

Chapter 2

Yellows

around vouch weather head window high sign
meant leapt group healthy right disappeared

Breaking

recognize hospital entrance gestures unusual
zookeeper popular squeezed intelligent buddies
different special communicate comfortable
recliner hamburgers Monopoly enthusiastically

Phrases

Mr. LaRue She knew vouch for them both
count the blocks pointed to the snack machine
Stephanie's Hair Care cutting and styling
on the patio breaking news near the foothills

Chapter 2

The Zoo

When Judy and Hobo hopped on the bus, there were plenty of empty seats. Judy looked around. Except for Mr. LaRue, the bus driver, she didn't recognize anyone. She smiled. She knew from the looks on their faces that many of the people were wondering about her monkey. Just then, Mr. LaRue said to Hobo, "Hey, hero, how are you doing?"

Turning around to the other passengers, Mr. LaRue announced, "Don't be afraid of this young lady and her monkey. I can vouch for them both. You may have even heard about Hobo and Judy and their many adventures."

Judy stayed at the front of the bus. She wanted to discuss the weather with the bus driver. Hobo, on the other hand, started to stroll toward the back of the bus.

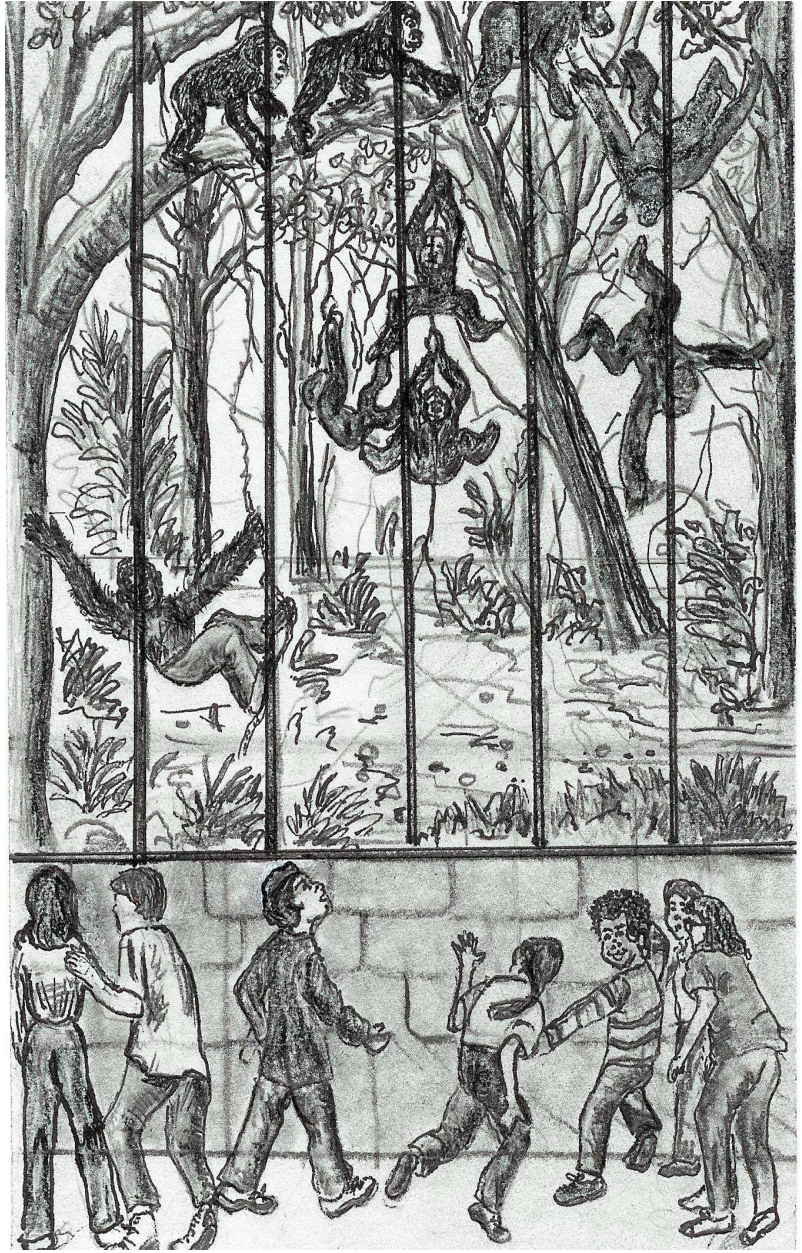
He stopped next to an elderly lady and said, “Hi, ma’am!”

The lady shook her head, looked at Hobo, and thought, “I must be hearing things.”

Hobo smiled and spoke again, “Good day, ma’am.”

The woman, somewhat shocked, looked more closely at Hobo. She replied, “Good day to you, too, young monkey.”

Hobo walked a bit farther, found an empty seat, and sat down. He liked hanging out in the back of the bus. There was so much to see from the rear window. The bus rattled past the hospital and the high school. Hobo pressed his nose to the glass. He spotted the sign for the zoo and began to count the blocks. After the bus zipped past the third block, Hobo got up and pulled the cord. The bus stopped, and Judy and Hobo hopped off. They quickly walked the short distance to the entrance of the zoo.



“I’ll race you to the monkey cage,” Judy said. Hobo dashed off and Judy began to jog. She knew how much it meant to Hobo to visit his monkey friends.

By the time Judy reached Hobo, he was screaming and hollering up a storm. His wild gestures and chatters were not unusual. He was asking his friends how they were doing, what was happening at the zoo, and if there were any problems he needed to address with the zookeeper. Hobo always made sure that his buddies were well taken care of by the staff.

The monkey house was the most popular spot in the zoo; it was always crowded. Today was no exception. Judy inched her way through the crowd until she spotted Tim, one of the monkey house caretakers. She waved and shouted, “Hi, Tim.”

Hobo heard the shout, turned away from his monkey friends, raced over, and leapt onto Tim’s back. The crowd gasped.

Someone yelled, “Watch out! A monkey’s gotten loose!”

“Mama, mama, will he bite?” asked a little girl.

“It’s OK,” Tim reassured the crowd. “Hobo doesn’t bite, and he’s not a zoo monkey. Just watch,”

Sensing what Hobo wanted, Tim walked over and unlocked the cage. Hobo leapt from Tim’s back. The cage was instantly filled with wild screams and hollers. The crowd watched with intense interest. No one left.

Ten minutes later, a large group of school children and their teacher squeezed into the monkey house. They were excited to see the monkeys swinging from tree to tree.

“Look!” a young boy yelled. “The monkeys are playing a game!”

Next to him, a girl suggested, “They’re playing tag.”

“I agree,” shouted a third child. “After getting tagged, that monkey began to chase all the other monkeys in the cage.”

Many students hollered and clapped each time one of the monkeys tagged another monkey. But several other students doubted whether the monkeys really knew what they were doing. One doubter looked at his teacher and asked, “Can monkeys really figure out how to play tag?”

His teacher smiled. “I think so,” he answered. “Monkeys are often as intelligent as a two-year-old child.”

Suddenly, the game of tag stopped. Hobo jumped from the tree onto the cage bars and pointed to the snack machine.

The zoo had recently installed a snack machine from which people could buy healthy treats for the monkeys. Hobo wanted some of this new machine food.

The children ran over to the snack machine, dropped in their coins, and rushed back with their hands full of monkey treats. Within moments, the students were tossing food to the monkeys. Hobo and his buddies hollered and screeched. The kids hollered and screeched too.

One of the parents yelled, “This is more like a madhouse than a monkey house.”

The crowd laughed.

After the food was gone and the excitement ended, Hobo clapped his hands and stomped his feet. Tim, the monkey house caretaker, got up and opened the door to the monkey cage. Hobo grabbed Tim’s hand and walked out.

The crowd watched with amazement. No one moved except Hobo. Grabbing Judy’s hand, Hobo waved and shouted to the children, “Thanks for the food!”

Stunned by Hobo's ability to speak, the crowd watched silently as the monkey and the girl left.

Judy and Hobo spent the rest of their afternoon walking through the many different animal houses. Hobo had a special talent: he could communicate with any animal. As the zoo animals spoke to him, Hobo made a mental list of their problems. By the end of the day, Hobo knew that one of the lions had a little piece of steel caught in his paw; that the hippos needed more water in their moat; and that the apes wanted more tree limbs and bars from which to swing.

After talking to the zookeepers about these issues, Hobo and Judy headed for the bus stop. The bus pulled up in a few minutes. The friendly Mr. LaRue was still on duty behind the wheel. He asked, "Did you have fun at the zoo?"

"Sure did," Hobo answered.

Judy said, “We have one more stop to make before we go home for dinner. Will you please let us off at Stephanie’s Hair Care on Main Street?”

Mr. LaRue nodded.

This time Hobo did not go to the back of the bus. He plopped in the seat right behind the driver. Judy sat next to him.

Five minutes later, Hobo and Judy arrived at Stephanie’s. Hobo sat in a comfortable recliner and watched as Stephanie Ford cut Judy’s auburn hair. After she had finished cutting and styling Judy’s hair, Ms. Ford looked at Hobo. “OK, Hobo. It’s your turn.”

Hobo hopped up on the chair. He always liked it when Ms. Ford gave him a haircut. Soon Hobo’s trim was done and he and Judy left the shop.

It was getting late. When they arrived home, Judy’s mom was flipping hamburgers. Hobo clapped his hands and said, “Yummy! Those hamburgers smell yummy. I’m starving.”

Judy and Mrs. Strome laughed, but they were hungry, too.

After eating their hamburgers outside on the patio, Hobo and Judy went to the kitchen and began washing the dishes. Judy liked doing chores with Hobo. Hobo put the last dish away and Judy suggested a game of Monopoly. Soon they were laughing and screaming over who had the most property and who was going to jail.

Usually they played Monopoly all evening, but tonight Judy noticed that Hobo looked sleepy. She said, “Hobo, why don’t you go up to bed. We have had a very long and fun day. I’ll join you just as soon as I watch the evening news.”

Hobo threw Judy a kiss as he scurried up the stairs.

Judy turned on the television. She listened intently as a young reporter enthusiastically described some breaking news: “A storm rolled through a small town

near the foothills earlier this evening. A funnel cloud was seen swirling over some neighboring houses. An hour later several people reported that their pets had disappeared.” (4.5)