

THE FOOLISH LEADER

Adapted by Carole L. Cooney

Setting: An old-growth rain forest

Characters:

Narrator

King of Gibbon monkeys

Gabby

Husky

Smarty, Power Boy, Straight Twig

Narrator: One evening the full moon hung low in the black sky. It seemed a golden color and was clearly reflected on the glistening surface of the watering hole. Through the trees, hoots could be heard as the Gibbons warned one another to stay out of their territory.

King: (hoot, hoot!) Who is that in my fruit tree? Get out or I'll come after you!

Gabby: (hoot, hoot!) It's just me, Gabby, so just stop your hooting, your Majesty. I wanted to tell you about something I just saw down at the pool.

King: Hurry, Gabby. You know how I don't like the way you always talk and talk and never finish until the sun goes down. Well, it's night time, so I guess you'll do a quick job.

Gabby: Well, King, I was just down at the pool and I ...

King: Yes! You already said that! Hurry up and tell me what you saw.

Gabby: Well, I was walking around the pool just taking a little sip of cool water when suddenly I saw a big ball – it was a huge ball...

King: What is so great about a big ball?

Gabby: Oh, your Majesty! It was a BIG – BALL – OF - GOLD!

King: (hoot, hoot!) Well, why didn't you say so! Gabby, call all of our strongest Gibbons to come here immediately!

Narrator: The King quickly told his subjects his plan to get the ball of gold.

King: Husky, go to the sturdiest tree near the pool and hold onto it as tightly as you can. *Do Not Let It Go!*

Husky: Yes, your Majesty!

Narrator: And so, Husky grabbed some vines and swung over to the sturdiest tree, and held on to it as tightly as he could.

King: Next, I want Smarty to follow Husky. Smarty, grab Husky's hand, leap out over the pool, stretching your other hand into the water to grab the ball of gold.

Narrator: So Smarty did just what the King said, but he failed to grab the ball of gold. He could not reach far enough to even get close to the surface of the water.

King: I see the problem. All right! Now I want Power Boy and Straight Twig to join Husky and Smarty. Hang hand to hand making a chain. Remember, Straight Twig, to leap out, stretching your hand into the water to grab the ball of gold.

Narrator: So Husky, Smarty, Power Boy and Straight Twig joined hand to hand and stretched out like a giant chain. And once again they failed to grab the ball of gold. The King was so anxious to have the ball of gold that he decided he was the only one who could succeed.

King: All right! Here I come! Hold still while I climb down your arms. (Hoot! Hoot!) I'm almost there! All I have to do now is stretch out into the water and grab the ball of gold.

Narrator: BUT! The King was too heavy. The monkeys could no longer hold on to each other's hands. So when the King leapt out over the water, the entire chain of monkeys broke apart and fell into the pool. Not the King, nor even one monkey rose to the top. And the ball of gold faded as a large cloud passed in front of the moon.