

# THE CALICO BUFFALO

## SYNOPSIS

Long ago in the buffalo kingdom, the herd makes ready for a festival. A great celebration of Spring. At the same time, their young queen waits to deliver her first child.

Thorn, the queen's younger brother, isn't happy about it. He is next in line for the throne. This newborn will push him out. This newborn will ruin everything.

When her time comes, the young queen slips off into the woods. Her mate, the Chief, soon joins her. When the calf is born, something is wrong. Instead of an earthy color, their son arrives covered with the markings of a calico kitten. A coloring forbidden in the buffalo world. A calico cannot be kept.

Desperate to save their son, the queen and the Chief break buffalo law and disguise him. They cover him up with the muddy-brown clay from the river bank. It works. No one sees. They will need to be careful, keep a close watch. But, for now, the little prince lives.

The prince happens upon a strange little toad with a croak ten times too big. To show the toad he isn't the only odd-ball, the prince washes off some mud and shows his new friend his colors. Hidden away, Thorn watches everything. Thorn sees all he needs to snatch away the throne.

The prince will be presented at the festival. With all eyes watching, he will march across a footbridge to the meadow. As he does, with one massive hoof, Thorn will send the prince tumbling into the waters below. Wash him clean, for all the world to see.

Law has been broken. A trial is held. Thorn delivers his case. No queen of their herd should have kept such a calf. No Chief should have fathered him. But, the law is old. The herd is split. The tiny toad speaks up. The answer is simple. They must journey to ask the Angk Sha, the mythical first of their kind. Only she will have the answer. The royal auntie, the legend-keeper, knows every step to find her. They will march to the Angk Sha at dawn.

Thorn is foiled. He needs a new plan. Amaruq, leader of the wolf-pack, offers her help. The wolf is the buffalo enemy. What is in it for her? One juicy calico. Thorn agrees.

The journey is long. The landscape has changed. Auntie can't find her way. Thorn alters the legend, changes their course and directs the herd straight to the wolves. All seems lost for the prince, the queen and the chief until the Angk Sha, comes thundering in. Wolves scatter, the herd gasps, Thorn falls to his knees as the light washes over the answer they seek in the Angk Sha's CALICO face. The Angk Sha delivers her message. Each child is quite perfect as is. All hearts are changed.

As the closing number plays, each in the herd reveals the difference they've been hiding their entire life. The herd, full of love, marches home.