

# Detective Gus, the gorilla

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Gus and Gabby, two good, kind gorillas, lived in a special part of the zoo. They had a little house to sleep in, and a wooden jungle gym to play on. They also had three trees to climb.

Gus and Gabby were having lunch. They were eating cabbage and pumpkin and beans and mealies, and lots of oranges and paw-paws and apples and *bananas*. They *loved* bananas!

Suddenly a little boy's head popped up over the wall of Gus and Gabby's garden.

"Hello," he said.

"Hello," said Gus.

“Can I come down and play on that jungle gym?” he asked.

“Yes,” said Gus. “Jump down into the garden, but mind the thorn bush!”

So the little boy jumped down and landed on the grass next to the gorillas.

“We have nearly finished eating our lunch, but we still have one banana left,” said Gus. Even though he loved bananas more than any other food, Gus was a very kind gorilla. He held it out to the little boy.

“Would you like it?” he asked.



“Yes, please,” said the little boy. He took the banana and smiled.

“Where is your mother?” asked Gus.

“She is lost,” said the little boy.

“Oh. Are you also lost?” asked Gus.

“No, I’m not lost. I am here,” answered the little boy.

“That is true,” said Gus. “How did your mother get lost?”

“We were walking along, eating ice-creams, and when I looked up, she wasn’t there,” said the boy.

“I’m sure you’ll find her later on. But let’s play now!” said Gus, and he took the little boy’s hand and lifted him up onto the top of the wooden jungle gym.

They had a wonderful afternoon together. Gus walked upside down along the wooden poles of the jungle gym, holding on with his hands and feet, and the little boy did the same. Gus caught a branch hanging over the jungle gym and swung up into a big tree. The little boy did the same. They even hooked their legs over the branches and hung upside down! Gus and the little boy played together all afternoon, until the little boy was too tired to play anymore.

“Why don’t you have a rest?” said Gus.

“Okay,” said the little boy. He wandered off and fell fast asleep on the clean, sweet-smelling straw bed in Gus and Gabby’s little house.

“If he is lost, maybe he can stay here with us forever,” said Gabby. “I would like that!”

“I would like that too,” said Gus.

Just then the zookeeper arrived.

“I think I have important news for you,” he said, and he handed Gus a letter. Then he left, and closed the gate behind him.

"It *must* be important news if it is a letter for Gus!" thought Gabby. "What does the letter say, Gus?" asked Gabby with her big chitty-chatty smile.

Gus climbed up onto the top of the jungle gym and opened the letter. "It's from Policeman Moloi," he said.

"Read it, read it!" said Gabby.

Gus held the letter out in front of him and read aloud to Gabby:

*Dear Gus*

*Please help us.*

*Molefe is missing. He is five years old. He was walking around the zoo with his mother. They were eating ice-creams. Molefe's mother said she loved chocolate ice-cream, then she asked Molefe what his favourite ice-cream was. But Molefe didn't answer because he wasn't there!*

*His mom was very worried. She called, and called, "Molefe, Molefe, where are you?" But there was no answer.*

*Molefe's mother ran all over the zoo looking for him, but she couldn't find him. He is missing. Gone! Just like that!*

*Molefe's mother is crying here at the police station now, Gus. Please help us.*

*If you get any news about Molefe, beat your chest loudly, and we will come running.*

*Best wishes to you, Gus.*

*Your friend*

*Policeman Moloji*

Gus was sad. "I think the little boy who is fast asleep in our house may be Molefe," he said.

"Why do you think that, Gus?" asked Gabby.

“Because he said his mother was eating an ice-cream when she got lost,” said Gus. “If he is Molefe, we can’t keep him. His mother is crying for him.”

“She must be very sad,” said Gabby. “You’re right, Gus, we can’t keep him.”

Just then the little boy woke up and came into the garden, rubbing his eyes.

“I want my mother. Where is she?” he said.

“We will find her,” said Gus. “What is your name little boy?”

“I am Molefe,” said the little boy.

“I will let Policeman Moloi and your mother know that you are here,” said Gus. Then he stood up straight on top of the jungle gym. He lifted his arms and drummed loudly on his great big chest.

Policeman Moloi heard the drumbeat. He ran puffing and panting to the gorillas’ home. Molefe’s mother heard the drumbeat and followed Policeman Moloi. She ran puffing and panting to the gorillas’ home.



“There you are, Molefe!” she said. She picked him up and held him close.

“They found you, Mom!” said Molefe.

“Yes! I was lost without you, Molefe,” she said. “But why are you in here with the gorillas?”

“I have been playing on the jungle gym with my friend, Gus,” said Molefe.

“Oh ... goodness! Well, we must go home now, Molefe,” said his mother. She looked at Gus. “Thank you for looking after Molefe and playing with him,” she said.

Molefe ran up to Gus, and the great big gorilla patted him on the head. Gabby gave him one of her big chitty-chatty smiles.

“Bye-bye,” said Molefe, and off he went with his mother.



“Gus, because of you, Molefe is safe,” said Policeman Moloji. “You are a great detective!”

The next day the Chief of Police and a big brass band and a camera man and a news reporter arrived at the zoo. A crowd of people followed them. The zookeeper led them all into Gus and Gabby’s garden. The brass band played a tune, the camera man took pictures of Gus, and the reporter wrote a story about Gus and Molefe. The crowd of people cheered.

“Gus is a great detective,” said the Chief of Police. “He once caught a famous shopping bag thief and now he has found a lost little boy. Well done, Gus!” Then the Chief of Police handed Gus a great big bunch of yellow bananas and he gave Gabby a great big bunch of pretty yellow flowers.

When they had all gone away, Gus and Gabby sat down and ate all the bananas except one. “Would you like the last banana, Gabby?” asked Gus.

“No thanks, Gus,” said Gabby with a big chitty-chatty smile. “I’m eating the flowers. You are a famous detective now! You have the last banana!”

So he did.