

Rikki's Ride

by Elizabeth Trach

Rikki was a monkey. She was small, with light gray fur and a black face. She lived in the grassy, flat savanna with her family and friends. The savanna was in Africa, so Rikki often saw other animals playing, resting, and searching for food.

Rikki was always hungry. She ate mostly leaves and seeds, but her favorite food was a nice, juicy grasshopper.

"Stay with the group," Rikki's mother warned. "The lions are moving closer today."

"I think the lions would rather eat one of the big zebras over there," Rikki said carelessly. "I'm much too small."

"When lions are hungry, they will eat anything that moves. Be careful."

Rikki continued to search for seeds. Suddenly, a fat, brown grasshopper jumped up and bounced off her nose. Rikki squealed. What a wonderful lunch!

Rikki followed the grasshopper. Each time it jumped, she made sure watched where it landed. The grasshopper zigged and zagged across the field.

Before she knew it, Rikki was right next to the group of zebras near the watering hole. "On the next hop, I will grab that grasshopper," she said.

The grasshopper jumped high, and so did Rikki. She tried to grab the bug as she flew through the air, but she was much too high.

Plop! Rikki landed right on a zebra's back!

The zebra jumped and kicked its legs in the air. "Get off me!" he cried. But Rikki was scared and grabbed the zebra's mane with her fists.

"Ouch!" yelled the zebra. And with that, the zebra ran away through the grass.

Rikki crouched low on the zebra's neck and held on tight. The wind was rushing in her face. She was going so fast that the grass looked blurry. "This is fun!" shouted Rikki. She was miles away from the watering hole now.

"Fun?" yelled the zebra. He stopped so suddenly the Rikki tumbled forward over his head and fell on the

ground. She looked up at the zebra, who was breathing hard. "Maybe for you, but I'm going home. You can walk." The zebra turn his back and walked away.

Rikki didn't see any lions, but she was very far from home. "Wait for me!" she called. "I'm sorry!"

The zebra paused. "Catch up, and let's get home where it's safe," he said.

So Rikki did. She couldn't wait to tell the other monkeys about her big ride!

Questions

1. Based on the story, what is a savanna?
2. Why is Rikki's mother worried about the lions?
3. How does the zebra feel about Rikki?
4. Do you think Rikki is a good monkey or a bad monkey? Explain your answer with details from the story.