

TOMBOY

Revised 09/12/2006
Final Draft © 2006 Maria Decaney
191 16th St. Apt. 3R
Brooklyn, NY 11215
mariadecaney@yahoo.com
(646) 853-5222

TOMBOY

MO, HERBIE, and SIMON run out from behind the panels yelling and screaming. SIMON has a football. They converge and MO breaks out of the group with the football. She runs down stage center and scores. She screams maniacally and does a little victory dance. Everyday MO wears her favorite baseball cap and a sports watch that is water resistant.

HERBIE

Mo Melton

SIMON

Who's real name is

MO

(Grossed out) Melissa

SIMON

Had just scored her 35th touchdown of the year-

HERBIE

-she keeps count-

SIMON

When suddenly

(A school bell rings.)

MO

(Disappointedly) The bell rang and it was time to go to class. Mo put her favorite baseball cap on straight and checked her watch.

(MO, HERBIE, and SIMON sit facing the audience.)

MRS. MARBLE **(SIMON)**

(Crossly) Okay, everybody! Recess is over! Now settle down and be quiet.

SIMON

Mrs. Marble said as Mo elbowed Herbie.

HERBIE

Ouch!

MO

Mo giggled. Mo, Herbie, and Simon were best friends.

HERBIE

Herbie thought that Mrs. Marble was tall and mean.

MO

She was always sending Mo to the office for talking in class.

MRS. MARBLE

Melissa Melton, young ladies should not talk out of turn.

SIMON

Once, Simon and Mo saw her hiding behind a bush during recess. She smoked THREE cigarettes before recess was over.

SIMON, MO, and HERBIE

Gross!

MRS. MARBLE

We have a new student to our class. Her name is Jenny Piper, so let's all be nice and make Jenny feel welcome.

(JENNY enters.)

SIMON

Jenny took a seat in the middle of Mo, Herbie,

MO

and Simon.

JENNY

Hi. My name is Jenny.

MO

We know, we know.

SIMON

My name is Simon.

JENNY

(Turning up her nose) I have a dog named Simon.

SIMON

Oh.

HERBIE

My name is Herbie.

JENNY

(Disdainfully) What kind of name is that?

MO

My name's Mo.

JENNY

What's your *real* name?

MO

That *is* my real name.

HERBIE & SIMON

Melissa.

JENNY

Mo is a *boy's* name. Who would want to be named after a boy? You should change it back to Melissa.

MO

Before Mo could say something back to the new girl, Mrs. Marble said,

MRS. MARBLE

Jenny, why don't you go first for Show and Tell?

JENNY

(Shyly) Uhm. Okay. **(She stands up)** I don't really have anything to *show*... but I can *tell* a little about me. My name is Jenny, and I'm nine years old. My birthday is on May 22nd and I have three dogs **(she looks at Simon)**, 2 parakeets, a rabbit, ten goldfish and a hamster. I moved here from Boston, Massachusetts and I have three older sisters. My favorite color is pink or purple and I like to wear dresses everyday except for sometimes Saturdays when me and my mom go to the beach.

HERBIE

Mo rolled her eyes.

JENNY

And Jenny smiled proudly.

SIMON

While Show and Tell went on, Mo passed a note to Simon and Herbie. It said:

MO

She's corny.

HERBIE

Simon and Herbie agreed- even though they both kinda thought there was something about the new girl that was... well....

SIMON

new.

HERBIE

But they didn't tell *Mo* that.

(The bell rings. JENNY exits.)

MO

Finally school was over!

HERBIE

When the bell rang, Mrs. Marble said:

MRS. MARBLE

Don't forget to have your parents sign your permission slips for our field trip to the zoo on Friday! **(Simon, Mo and Herbie take off while Mrs. Marble signals for Jenny to stay.)** Jenny, let me give you a permission slip to take home.

SIMON

Herbie, Mo, and Simon ran outside

MO

And started to play!

SIMON

Herbie usually didn't say much, unless he was with his best friends.

MO

He was shy when it came to grown ups.

HERBIE

And he carried a beanie baby shaped like a lion in his lunch box. **(He shows the audience shyly.)**

SIMON

Which didn't leave much room for a sandwich.

MO

But today! Today Herbie had Mo in a headlock!

SIMON

Mo was almost ready to give up when all of a sudden Jenny

JENNY

Walked around the corner and SCREAMED!

(MO, HERBIE, and SIMON look up at JENNY.)

HERBIE

What happened?

JENNY

Quit beating her up! I'm going to tell!

MO

(Runs to stop JENNY) Aw, don't tell! We were just wrestling!

JENNY

I know, and I'm going to tell on him for you!

MO

No, you don't have to – I was just about to put him in a half nelson! **(MO jumps on HERBIE and JENNY screams again.)**

MO

Stop that!

JENNY

Girls don't wrestle!

MO

Who says?

JENNY

My mom.

MO

Well, my DAD wrestles with me all the time! We play Smackdown and-

HERBIE

Jenny the new girl made a funny face.

JENNY

You must be a tomboy.

MO

I'm not a boy!

JENNY

Duh! I *know* you're not, stupid! I said that you were a TOMBOY. Don't you know what that is?

MO

(Unsure but cocky still) Yeah! **(Pause)** So what if I am?

(The sound of a car horn.)

JENNY

(Waving) I'll be right there, Mommy! **(Looking at MO, then skipping away)** Hmmph. Whatever, *Melissa*. See you tomorrow, Simon and Herbie.

MO

It's MO!

HERBIE and SIMON

Bye, Jenny.

MO

Don't talk to her! Who's your best friend anyway?

HERBIE

But... She said good-bye first, Mo.

MO

She bothers me.

SIMON

Being called a tomboy bothered Mo all day. When Mo went to the grocery store with her mother later that night, she decided to ask her what a tomboy was.

HERBIE

It was kind of hard, though, because her mom worked for a bank or something, and she was always on the phone.

(Throughout the entire conversation, MO's mother, MRS. MELTON is on her cellular phone.)

MO

Ma.

SIMON

Mo's mother did not like to be interrupted.

MO

Ma-

MRS. MELTON (**JENNY**)

I'm on the phone, Mo.

MO

I just have a question-

MRS. MELTON

Wait.

MO

I just wanna know what a tomboy is-

MRS. MELTON

(Frustrated) A girl who wants to be a boy. Now *hush up* and let me finish this.

HERBIE

It wasn't that Mrs. Melton was mean.

SIMON

She just liked to work.

MO

She worked *all* the time.

SIMON

It seemed like she was always too tired to talk to her kids.

MO

Mo thought about what her mom just said. A tomboy was a girl that wanted to be a boy? She didn't feel like she wanted to be a boy. Did *Jenny* think that Mo wanted to be a boy? Maybe Mo was starting to LOOK like a boy, and that's why Jenny said something!

JENNY

Hiiii, Simon.

SIMON

Hey there, little lady.

JENNY

Heeeellloooo Heeeeerrrrrrrrbbbbbbbie.

HERBIE

Hello there, Sunshine.

JENNY

(Flatly) Mo.

MO

(Equally as flat) Jenny.

JENNY

What are you guys working on?

HERBIE

We're fixin' our bikes.

JENNY

Oh, wow. Do you think you could fix mine, too?

MO

What's wrong with it?

JENNY

Hey! What's wrong with your voice?

MO

What're ya talkin' about?

JENNY

Something about you is different.

MO

Like what?

JENNY

YOU HAVE A MUSTACHE!

(MO turns away from the audience. When she turns to face the audience, she has a mustache and big muscles.)

HERBIE

Oh my God! You do!!

SIMON

Of course she does; she's one of the boys-

MO

I am not a boy!

JENNY

You're turning into a dude! Wait 'til I tell everybody!

(JENNY exits.)

MO

No! Come back here!

SIMON

I told you she was one of us!

MO

No I'm not! I am not a boy!

(End of *Fantasy Sequence*. Music ends.)

-

MRS. MELTON

Melissa Melton! Stop screaming! I'm on the phone!

HERBIE

The next day at school, Mo wore a dress. **(MO puts on a dress over her outfit)** She thought that she had seen a shadow over her upper lip when she was brushing her teeth that morning- like the kind that her dad got when he just woke up.

SIMON

So she put on some of her mom's lipstick. **(We see MO using a toothbrush and lipstick)** She hoped that it would hide her mustache until she could take one of her dad's razors and shave it off.

MO

She left her favorite sports watch at home-

SIMON

- it was water resistant up to 25 feet -

MO

- but she put her favorite baseball cap in her backpack, just in case.

HERBIE

When Simon and Herbie saw her,

SIMON

They started laughing! **(To MO)** Are you crazy?

HERBIE

How are you going to play football in *that*?!

MO

Do you think I look like a boy?

SIMON

Not like that!

HERBIE

Yeah, not like that!

MO

Stop laughing! I think I might be turning into a boy, and I'm trying to disguise myself.

HERBIE

Herbie and Simon laughed harder!

MO

I'm serious! I can't play football anymore.

SIMON

WHAT?

MO

I think it's making my muscles too big. Herbie, will you check and see if I have a mustache?

HERBIE

Aw, come on, Mo! You *don't* have a mustache. And you *gotta* play with us. We need you on our team or else we're not gonna win!

(JENNY enters.)

JENNY

Hi, you guys. **(She does a double take with MO)** *Melissa?* Wow. You look really nice. I have a bow in my backpack that'll match your dress. You want it?

MO

Seeing Jenny, Mo felt all wrong. She really *wanted* to play football. And she didn't want to be standing around in some dumb dress. What was she thinking? **(to JENNY)** Nope. I don't need your stupid bow. **(to HERBIE and SIMON)** I'm going to play football.

(MO proceeds to take her favorite baseball cap out of her backpack. SIMON and HERBIE cheer.)

HERBIE

YES!

JENNY

Oh no! You're going to mess up your dress!

(MO puts her cap on.)

MO

I hope so!

(JENNY looks on in horror as MO, HERBIE, and SIMON race off. A school bell rings.)

-

JENNY

When school started Mrs. Marble collected everybody's permission slips to go to the zoo on Friday.

HERBIE

While Mrs. Marble's class painted a mural in the hallway, Simon and Mo got a chance to talk.

(SIMON and MO are quietly speaking while they work on the mural.)

SIMON
What made you wanna wear a stupid dress anyway?

MO
I thought that I was turning into a boy.

SIMON
What made you think that?

MO
(Shrugs) I dunno.

SIMON
We know you're not a boy, Mo.

MO
Simon, how do you know that? Do you know what a tomboy is?

SIMON
It has something to do with playing sports. I think it's a girl who always plays football, or something.

MO
Well, maybe Jenny's right, then. Maybe I AM a tomboy!

SIMON
Look, don't panic. I don't think there's anything bad about being a tomboy. I just think there's something different about it.

MO
Different? Do you think that I can still do things that girls do?

SIMON
OF COURSE, you nutcase. You ARE a girl. Duh!

MO
I mean, do you think that I could have a boyfriend.?

SIMON
Why would you want a boyfriend?

MO
Do you promise not to tell?

Tell what? SIMON

Cross your heart and hope die. MO

Okay, okay. SIMON

I kind of want Herbie to be my boyfriend. MO

WHAT? ARE YOU SERIOUS?! SIMON

Shhhh! MO

MRS. MARBLE
Simon, do you want to go to the principal's office?

Uhm... No. SIMON

MRS. MARBLE
Well be quiet then.

SIMON
(Rolls his eyes at Mrs. Marble. To MO) I hate to tell you this, Mo, but you're tough. I know you can take it. Herbie likes Jenny.

What?! MO

SIMON
He liked her ever since he saw her.

-

(Fantasy Sequence...Dramatic yet corny music. A "Gone With The Wind" themed love story.)

HERBIE
(Suavely) Well, you called me over here, Melissa. What do you have to say for yourself?

MO

Herbert, I have something very important to tell you. **(She takes a deep breath and pauses)**
I've known you since kindergarten and I think it's time that you know that I love-

HERBIE

Yes?

MO

I love-

(JENNY enters. We hear a piano.)

JENNY

Herbert!

HERBIE

Jennifer!

MO

Jennifer?

JENNY

Melissa?

MO

Herbert?

JENNY

Herbert, I need to talk to you. I think you should know that-

HERBIE

Yes?

MO

No!

JENNY

I love you, Herbert!

HERBIE

Oh, Jennifer!

(JENNY runs towards HERBIE.)

MO

Herbert, no!

(More music. JENNY knocks MO aside as she takes HERBIE by the hands and they spin around in a circle, looking at each other lovingly. They run off like two ballet dancers as MO struggles to get up off the floor.)

MO

Herbert? **(Mad)** HERBERT! You come back here! **(Wimpering)** I think I sprained something.

(The music swells, then fades. End of *Fantasy Sequence*.)

MO

He doesn't even know her. She's boring.

SIMON

She has really pretty hair.

MO

You think so, too?

SIMON

(Sighs) Mo, Herbie is your best friend. Just like he's my best friend. You can't *like* your best friends. Besides, you're one of the guys. You can't go with him and wrestle him at the same time.

MO

Why not?

SIMON

Because you never let him win.

(*Fantasy Sequence*... Fight music. A night in Greensboro, South Carolina. SuperStar Wrestling.)

COMMENTATOR **(Voice Over)**

Welcome to another night of SuperStar Wrestling, ladies and gentlemen! Tonight we have the fight that you've all been waiting for! Herbie 'the Hotdog' Harrington against Magnificent Mo Melton. Wait! What's this? Simon the Stupendous has entered the ring... It looks like he's come to help out the Hotdog! They're double teaming Magnificent Mo! OOOHHH! A figure four leg lock! But wait! Magnificent Mo hasn't given up! Could it be? Yes! She has both of

them in head locks! The audience is counting down!!!

(Everyone on stage counts down, hopefully encouraging the audience to count also: 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1!!!! The two guys wave their hands in surrender. A bell sounds three times.)

MO

It's over, ladies and gentlemen! Magnificent Mo Melton has won the fight! Wait a minute! Who is this?

JENNY

Gorgeous Jenny Piper has come to support her boyfriend, Herbie the Hotdog!

HERBIE and SIMON

Isn't she just ravishing?

(End of *Fantasy Sequence*. The music ends. A school bell rings.)

-

JENNY

It was Wednesday. Mo was excited about going to the zoo on Friday. But she was still trying to figure out what a tomboy was.

SIMON

She decided to ask as many people as she could. That way, she would have a better idea of what a tomboy really was.

(HERBIE and JENNY are talking together. MO approaches them.)

MO

Herbie, I need to talk to you.

JENNY

Hi, Melissa.

MO

Right now, Herbie.

HERBIE

You didn't even say Hi to Jenny.

MO

I didn't hear anybody say Hi to *me*. I heard somebody say Hi to *Melissa*.

HERBIE

(To JENNY) I'll be right back, okay?

MO

(Walking away) C'mon.

HERBIE

What's up?

MO

It's recess and you're not even playing football with us. What's going on?

HERBIE

I just wanted to talk to Jenny for a minute.

MO

What's the big deal about Jenny? Jenny this, Jenny that-

HERBIE

Mo-

MO

Never mind. I just wanted to know if you know what a tomboy is.

HERBIE

It's a girl who acts rough.

MO

I don't act rough. Do you think I act rough?

HERBIE

Well... You beat up Big Terry at the beginning of the school year.

MO

Wasn't he trying to take your lunch money?

HERBIE

Well... yeah, but... Out of the whole school you're the only one who ever beat him up.

MO

Mo didn't think she acted differently from any other girl when it came to being rough. But then she noticed that she had a lot of scars on her elbows-

SIMON

- and scabs on her knees -

JENNY

- that Jenny just didn't have.

-

(Fantasy Sequence... Carnival music. At the Side Show.)

SIMON

(In a straw hat and red and white striped jacket) Step right up, girls and boys! See one of the 7 wonders of the world!

(MO appears on a platform. Everyone on stage reacts with Ooooh or gasps.)

SIMON

That's right, don't be afraid. Get a little closer and take a look at Mo Melton, the Tomboy. **(He produces a pointer from his jacket pocket)** Notice the cut above her eye from falling out of the cherry tree in her back yard. **(Pointing as he goes; HERBIE and JENNY react with more gasps or Oooohs)** This scar on her knee is from sliding into home base during a softball game-on the cement. And this bruise is from when she fell off of her bike last week. Notice the wild look in her eyes. **(Motioning to HERBIE)** This gentleman is responsible for capturing her and bringing her to us.

HERBIE

(To the audience) Hello.

SIMON

Tell me, Sir, where did you find her?

HERBIE

In the wild, of course.

SIMON

The Congo? The Himalayas? The frozen Tundra?

HERBIE

My backyard. She was trying to catch bees with her bare hands. **(More reaction from the "audience")**

SIMON

Amazing. Yes, ladies and gentleman, boys and girls, turn away if you must - but the fact still remains. This is the toughest, roughest tomboy you will ever see!

JENNY

Oh, my! **(She faints)**

(SIMON and HERBIE rush to JENNY's side.)

HERBIE

Are you okay, Miss?

MO

Oh, geez! C'MON. I'm not THAT rough! I didn't even look at her!

SIMON

I'm sorry! I didn't realize she was so dangerous! I'm locking her up and turning her into Animal Control as soon as I can!

MO

This is crazy! I'm not an animal!

(The sound of chains and a metal door closing.)

MO

C'mon! I'm not that rough!

(End of *Fantasy Sequence*. Music ends.)

-

HERBIE

Uh... You were kind of rough with Big Terry. You made him cry. And you gave him a bloody nose. Look, recess is almost over and I wanna talk to Jenny. I'll see you in class, okay?

MO

Okay.

SIMON

Mo had a little sister named Carmen. Carmen was five. She could read the newspaper by the time she was three years old, but she couldn't pronounce her R's. Mo thought that maybe Carmen would know about tomboys.

CARMEN (**JENNY**)

Once I wead this book about a girl named Hawwiet the Spy. She was a tomboy. She was weally bossy. She liked to tell people what to do *all the time*. And she was weally, weally noseey.

MO

Well, I'm NOT bossy.

CARMEN

You boss me around all the time.

MO

Be quiet. No, I do not. And I'm definitely not nosey.

CARMEN

Then why do you always want to know what I'm wearing?

MO

I do NOT. Why? What are you reading now? Is it something about tomboys?

HERBIE

Mo was surprised at what Carmen said. She didn't *think* that she was very bossy. And she didn't think she was nosey at all.

SIMON

Of course, she *had* tickled Simon until he almost peed on himself because he wouldn't tell her if Herbie and Jenny were going together.

MO

But did that count as being nosey? She didn't *let* Simon pee on himself, even though he wouldn't tell her if Herbie and Jenny were going together after all.

SIMON

Carmen was a brain-iac, but Mo didn't think Carmen knew what a tomboy really was.

HERBIE

Mo was running out of people to ask. She even asked Mrs. Marble what a tomboy was at school the next day during morning recess.

MRS. MARBLE

Funny you should ask that. I used to be a tomboy.

MO

Mo's eyes got big. **(Scared)** Did all tomboys grow up to smoke cigarettes?

MRS. MARBLE

I remember those days. I used to be the biggest bully on the block.

MO

You did?

MRS. MARBLE

Of course. I was pretty bad. **(Quickly)** But that doesn't mean you have to be. This is off the record - just between you and me, okay?

MO

A tomboy is a bully?

MRS. MARBLE

Yeah. She's the one who's always in control.

(Fantasy Sequence... Music. A black and white mobster flick.)

SIMONELLI **(SIMON)**

Mr. Mo, I come to you for help.

MR. MO **(MO)**

What do you need, my son?

SIMONELLI

There's this guy, Herb-o, and he took all my X-Box games and he won't give 'em back.

MR. MO

Where is he?

SIMONELLI

He's at his house playing my games!

MR. MO

Come on.

(MO motions for SIMONELLI to follow her. They go to HERB-O's house and knock on the door.)

HERB-O **(HERBIE)**

Whaddaya want?

SIMON

I want my games back!

HERB-O

Fat chance. Go away and don't come back!

MR. MO

Open the door.

(HERB-O becomes visibly shaken. Threatening music.)

HERB-O

M-M-Mister M-M-Mo?

MR. MO

I'm not gonna say it again. Open the door.

HERB-O

O-okay, sure.

(HERBIE rushes to open the door. Once opened, MO takes him by his collar.)

MR. MO

Simonelli here says that you have some X-Box games that belong to him.

HERB-O

Well, yeah, I do, but-

MR. MO

(She grabs him closer) Give 'em back.

HERB-O

But-

MR. MO

(She shakes him a little) NOW.

HERB-O

Yes, ma'am.

(He gives the games back to SIMONELLI.)

MR. MO

Am I gonna have to come here again?

HERB-O

N-No. Ma'am.

(MR. MO lets go of him and walks out the door with an ecstatic SIMONELLI.)

SIMONELLI

Thank you, Mr. Mo! How can I ever repay you?

MR. MO

C'mon. We're goin' to my house to play your games.

SIMONELLI

YEAH!

(End of *Fantasy Sequence*. Music fades.)

-

(A school bell rings.)

HERBIE

In class the next day Simon and Herbie tried to have a serious talk with Mo.

SIMON

You're acting weird lately.

MO

What do you mean, weird?

HERBIE

It's like you don't wanna be around us. You didn't want to play with us at recess yesterday.

SIMON

And you're always daydreaming and you don't pay attention in class.

HERBIE

And yesterday I dared you to start a food fight during lunch and you wouldn't do it.

MO

So what?

HERBIE

You're not being the same Mo.

MO

I AM the same Mo. And how would you know anyway? All you ever wanna do is hang around *Jenny* and talk about *Jenny*. No wonder you think I'm acting weird - I'm NOT Jenny!

SIMON

That's not it. All you talk about is being a tomboy.

MO

I'm trying to figure out what one is.

HERBIE

For what?

MO

Because I gotta know.

SIMON

Who cares?

HERBIE

Yeah, we don't care.

MO

WELL I DO!

SIMON

Well when you find out, find us.

HERBIE

Yeah! Find us when you're ready to be our friend again.

JENNY

Later, in the lunchroom, Mo -

MO

- sat by herself -

SIMON

- while Simon, Herbie and Jenny ate lunch together.

MO

She tried to start a food fight with Simon and Herbie but they wouldn't even look at her!

HERBIE

Then she threw some mashed potatoes at Simon, but they hit Jenny in the head!

(JENNY screams.)

JENNY

My hair! It's ruined! **(She starts to cry.)**

MO

She didn't mean to hit Jenny!

HERBIE

Everyone in the lunchroom looked at Mo - including Mrs. Marble.

MRS. MARBLE

Melissa Melton! Go to the principal's office. **RIGHT NOW!**

JENNY

That night, while Mo was helping her dad fix his car, she thought she would ask him what he thought a tomboy was. Mo's dad was also one of Mo's best friends. Besides, since he was a boy, she thought he would know best.

(The sound of tools clinking together.)

MR. MELTON **(HERBIE)**

Hand me that wrench, hon.

MO

Dad, can I ask you something?

MR. MELTON

Ask away, sweetie.

MO

This girl at school called me a tomboy.

MR. MELTON

A tomboy, huh? Well, I guess you could be called that.

MO

Why?

MR. MELTON

Because you are one, aren't you?

MO

I don't know! Nobody can tell me what a tomboy really is but everybody calls me one!

MR. MELTON

Okay, calm down, sweetie. You don't have to get all upset about it. Calm down.

JENNY

Mr. Melton hated to see his daughters upset. For a minute, Mo felt like crying.

SIMON

Even though she never cried. She thought crying was for babies.

MR. MELTON

(Thoughtfully) A tomboy is a girl who stands up for herself. She doesn't take any mess from anyone. She's strong. Not always muscle-strong, but strong in her mind. She's smart, and she knows how to fix things... not just with her hands, but situations. Do you understand that? People look up to her and want to be like her, but they're afraid to.

MO

Why?

MR. MELTON

Because being a tomboy takes dedication - and guts. Look at all of the people in the world that are tomboys... what about the Venus or Serena Williams? Or Oprah Winfrey?

MO

Or.... Pink?

MR. MELTON

What about Hillary Clinton?

MO

Pocahontas! Or that girl who races cars?!

MR. MELTON

You're mom!!

MO

Missy Elliott – and Kelly Clarkson – and Gwen Stefani – and Queen Latifah!

MR. MELTON

You have to be a pretty special person to be a tomboy.

MO

Really? I'm special?

MR. MELTON

Of course you are, sweetie. You're *my* little tomboy.

JENNY

After her dad explained what a tomboy really was, she sang a little song to herself and did a little dance.

MO

I am a tomboy! I am a tomboy! I wanna be a tomboy... **(to the beat of Hollaback Girl)** T – O – M – B – O – Y – S!

JENNY

It seemed like there were some pretty important people who might be called tomboys.

HERBIE

And it seemed like Mo was pretty important herself.

JENNY

The next day at school was the big day.

SIMON

It was the day of the field trip to the zoo!

HERBIE

YAY! Herbie really wanted to see a lion.

MO

Mo couldn't wait! She wanted to see ALL of the animals - but especially the elephants and the tigers.

JENNY

Jenny didn't want to see any snakes. She really didn't like animals that much except for her pets at home. But she was happy because her mother was going to be one of the parents who went along on the field trip.

SIMON

Simon wanted to go on a safari adventure like the ones he had seen on TV!

HERBIE

That morning, they all got on a big school bus with two other classes from their school, a group of parents, and Mrs. Marble.

(We see them all on the bus.)

SIMON

Simon and Herbie sat in the back.

HERBIE

And Mo sat across from them.

SIMON

They tried to ignore her but after a while she talked to them anyway.

(Throughout the course of their conversation, MO throws little pieces of paper at JENNY.)

MO

Hey you guys. I found out what a tomboy was.

HERBIE

So what.

SIMON

What is it then?

MO

A tomboy is when a girl is powerful and people look up to her.

SIMON

HA! Yeah, right.

HERBIE

(Snorting) Yeah, right! Who told you that?

MO

Lots of people.

SIMON

So why did Jenny call you a tomboy then?

MO

(Shrugs) Maybe she looks up to me and she knows that I'm powerful.

SIMON

Oh, man! Whatever, Mo!

HERBIE

Mo *is* pretty powerful. In gym the other day, she broke the school record for most pull ups in 30 seconds. She even beat Tom Lindsey and he's a sixth grader.

MO

It's not only that, picklehead. My dad told me that you have to be special to be a tomboy. You've gotta have guts.

SIMON

Everyone has guts. Otherwise, why would it hurt when you get punched in the stomach?

MO

Never mind. You don't get it.

(MO throws more paper at JENNY. JENNY sees a piece land in her lap.)

JENNY

(Tattling) Jenny told Mrs. Marble that she had paper in her hair and Mrs. Marble said,

MRS. MARBLE

Whoever is throwing the pieces of paper needs to stop NOW or else we are going right back to school!

HERBIE

Herbie made Mo stop because he thought Mrs. Marble was going to turn the bus around.

SIMON

Simon snickered. So much for being all powerful, he said.

MO

Mo rolled her eyes at Simon. Herbie was such a wuss sometimes. Mo *knew* that Mrs. Marble would *never* turn the bus around because she could smoke cigarettes *all day* at the zoo.

JENNY

At the zoo, everyone lined up in groups and got ready to see the penguins. Jenny followed Herbie like a puppy the whole time.

SIMON

Penguins are stupid. I want to see the lions!

MO

I want to see the elephants first.

SIMON

C'mon, Herbie. I brought my camera so I could take a bunch of pictures. Let's go on our own safari.

(Simon takes the camera out of his backpack.)

HERBIE

What do you mean?

MO

You guys can't leave the group. Are you crazy?

SIMON

I know where I'm going. I've been here before. Like when I was 4 or something. We can meet up with them later. *Plus*, no one was talking to *you*, *Melissa*.

HERBIE

Yeah! We can go see the lions before there's a big crowd there!

MO

Well, let me go with you.

SIMON

For what? So you can ask the alligators what a tomboy is?

MO

I don't want you guys to get lost.

SIMON

Psssh. Forget it. We're not gonna get lost. We're goin' without you.

HERBIE

C'mon, Simon. Let her go. If she stays here she might tell Mrs. Marble that we're gone.

MO

No I won't!

SIMON

(Aggravated) Okay, fine then. She can go. But *I'm* the leader of this safari. **(Walking away)** Let's go. I think the lions and tigers and stuff are this way.

HERBIE

(Following SIMON) Cool!

MO

(Following the two) Hey! Wait for me!

JENNY

The zoo was bigger than Simon remembered.

HERBIE

There were a lot of twists and turns.

JENNY

So far all they had seen were the pandas and the Reptile House.

MO

They went in the same big circle twice.

SIMON

When Mo looked at her watch it was 11:30.

MO

Hey, we have to be back at 12:00 to have lunch.

HERBIE

Wait! We didn't see the lions!

SIMON

Or the elephants.

MO

I think we're lost. What if we don't find the class by the time the bus leaves?

SIMON

We'll find them - we're not lost. We're really close to the good stuff.

MO

How do you know?

SIMON

I can feel it.

HERBIE

Let's just see a couple more animals.

MO

Fiiiine.

JENNY

Just then Simon saw a sign that said,

SIMON

Gorilla Habitat!

(A gorilla habitat appears. SIMON points and starts running.)

HERBIE

(Running after SIMON) Ooooooh! Gorillas!

MO

The gorilla habitat had a big stone wall all around it.

HERBIE

And part of it was being fixed. There were ladders and tools all over the place.

SIMON

Simon started climbing the part that was being fixed.

MO

Simon! Stop that! Someone's going to see you climbing that ladder!

SIMON

Well, hurry up then!

MO

I'm not climbing that!

HERBIE

You're gonna get caught, Simon.

SIMON

No one's around - and there's trees all over the place. Who's gonna see? I just wanna get a closer look! Herbie, c'mon.

HERBIE

(HERBIE starts climbing reluctantly) Ooohhhh. Quick, Mo. Follow me. We're just gonna look.

MO

You guys! **(She climbs the wall until she's standing next to HERBIE and SIMON.)**

JENNY

They walked around the wall until

MO

Simon stopped all of a sudden.

HERBIE

What's wrong?

SIMON

We can't go any further. This goes up to the roof of the lookout place.

HERBIE

(Looking down) Hey! There's Mrs. Marble! The whole class is down there!

MO

We found 'em! Let's meet up with everybody!

SIMON

No way! I wanna take some pictures of the gorillas!

(He starts to use his camera.)

MO

We'll do it from the lookout place. Let's get down from here.

SIMON

Everybody gets their pictures from the lookout place. I wanna get some pictures from here.

HERBIE

I don't even see any gorillas from here, Simon. I think we should just get down and catch up with the rest of the class.

MO

Yeah, Simon, what if we lose them and they go back to school without us?

SIMON

Hey, I'm the leader of this safari and I say we stay. **(He looks at MO and HERBIE's reaction)** You guys, we came all this way. It'll only take a couple more minutes. **(Teasing)** Besides Mo, I thought you said that you were a *powerful* tomboy. You're actin' kinda weak to me.

MO

I don't care what you say. Herbie and I are going back.

SIMON

Fine. You go ahead. **(He gets up)** I'm going to stay and take the best picture of a gorilla you've ever seen.

(SIMON turns to go. As he does, his foot slips and he falls.)

SIMON

Arrrthghghghmmm!

MO and HERBIE

SIMON!

JENNY

(She has snuck up behind them) Oh no! Simon!

MO, HERBIE, and SIMON

JENNY?!

MO

You idiot! You followed us the whole way here?

JENNY

I wanted to see what you guys were doing!

MO

You were going to tell on us!

SIMON

Help! I can't hold on!

HERBIE

Mo! Do something!

MO

Herbie and Jenny started to cry.

JENNY

Do something, Mo!

(MO tries to reach SIMON.)

SIMON

Help! I'm going to fall!

MO

(Trying to reach him) You're too far down! **(She looks around)** Jenny, hand me that thing on your dress.

HERBIE

Jenny screamed!

JENNY

There's a gorilla right there! He's looking at Simon!

HERBIE
(Looking down) Aaaghh! It really is a gorilla!

SIMON
AAAHHH! Get me out of here!

MO
Simon! Stop kicking! Stay still!

JENNY
Oh no! Simon!

MO
Shut up and hand me your belt quick!

JENNY
It's not a belt, it's a sash.

MO
GIVE IT TO ME!

JENNY
Okay, okay!

(JENNY hands MO the sash from her dress.)

MO
Hold my legs, you guys!

HERBIE
Jenny and Herbie held on to Mo.

(MO leans over the wall.)

JENNY
(Terrified) The gorilla looked hungry! Mo worked fast.

MO
Grab this, Simon!

SIMON
I can't!

MO
Don't worry! Just grab it now!

SIMON
(Crying) I'm gonna fall!

MO
No you're not! Just hang on!

SIMON
You're gonna drop me!

MO
No, I'm not! Just reach for it! I promise I won't let you fall!

(SIMON valiantly reaches for the sash.)

HERBIE
He got it!

JENNY
The gorilla's coming after you, Simon!

SIMON
AAHHHRRRRGGHHH!!

MO
Hurry up! Use your feet!

JENNY
Climb, Simon! Climb and don't let go!

MO
C'mon, Simon, you can do it!

HERBIE and JENNY
You can do it, Simon! You can do it!

SIMON
Simon made it over the wall.

HERBIE
(Frightfully) The gorilla looked at all four of them.

JENNY

And walked away.

(SIMON is on his back, on the wall, but still manages to turn to the side and pull his camera out.)

SIMON

But not before Simon got a picture.

(SIMON collapses on his back. The gorilla roars.)

MO

Are you okay?

SIMON

My ankle hurts.

HERBIE

Let's go.

JENNY

Yeah, let's go.

MO

Mo, Herbie, and Jenny helped Simon climb down the wall.

JENNY

Mo saw Mrs. Marble's class leaving the Gorilla Habitat's lookout place.

MO

Hurry! We gotta catch up to them!

SIMON

(Limping) Together the four of them caught up with the rest of the class.

MO

Nobody even noticed anything different.

JENNY

Until Simon couldn't walk anymore. Mrs. Marble stomped out the cigarette she had been smoking and said,

MRS. MARBLE

What happened now? Simon, how on earth did you twist your ankle?

(SIMON, MO, and HERBIE look at JENNY.)

JENNY

He tripped over a rock.

(SIMON, HERBIE, and MO nod, eyes big.)

MO

(To HERBIE and SIMON) Maybe she's not so stupid after all.

(The four look at each other and smile. A bell rings.)

JENNY

On Monday, before school started, everyone got a chance to look at Simon's picture of the gorilla that almost ate him.

(We see the picture. It is a blurred shot of green with a bit of black fur in the corner.)

SIMON

But he wouldn't let anyone touch it except him.

HERBIE

(Disappointed) Even though it only showed part of the gorilla's butt.

SIMON

Nu-uh! This looks like a tooth right here, doesn't it?

JENNY

After he put it in his pocket, Mo said,

MO

(Pointing to the wrap on SIMON's ankle) How long will it be until you can play football?

SIMON

I dunno. A while, I guess.

HERBIE

That stinks.

JENNY

(Sympathetically) I know.

MO

Everybody looked at Jenny.

JENNY

(Innocently) Football's not so bad. I watched it with my dad yesterday.

MO

Mo smiled.

SIMON

Hey! You're not gonna go behind our backs and tell on us, are you?

JENNY

No way. I followed you. Why would I tell on you when you could tell on me?

MO

Because maybe that's what *girls* are supposed to do.

JENNY

It doesn't matter. I would never tell on my friends.

HERBIE

You know, I *was* kinda scared climbing up that wall.

MO

I was scared when Simon fell. I didn't want that gorilla to eat him for lunch.

SIMON

Ha, ha! I wasn't scared of no girl-illa. I saw you crying, Herbie, you cry baby!

MO

Shut up, Simon. Herbie's not a cry baby. You were crying, too.

JENNY

There's nothing wrong with crying when you're scared.

MO

Jenny's right.

JENNY

I am?

HERBIE

Mo, you did good. How did you get strong enough to pull Simon up all by yourself?

MO

I don't know. **(Looking at JENNY)** I guess it had something to do with being a *tomboy*.

JENNY

(Sheepishly) There's nothing wrong with being a tomboy either.

MO

There's not?

HERBIE

What IS a tomboy anyway?

JENNY

It's a girl who doesn't wear dresses.

MO

That's what you think a tomboy is?

JENNY

Yeah. What did you think?

SIMON

Mo could not believe that she spent all of that time trying to figure out what a tomboy was when Jenny didn't know herself!

HERBIE

At least now she knew that she was a tomboy.

MO

And she was proud to be one.

SIMON

And she knew that she cared about her friends.

JENNY

And they cared about her.

HERBIE

Hey! School is gonna start soon! Are we gonna play or what?

JENNY

Um. I'll just watch for now.

SIMON

(Miserably) Me, too.

MO

How about if we play Buried Treasure? Simon, you can be the wooden legged pirate.

HERBIE

C'mon and play, Jenny.

JENNY

Okay!

SIMON

She can't play. She's wearing a dress.

MO

Dresses aren't so bad. Right, Jenny?

JENNY

Right!

MO

Besides, you never know... We might need to use your belt.

HERBIE, SIMON, & JENNY

It's not a belt! It's a sash!

(Music. They run off stage, laughing and playing.)