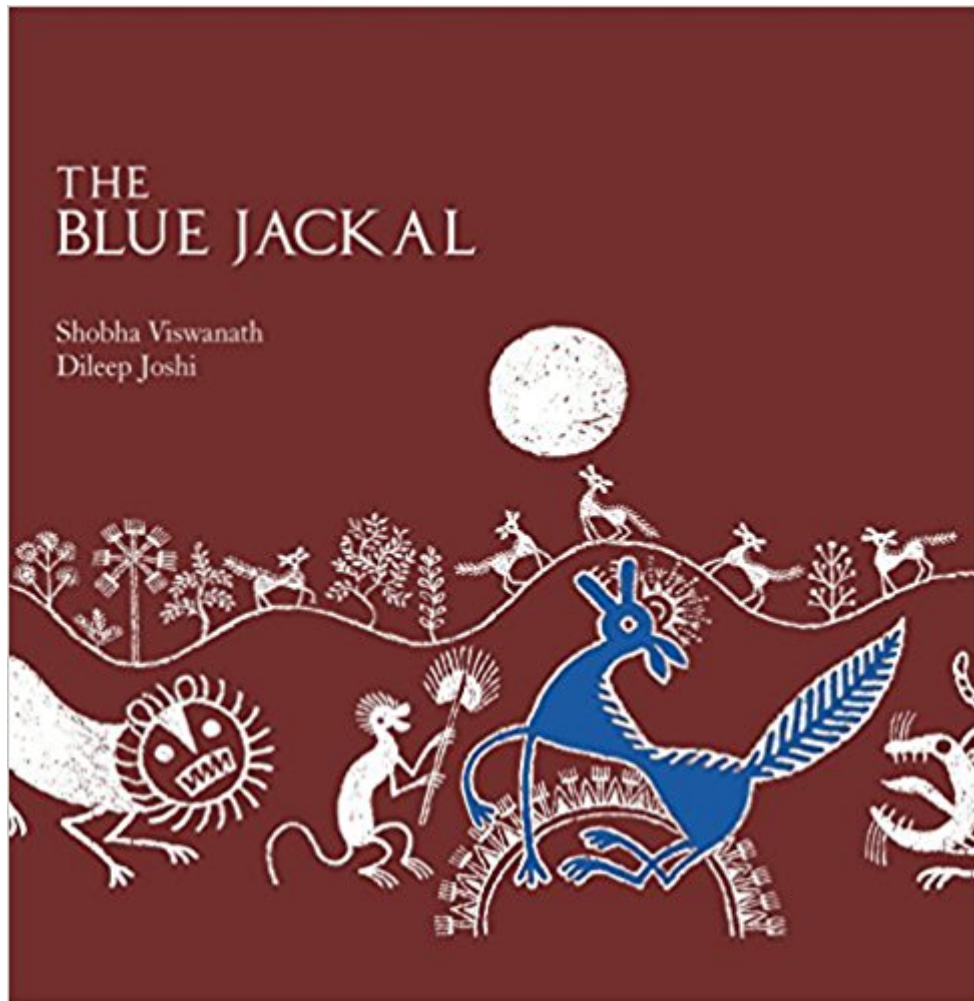




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# The Blue Jackal



## Synopsis

Juno the jackal is the runt of the pack, and the other animals bully him because of his size. One night, Juno is chased by some dogs from the village, and he hides in a vat of indigo dye to escape. When he returns to the forest, his fur is bright blue, and the animals hail this strange new creature as their king. But can Juno keep his true identity hidden? Featuring illustrations inspired by traditional Warli artwork and an informative historical note, this Indian folktale will spark a wonderful discussion about the relationship between perception and reality.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 630 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 34 pages

Publisher: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers (April 22, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0802854664

ISBN-13: 978-0802854667

Product Dimensions: 8.4 x 0.4 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 2 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,123,547 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #127 in Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > Asian #570 in Books > Children's Books > Animals > Foxes & Wolves

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - Kindergarten

## Customer Reviews

Gr 2-5 • This is a strong retelling of one of the tales from the Panchatantra, a third-century BCE text of Indian literature. This retelling from Sanskrit flows well and begs to be read aloud. It tells the tale of a bullied runt jackal who is accidentally dyed indigo and is subsequently mistaken for a king. He betrays himself by howling along with the other jackals. The rain washes away his indigo fur, but he retains the memory of having once been a king. The story would be interesting as a group presentation and could lead to discussions regarding identity. The illustrations, which are the true standout here, will not work well in a large group, because of their intricate detail. They are done in the style of the Warli tribe of East India—white paintings done in rice flour on a dark background. They will intrigue children who have an eye for such things.

VERDICT This book fills a void in terms of Indian literature directed at children, but it will need an introduction or some promotion if it is going to circulate. —â •Grace Oliff, Ann Blanche Smith School, Hillsdale, NJ

Dileep Joshi — graduated from Sir JJ School of Art in Mumbai and has worked as a freelancer with several advertising agencies. He has illustrated books for Scholastic India and Karadi Tales. Shobha Viswanath — is the co-founder and publishing director of Karadi Tales in India. She has previously published books with Puffin and Scholastic. Shobha's work is focused towards reclaiming a place for Indian literature for children.

This is a lovely book. My daughter and I read Vasilisa the Beautiful, a Russian folk tale, and then The Blue Jackal. It was fun to compare the different tales and the different styles of art, both so beautiful but so different. At the end of this book we learn that the illustrations are inspired by traditional Warli, a tribe from western India, artwork. The traditional paintings were rice flour on a mud base. The colors in the book are white on a background of a dark henna or purple. Indigo is used for the jackal and except for the other pots of dye (the jackal jumps into the indigo pot hence the name of the tale) no other colors are used. The words of the book flowed beautifully and we really enjoyed the story until the end. I think our culture is more accustomed to a happily ever after. My daughter describes the end as sad and I have to agree. The little jackal in the story is picked on by all the other jackals for being weak and skinny. One day in search of food, he goes into town and is chased by the dogs in the town. He hides in a pot of indigo ink all night. He goes back into the forest in the morning and all the other animals think he is a king. So he has them banish all the jackals. The next full moon he howls like a jackal and the animals realize that he is just a jackal too and chase him away from his throne. In time, all the dye washes from his fur. The story ends with: "No matter what troubles his life might now bring, he never forgot that he once was a king." Loved it until that kind of anticlimactic, as my daughter would say, sad ending.

A cute little book that my 5 & 8 year old quite enjoyed. As an adult, I was especially pleased with the artwork and the fun of the rhyming verses, but I'm not so sure about the moral of the story. Note: received a copy from the author in exchange for an honest review

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