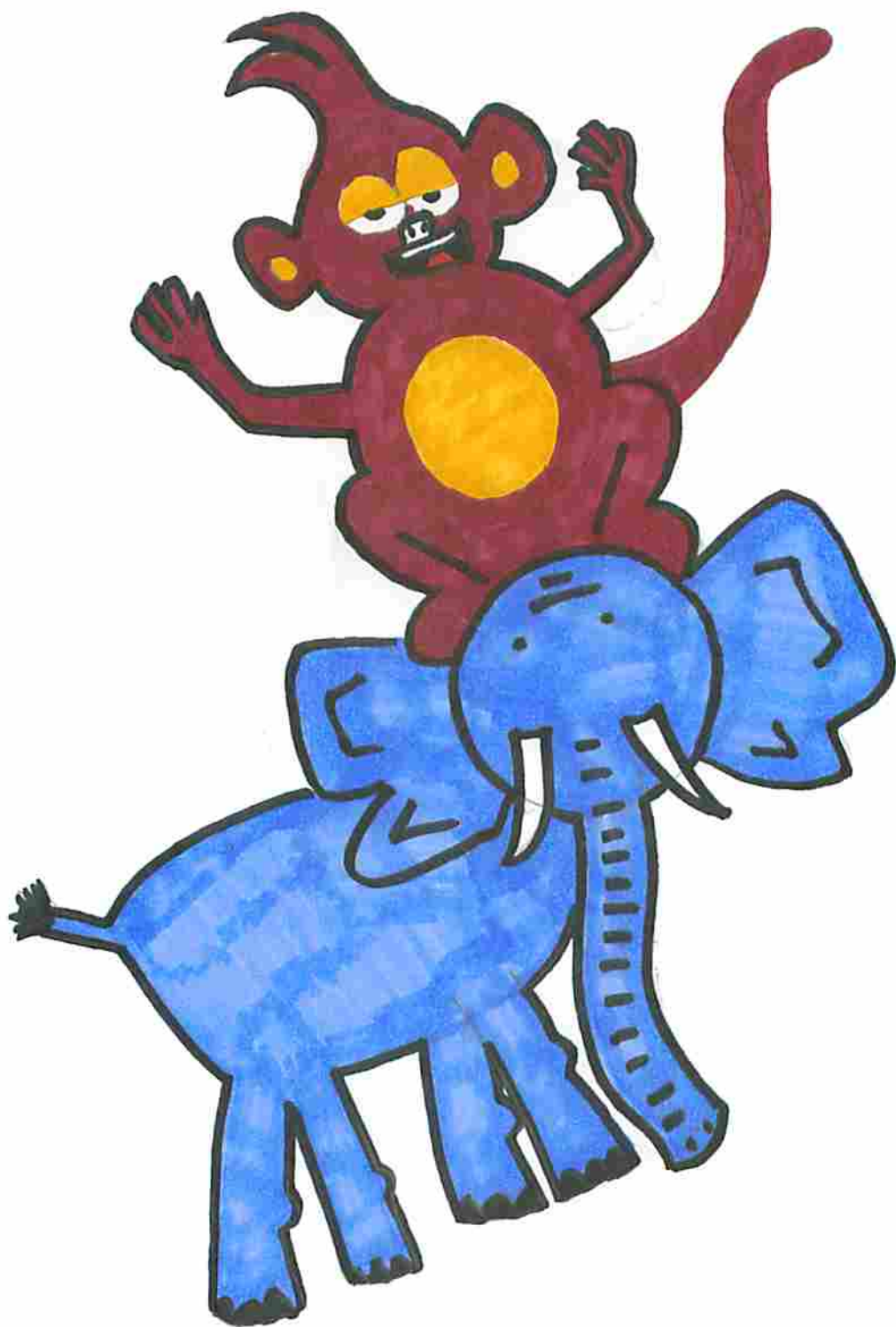


# TRUMAN'S TRUNK



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**By Nick Sturtz**

Truman was an unhappy elephant. He spent his days being teased and his nights dreaming of a new life. He had a big trunk that always got in the way and made him look clumsy. It was twice as long as the other elephant's trunk. However, Truman was able to reach up to the tops of the trees where other animals couldn't get to. Other animals didn't really appreciate his skill and would constantly make fun of him. He would often trip over his trunk and even worse, step on it. It was the biggest trunk in the whole world. The size of it made Truman's head look like a peanut with some gigantic ears flopping around. Since Truman was a shy gentle animal and everybody in the jungle knew that he wouldn't hurt a fly. They would all take advantage of his kindness and this made Truman very sad.

There was only one animal in the jungle that didn't reject Truman, and that was Reese the Chimp. Reese would talk to anybody and anything. He never really stopped talking. He would just go on and on and on. But Truman put up with his chatter more than most because Truman was lonely and didn't have anyone else to talk to or listen to. All day, Truman and Reese would chatter on about anything that came into their minds. Truman put up with the taunts of the other animals and Reese would try to make him feel better even though the put-downs hurt Truman deeply.

One morning, right after Truman had gotten an excellent night's sleep and was feeling better than usual, he ran into a group of bully animals over by the watering hole.



Gerald the Giraffe, Kent the Crocodile and Lonnie the Lion all walked out from behind some bushes into the clearing looking very angry.

“Look who we have here,” laughed Lonnie the Lion.

“Are you lost? Because you don’t belong here,” said Kent the Crocodile.

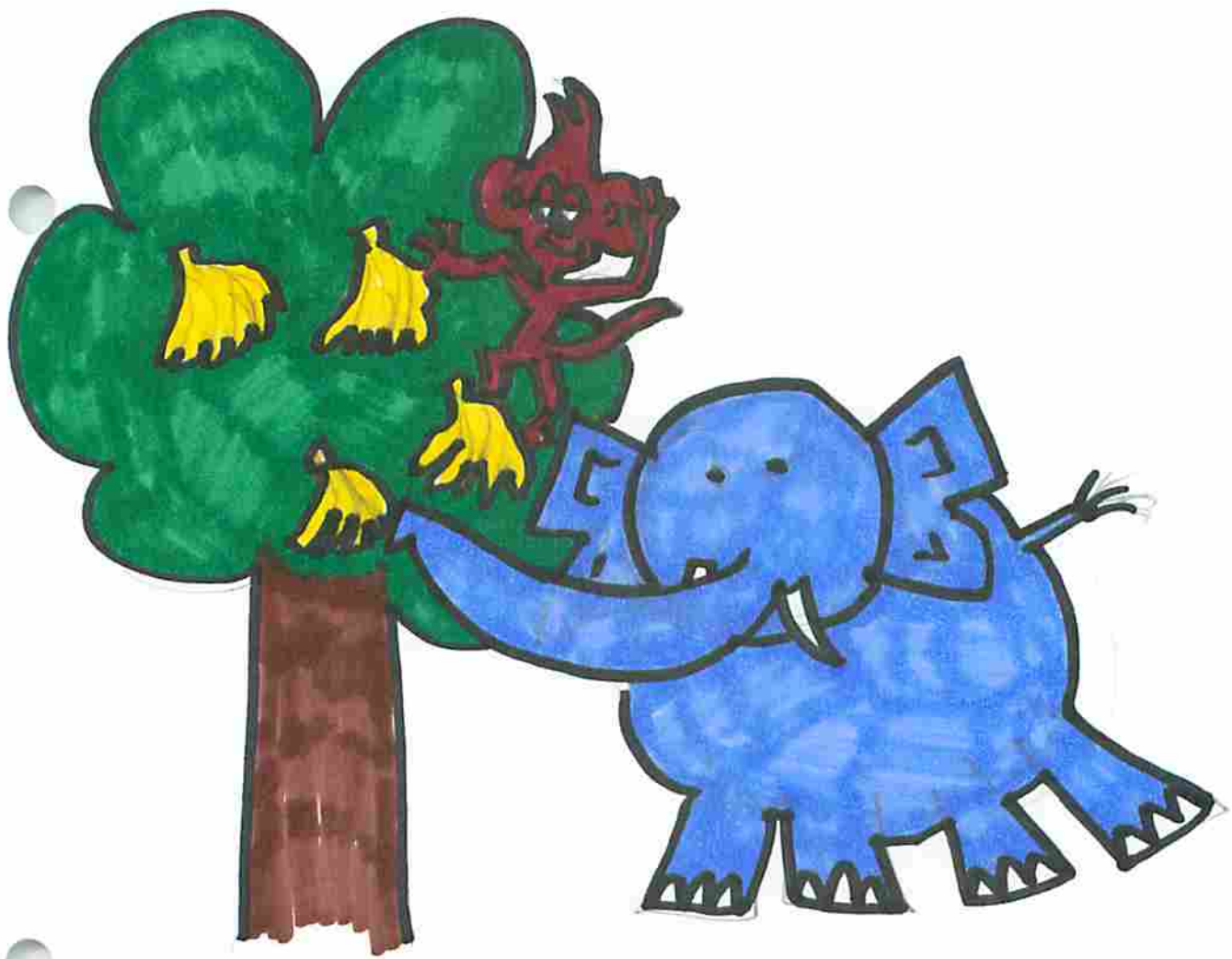
Truman just stood there and sighed.


“I was just looking for Reese,” he said. He knew nothing he said would change their minds. He began to walk away from them, but before he could the animals tripped him and he fell into the watering hole. Truman tumbled down the bank and landed in the watering hole with a huge splash making all of the other animals that were drinking very angry. He slowly pulled himself up to the bank and walked off into the bushes, ashamed and embarrassed about what had just happened. A while later when Truman went to go eat some of the delicious guavas in the grove, he found Reese eating a banana up in a tree. He told Reese what had happened and asked him if he could do anything about it seeing as Lonnie, Kent and Gerald were all Reese’s friend too.

“I’ll see what I can do,” said Reese. “But they’re a stubborn bunch.”

“I know, but I don’t mean any harm. They never give me a chance.”

Lonnie, Kent and Gerald had played many evil and nasty tricks on Truman that he would never forget. One early morning, they stuck the sap of the Stickle Fern on Truman’s feet when he was asleep and when Truman woke up, his feet got stuck to the ground and he wasn’t able to move. He screamed and screamed for someone to come and help him. Finally he gave up. Truman had been feeling miserable and would’ve been stuck there for the rest of the day if it wasn’t for Reese finding him and bringing him some water so he could get himself unstuck.





“Thank goodness you found me!” Truman exclaimed. “I could’ve been stuck there for days. Those other animals are some no-good bullies.”


“I know,” Reese said. “I sometimes wish they would be a leave me alone forever.”

“They will never change. I need to leave, go somewhere new and exciting where the other animals don’t taunt and reject me,” Truman had replied.

Now Truman thought of all the places he could get away to. For a minute he lost himself in his dreams, but Reese tapped him on the head bringing him back into reality.

“Oh. Sorry about that Reese. I must have spaced out for a second.”

“It’s OK. Are you hungry? I’m starving. Let’s go get something to eat,” yelled Reese.




So Truman and Reese lumbered out of the mossy grove and headed for Reese’s favorite eating spot, the banana tree clearing. As soon as they arrived, Reese jumped to a tree and began devouring banana after banana until the tree was bare. Reese moved from tree to tree, gobbling up the whole clearing.

“Aren’t you going to save any for the other animals?” asked Truman.

“Who cares about the other animals. Right?” replied Reese. “It’s all mine.”

So Truman and Reese ate bananas until their stomachs were full and the trees were naked. They both walked back over to the watering hole to wash the meal down. Truman was feeling a lot better compared to the last time he had come down to the watering hole.

As Truman and Reese arrived at the watering hole, they heard a bunch of screams. They both looked around frantically trying to figure out where the shouts were coming from. There was a figure flailing and splashing around in the middle of the lake.





“Help me! I can’t swim! Help me!”

It was Gerald the Giraffe. He had wandered out into the deep end and wasn’t able to keep himself afloat. His long neck was slowly getting shorter as he sank into the water. Plenty of animals were trying to help him, but Gerald was out too far, and no animals were strong enough to swim out to the middle of the lake and bring him back. Truman knew he could do it. But did he want to? Gerald had always been so mean and rotten. But Truman decided to overcome his feelings.

“I’ll save you,” he cried as he jumped into the lake and started swimming towards the flailing giraffe who had given him so much grief in the past. Truman was still in the shallow end so he could walk on the lake floor. As he reached the edge of the shallow and deep end, he reached his trunk out as far as he could.

“Grab my trunk, Gerald.”

Gerald flailed his legs until he got a hold of Truman’s enormous trunk. Truman snapped his trunk back and threw Gerald all the way to shore. All the animals were cheering when Truman lifted himself out of the water.

“He’s a hero!” they all cheered.

Truman was never made fun of for his large trunk again and he lived the rest of his life in happiness knowing he could do whatever he put his mind to.

**THE END**

HIP - HOP  
HOORAY

