

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 off-stage 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, a man dressed as a gorilla who sits smoking a cigarette. 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: Hey! Is this the new job you mentioned? What's the play?

GUS: There is no play.

KARI: *(Not listening)* Are you King Kong? That is so cool! Wait 'til 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. *(Slight pause as she fumbles in her bag and then pulls out a banana.)* Banana?

GUS: Are you kidding me? *(KARI bursts out laughing again.)*

KARI: Come on, it's funny!

GUS: Hilarious. *(He smokes.)*

KARI: 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 going to work.

KARI: But where? You've got to tell me, dressed like that. (Pause) Come on!

GUS: Forget it. Besides, I can't.

KARI: Why not?

GUS: I'm not even supposed to let people see me in costume outside of work. So, you didn't, all right?

KARI: Like I could forget this!

GUS: I'm serious!

KARI: OK! I won't tell anyone, 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? (Slight pause)

GUS: Will you stop bothering me if I do?

KARI: Sure.

GUS: And you'll keep it to yourself?

KARI: Of course! (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: No! I don't make balloon animals!

KARI: Then what?

GUS: I'm the gorilla.

KARI: What do you mean you're the gorilla?

GUS: I mean, I'm the gorilla.

KARI: Which gorilla?

GUS: *The gorilla! (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.

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

GUS: I'm Gertrude.

KARI: You're Gertrude?

GUS: I'm Gertrude. *(KARI starts laughing again.)*

KARI: You're a girl gorilla!

GUS: Shut up. It's not that funny.

KARI: *(Still laughing)* You're playing a girl gorilla!

GUS: I know that, OK? I've got to get to work now. Thanks for the banana.

KARI: Can I watch?

GUS: No!

KARI: Please?

GUS: After all that?

KARI: I'm sorry, but you have to admit it's funny.

GUS: Not when you're the one in the gorilla suit, it's not.

KARI: I guess. Do all actors do stuff like this?

GUS: Only when they're as broke as I am.

KARI: Oh. Do you need money? I've got some... *(She starts digging around in her pockets.)*

GUS: I don't want your money. I've still got my dignity. *(Quickly)* Don't say it.

KARI: I wasn't going to.

GUS: Look, I really need to go. I'll see you later, Kari. *(He puts out his cigarette and gets up.)*

KARI: I promise I'll be really quiet! *(She looks at him hopefully.)*

GUS: Fine, you can watch. But only if you promise to stop the kids from throwing things.

KARI: They throw things?

GUS: Oh yeah, toys, sticks, sometimes rocks.

KARI: That's terrible!

GUS: You don't really feel it through the suit. Come on. *(GUS puts on his head/mask, lumbers into the zoo and over to his "cage." He then assumes his gorilla pose. We hear zoo sounds. KARI watches him. Pause.)*

KARI: *(Whispering)* Well, do something!

GUS: *(Whispering)* I am! 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 is coming! *(GUS grunts and acts gorilla-like. We hear the voice of THE BRAT.)*

BRAT: *(Offstage)* I want to see the gorilla! Over here!

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

BRAT: She's boring!

KARI: No she's not! I think 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? What can she do?

KARI: Well, she can... roll over! Roll over, Gertrude, roll over!

BRAT: Do it! *(GUS reluctantly rolls over.)*

KARI: Good Gertrude!

BRAT: Is that it?

KARI: Oh no! Um... play dead, Gertrude! Come on! *(GUS plays dead.)*

BRAT: That's stupid.

KARI: But she can do all sorts of tricks! *(Slight pause)* Juggle! Can you juggle, 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! 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?

GUS: Anything but make me dance!

KARI: I'm really sorry.

GUS: Are you trying to get me fired?

KARI: They wouldn't! You're a great gorilla!

GUS: They will if they see me talking to you.

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

GUS: Please.

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

GUS: Nothing.

KARI: No, tell me.

GUS: Trust me, you'd rather not know.

KARI: I would!

GUS: It's nothing, Kari. Just enjoy the zoo. *(Slight pause as KARI realizes what he means.)*

KARI: There are others? What kind of 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 picture and dressed as a pink flamingo.)*

BERNIE: Gertrude.

GUS: Fifi. *(BERNIE exits.)*

KARI: Oh that is so wrong! *(She runs offstage in horror and GUS settles back into his gorilla routine. Blackout.)*