

JELLYSTONE

The simple premise is that The Ranger has gotten a promotion and has chosen a replacement who knows every animal trick and con game. Meet Yogi Bear, Forest Ranger!

Yogi, Cindy and Boo-Boo run the Ranger Station and deal with the three responsibilities of the Park Service: Protect the park and its wildlife from ignorant tourists, protect the tourists from the wildlife, and protect the wildlife from themselves. Maybe the animals watched too many Yogi Bear cartoons in the sixties but denizens of Jellystone have realized humans are a fantastic meal ticket.

He may be “the man” but Yogi is still the Yogi who has always been a bit of a con bear. So although he’s the voice of authority, he eagerly offers to keep the “pic-ka-nic baskets” of the visitors in his office safe for their own protection although they might leave lighter than when they came in.

The community of Jellystone is filled with broad, eccentric types, both animal and human, visitor and resident. Every attitude in our society can be mirrored in the lives of the citizens of Jellystone. There’s also the whole “Circle of Life” thing to deal with. We may make references to predator and prey situations for a gag or story but nobody is eating their neighbor onscreen. However, any actions the Rangers take impact the entire park.

Imagine a wolf and squirrel snacking out of trash cans, “Hey, remember when there wasn’t delicious garbage and I had to eat you guys for lunch.” The squirrel is certainly glad those days are over. He likes hanging out with the wolf. But when the rangers lock the lids and say, “No more garbage. It’s not healthy,” the wolf pauses to consider and the squirrel starts sweating.

Yogi gets things done, usually by bending the rules to fulfill the letter of the law but lets the animals have an easier life and maybe get a snack or two himself.

SPRINGBOARDS AND PREMISES

YOUTUBEARS

One of the biggest problems of National Parks are the tourists that insist on getting a photo of themselves with a potentially dangerous wild animal. But when a backpacker posts his “Me with a bear!” video on YouTube, the bear disappears with the phone to share the clip with his buddies. Within an hour, every animal in the park is swiping a cell phone to post its own videos.

TV news crews rush into Jellystone to cover the story and soon Yogi finds himself at the center of media attention. If there is a fuse to the powder keg of Yogi’s ego, consider it lit.

Meanwhile, Boo-Boo and Cindy are dealing with a flood of terrorized park visitors. The animals are now competing for the highest number of views which has led to Johnny Knoxville dares, meme-generating and escalating pranks on campers.

Yogi spends a little too much time posturing for the media and less dealing with the problem at hand until his boss, The Ranger, returns. Yogi has become the unlikely spokesman for the park service and he better get a handle on things stat! Pressure’s on!

But the fad has already run its course because most of the animals are now wrapped up in splints, casts, and bandages. Cindy and Boo-Boo collect the cell phones with little complaint, even from the skunk who sniffs a tearful goodbye to his double rainbow video. Meanwhile, Yogi trying to make up for lost time, blunders into a series of pranks and ends up with his head in a bee hive. He becomes just another laughable viral video. But you can’t keep Yogi’s spirits down for long. We leave him in bed, face swollen with bee stings, “So how many views did I get today? That’s better than the average meme!”

FERAL FOLLIES

A family of super-rich, first time campers pulls up in an ridiculously decked out RV sporting every imaginable creature comfort. From spa, media center and anti-mosquito dome to roll out astro turf, it all insures that they can “rough it” without every having to touch a bit of nature. But while mom complains about the overuse of pine scent in the area, their pampered son toddles out into the woods and right into the middle of the wolf pack. A couple of the younger males look to their elders, “So, uh... are we allowed to eat it?”

Grandma Wolf knocks some sense into them, “Are you ignorant? Haven’t you read Kipling? That there is our feral child. It’s our job to raise him as one of our own.” By the time Yogi checks into the situation, it’s pretty obvious the kid is doing great as a wolf. Better than he was as a kid with his materialistic parents.

Yogi brings the parents to the wolves to show that the kid has a home where he is loved. However, the parents are impressed with what the back to nature lifestyle has done for their child. A simpler life, getting in touch with their inner animal, they want to give the wolf thing a try too. But the child still needs a human education so somehow a wolf ends up attending the “Mommy and Me” classes at the preschool while dad wolf ends up chatting Game of Thrones

over the water cooler at Goldman Sachs. Meanwhile, the parents are in the backyard chewing on bones and howling at the moon.

INVADERS FROM BEYOND

Another real world threat to local ecologies is the introduction of invasive species. One of the weirdest, whose traits we will caricature, are the walking catfish from Thailand. These toothy predators are able to walk out of evaporating ponds and into more promising territories. We will treat them as bug-eyed, ALIEN INVADERS, with no personalities but relentless appetites.

Yogi, Cindy and Boo-Boo are our brave protagonists as we play up 50's sci-fi paranoia along with nods toward the last three decades of science fiction spectacles.

CUTE AS CUTE CAN BE

Just admit that you have lost hours to the watching of kittens on the internet. You are not alone. "Cute" has an almost irresistible power to enslave us. Which is exactly what is happening deep in the woods of Jellystone!

There's a baby squirrel with giant, highlight-filled, eyes who has mastered the power of the cute look. She doesn't even talk yet she can get anything she wants with a simple coy glance. And that doesn't even take into account the nuclear-level upgrade that happens when she bats her eyelashes. All the animals are being affected. A fiercely protective cult grows around her. They bring her every comfort, every sweet treat, and every toddler toy in the park.

Yogi scoffs at the approaching apocalypse but soon falls under the sway of the squirrel child. Cindy knows that the only way to get him back is to fight cute with cute. It's time for Boo-Boo to get a makeover! But it's not just make-up and hairstyle so Cindy brings in a crusty, Asian mentor to school Boo-Boo in the Art of the Adorable. In a classic training montage, Boo-Boo is transformed from appealing to "awwwww"-some.

It's a battle of the titans but Boo-Boo is able to win Yogi back! The little squirrel throws a tantrum - which isn't appealing at all. That breaks her spell over her followers and the animals wander away. All seems back to normal... until we get a glimpse of her precious little brother!

THE WALKING FED

Yogi is always trying to prove he's the same old Yogi to his pals. Before their hibernation Yogi buys all the bears extra large anchovy pizzas with double aged cheese. Everyone chows down and heads inside for the winter. Meanwhile, our ranger bear fights his natural drowsiness with a double shot, extra expresso, mocha monstrosity from a Starbucks clone. He brings the leftover pizzas back to the office.

Is it the exotic cheese or the anchovies? Who knows but *something* has started the bears sleepwalking, staggering out of their caves like zombies. It all becomes a parody of zombie movies as Yogi, Cindy and Boo-Boo try to get the bears back into their caves as they act out their dreams. Things get worse because Yogi is super jittery due to pounding down the coffee. And then Cindy and Boo-Boo snack on the pizza and become sleepwalkers themselves. Caffeinated Yogi is the only one left to cope!

POSSIBLE REOCCURRING HUMANS

THE RANGER not only stops by as the voice of authority to put pressure on Yogi, he also points out problems that Yogi needs to handle. These can often be problems in the real world like geysers being destroyed by people pitching in trash, ignoring warning signs or how invasive species can ruin an eco-system. These aren't lectures but just enough to set up a story premise. Generally, we can do without it but if he's going to appear later to raise the stakes in some way we can take advantage of the real world grounding it provides before we exaggerate the consequences to the extreme.

THE AGGRESSIVE NATURE VIDEOGRAPHER wears weird scents, disguises himself as animals from Canadian Geese to Moose and builds treetop blinds and subterranean hideouts in order to get the best footage. Of course, the animals are never fooled and look at him as a source of entertainment. He's less of a story catalyst and more of a running gag, background character that fills out the community of Jellystone.

THE CUTTING EDGE BACKPACKER has every bit of the latest gear available. Ridiculous stuff that can easily endanger him when used wrong, like the inflatable tent that bounces him off a cliff or the nova-bright, night light that blinds him. He's also the editor of a trendy, backpacking magazine.

THE SURVIVALIST loves living off the land, making his clothes from tree bark or whatever because he doesn't trust the "guvmint." He'll try to scare the other humans out so he has more nature to himself. It's not the politics that we highlight but his attitude.

THE VISITORS they're a mix of all types from well meaning but ignorant victims and party oriented college campers to aggressive off road weekend warriors. To keep the design budget low and the running gag humor high we'll see the same groups over and over again.