

Look Mom, I Got a Job!

by
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CHARACTERS

GUS (M), *an aspiring actor with a less-than-inspiring job*

KARI (F), *his upstairs neighbor and an avid jogger*

THE BRAT, *an obnoxious child* *

BERNIE (M), *Gus' less-than-sanitary co-worker*

(F) indicates a female role

(M) indicates a male role

Total Roles: 4 (1 female, 2 male, 1 male or female)

* THE BRAT may be doubled with BERNIE as an offstage voice

SET REQUIREMENTS

No set is required. However, a zoo setting complete with animal cage may be used, if desired.

(The lights come up on GUS, who is dressed as a gorilla. He sits drinking a cup of coffee. His head or mask is currently removed. KARI enters dressed in a jogging outfit. She passes by GUS, does a double-take, then stops and laughs.)

KARI

Gus? Gus, is that really you?

(GUS grunts and KARI laughs even more.)

Oh that is too funny!

(She continues to laugh.)

Do that gorilla thing again.

GUS

Forget it, Kari.

KARI

Come on.

(Slight pause. GUS grunts a couple more times. KARI is in hysterics.)

That is the funniest thing I've ever seen.

GUS

Are you done?

(KARI continues to laugh, then stops.)

KARI

Yeah, all done. What are you doing, anyway?

GUS

Going to work.

KARI

Is this the new job? What's the play?

GUS

There is no play.

KARI

(Not listening)

Are you King Kong? That is so cool. Wait until I tell everyone I live upstairs from King Kong.

GUS

I'm not King Kong. It's not a play.

KARI

It's not an acting job? I thought you were an actor. You told me you were an actor.

GUS

I am. It's a special job, OK?

KARI

OK.

(She fumbles in her bag and pulls out a banana.)

Banana?

GUS

Are you kidding me?

KARI

Come on, it's funny.

GUS

Hilarious.

KARI

So do you want it?

(Slight pause, then GUS takes the banana and starts to eat it. KARI starts stretching.)

GUS

So what are you doing?

KARI

Just going for a run.

(GUS grunts in understanding.)

Why a gorilla?

GUS

I told you, I'm on my way to work.

KARI

But where? You've got to tell me, dressed like that.

GUS

I can't.

KARI

Why not?

GUS

I'm not even supposed to let people see me in costume outside of work. So you never saw me, all right?

KARI

Like I could forget this.

GUS

I'm serious.

KARI

OK, fine. But this is just so cool.

GUS

Hardly.

KARI

It is. Who else gets to dress up like a gorilla for work? You've got to tell me why. Please?

GUS

Will you stop bothering me if I do?

KARI

You bet.

GUS

And you'll keep this to yourself?

KARI

Sure.

(Slight pause)

GUS

The zoo.

KARI

The zoo what? Oh! Do you make those balloon animals? I love those. Can you make one for me?

GUS

I don't make balloon animals, Kari.

KARI

Then what do you do?

I'm the gorilla. GUS

What do you mean you're the gorilla? KARI

I mean, I'm the gorilla. GUS

Which gorilla? KARI

The gorilla. GUS
 (KARI stares at him blankly.)
 The zoo doesn't have a gorilla, so I dress up like a gorilla and hang out in the gorilla cage.
 I'm the gorilla.

But the zoo does have a gorilla. I've seen her. Gertrude, Gertrude the gorilla. KARI

I'm Gertrude. GUS

You're Gertrude? KARI

I'm Gertrude. GUS
 (KARI laughs uncontrollably.)
 Shut up. It's not that funny.

Yes it is! KARI
 (Still laughing)

I've got to get to work. Thanks for the banana. GUS

Can I watch? KARI

No! GUS

KARI

That's terrible.

GUS

You don't really feel it through the suit. Come on.

(GUS puts on his head or mask, lumbers into the zoo, and enter his "cage." He then assumes his gorilla pose. We hear zoo sounds. KARI watches him. Pause.)

KARI

(Whispering)

Do something.

GUS

(Whispering)

I am doing something. I'm being a gorilla. What do you think they do all day? Juggle knives?

KARI

That'd be cool! Can you do that?

GUS

No. Now be quiet, someone might come by.

(Pause)

KARI

You know, Gertrude, you make a pretty cute gorilla.

GUS

I hate you.

KARI

Oh! Someone's coming.

(GUS grunts and acts gorilla-like. We hear the voice of THE BRAT.)

BRAT

(Offstage)

I want to see the gorilla! I want to see the gorilla now!

GUS

(Under his breath)

Oh boy.

(THE BRAT enters and watches GUS. Pause.)

BRAT

Why isn't the gorilla doing anything?

KARI

Well, maybe she's just resting. I'm sure she'll do something really exciting really soon.

(GUS wanders around, gorilla-like, and scratches his head.)

BRAT

She's boring.

KARI

No she's not. She's the best animal in the whole zoo. Aren't you, Gertrude?

(To the BRAT)

Don't you think she's just wonderful?

(THE BRAT throws something at GUS.)

Oh, don't do that.

BRAT

Do something!

(THE BRAT throws something else.)

KARI

Stop it. Gertrude's a nice gorilla.

BRAT

Bad gorilla!

(THE BRAT throws something again.)

KARI

If you stop, I'll get her to do a trick.

(GUS grunts in surprise.)

BRAT

Oh yeah? Like what?

KARI

Well... roll over. Come on, Gertrude, roll over.

BRAT

Do it!

(GUS reluctantly rolls over.)

KARI
 Good Gertrude.

BRAT
 Is that all she can do?

KARI
 Oh no. Um... play dead, Gertrude.

(GUS plays dead.)

BRAT
 That's stupid.

KARI
 But she can do all sorts of tricks.
 (Slight pause)
 Like juggling. You can juggle, can't you, Gertrude?
 (GUS advances on KARI and grunts very clearly that he does not
 juggle.)
 Maybe not. Oh! But she can dance. Come on, Gertrude, dance for us.

BRAT
 Gorillas can't dance.

(GUS grunts in agreement.)

KARI
 This one can. Gertrude's really smart. Show us, Gertrude, show us what a good dancer
 you are. Please?
 (GUS grunts and starts dancing, badly.)
 Good Gertrude. What a good gorilla. Isn't she amazing?

BRAT
 Dumb gorilla.

(THE BRAT throws one last item and exits.)

KARI
 OK, I think the kid's gone now.

GUS
 I am going to kill you! What were you thinking?

KARI
 I'm sorry. I was just trying to help. What was I supposed to do?

Anything but make me dance. GUS

I'm really sorry. KARI

Are you trying to get me fired? GUS

They wouldn't fire you. You're a great gorilla. KARI

I will get fired if they see me talking to you. GUS

Oh. Maybe I should just leave you alone then. KARI

Please. GUS

Though I might as well look around while I'm here. I'd like to see some animals that aren't guys in suits. KARI
(GUS stifles a laugh.)

What?

Nothing. GUS

No, tell me. KARI

Trust me, you'd rather not know. GUS

Yes, I would. KARI

It's nothing, Kari. Just enjoy the zoo. GUS

(Slight pause as KARI realizes what he means.)

KARI

There are others? What kind of a zoo is this?

GUS

Hey, mine's not even the worst job.

KARI

What's the worst?

(BERNIE enters. He is the ugliest, nastiest person you can imagine and dressed as a pink flamingo.)

BERNIE

Gertrude.

GUS

Fifi.

(BERNIE exits.)

KARI

Oh that is so wrong!

(KARI runs offstage in horror and GUS settles back into his gorilla routine. Blackout.)