

FRANK LAMPARD

FRANKIE'S MAGIC FOOTBALL



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FRANKIE'S KANGAROO CAPER



CHAPTER 1

A few specks of rain spattered against the car window. Outside, the sky was slate grey, even though it was supposed to be summer.

Typical English weather, thought Frankie. It was the last day of the half-term holidays. Normally, he'd have been out playing football,

but his mum and dad had offered to take them all to the safari park instead. So far they'd seen African mammals, the reptile house, penguins and sea lions, and a massive gorilla.

Frankie read the sign as they waited in the queue of cars outside the monkey enclosure.

Please close all windows and doors.

Please do not feed the animals.

**Please do not beep your horns –
the monkeys don't like it!**

"I hope they don't jump on my car!" said Frankie's dad, who was

in the driving seat. "I've just had it washed."

Frankie peered out of the window as they drove in. He couldn't see a single animal. Where were they all hiding?

"What's your favourite creature in the safari park so far, Frankie?" asked Louise. She and Charlie were sitting in the back with Frankie. Max, Frankie's dog, sat in the rear of the car, peering out of the back window.

"I like the cheetahs!" said Frankie. "The guide book said they were the fastest creatures on legs. Imagine being able to run at

seventy miles an hour. No defender could catch you!”

“The cheetahs looked pretty lazy to me,” said his dad. “They were just lounging around today.”

“Like you on the sofa when the football’s on, Dad,” said Frankie.

Everyone laughed.

“I loved the sea lions,” said Louise. “They’re so clever!”

Frankie agreed. They’d watched a display in the sea lion tank, as the animals leapt out of the water, jumping through hoops while their keepers tossed them fish. One had even splashed Frankie’s dad with its tail.



"They were pretty good at football too," said Frankie's mum. "One could balance a ball on its nose!"

"The orang-utan was best," said Charlie.

"Why?" said Louise. "Because he had red hair like you?"

"No," said Charlie, grinning.

“Because of his reach, of course. He’d make an amazing goalkeeper. Hey – look at that!” He pointed with his goalie glove out of his window, and Frankie saw a black shape running along a branch.

“It’s a monkey!” said Louise.

Frankie steadied his camera as more monkeys appeared through the leaves. One was watching their car and eating a piece of mushy fruit. Frankie waved to catch its attention. “Say cheese!” he called. The monkey swung down from the tree, then leapt out of sight over the top of the car before Frankie could get a picture.

“Where’d he go?” asked Louise, looking around.

Thump!

Something hit the roof of the car.

“Oh no,” said Frankie’s dad, twisting in his seat. “He wants to say hello!”

A small wrinkled face peered over the top of the car, looking into Frankie’s window. The monkey’s mouth twisted in a smile and it laid a palm against the glass.

“They’re so like us, aren’t they?” said Louise.

The monkey vanished.

“Thank goodness for that!” said Frankie’s dad, continuing to drive

slowly. "Now it can go and bother someone else."

Thumpety-thumpety-thump.

Footsteps bounced along the roof, and the monkey landed on the bonnet.

Frankie's dad put on the brakes gently and the car came to a stop. "Oh, marvellous!" he sighed.

The monkey began to fiddle with the windscreen wipers, pulling at one until it twanged back into place.

"Maybe we should call the park rangers," muttered Frankie's dad.

"Don't be silly," said his mum. "It's only playing. And look, the same thing is happening to everyone else!"

Through the front windscreen,

Frankie saw she was right. All the cars had monkeys leaping over them, causing mischief.

Frankie's dad continued to drive slowly.

The monkey hopped on to the wing mirror, then disappeared again. Max whined from the back of the car. Frankie turned and saw the monkey perched on the rear of the car. It seemed to be fiddling with something.

"Lou, you don't think monkeys can open boots, do you?" he said.

Before his friend could answer, there was a soft click, and the boot opened.