Ivan: The Remarkable True Story Of the Shopping Mall Gorilla

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A young baby gorilla named Ivan is captured at birth and sold to store owners for the purpose of bringing customers to a local mall in Tacoma, Washington. For years, he was treated as a human in the owners’ home, but eventually they locked Ivan in a cage at the store as an attraction and display. Eventually, the people of the town protested his captivity and finally he was taken to a zoo where he was much happier.

The illustrations in Ivan: The Remarkable True Story of the Shopping Mall Gorilla beautifully capture Ivan’s emotions and help readers engage and understand his story. For example, he is smiling when comfortable with his family at home and portrays wonder and amazement when introduced to the zoo. The story is told in short, simple sentences and rhymes that are accessible to young readers. The additional pictures of the real Ivan and a letter from one of his keepers adds meaning to this true story. Also, this book promotes animal right awareness and teaches how you can change the world by speaking up for those who cannot speak for themselves. This is a great message to teach children and adults alike.