

Panther's Purple Tram

by Cassandra, 4th grade writer



Panther woke up one morning in the mood to play. "I will play with Brother and Papa Panther today," she said. "They will want me to visit them at the Fauna and Flora Zoo and Gardens."

Panther headed to the zoo, wondering what her family was up to. "Maybe they will want to race," she thought. "Or they might be eating." She stepped through the hole in the zoo gate.

"Maybe Mama Panther will be feeding the new cuuuu...." She stopped dead in her tracks. There, sitting in front of her was the large, shiny, new, purple zoo tram. She stepped forward to examine it. Slowly, she edged her way toward the driver's seat. She stepped inside.

"Look at all the buttons and levers!" she shouted in surprise. She turned the key and the tram rumbled as if to say, "Take me for a spin, I know you want to." Panther put her paw on the gas pedal and turned the wheel.

"To the kangaroos!" she declared.

When she got to the kangaroo exhibit, she honked the tram horn. Roothy Kangaroo was leaping about, but stopped when she saw Panther and looked distressed. "Hello, how are you Mrs. Kangaroo?" Panther asked.

"I was better before you drove up in the tram," muttered Mrs. Kangaroo.

Panther ignored the rude comment. "This is lots of fun!" babbled Panther. Mrs. Kangaroo turned around and began to head toward her favorite tree.

"You should try it!" said Panther.

Mrs. Kangaroo spun around and glared at her. "That would take me to my death!" snapped Mrs. Kangaroo.

Panther sighed. "On to the prairie dogs," she decided. Panther turned the tram around and headed to Prairie Dog Town. As the cheerful Panther chugged along in the noisy tram, Baby Prairie Dog heard her coming, but Mama Prairie Dog did not notice the tram.

"I'm going to my burrow, Mama" said Baby Prairie Dog in a rush.

"Be sure to say your prayers," said his mother in a soothing tone.

Then Mama Prairie Dog looked up. "Do not run me over! Please!" She managed to say in a frightened voice.

"I will not run you over," Panther nearly shouted, sounding offended. "I just came to show you this beautiful tram. Come join me."

"AAAAHHHHH!" screamed Mama Prairie Dog as she scurried down into the tunnel of her burrow.

Panther was surprised by the reaction of the prairie dogs to her invitation. "I hope the porcupines will be a little kinder," thought Panther as she headed out of the grasslands of Prairie Dog Town. As the big, purple tram approached a tree, Panther noticed a porcupine curled in the hollowed out trunk of the tree. Panther beeped the horn as she parked the tram by the porcupine's home. "Hello, Mr. Porcupine," she said.

Mr. Porcupine awoke with a frown, noticing Panther brought a tram to his home. "You better get that noisy, metal contraption out of here, or I'll pop the tires with my quills," grumbled Mr. Porcupine.

"Okay, okay, I'll leave. I just wanted you to ride with me," said Panther shakily. "What a friendly greeting," thought Panther sarcastically as she drove off, discouraged. "I'll go visit my family."

When Panther arrived at the panther exhibit, she noticed her family was not there. Panther returned the tram where she found it and, unhappily, she slipped through the hole in the zoo gate and went home.

After a good night's rest, Panther returned to the zoo, determined to see her family. Out of curiosity, Panther went to see if the tram was where she left it. To her surprise, the tram was not there. She shrugged and ran toward her family's exhibit ready for a visit. As Panther approached her family's exhibit, she saw the tram loaded with all of the animals including her family.

"Come drive us!" they all shouted in unison.

"Alright," said Panther as she jumped into the driver's seat. Panther wasn't sure what had changed their minds, but she was just happy everyone had joined her.

"I'm glad I didn't pop the tires on the tram. This is fun!" cried Mr. Porcupine.

"This isn't as scary as I thought it would be!" cried Baby Prairie Dog.

"I've never had so much fun!" cried Mrs. Kangaroo.

When the ride was over, all the animals asked Panther to come back each morning before the zoo opened so they could ride again and again.