Calvin stopped and looked at the tree before him. This was **his** special tree. Only he had been able to climb it until now. Calvin looked up and stared at the object of his attention staring back at him. Sitting on the branch a foot and a half above Calvin was a furry yet unperturbed tiger. Hobbs harrumphed at Calvin’s mean stare. He was king of the tree and there was nothing Calvin could do about it.

“What are you doing Hobbs?” asked Calvin quietly.

“Being king of the tree peasant. Shush while I contemplate this leaf” came the nonchalant response.

Calvin bristled at this huge disrespect. “Why don’t you come down Hobbs? I’ve got some food.”

“Is that your humility? Are you going to feed me your obedience?”

That did it! Calvin picked up a stick and threw it at Hobbs, but the stick hit the branch and bounced back and struck Calvin in the head. Hobbs roared with laughter and promptly lost his balance and fell out of the tree. He looked up to see a snarling Calvin reaching for him and said “Come on and get it push over….” And they began tumbling in the dirt around the tree fighting.

A little while later they laid there on the ground panting from all the exertion. Calvin laid there staring up at the clouds between the leaves of the tree. It was a beautiful summer day. Not too hot and with and occasional breeze to ripple through the leaves, grass, and minds. Calvin turned over and looked at his friend who laid there with his eyes closed. His paws up as if waiting for a belly rub. His friend. Hobbs was his truest of friends. He was always there to listen, console, tease, and sometimes comfort in times of extreme duress. Yet he wondered how much longer Hobbs would be there for him. How long does this wonderful magic last that made a stuffed tiger a friend… a best friend.

Hobbs had tried to explain the best he could because even he was somewhat unsure what made him a living being. He said that as far as he knew he was there for Calvin always and that he would only show his true self to Calvin. Calvin wasn’t too sure what Hobbs was saying but he somehow knew that their friendship was more than a normal deep friendship. There was something eternal about it. Laying there Calvin decided they had laid there long enough and was about to get up when Hobbs nose twitched and his tail started lashing about.

“Suzy’s coming” whispered Hobbs.

Calvin felt a small stab of annoyance, but then that changed when he realized they had advance notice and he could take advantage of that to play a trick on her.

“How far away is she Hobbs?” Calvin asked.

“Not too far. What are you thinking?”

“I think we need to do the squirrel trick.” Calvin grinned wickedly. The squirrel trick was to climb high and hide in the tree and when the unwary passerby toddled along they would pelt the individual with the acorns that always seem to be in abundance.

“Me first!” barked Hobbs as he jumped up and started climbing up the tree.

Calvin grabbed him by the tail causing Hobbs to squawk and they started fighting again. However Calvin quickly apologized and they both shimmied up the tree… higher into the thick of the leaves to sit and wait for Suzy to walk by.

Suzy walked along the small foot worn trail in the country side. She like to take a walk and enjoy the beautiful flowers and plants. She also kept an eye out for Calvin. She knew he was a mischievous boy only too well. Calvin could be sweet but most of the time he was a mean pranking boy. She still liked him though as she often had seen the quiet side of Calvin having deep heart felt conversations with his stuffed tiger Hobbs. Hobbs… Calvin never went anywhere without Hobbs that she knew of. Despite some teasing by people, most took it as normal that where you saw Calvin you would see Hobbs. She had even seen his parents just shake their heads over it, but they loved him and seem to have a lot of patience.

She walked along and had been picking small flowers here and there to create a small bouquet of flows. Something nice to sit in her bedroom she thought. As she bent down near a huge tree to pick a flower she heard a very light sound of something thudding nearby. She stood up and looked around. There was nothing or no one near. Shrugging she bent down again to pick the flower and this time she felt something hit her. She straightened up quickly and looked about. She saw an acorn laying nearby. Before she could turn another acorn hit her in the head! She dropped her flowers and gripped her head and looked towards the tree and then heard the small voice of giggling and knew it was Calvin.

“I KNOW ITS YOU CALVIN! I’M GOING TO GET YOU! YOU MEAN BOY!” she yelled at the tree.

Then a hearty raspberry erupted from amidst the leaves along with some acorns. “Yeah right” came the soft reply.

Suzy gritted her teeth and gathered up her flowers all the while glowering at the tree. She would get him back soon enough she thought. She started back towards home but yelled out, “You gotta come down sometime BOY and Im going to be waiting for you!”

Calvin was laughing quietly at the scene. Hobbs sat next to him smiling at Calvin, but as he turned to look at Suzy he realized she was glowering at them through the leaves. He knew this meant that she was going to pull a prank on Calvin sometime, somehow. Mildly concerned he turned towards Calvin.

“You know she’s going to get you back.” Said Hobbs.

“Pffft” sputtered Calvin, “Like she has a chance. I can handle her.”

Hobbs rolled his eyes. Evidently his friend was still suffering from some brain damage from their last little wrestle. “Uh-huh” he said.

“Let’s go home, I’m getting hungry Hobbs” said Calvin.

“Hmmm maybe I will stalk me some dinner.” Said Hobbs.

“What? But we’re having pizza. You love pizza.” Said Calvin.

“Ok,” said Hobbs, “and so you know, I like pizza, but I like my food fresh. Freshly caught.”

Calvin laughed and started climbing back down the tree. He landed on the ground and looked around. The sun was starting to set and as he reflected he realized he had had a good day. Grabbing Hobbs he started home.

As they walked home, Hobbs asked Calvin why he always had to pick on Suzy. Calvin had replied quickly that she was a stinky girl and had girly cooties. Then Calvin was quiet for a few steps then quietly muttered that he really didn’t know why he tormented Suzy. It just sorta seemed the right thing to do. Besides he was pretty sure he could handle anything she was going to do… unless she cried. Calvin told Hobbs he had no way to counter that. Crying girls were pitiful and he didn’t handle pitiful too well. Hobbs snickered and told Calvin he liked her. She was good at hugging. Calvin rolled his eyes and harrumphed.

They soon was just within sight of home. He could see his dad out mowing the yard. His dad was very nice, but he did not understand Calvin’s superior intellect. At least that’s what Calvin told himself. Why else did Calvin get into so much trouble! As they got closer he could see that there was a bicycle in the driveway… ROSALYN! His parents were going again, why else was she there.

“Hobbs do you see who’s bike is there?” whispered Calvin.

“Hmmm looks like a girls bike… Rosalyn?” asked Hobbs.

Calvin put on the pouty face, “Why is she at our house? Arrgh If mom and dad are going out then why is dad mowing the yard. I don’t know why they just don’t let me be by myself.”

“I don’t know. Let’s go find out. … I thought you liked her. You always make those kissy faces when she is around.” Slandered Hobbs.

Calvin froze. “What … did … you … say Hobbs?”

“You heard me little man. I have seen you making kissy faces at her.” Said Hobbs staring down at his paws nonchalantly.

Before Calvin could retort a voice called out “Calvin! Get over here now!”

His dad was looking at him from a few doors down and waving at him. Great thought Calvin as he turned back towards the house and continued walking noting the bemused grin on his dads face. His evening was not going to be as fun. As they got closer he noticed another bike in the driveway. It looked real familiar … in fact.. NO!

Hobbs looked down and noticed his friends shocked expression. “What?”

“That other bike is Suzy’s!” said Calvin through gritted teeth.

Hobbs chuckled.

“It’s not funny fur brains.” Snarled Calvin.

“What? What do you mean? You have both of your girlfriends at your house now!” laughed Hobbs up in Calvins face. “So what are you going to do about it little boy!”