

# The Floating Log

A STORY BY ARKEDELIC

## Note to Parents



**BUILDING BEAUTIFUL INSIDE**

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**Splish... splash... slop!**

The forest floor was still soggy from last night's rain. Drops slid off broad leaves and landed with plop on the backs of ants marching in line.

Pokes the porcupine trotted along the stream, his quills rustling.

Beside him, Sherry the young bonobo swung low branches and landed with thud, thud on the mud.

"Look!" Sherry pointed. A thick log bobbed lazily in the water, drifting downstream.  
"It's our raft!"

"Race you to it!" Pokes squeaked, his nose twitching as he dashed.



“Not so fast, little ones,” came a deep rumble.

Dagger the rhino was grazing nearby.  
His horn glistened with rain.

“Don’t run by the stream. It’s slippery—you’ll tumble in.”

Sherry rolled her eyes. “We won’t fall.  
You’re just too big to know how quick we are!”

Pokes added cheekily, “Yeah, big feet, slow steps!”  
and both burst out giggling.

Dagger shook his head, sending droplets flying,  
but said no more.





High above, Bono the bonobo swung through branches, his face breaking into a grin.

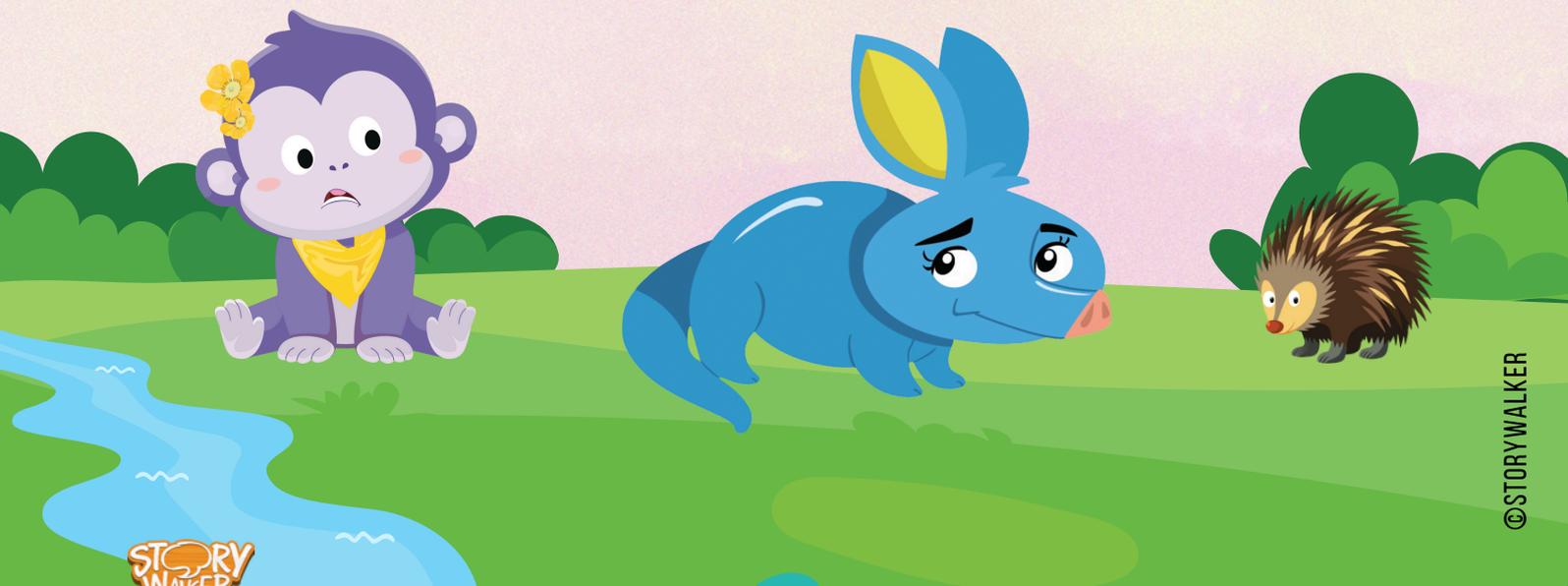
“Sherry! You still haven’t cleared the nut shells you dropped this morning. Your mom will be cross!”

Sherry made a face and hollered back, “Logs don’t wait, shells do!” and she darted forward.

Further along, Alina the aardvark lifted her snout from a mound. “You’re stomping over ant nests! That’s bad for them and for your toes.”

Pokes shouted back, “Ants can swim, right?”

He leapt past, splattering mud. Sherry snorted with laughter, “You tell her, Pokes!”



The log drifted faster, spinning lazily in the current.

With a final sprint, the pair jumped—plonk!—onto its slick back.

“Adventure!” Sherry yelled, spreading her arms wide.

“Captain Pokes reporting!”  
Pokes squealed, puffing his chest.

For a moment, it was magic. The stream carried them like riders of the river.

They laughed, swayed, and even tried to balance like acrobats.

But then the log rolled. **Crrrreeeak...**

“Whoa—whoa—whoa!” Sherry wobbled.

“Yaaahhh!” Pokes squealed as the log tipped.



They slammed into each other.

Ouch! Sherry yelled—one of Pokes' quills pricked her arm.

Oof! Pokes grunted—Sherry's foot had kicked his side by accident.

The log spun. Water splashed. Whoooosh!  
In seconds, both toppled in.

“Help!” Sherry gasped, flailing.

“I—I can't swim!”

Pokes squeaked, clinging to a slippery bark piece.

The current tugged hard.  
The forest seemed to hold its breath.



Then came Splooosh!

A huge shadow cut through the water.

Mumbo the hippo charged in, steady and strong.

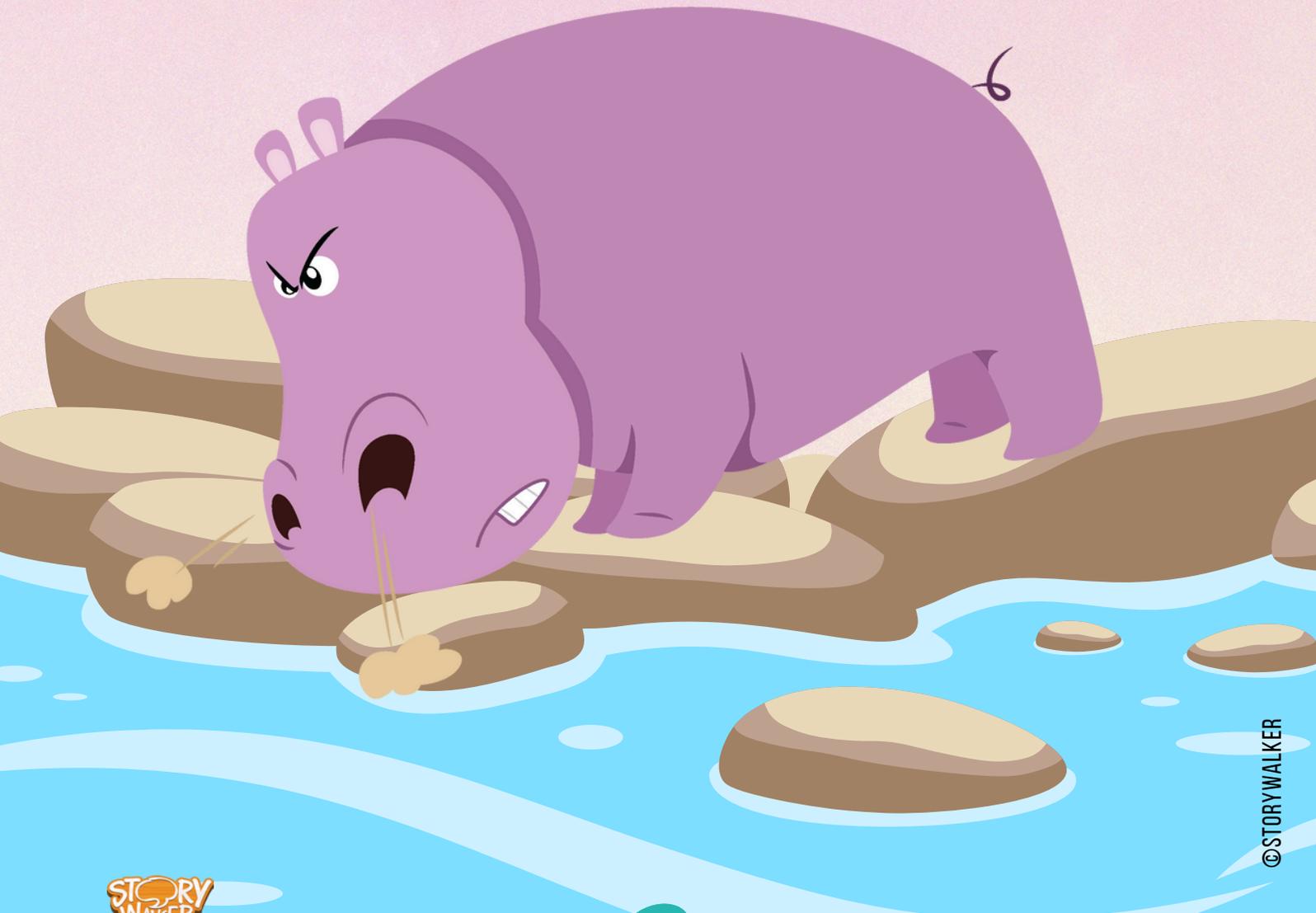
With one wide sweep, he nudged the log closer.

With his snout, he pushed Pokes toward the bank.

With his back, he lifted Sherry clear.

“Grab on!” Mumbo bellowed.

The two clung tightly until—slurp, slurp—they scrambled onto dry ground, dripping, shivering, and gasping.



On their walk home, every animal they had brushed off  
was waiting.

Dagger gave them a silent nod.

Bono swung low, grinning with relief.

Alina sniffed and said,  
“At least you didn’t squash all the ants.”

Sherry and Pokes mumbled, “Sorry... sorry... sorry.”  
Their voices small but sincere.

Mumbo rumbled kindly, “Sometimes rules feel heavy.  
But rules keep you safe. Safe to laugh,  
safe to play, safe to go home again.”



By the time Sherry trudged into her nest,  
water still dripping from her fur, her mother was waiting.

Piles of nut shells still lay scattered.

Sherry sighed and got to work without a word—  
crack, scoop, sweep.

Her mother ruffled her damp head gently.  
“Logs, chores, and rules, hmm?  
Looks like the stream gave you your lesson today.”

Sherry blushed but smiled.  
“Maybe tomorrow I’ll race the log in my dreams,  
not in the water.”

Outside, Pokes sneezed so loudly the ants scattered.  
And just like that, the forest laughed again.

—THE END—



# Building Beautiful Inside

VALUE LESSONS FROM 'THE FLOATING LOG'

## HOW DO I DEAL WITH BACKTALK OR DEFIANCE IN A WAY THAT BUILDS RESPECT, NOT JUST FEAR?

**Context in the story:** Sherry and Pokes ignore warnings from Dagger, Bono, and Alina, giving cheeky retorts instead of listening. Their backtalk ends in trouble when the drifting log spins them into the stream.

**Real-world connection:** Children sometimes answer back when told to be careful or follow directions. This defiance may come from wanting to feel independent, but it can put them at risk or strain relationships. They learn most when they experience the consequences of their actions in a safe space.

**How parents can use the story:** Respond to backtalk with calm firmness, not fear or harshness. Explain why the boundary or instruction matters, so children understand its purpose. Let natural consequences guide the lesson when it is safe to do so. Over time, children will learn that respect grows not from fear, but from trust and understanding.

# Building Beautiful Inside

VALUE LESSONS FROM 'THE FLOATING LOG'

## HOW CAN I TEACH MY CHILD WHY OBEDIENCE AND FOLLOWING RULES MATTERS?

**Context in the story:** Every animal warned Sherry and Pokes about the dangers near the stream, but they ignored the rules. Only after nearly drowning did they realise those rules existed to keep them safe.

**Real-world connection:** Rules often feel restrictive to children, especially when they want fun or adventure. Yet rules are meant to protect, not to spoil enjoyment. When children see how rules connect to their safety and happiness, they begin to respect them.

**How parents can use the story:** Explain the “why” behind rules in everyday life, linking them to safety and care. Reinforce that rules are not about control but about keeping play, family, and friendships safe and enjoyable. Use small examples, like chores or routines, to show how rules keep things running smoothly. Over time, this builds a mindset where children value rules rather than resist them.

# Building Beautiful Inside

VALUE LESSONS FROM 'THE FLOATING LOG'

## HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD FOLLOW DAILY ROUTINES AND LITTLE TASKS WITHOUT MUCH FUSS?

**Context in the story:** Sherry dismisses Bono's reminder about her nut shells, choosing play instead. After her scare on the log, she returns home and quietly clears the shells without fuss.

**Real-world connection:** Daily routines often feel boring compared to play and can lead to protests or avoidance. Yet these small tasks teach responsibility and self-discipline. When children link routines to positive outcomes, they are more likely to follow them willingly.

**How parents can use the story:** Encourage routines by showing their value rather than forcing them with constant reminders. Praise children when they take initiative to complete small tasks on their own. Build habits with a mix of consistency and lightness, so chores don't always feel like burdens. With time, children learn that small responsibilities add up to big confidence.

# Assessment Questions for 'THE FLOATING LOG'

**Five assessment questions to encourage children's understanding and emotional intelligence:**



## 1. Cheeky Replies

**Purpose:** To reflect on backtalk.

**Question:** How did Sherry and Pokes answer when others warned them?

**Follow-up:** Why do you think it's important to listen instead of answering back?

## 2. Rules Matter

**Purpose:** To explore obedience.

**Question:** What happened when they ignored the warnings about the stream?

**Follow-up:** How do rules help keep us safe at home, in school, or outside?

### 3. Natural Consequences

**Purpose:** To connect actions and results.

**Question:** What happened to Sherry and Pokes on the floating log?

**Follow-up:** Can you think of a time when not listening led to a problem?

### 4. Chores and Routines

**Purpose:** To value small tasks.

**Question:** What did Sherry do with the nut shells when she returned home?

**Follow-up:** How do you feel when you finish a small task without fuss?

### 5. Respect, Not Fear

**Purpose:** To reinforce healthy discipline.

**Question:** How did Mumbo and the other animals treat Sherry and Pokes after the accident?

**Follow-up:** Why is it better to learn through kindness and respect instead of fear?

**See you next Monday**  
with another interesting story!

Got feedback or a suggestion? We would love to hear it!  
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