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AGE DIVISION: ADULT

IMAGE OF CHOSEN CREATURE(S) *(see below)*



Jingo and the Eye

Billy clicked on the television. Jingo and The Gang was the Saturday morning cartoon. The Gang solved weekly mysteries with Jingo, their wide-eyed cat sidekick. Jingo got into all kinds of trouble. Like the time he fell into the vat of pudding, shrugged, and said “I guess that’s why they say the proof is in the pudding,” in his signature lisp. Or that time Jingo learned the true meaning of Christmas after he snuck on Santa’s sleigh and ended up filling in for a sick Blitzen. Jingo was funny and always made people laugh, but one day, Jingo laughed back.

Episode #456: Jingo and The Gang Go Hawaiian

Jingo and Moptop chased the smuggler through an antique store. Jingo’s orange fur flew as he ran. Moptop knocked over a priceless vase, barely catching it.

“What a close shave,” he said.

“Don’t you mean a close vase?” Jingo said.

They ran out of the shop and straight into Sly and Betty, who had just gotten back from the library where they discovered there were tunnels under the city. Moptop’s long brown hair fell in his eyes, and Betty’s blond strands flew everywhere.

“Always perfect,” Sly said, rubbing his close-cropped red hair. “Groovy, man.”

“Jingo needs a bigger tongue for his fur,” Jingo said.

“Oh, Jingo!” The Gang all said at once.

“I think the smuggler went that way,” Moptop said.

They looked down the path. A snake slithered by. Just beyond the palm tree line there was darkness. The gang dusted themselves off, went down the path, and found themselves outside a cave.

“Wowie Zowie,” said Moptop. “That looks dark and endless.”

“We’ve got to get the king’s gold back, or the curse will never be lifted,” Betty said.

“Count Jingo out,” Jingo said. “He’s shaking in his fur.”

“Talk about a scaredy-cat,” Sly said.

“Jingo, you have to be brave.” Betty kissed Jingo on the cheek, and he blushed.

“Charge!” Jingo yelled, running inside.

“Wait!” Moptop yelled.

Soon Jingo was alone in complete darkness. He couldn’t hear the voices of his friends.

“Guys, I changed my mind. I can’t see my paw in front of my face.”

Then he heard running water and a faint voice from deeper inside. He followed the sound.

“I bet it’s a smuggler.”

As he said it, though, he knew it wasn’t the truth. The voice was not human; it was made of water. “Jingo doesn’t know what that means. How does Jingo know something he doesn’t know?”

He was really scared now. The voice said his name softly, “Jingo...”

Suddenly, Jingo was in a bright cavern in front of a waterfall. From the waterfall, something new, strange, and wonderful floated out with scales and fins like a fish, a round body, and a long, flowing tail. Jingo thought the tail was made of water, and silver, and pieces of dreams. As he watched, an image flashed into his head of a hand holding an orange pencil over a blank page. The hand sketched a paw. Jingo's own paw tingled.

"Who are, you?" Jingo said.

A giant eye opened in the middle of the creature's body, and a wide beam of light shot out, bathing Jingo in the glow. The creature had no mouth, but Jingo heard the voice inside his head.

"You're on television, Jingo."

"I've never seen myself on there." Now, Jingo was not speaking with his mouth either.

"Not on your level of reality. But in *reality* you tell bad puns and run through contrived plots. Children watch you on Saturday mornings; they're watching you right now."

"You're coo-coo," Jingo said. But a name popped in his head: Jim Spangler. He knew Jim was the creator.

"Jingo, look around this room. Right, left, front. There are three walls. Now to turn to the fourth wall, the way you came."

Jingo turned back. The creature shone his eye on the blackness. A square window appeared. Jingo looked through the window, and the picture focused: a boy on a couch in pajamas. Jingo instantly knew this was the third dimension. The boy stepped closer to the T.V. Jingo stepped closer to the window.

"I will show you more," said the creature.

The eye glowed brighter. Jingo saw through the wall. His body stayed, but his mind lifted up and saw the street, the city, the state, the country, the spinning earth. Jingo understood it all. He was an insignificant speck in the sea of the universe; he was a strand in the creature's tail. Jingo laughed. His whole body shook with laughter. He grabbed his sides and fell to the ground. He laughed, and laughed, and laughed.

Billy watched Jingo laugh alone in a dark cave. Something must be wrong with the T.V., Billy thought, and clicked off the set.