

SUNDIATA

Legendary “Lion” King of Mali

by Jay Breckenridge & Coni Koepfinger

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

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SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

DEDICATION

Temujin the Storyteller: instrument maker, scholar of African history,
family man, teacher, and performer extraordinaire.

This play is dedicated in loving memory to the late, great storyteller,
Temujin Ecunfeo, who functioned as our prop master, performer, and
resident griot to help bring this ancient legend to life in our play.

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

SUNDIATA: Legendary “Lion” King of Mali, by Jay Breckenridge & Coni Koepfinger, was first performed by the theatre students at the Penn State Greater Allegheny Campus, McKeesport, PA, as part of the campus Teaching International Project in the Spring of 2006, with Jay Breckenridge and Coni Koepfinger as directors. Our play is based on the ancient classic tale, told in our version by “dueling griots.” We used online files and sources. Our notes for *Sundiata* found on Wikipedia are in the public domain because it does not contain sufficient human authorship to support a copyright claim.

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

CAST OF CHARACTERS in order of appearance

KOUYATE -- Griot #1

MADU -- Griot #2

DANKARAN -- son of King Nara by his first wife, Sassouma

DOUA – King Nara’s griot

BALLA FASSEKE-- also a griot, son of Doua

KING NARE – Sundiata’s father

HUNTER – who is also a fortune teller

SASSOUMA – first wife of King Nara, jealous of Sundiata

SOLOGON – the Buffalo Woman, Sundiata’s mother

NANA TRIBAN – Sundiata’s half sister

MANSA KONKON – sorcerer king of Djedeba

KING TOUNKARA Of MIMA -- a healing place

SUMANGURU – King of Sossa, Sundiata’s rival for power in Mali

ENSEMBLE CHORUS - Actors, Singers and Dancers, can be used to cast the Townspeople, Horsemen, Soothsayers, Archers, and drummers.

The Parodos: The Entrance of the Drummers and Chorus

SUNDIATA

LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

Full stage lit. The Song of the Djeli. A procession to set the tone and mood of this great tale.

The Prologue: Two Sides to the Same Story

Dual spots on Griots. Theme music.

KOUYATE. In the early Middle Ages, the empire of Ghana flourished in West Africa, trading in salt, gold, and slaves. In 1076, Islamic Berbers, jealous of its wealth, invaded the empire and subdued all but the small kingdom of Sosso, which resisted and gradually gained power. When Sumanguru came to power in Sosso after 1200, he began plotting to annex the kingdom of Mali—killing off the chieftains, one by one, according to some accounts, but sparing the young prince Sundiata, whom he apparently considered insignificant. Sundiata would later defeat Sumanguru at the battle of Kirina in 1235, destroy the cities of Sosso, Dia, and Kita, and begin to expand the kingdom of Mali.

MADU. The story of Sundiata’s rise to power, like many other historical and cultural records, is maintained in “speaking documents,” the griots who maintain the cultural memory of the various peoples of West Africa. Their stories and songs include the customs, traditions, and governing principles of the kings and chieftains.

KOUYATE. Listen, then, as I tell you the story of the greatest king ever to rule Mali. His name was SUNDIATA. Understand my purpose: I am a

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

griot, a djeli—or, in your language, a storyteller, historian, and keeper of the knowledge of my people. The legacy of my title comes from my father and his father and his father’s father—all the way back to Doua, the griot of the first king of Mali. The story I will tell you of Sundiata is a perfect example of good overcoming evil.

MADU. Ha ha ha haaa. There you go again, twisting the tale.

KOUYATE. Ah, I see. MADU has decided to interrupt me once again to boast about his evil heritage.

MADU. “Evil” is a very strong word, my friend. You believe that your ancestors told the story the right way, but as I have learned from many years of storytelling, there are usually at least two sides to any story. Only after a battle do the stories emerge about the struggles of good and evil. And usually the “evil” side is the loser of the battle. My own griot, or djeli heritage was also passed down through **my** fathers’ family—all the way from King Sumanguru’s reign.

KOUYATE. Oh, yes—SUMANGURU, the one who attempted, with his army of thousands, to destroy Sundiata’s destiny: to be ruler of Mali.

MADU. I will let you tell your story, but when I hear you playing fast and loose with the facts, I will point that out.

KOUYATE. Agreed, and I will wait to laugh when you must lie to prove your point.

MADU. And so it begins. (*Blackout. Sundiata rhythm x 3 and fade. Followspot on Kouyate.*)

SCENE 1: The Prophecy

Stage Right Center lights up slowly as Kouyate finishes his speech and the characters assemble.

KOUYATE. Listen then, to how the birth of the great King Sundiata was foretold. KING NARE FATTA, Sundiata’s father, the great hunter king, loved to sit under his favorite Baobab tree, attended by his loyal kinsmen. His son, DANKARAN TOUMAN, born of his first wife SASSOUMA,

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

was old enough to sit with his father on the ox hide, along with NANKUMAN DOUA, the Griot.

DANKARAN. Father, do you know this man coming toward us?
(Stage Left lights up.)

DOUA. He is obviously a hunter—from Sangaran, I would say, from his clothing.

KING NARE. And he is a successful hunter, judging from the full game bag he carries. Approach, HUNTER.

HUNTER. Greetings, Great King. Fortune has smiled upon my hunting near your city, and, as is the custom, I have brought you a portion of the meat.

DOUA. *(accepting the meat)* The king welcomes you, stranger—you respect our customs.

KING NARE. Please, sit with us and tell us of your travels.
(Stage Left lights down.)

DANKARAN. Is it true, what they say about the hunters of Sangaran—that you are the best soothsayers in the world? *(Everyone laughs.)*

DOUA. Dankaran is right—that is your reputation, Hunter.

HUNTER. It is true. I do not wish to sound boastful, but thanks to my master’s teaching, *(scatters his cowry shells on the mat)* I am known as a seer among seers.

DOUA. And do you read the future in those cowry shells you carry?

KING NARE. What can you tell us, then, of my kingdom and the future of our clan?

HUNTER. The world is filled with mysteries. Who can recognize, in the child, the great king to come? *(all pat Dankaran's shoulders for encouragement)* Nothing is certain, but I see two strangers coming to your city.

DANKARAN. I don’t see anybody.

HUNTER. Mali is about to emerge from the night into the light, which comes from the East.

DOUA. This is a bit vague, Hunter. Can you speak more plainly?

HUNTER. *(gazing intently)* You have ruled well, Great King, and you intend to pass on your expanded kingdom. But your successor has not yet been born. *(everyone protests)* Two strangers are bringing to you a

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

disfigured, ugly, hunchbacked woman whom you must marry—for she will bear you a son who will be more mighty than the great Alexander.

DOUA. More mighty than Alexander?

DANKARAN. Wait, what about me? I am your son.... my mother is your wife....

HUNTER. The destiny of Mali is in your hands now, oh Great King.

(gathering his shells) I have said what I have to say. Farewell.

(pandemonium as the hunter leaves the group)

KOUYATE. The soothsayer left the group in some disarray. They argued among themselves as to what was to be believed of this reading of the cowry shells.

CROWD. What? An ugly, hunchbacked woman? Too bizarre! To bear a son greater than Alexander? This is just too fantastic!

DOUA. But he spoke of the destiny of Mali.

CROWD. The destiny of Mali is with Dankaran! This was just some kind of shell game!

DOUA. Could his vision be true? He became so specific....

CROWD. This Sangaran soothsayer is out of his mind. It's a hoax. He must have been out in the sun too long. Impossible! *(Stage lights down; Followspot on Madu.)*

MADU. Of course it was impossible! But that is the way Sundiata's people love to tell the story. Sorry, but I just have to interrupt here. You see, they want some sort of mystical prophecy to back up their claims for the greatness of their hero, Sundiata. You will see that they come up with some other pretty amazing events to make their story all the more compelling—whether true or not. Listen then to their continued fabrication, as some days have passed after the supposed soothsayer's words. *(Followspot out; Stage Right and Center lights up.)*

DOUA. Your Majesty, I believe that hunter spoke true—look! Two STRANGERS approach.

KING NARE. What's that they have with them?

(Stage Left lights up.)

DOUA. It's a woman, I think. A hunchbacked woman....

STRANGER 1. Greetings, great King Nare Fatta. We are returning from hunting in the land of Do, and we bring this young girl as a worthy wife

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

for the king.

DANKARAN. My father already has a wife—my mother! Take this ugly woman away from here.

DOUA. Easy, Dankaran. All sons and daughters of Mali are welcome here. Let us hear from these men what adventures have brought them from Do—with this woman.

KING NARE. You are my guests. Sit and take refreshments with us, and tell us of your travels.

STRANGER 2. Thank you, Great King. My brother and I pursued game from here to the land of Do, and there we learned that a certain buffalo was ravaging the countryside—no one was safe.

KING NARE. A killer buffalo?

STRANGER 1. Yes, every day it claimed at least one new victim, and the king of Do offered great riches to the hunter who killed this buffalo. We were determined to succeed.

STRANGER 2. But as we hunted for the buffalo, we came upon an old woman, crying and wailing about her great hunger. She begged us to give her something to eat.

STRANGER 1. We were touched by her tears, and we gave her food from our packs. As we were about to move on, she said that she knew we were seeking the wild buffalo of Do—but she claimed that our arrows would be useless against that buffalo.

STRANGER 2. However, because we had been generous to her, she revealed to us that she, herself, was the wraith of this buffalo which had been killing so many people. It was her revenge against her brother, the King of Do, for denying her inheritance.

STRANGER 1. But by then her vengeance had been fulfilled, and she allowed us to conquer the buffalo, telling us to take the buffalo’s tail to the king as proof—then we could claim our reward.

STRANGER 2. And the reward would include the hand in marriage of our choice from the maidens of Do, but the old woman said that we must choose the ugly, hunchbacked girl called SOGOLON, who was the old woman’s wraith.

DANKARAN. But you said the old woman was the wraith of the buffalo!

STRANGER 1. That’s right, but the buffalo was dead then, and the young

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

woman became the possessor of the buffalo’s spirit. The old woman said that this Sogolon was an extraordinary woman, fit to be the wife of a king.

DOUA. And you had to choose her from among all those beautiful and tempting young maidens of Do? That must have been a great difficulty.

STRANGER 2. It was, to be sure—and we were laughed out of town when we made our choice. But the old woman had said that this Sogolon was a fit wife for a king, so we brought her here to you.

DOUA. You did the right thing, according to a prophecy which we have heard. It was foretold that she will bear a son who will be greater than Alexander, a king to expand and unify the land of Mali.

DANKARAN. But, my mother.... What about me?

KING NARE. *(To Dankaran.)* Silence! *(To the strangers.)* We shall solemnize this union with Blessed Ceremony at once — *(Looking to the stars.)* Let no man on Earth dispute the rights of this son to be born to me. *(Stage lights down slowly; Followspot up on Griot #1--follow him to the stump.)*

KOUYATE. *(Returning to the griot stump.)* And thus, it was that King Nare Fatta took a second wife—Sogolon, the Buffalo Woman of the prophecy. *(Blackout. Sundiata rhythm during stage transition.)*

SCENE 2: The Prophecy Revealed AGAIN

Followspot up on Kouyate.

KOUYATE. Later that night, King Nare sits alone in his camp; he is troubled by the news, but he knows that he must inform Sassouma of the prophecy. *(Stage Right Center lights up and Followspot down. Enter Sassouma.)*

SASSOUMA. *(Rushes to his side; holds his arm affectionately.)* My King, you called for me?

KING NARE. Come, Sassouma, gaze at the stars with me. We must look to the gods for guidance.

SASSOUMA. What do you need, my husband? You know that whatever I have is yours? *(She kneels at his side.)* How may I serve you?

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

KING NARE. Let us speak intimately now, Sassouma. You have been fair to me, and I to you. Still, prophecy has brought me another wife; I must marry the Buffalo Woman, who will bear the next king of Mali.

SASSOUMA. (*Refuses to accept this.*) My King, I will not endure this... (*Touches his brow.*) Perhaps fever causes you this poisonous idea? Perhaps the woman infected you with her charms! (*Angrily.*) Well, I, too, have charms and great potions. I will find the potion to make you well again. (*She stands and starts to leave, but King Nare grabs her arm to hold her back.*)

KING NARE. Wait, wife... (*Stands.*) Truly, I tell you, woman—we must obey the prophecy! I must marry Sogolon, the Buffalo Woman, for it is she who will bear my son, the great warrior king.

SASSOUMA. (*Pleading.*) But Dankaran... he is a fine son... he would do you proud...

KING NARE. No, Sassouma... Leave me now. I must take the Buffalo Woman. (*Sassouma goes out. Blackout.*)

SCENE 2a: Wedding Dance/Celebration sequence

Celebration rhythms. Chorus enters for Wedding dance / Celebration sequence. Blackout. Sumanguru rhythm. Followspot up on Madu.

MADU. And, indeed, the great “Lion King” and “The Buffalo Woman” did get married, but I heard there was some concern right away about the bride’s “reluctance”...after the ceremony. In fact, she was “reluctant” for more than a week, and the dancers were getting pretty tired—waiting for news of the “culmination” of the marriage festivities so they could go home to their own families. From what I understand, it was only the threat of execution that ultimately convinced the Buffalo Woman to give up her fighting spirit. Then, sure enough, a little over nine months later, the dancers were back to celebrate the birth of this supposed wonder child. But, listen now to how they describe what happened. (*Followspot out; Sundiata rhythm for scene prep.*)

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

SCENE 2b: Sundiata’s Birth

Follow spot up on Griot #1 from the stump.

KOUYATE. Nearly a year after the marriage ceremony of King Nare and Sogolon, the prophesized birth of the child came to pass. (*Followspot down, Stage Right Center lights up as he finishes speech as he walks into the scene as we hear the sound of a baby crying.*)

SOGOLON. We shall give him the name *Sundiata*. He shall become a great king one day.

DOUA. Of such spirits great kings are born.

SOGOLON. Yes, his name will be *Sundiata*... his eyes behold the light of the sun, *Sundiata!* (*More sounds of a baby crying, then a lion roaring.*)

KING NARE. Yes, a fine name indeed, and my son shall become the greatest king in all of the land.

DOUA. The son of a lion and buffalo will be mighty indeed!

KING NARE. (*Putting his arm on the shoulder of his griot.*) When the time comes, I shall make your son, Balla Fasseke, the griot to train and sing the praises of *Sundiata*. You are my griot and your son shall be my son’s griot. To our sons!

DOUA. To our sons! I shall see to it that Balla Fasseke prepares for this honor with great care—a nation must rise with the sun.... (*Fade Stage Right Center lights. Stage Left lights up. Enter Sassouma, as he creeps in at Stage Left corner.*)

SASSOUMA. King Nare already has a fine **son**—MY son. My son should be the one to take the throne and be King. Not some brute from an ugly woman like that... I will see to this! With all the powers of heaven and earth, they shall see the son rise! But it will be my son! Mine! Not hers! (*Exits, laughing maniacally. Blackout. Sumanguru rhythm during scene shift.*)

SCENE 3: Sassouma’s Jealousy

Followspot up on Madu.

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

MADU. Now, you see how they try to make out that Sassouma is some kind of crazed witch? They shouldn't go filling everyone's heads with these evil images of Queen Sassouma. She was a beautiful, proud and powerful woman, with a benevolent spirit. The insult of having her husband skip over their first born son, Dankaran, to anoint Sundiata as heir apparent was too much to bear. How would **you** feel if your son's birthright, guaranteed by custom, was being threatened by the birth of some deformed thing—from your husband's **second** wife? And all because of some **prediction** made by a stranger with cowry shells. What kind of king does this? As they report it, this child, Sundiata, was born weak and crippled—barely functional. He was probably no prize to look at, any more than his mother was, for that matter. So, of course Queen Sassouma felt it was her responsibility to set things right. She had an obligation to put an end to this foolish prophecy and to ensure that the **rightful** king was crowned—no matter what. (*Magical sound underscore. Soft blue lights up come up Stage Left.*)

SASSOUMA. (*Gently.*) You must face the facts, Sogolon—the prophecy has failed. This child cannot possibly be a future king of anything, much less the great king of a united Mali. I only want what is in the people's best interest!

SOGOLON. My son, Sundiata, is destined to be a great king. The prophecy says so.

SASSOUMA. My son, Dankaran, would be the better ruler for our people... You can understand, as a mother, that I must do whatever is necessary to insure that Dankaran becomes king, as he is rightfully entitled. (*Stage Left lights down. Sound out, Sundiata rhythm. Followspot up on Kouyate.*)

KOUYATE. No, no, I do believe we had it right initially. You are correct, Madu, that Sassouma would do anything to stop the prophecy, but not for all the righteous reasons you suggest. Listen then, as I continue my tale of the jealous Queen. (*Magical sound under. Stage Right red lights up.*)

SASSOUMA. (*Angrily.*) Face it, Sogolon! The prophecy has failed!

SOGOLON. That's what you think—the prophecy is stronger than both of us!

SASSOUMA. I warn you, Buffalo Woman, I will see to it that Dankaran

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

is king, one way or the other! If you try to stop me, I will destroy you!
(*Sassouma tries a magic spell and perhaps a strangle hold, Flash blacklights. Blackout. Sundiata rhythm for scene shift.*)

SCENE 4: The King’s Gift –A Griot Named Balla Fasseke

Followspot up on Kouyate; Spot out and Stage Right Center lights up as Griot finishes speech. King Nare is seated, while Doua and Balla are standing nearby.

KOUYATE. One day, King Nare called Sundiata to him in the court yard.

KING NARE. Son, sit with us. As you know, I am growing old and soon I shall be no longer among you. But before my death, I am going to give you a gift that every king gives his successor.

SUNDIATA. What is that, father?

KING NARE. I am going to give you a griot, which every prince must have. Your griot will be BALLA FASSEKE, who is the son of my griot, Doua. From this day forward, you will become close companions.

DOUA. From a young age, Balla has been training. He is knowledgeable in the music, history, and religion of our people. However, the most important lesson he has learned is how to be a counselor to the future ruler of Mali.

KING NARE. Yes, this knowledge has been passed down from griot to griot throughout the years, to ensure the success of the royal family and its place in history.

DOUA. Your journey to fulfill your destiny will be guided by Balla’s teachings.

KING NARE. I have now done everything that a king can possibly do for his kingdom, and eventually your destiny will lead you to be greater than I.

SUNDIATA. (*Looks around at the company.*) Balla, I am pleased that you will be my griot and companion, as tradition has dictated and my father has ordained.

BALLA. And I am pleased to be in your service, son of Sogolon and the great King Nare. (*Stage Right Center lights down. Followspot up on*

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

Kouyate.)

KOUYATE. *(Returns to storytelling stump.)* And thus, the bond between Sundiata and Balla Fasseke was established—a bond which would be tested sorely by the hard times that were to come. *(Blackout. Sundiata rhythm during scene shift as the benches are arranged for King Nare’s bed, Stage Right.)*

SCENE 5 : The Death of King Nare

Stage Left Center lights up on Sassouma and Dankaran.

SASSOUMA. Dankaran, your father is a fool! No one should rule this land but you, my son! No one is going to stop this from happening—not even Nare.

DANKARAN. But he will never change his mind...you know this. The prophecy is greater to him than you or I. Nothing will destroy his faith in Sundiata.

SASSOUMA. That much is certain...but not everyone thinks so highly of Sundiata. He is a pitiful disgrace for a future king.

DANKARAN. True, but he carries the influence of the prophesy. One day he might be able to confront me for the throne.

SASSOUMA. He is a mental and physical cripple! But, Nare is our first problem, and something must be done right away.

DANKARAN. What do you mean by that?

SASSOUMA. He is but a confused old man. His time will be over soon. When it is, you must be ready. Come, let’s see him now. *(Stage Left Center lights down and, Stage Right lights up as Sassouma and Dankaran enter the King’s bedchamber.)*

KING NARE. Ah, there you are. I’ve been waiting to talk with you both.

SASSOUMA. My King, you must be parched. You are very, very ill. I have made you a potion, er, a tonic to revitalize your spirit.

KING NARE. Thank you, Sassouma. *(Drinks.)* ...you have been very kind to me lately. Are you no longer angered by my insistence that Sundiata must take the throne?

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

SASSOUMA. If those are your wishes, then we will abide by them. Drink this, my king—it is good for you. It will ease your pain. (*Looks first to Dankaran, then the king.*) Is it official, then? Sundiata must rule?

KING NARE. Yes, Doua knows my last will—my last wishes. He and Balla Faseke will put things in order for us. (*Yawns.*) I’m so tired. (*Starts to drop his cup.*) I’m feeling very weak...

SASSOUMA. (*To Dankaran, giving him the cup of poison.*) Make sure that he finishes his “tonic.” Stay with him until he does.

DANKARAN. But? Me? I’ll ...

SASSOUMA. Stay!

DANKARAN. What if he...?

SASSOUMA. Hush, boy! I will take care of this matter. (*Rushes Stage Left with the will.*)

KING NARE. (*Sipping more of the drink.*) Thank you, son... Someday you will learn, we all must obey the stars. (*He coughs and breathes his last.*)

DANKARAN. (*Horrorified, drops to his knees beside the king.*) Father! Forgive me. (*Crossfade to Stage Left soft blue lights.*)

SASSOUMA. (*Illuminated by moonlight, is tearing the will into small pieces.*) Sometimes a mother must make sacrifices for her son! Even if it means the sacrifice of her immortal soul.... (*She looks up and laughs.*) Now the stars must obey me! (*Blackout. Sumanguru rhythm. A followspot comes up on Madu.*)

MADU. There’s that maniacal laugh again. Who’s to say whether Sassouma didn’t just give King Nare a soothing potion? And what difference would a will make in the story, anyway? Sundiata’s people are all caught up in that prophesy business, so they have already sided with “a higher power”—as if the stars shine only on *them*. But Sassouma was a purposeful and powerful woman, as I have said, and I am not surprised that she had no trouble persuading the tribal council to make Dankaran king when old Nare died. The Sudiata djeli will counter, of course, that the prophecy had not “worked its way through” yet—and just wait until you hear their story of the little “miracle” that happened next. The way they tell it, Sundiata and his mother were on their way to the market one day when the big event was triggered. (*Blackout. Sundiata rhythm during scene*

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

break.)

SCENE 6 : Hymn to the bow

All stage lights up. Sundiata, Balla, and Sogolon enter Stage Right. Hecklers enter Stage Left.

HECKLER 1. Look at the boy coming this way. He is such a lazy cripple that he has to crawl on the ground!

HECKLER 2. I know that boy. He is Prince Sundiata.

HECKLER 1. Ha! Prince? He is no more a prince than a goat.

HECKLER 2. (*Laughing.*) Yes, you are right. Hey, everyone—look! It is Sundiata, the goat prince! (*More laughter.*)

SOGOLON. Have you all no shame? He is but a boy. (*She weeps.*)

BALLA. Sundiata, does this not bother you? They have forced your mother to tears.

SUNDIATA. Yes, it does, BALLA. But what can I do? I can't even stand. (*Stage Left and Stage Right lights fade down.*)

BALLA. (*Sighs*) Sundiata, you must believe in yourself if you are to overcome adversity.

SUNDIATA. I don't understand...

BALLA. If you think of yourself as a cripple, then that you will *be—a cripple* for the rest of your days. But you must think of yourself as a *king*, for that is what you shall be.

SUNDIATA. (*Looking at the ground*) I will never be king... I can't even stand.

BALLA. The only person keeping you from standing is you—and you alone. You must strengthen your spirit. Your spirit can control your body.

SUNDIATA. My spirit?

BALLA. Yes, Sundiata, your spirit. You must reach inside yourself and find it. It is your source of strength and ambition. Your people need you, Sundiata. With Dankaran and Sassouma at the throne, our people will suffer. It is up to you to give our country back to the people.

SUNDIATA. Yes, you are right, Balla. I must find the strength. If not for myself, for our people.

SUNDIATA: LEGENDARY “LION” KING OF MALI

BALLA. Yes, Sundiata! Find your strength. Find your spirit.

SUNDIATA. Give me your walking stick, Balla. (*Sundiata stands up with the help of the stick, then Balla Fasséké and Sogolon sing the “Hymn to the Bow”. Kora music cue. Intensify lights.*)

BALLA. (*Singing.*)

Take your bow, Simbon,

Take your bow and let us go.

Take your bow, Sundiata.

Allah’s made a perfect day.

SOGOLON. (*Singing*)

So, my son is going to walk!

Room, room, make room!

The lion walks; yes, he walks!

Antelopes, out of the way! (*Sundiata rhythm softly underscores.*)

SOGOLON. Sundiata, you are standing up! Oh, day, what a beautiful day!

Oh, day of joy!

SUNDIATA. Yes, mother, things will be different now. I have found my spirit. (*Strong, louder Sundiata rhythm. Blackout. Shift to Sumanguru rhythm. Followspot up on Madu.*)

MADU. Yes, yes, yes—the cripple learns to walk. A fine, uplifting tale, calculated to stir the faithful and illustrate the growing strength of their hero. Meanwhile, the real warrior king, SUMANGURU, was consolidating his power in Sosso. Sumanguru knew how to make war and how to build a kingdom. We don’t have to make up any miracles on our side about how he fulfilled his destiny. Sumanguru learned by doing—by creating his own destiny. That had to make even Sassouma envious. (*Blackout. Sundiata rhythm for scene break.*)

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