

## ***Steve goes to Carnival***

By Joshua Button and Robyn Wells

Notes by Robyn Wells, March 2018

### **2. ANTONIO**

Manila folder containing 10 pieces of original artwork

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The character of Antonio and his friendship with Steve was described by Joshua in the first draft of the story in 2006: 'Antonio is handsome and kind and loves jazz. He is the zookeeper at the Rio de Janeiro Zoo in Brazil. Antonio loves all the animals, but he loves Steve the Gorilla the best. Sometimes he takes Steve for a walk and they listen to jazz on the radio.' (see *Notebook 1*).

In the initial drafts, Antonio and the saxophone player were two separate characters. In the earlier versions, as soon as Steve is exposed as a gorilla, the jazz club hostess calls the zoo and Antonio comes to his rescue. In the final publication, Antonio the Zookeeper and Antonio the Saxophone Player were merged into one character. This was a significant change: it creates an element of surprise for the reader, and gives Antonio a greater depth of character. Not only is he a zookeeper— he is a talented musician! Antonio becomes a kind of pied piper: his music is like a magical thread that weaves throughout the story.

The original inspiration for the look of Antonio was Antonio Banderas, whom Josh had admired in the film *Zorro*. When Joshua came to illustrate the final pieces for the book, photographs were taken to get the right body language for each scene: Robyn's friend Marcus Duncan posed as Antonio the Zookeeper and Tim Malone, a saxophone player, modelled Antonio the Saxophone Player.