My Trip to the Zoo

Yesterday my best friend Amanda and I went to the zoo. It was a nice, sunny day and we had been looking forward to this trip for a few weeks. It certainly turned out to be an interesting time, although not exactly what we expected!

The first place we went, where we always go first when we get to the zoo, was to see Jerry and Tyson. That’s what we call our two favourite meerkats. At Adelaide Zoo there are nine meerkats in the family. The meerkats are very cute, and they certainly act like they know it! Amanda and I have given all of them names, although sometimes it’s hard to tell them apart. Our favourites are Jerry and Tyson because they are so cheeky. We stayed for a while to watch them busily digging tunnels, play fighting with each other, and basking in the sun - always with one of them standing up on his haunches on guard duty.

After we had said hello to the meerkats, we had to visit the pygmy hippopotamus because Amanda likes him second best. We stood by the enclosure and peered in, trying to see him, but he was nowhere to be found. I looked at the disgustingly mucky water in the pool and was wondering how any creature could survive in such an environment, when the hippopotamus abruptly surfaced right near me, sending a wave of water in our direction. I shrieked and jumped out of the way, even though he couldn’t possibly splash us. Little did I know what was in store for us later that day.

Our next destination was the reptile house. Ever since I saw *Harry Potter,* I have wished I could talk to a snake. Amanda and I always try speaking parseltongue but the snakes never fail to ignore us. This time we tried it on the Komodo Dragon too and she looked a bit more interested. Maybe we are getting somewhere. Or not.

Our fourth and, as it turns out, last visit was to the lions. They seemed very upset and were roaring at everyone, and even though they are behind huge bars, it was still a bit scary. The roar seems to get into your stomach and make it feel like jelly. We watched them for a while, and then we made our first mistake – we took our eyes off them! Amanda was saying something to me when she noticed, too late, that other people were backing away. As we turned back to see what they were looking at, a sudden spray of warm water hit us. Then we realised: it was NOT water! One of the lions had backed up to the bars and was peeing everywhere. Apparently, they do this sometimes to mark their territory. It was amazing how far it went – we weren’t the only ones in the line of fire, but we were the closest victims and got the most drenched. We both screamed louder than the lions roaring. Some of the other people standing around started laughing at us. I just wanted to get out of there.

We rushed as fast as we could to the nearest water fountain and tried to rinse off, but the smell would not go away. Then we went to the toilets and tried to clean up more thoroughly with water from the toilet sinks. Amanda got really carried away and rinsed her mouth out with soap – she claims some of it went into her mouth! We were drenched and smelly, and felt a bit sick after that, so we decided we may as well just go home. Amanda was feeling even worse than me, probably because of the soap. We both stank the bus out and got some really revolted looks from other passengers!

When we got home my mum took one look at us and sent us to the bathroom where we both had hot showers. Then she gave us a yummy tea to take the taste away. I thought we might end up at the doctor, but neither of us got sick. I can tell you one thing though: we will never go near that nasty lion again.

