Lion’s Lunch?
By Fiona Tierney

Sarah was walking through the jungle, singing happily, when a big lion pounced from behind a bush. “What are you doing in my jungle?” he roared.

“P-please, Mr. Lion,” whispered Sarah. “I was only going for a walk.”

“A WALK! Nobody here just walks. We run, sprint, prowl, creep, swing, lumber, slither, swoop, gallop, and scuttle. You shouldn’t be here, this is my jungle.”

“I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to bother you,” said Sarah.

“And what was that sound?” snapped Lion.

“I was s-singing,” said Sarah.

“SINGING! Nobody here just sings. We roar, yowl, grunt, chatter, buzz, trumpet, hiss, growl, pant, and harrumph.”

“I’m sorry said Sarah. “I didn’t mean to bother you.”

“Since you shouldn’t be here, I’m going to eat you,” said Lion.

“Please don’t eat me,” pleaded Sarah. “I love the jungle. Tell me what I can do to stay.”

“Let me see,” jeered Lion, ticking off his sharp claws one by one.

“You can’t run like Cheetah or climb like Monkey or swim like Crocodile or stalk like Tiger or leap like Gazelle or hide like Chameleon or reach like Giraffe or wallow like Hippopotamus or float like Butterfly or wriggle like Snake.

“Now I’m out of claws, and it looks to me like you’re LUNCH!”

Lion licked his lips and got ready to leap.
“Wait!” said Sarah. “If I can do something that nobody else in the jungle can do, will you let me stay?”

“What can you possibly do that we can’t do better?” asked Lion.

“I can draw,” said Sarah.

“Draw!” said Lion. “What can you draw?”

“You!” replied Sarah. She took out her paper, pencils, and paints. “Because you are King of the Jungle.”

As she drew, the other animals gathered behind her.

“Finished,” said Sarah at last, and she showed Lion her picture.

Lion looked.
Lion saw…

A Great Big Angry Lion!

“That’s not me,” he growled. “I’m handsome, but you’ve made me look mad and mean. I will eat you because you can’t draw.”

“OH YES SHE CAN,” chorused the other animals. “You’re bad-tempered and bossy. Let her draw us and you’ll see.”

So, while Lion sulked, Sarah drew all the other animals.

“See!” said the animals. “Sarah only draws it like it is.”

Lion looked at his picture and the other drawings. Then he looked at Sarah and the other animals. “Sarah, you are free,” he said in a voice that was quiet and thoughtful. “It’s getting late. Let me walk you safely out of the jungle.”

“No,” said the other animals. “You are too grumpy and bossy. We will go with Sarah.”

And they all set off in a merry, noisy, happy bunch, with Lion following far behind.
When everybody had said good-bye, Lion came up to her and said, “I don’t like the way I look. Sarah, I wish I could change.”

“You are a big, strong, and wonderful lion,” said Sarah. “Maybe you could try helping everybody instead of bullying them. I’m sure that will change the way you look!”

“Please come back and draw me again. You’ll see a difference, I promise,” said Lion.

“I’ll come again next month,” said Sarah.

And guess what she drew next time?

A GREAT BIG HAPPY LION!

Lion smiled when he saw the new picture. “Thank you, Sarah,” he said.

“You are welcome to walk and sing and draw in OUR jungle whenever you like!”