, and I will rule this jungle with a pansy paw of whiny justice.

WALT. Then I shall beat you all the way back to the magical kingdom! (*begins to beat SIMBA with shakespeare-saber*)

SIMBA. Oh dearest me... there go my principles... If only I wasn't voiced by a 13 year old prepubescent weakling like Jonathan Taylor Thomas!

WALT. When I'm through with you, you'll think you've gone back to the land before time! (*finishes killing him*) Well, that does it. Come on Will, we've gotta space-based musical with dancing donkeys to write.

WILL. Can Anthony Hopkins play the lovelorn donkey herder?

WALT. I'm sorry, Mark Wahlberg is already onboard.

WILL. Oh, the dramatic irony... (*they leave*).

RAFIKI. Well I Guess we learned an important lesson today, kids: Somewhere, Walt Disney's cryogenically frozen head is trying to take over the world... and you've got to stop him. (*Begins to sing*). It's the circle... The circle of life.

SIMBA. I'm still alive...

(*RAFIKI steps on SIMBA, KILLING HIM.*)

RAFIKI. Rafiki kill!

SIMBA. Ooh... (*dies*)

THE ALTOS

The Time: *Present*

The Place: *Nutley, NJ*

Characters:

TONY ALTO. A 5'2" Mafia boss with a very suburban family. Talks like he's on helium.

CHOCOLETTA. Tony's wife. Has a New Jersey accent.

TA. Tony's 15 year old son. Very aristocratic and british.

VALLEY. Tony's 18 year old daughter.

MAMA. Tony's self-depreciating, hatred-filled mother.

JIMMY-CHRISTOPHER-JOHN. A mob crony that works for Tony. Hey, that rhymed.

UNCLE SENIOR. Tony's elderly uncle, who is a bit batty.

BIG BONE. A rival mob boss. Smart but slow.

BOY SCOUT. Hit by Tony's car.

THE KITTY. A persecuted family cat.

HORSE'S HEAD. The disembodied head of Mr. Ed.

JEFF PROBST, HOST OF TV'S SURVIVOR. Jeff Probst, host of TV's Survivor.

AL CAPONE. The somewhat strange ghost of Al Capone.

FBI GUY. Agent Gaygent, the long arm of the law.

LAWYER. Works for CBS, very blunt and buff. More like a thug.

PIZZA GUY. Young and nerdy.

BIRD. Loud and screechy.

AMERICAN PUBLIC. Guy or girl dressed very generically. Speaks like a TV announcer.

Set:

The play is designed to be carried out on a relatively empty stage. Different parts of the stage should represent different places. Anything which adds to the correlation between the play and a certain HBO mob drama is encouraged. A simple set of chairs, a kitchen area with a fridge, and a table are all that's necessary. Guns and knives can be mimed or real, although the gatling gun is probably more effective if real.

Note:

*This play is conceived as a sequel to Clyde Hendrickson's *The Merchandise King*. Back-to-back performance is encouraged.*

(Tony is standing in front of a mirror. JCJ enters, frantic)

JCJ. Tony! Tony! Big Bone killed Little Rod and he says you're next!

(Tony stares)

JCJ. What should we do? Tony?

TONY. *(Looking into mirror)* Does this suit make me look short?

JCJ. Yeah... but youz is Five foot two