

Who's the Real Hero?

A STORY BY ARKEDELIC

note to
Parents



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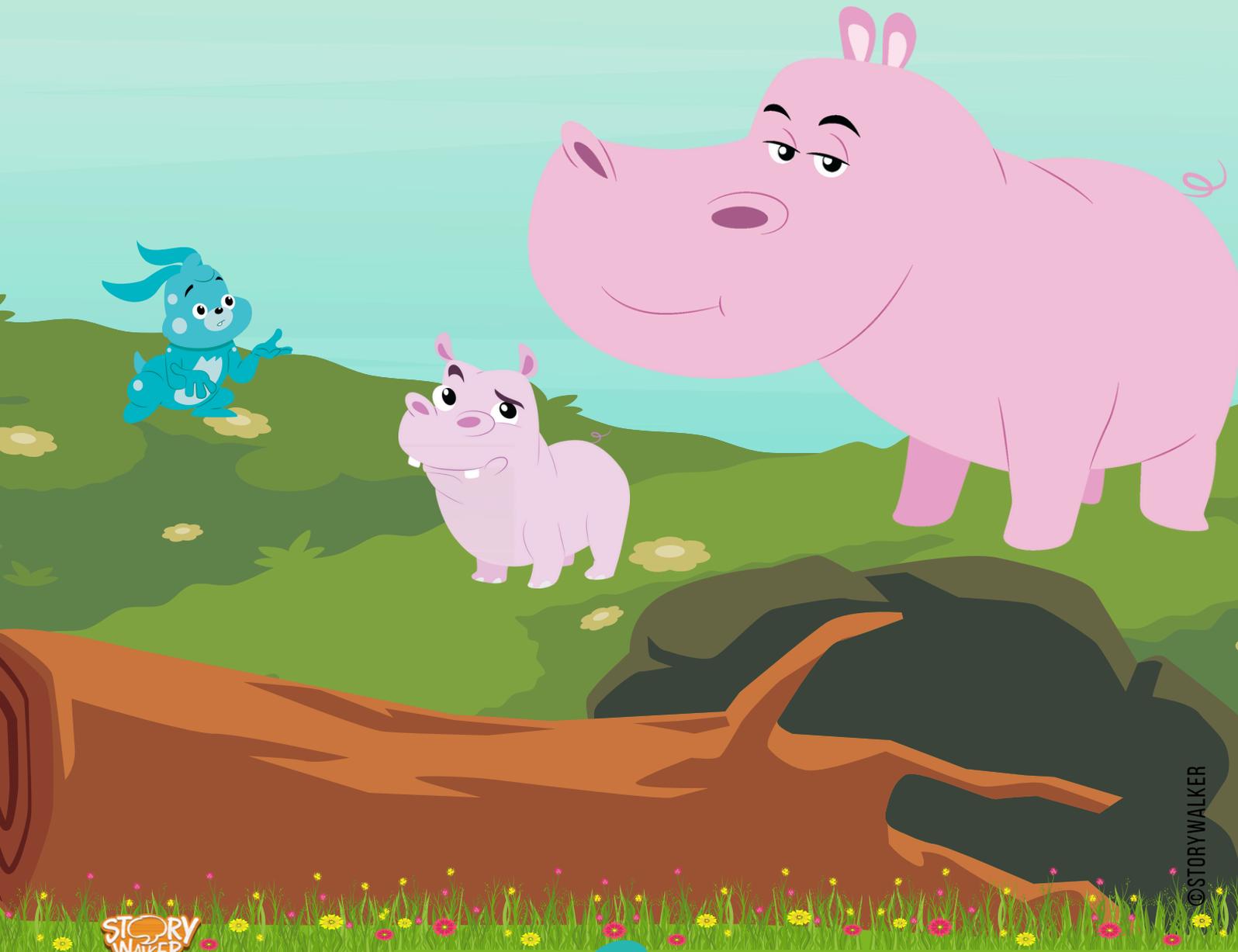
One breezy morning in Booshkata,
the river path was blocked.

A heavy log had rolled down the slope and landed right
across the trail, stopping everyone's morning stroll.

“What do we do?” cried Zeldon, his ears twitching nervously.

“Guess we wait?” shrugged Max.

But Mombino — big, gentle, wise Mombino — did not wait.



She examined the log with calm, watchful eyes.

She nudged it, walked around it, then pushed her strong shoulder into it — steady, quiet, and determined.

THUD-ROLL-SPLASH!

The log floated off downstream.

“Whoa!” Danny’s jaw nearly dropped to his knees.
“That was... legendary!”

From that moment, Danny decided he wanted to be exactly like Mombino. Not just a little like her. Exactly.



The next morning, Danny came stomping down the jungle path.

Stomp. Stomp. Stomp.

He wiggled his chin like Mombino.

He narrowed his eyes like Mombino.

He even cleared his throat in a deep rumble like Mombino.

“Why are you walking like you’ve got coconuts tied to your feet?” Kimaya asked, amused.



“I’m not Danny anymore,” he announced.
“I’m Mini-Mombino!”

Zeldon giggled. “You look like you’re stuck in slow motion!”

“Shhh,” Danny said. “Great heroes don’t hurry.
They just... glimmer with wisdom.”

Later that day, the friends spotted a termite hill that had collapsed, spilling soil all over the path to the mango patch.

“Stand back, everyone!” Danny puffed up his chest.
“I shall move this hill. For I am... Mini Mombino!”





He squinted. He stomped around the mound twice.

He tried to push the mound with his tiny bonobo shoulder.
Nothing.

“Maybe use a stick?” suggested Milo.

“Quiet,” Danny said. “Mombino doesn’t need sticks.”

He pushed again. His shoulder slipped.
Dust puffed into his face.

Finally, Danny stood up and declared,
“The hill shall be moved... by someone else.”

Zeldon snorted with laughter. “Some hero you are!”

Kimaya put a gentle hand on Danny’s back.

“You know, Mombino isn’t a hero just because she looks serious or pushes logs.

She’s a hero because she notices, plans, and keeps trying. You’re copying the outside things but not the inside things.”

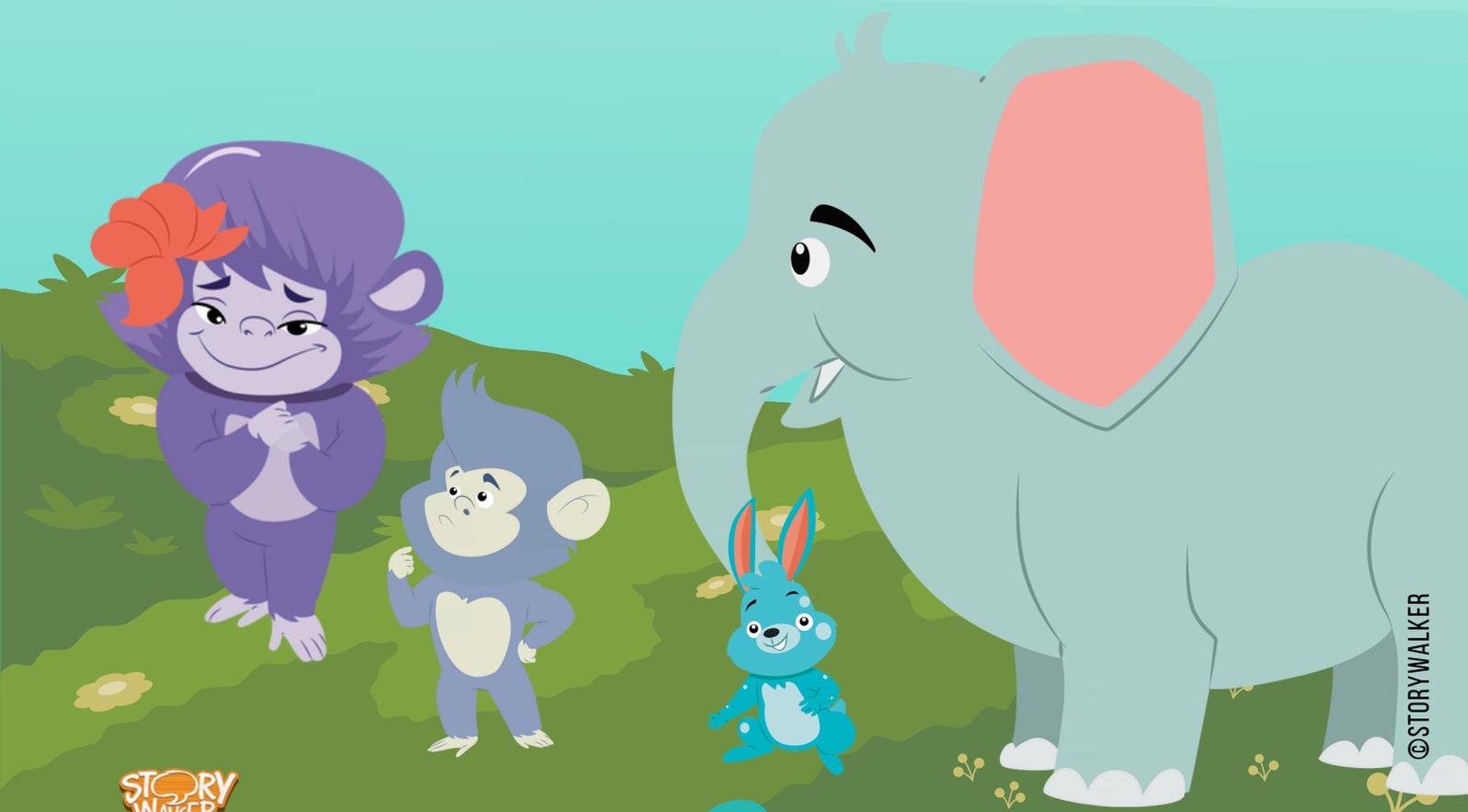
Danny frowned. “You mean I’m copying her wrong?”

“Not wrong,” Kimaya said kindly.
“Just... the shiny bits, not the real bits.”

Danny sat for a while, thinking.

Then he stood up. “Okay. New plan.
I’ll do this the Danny way.

Milo, can you help me scoop the dirt into piles?
Zeldon, can you kick the twigs out of the way?”



“You did well,” Mombino said with a warm smile.

“You didn’t need to be me. You needed to be you.”

Danny grinned. “I guess the real hero thing is to think first, right? Not just squint and stomp?”

“Exactly,” Mombino said.
“Though the squinting was quite funny.”

The friends burst into a hearty laugh — even Danny, who squinted one last time just to make them all giggle.

— *THE END* —



Building Beautiful Inside

VALUE LESSONS FROM 'WHO'S THE REAL HERO?'

HOW DO I HELP MY CHILD ADMIRE THEIR ROLE MODEL WITHOUT COPYING THE WRONG THINGS FROM THEM?

Context in the Story: Danny becomes fascinated with Mombino and tries to copy everything about her — from the way she squints to how she walks and speaks. But he copies the surface without understanding the thinking, effort, or care behind her actions. The story gently shows that admiration is wonderful but it's important to understand what we're admiring and why.

Real-world Connection: Children often idolise teachers, older kids, cartoon characters, or even parents. Sometimes they copy catchphrases, behaviours, or attitudes that look impressive but aren't meaningful or right for them. It's a part of growing up, but it can be confusing.

How parents can use the story: This story helps children explore the idea of role models through playful imitation. Parents can ask their child who they admire and what they like about that person — then help the child reflect on the deeper qualities that make someone worth admiring. Using Danny's funny attempts to "be Mombino," parents can show that copying gestures or tone doesn't make someone wise — it's the choices, the thinking, and the values that matter. The story creates space for conversations about admiration that builds self-worth rather than mimicry, helping children learn to take inspiration while still being true to themselves.

Building Beautiful Inside

VALUE LESSONS FROM 'WHO'S THE REAL HERO?'

HOW CAN I TEACH MY CHILD TO HANDLE PEER PRESSURE AND MAKE WISE CHOICES?

Context in the Story: Danny is so focused on copying Mombino that he ignores his own strengths and ideas. Even when things don't work, he continues the act because he believes that's what makes a hero. Only when Kimaya gently guides him back to his own way does Danny begin making wiser, more thoughtful choices and becomes effective in his own right.

Real-world Connection: Children face subtle peer pressure even at a young age — whether to copy a friend's behaviour, dress a certain way, or follow a group decision they don't understand. This can lead to confusion between fitting in and thinking independently.

How parents can use the story: Parents can use Danny's situation to help their child reflect on times when they did something "just because someone else did it." The story makes it easier to talk about early peer influence in a playful, non-scolding way. Parents might ask, "Have you ever copied someone without really knowing why?" or "What would your way look like instead?" These questions guide children toward recognising their inner compass. The story also reinforces that it's okay to admire others but it's even better when admiration turns into thoughtful action, not blind imitation.

Building Beautiful Inside

VALUE LESSONS FROM 'WHO'S THE REAL HERO?'

HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE MY CHILD TO TAKE INITIATIVE AND MAKE THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES?

Context in the Story: At first, Danny waits for things to happen — believing that copying Mombino's stillness or style will somehow bring wisdom. But later, he decides to try a new plan, rally his friends, and lead in a way that's authentic to him. This is where the real shift happens when Danny chooses to act rather than just imitate.

Real-world Connection: Children may hold back from trying new things unless they feel confident or see someone else do it first. They might copy instead of creating — or follow instead of leading — simply out of fear of getting it wrong.

How parents can use the story: This story models the quiet power of initiative. Parents can use Danny's journey to talk about what it means to try your own way, even if it's not perfect. After reading, they can ask their child, "What would your plan be to move that hill?" or "Can you think of something new you tried this week on your own?" These reflections help children notice and celebrate moments of originality, courage, and effort. The story reminds children that it's not about having all the answers — it's about being willing to start.

Building Beautiful Inside

VALUE LESSONS FROM ‘WHO’S THE REAL HERO?’

HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCIPLINE?

Context in the Story: Danny believes that copying Mombino’s gestures will make him powerful — but he misses the deeper habits that make her truly wise. Mombino doesn’t act out of show; she observes, thinks, and applies quiet effort. By the end, Danny begins to understand that what looks like magic is actually built on attention, patience, and steady work.

Real-world Connection: Young children may think that heroes and leaders are just born great. The slow, invisible work behind achievement, whether it’s learning to tie laces or solve puzzles, is rarely obvious to them. Discipline often seems boring or invisible.

How parents can use the story: This story offers a chance to gently introduce the idea that true skill comes from consistent effort. Parents can talk about how Mombino seems calm and capable because she practices thinking before acting. When children feel impatient or want to “be great” instantly, the story offers a humorous counterpoint — even Danny had to learn that squinting hard doesn’t make problems go away! Parents can highlight the difference between copying and learning, between fast tricks and steady habits — planting the seeds of self-discipline through the story.

Assessment Questions for “WHO’S THE REAL HERO?”

Five assessment questions to encourage children's understanding and emotional intelligence:

1. Admiring Without Copying Blindly

Purpose: To help children see that it's good to admire someone, but even better to understand and follow their values instead of just their style.

Question: “Why did Danny want to be exactly like Mombino?”

Follow-up: “Can you think of someone you look up to and one thing about them you'd like to learn, not just copy?”



2. Finding Your Own Way

Purpose: To guide children towards using their own strengths instead of trying to be like someone else.

Question: “What changed when Danny decided to do things the Danny way?”

Follow-up: “What's something you've done your own way that made you feel proud?”

3. Making Wise Choices

Purpose: To help children think about the difference between following others and thinking for themselves.

Question: “Why didn’t Danny’s plan to move the termite hill work at first?”

Follow-up: “Have you ever tried something because you saw someone else do it but then found a better way for you?”

4. Understanding the Real Work Behind Success

Purpose: To help children realise that skills and wisdom come from practice and patience, not just looking the part.

Question: “What did Kimaya say makes Mombino a real hero?”

Follow-up: “What’s something you had to practice before you got good at it?”

5. Teamwork Brings Better Results

Purpose: To encourage children to see that working with others can make a big job easier and more fun.

Question: “How did Danny and his friends finally clear the path?”

Follow-up: “Who would you ask to help you if you had a big job to do?”

See you next Monday
with another interesting story!

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