

Full House Fan Fiction

The Greatest Kindergarten Hero

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FULL HOUSE - THE GREATEST KINDERGARTEN HERO

(This story takes place between the first and second seasons of Full House)

Six year old Stephanie Tanner grinned excitedly. "Say it again," she insisted to her 19-month-old sister, Michelle. "Say 'I love you' for Daddy." She pointed to her dad, Danny Tanner, who held a video camera.

"Yuvoo," Michelle spoke quickly.

Stephanie's 11-year-old sister, D.J., snickered as Stephanie handed Michelle a crayon. Michelle began scribbling on a paper.

Stephanie bit her lip and sighed as her dad walked away to tell her uncle Jesse. Since her mother died a year before, Jesse - her mom's brother - and her dad's best friend, Joey Gladstone, had moved in to help Danny raise the girls.

Stephanie shook her head slightly, her very blonde, Shirley Temple curls tickling Michelle's face. She took the toddler's hand and "helped her" make X's and O's on the paper. She asked D.J. to grab a helium balloon from a birthday party she'd attended the previous day. It still floated very well, so it was tied to her bed.

When D.J. brought it, Stephanie spoke sadly. "Poor Michelle, Mommy will never hear her say I love you."

"Steph," came D.J.'s giggling voice as the girls walked onto the back porch, "she says yuvoo."

Stephanie rolled her eyes as she held up a roll of tape she'd grabbed. "Oh, D.J., please! A mother would know what she meant."

D.J. handed Stephanie the balloon and helped her tape the drawing onto it. Danny returned with Jesse and with the video camera turned on once more. Stephanie got excited thinking about her mother. She felt sad because she missed her, but at the same time, a moment like this helped her to fondly remember Pam Tanner, and to think of the good times they'd had. She couldn't understand much about death. She only knew Pam was in a far better place, full of wonderful things, and from which her mother could never come back and they couldn't go see her.

"Ah, nothing so rare as a day in June - unless it's a day without dust. Is this my little girl who says 'I love you' now?" The proud voice was her dad's. Stephanie was excited to be featured prominently in at least one of her dad's videos of Michelle. He loved to record everything, but sometimes she felt he liked to record Michelle the most.

"Danny, she said yuvoo," spoke her Uncle Jesse. She enjoyed him, but this comment showed he knew little about babies. Then again, what did she expect? He and Joey had obviously been totally clueless on how to change a diaper when they'd moved in with her family.

Stephanie looked into the camera. "Look what Michelle colored. And her big sister Stephanie

taught her how. All ready, everyone?"

"We're ready," came the others.

Stephanie handed the balloon to Michelle, who toddled out into the backyard.

"Let it go, let it go!" cried Stephanie. Michelle released it, and it floated almost straight up.

"Hot dawg!" she exclaimed, leaping off the porch. The bundle of excited energy hollered "There it goes!" She looked skyward and waved. "Michelle's sending a present!" She turned to Michelle. "Say I love you,' Michelle."

Michelle was having none of the exuberance her sister had, though. She looked a little cranky, as she was ready for her morning nap. She whined as though she wanted the balloon. "Balloon! Mine!"

Stephanie continued to bounce and look into the brilliant blue sky. She heard DJ speak. "Uh, Michelle, see, you sent your note up there on..."

"Balloon! Balloon!" Michelle whined in a lovesick voice. She pointed where it had disappeared from view.

After a moment, Stephanie noticed her baby sister crying. She directed her attention toward her. "Michelle, it's okay, we'll get you...oh, don't cry, we..." She wasn't sure how to handle this. She desperately looked around for her dad, because Michelle seemed to want someone to violate the laws of physics.

"Michelle, you don't understand," Stephanie told the tot. "Some things can't happen. It's really simple, like helium balloons can't come down because of...well, whatever makes helium balloons go up. Okay, bad example. That's not so simple."

Their dad picked Michelle up and said "somebody needs a nap." They followed the two into the house.

Stephanie disliked the whining. She still cried sometimes - however, it was usually only if she saw someone else, like DJ, crying. She tended to be good at coming up with alternatives so she wouldn't feel so bad. That was the hardest thing about her mom's death. She missed her quite a bit, and there was nothing she could do about it. Luckily, she had a great family, and her best friend - a stuffed bear named Mr. Bear.

She was curious about her own Terrible Twos phase. She thought it a strange name, since it often began around 18 months. "I wasn't like that, was I, DJ?"

No, yours was more a screaming cry," her sister teased her.

DJ and Stephanie played together for a while, as the men of the house cleaned and discussed other important matters. Her Uncle Jesse was thinking of changing his name. He'd gone by Cochran for a while, but now he considered changing it back to Katsopolis.

Near lunchtime, soon before Danny would leave for his sportscasting job, they heard Michelle in the nursery. DJ walked in and picked her up. Stephanie followed her like a puppy, anxious to copy her older sister. She followed DJ down the stairs as the men talked.

"Yeah, well, for me," she heard Joey saying, "I've gone from being Joey to being No-ey."

"I thought I was No-ey," came her dad.

Stephanie immediately thought of a joke. "Only if you built an ark-ee."

DJ sat Michelle on the floor, and put the child gate back. "Michelle's up from her nap," reported the eleven year old.

Danny grinned. "Good. I was just talking to your Uncle Jesse, girls. Don't you think he should change his name back?"

"Aw, come on, Danny," spoke Jesse, "poor little Stephanie probably can't even say Katspop.. Kastop.. Kaspotopolis."

Stephanie beamed. She was quite talented in many ways. She could dance, sing, and even read well. Saying a name like this was really easy. "You mean Katsopolis?"

"Yeah, that," Jesse agreed.

"Jess, we all know you took this stage name around when Pam died. Is it really all about your career..."

Stephanie's dad trailed off, lost in thought. She could imagine why her mom's death was so hard on Uncle Jesse, too. She couldn't stand to think of what it would be like to lose DJ. She thought that, since Pam was his older sister, he felt the same way about her.

"If you change back now, maybe that'll take away some of the pain," spoke Danny. "You'll feel like you're carrying on for her."

Jesse finally agreed. "Yeah, maybe you're right. Seeing the little munchkin send her balloon up there helped, but..." Jesse looked around. "Where is she?"

Stephanie quickly hollered "freeze, Michelle!" She and DJ ran into the kitchen as the men looked elsewhere. She didn't know if Michelle was in trouble, but knew the toddler had been learning that very important command. It meant to stop all movement.

The six-year-old bolted over to the one-year-old seated at the table. A bottle of ketchup was laying on its side near her. Stephanie's eyes fixed on a knife that was also near, though. Something red was on Michelle's hands and cheeks, which she smeared on the table.

Stephanie screamed with the rapidity of an auctioneer. "Oh, no, Michelle's bleeding! Call 911! Call the doctor! Call the Ghostbusters! Call everyone!"

DJ ran to the phone, while the men ran into the kitchen. Stephanie pushed the knife away and examined the red material. She breathed a sigh of relief. It was all ketchup.

"Phew! False alarm!" She felt badly about scaring the others, as she remembered the story of the boy who cried wolf. Therefore, she turned it into a joke. "Unless...Michelle bleeds ketchup."

DJ put the phone down. "Oh, thank goodness!"

Stephanie looked sadly at the men. She feared they might be mad at her. "I'm sorry."

Danny bent down and put his hands on her shoulders. "It's okay," he said calmly, "you just got a little scared, huh?" She nodded slowly, lowering her head. "You did the right thing by calling us. Next time just yell 'come quick,' we'll be there."

Stephanie tried to force a grin. She would remember that for the next time, but she was disappointed that she'd not done it this time. She was often quite hard on herself when bad things happened. It was the price one paid for being so excitable.

"Okay," she said lowly.

Jesse picked up Michelle. "And you need to get wiped off and put in your playpen for a couple minutes."

"Careful, Jess, she climbed out of there yesterday," Joey told him.

Danny agreed. "It's just hard to keep her safe right now. Her pediatrician says at this age, your main goal is to keep a child alive."

Stephanie gasped. That sounded very scary to her! "Oh, no!"

Jesse glanced over from the sink. He could tell that comment startled his niece more than it was meant to. Danny simply blurted things at the wrong moment sometimes. "That just means we have to be extra careful, and more watchful than ever, because she can't help herself stay away from some things. But almost all kids survive this age really well."

DJ noted one problem. "She didn't even stop when Steph said 'freeze,' and I'm sure she heard it."

Danny laughed. "With that shout, folks in Oakland probably heard it." He continued by stating that they needed to work with her on that. "Once you put her in her playpen, Jess, I'll go down with you to the court if you want to get that name change, before I go into work."

Jesse agreed, and Joey decided to start lunch. DJ promised "we'll have her freezing so fast she'll think she's at the North Pole. I'll call Kimmy, she can help."

Danny spoke of DJ's friend. "Teach her, too, I can shout it while she still over at her house."

Stephanie laughed. Her whole family loved to tease DJ's best friend, Kimmy Gibbler. For Stephanie, it was partly because any friend took away from time she could spend with DJ. For the others, it was that Kimmy was not only easy to pick on, but was constantly over at their house.

The girls and Kimmy were all in the living room several minutes later. Michelle sat on DJ's lap. Stephanie sat in front of the toddler and spoke. She sincerely hoped this sunk in, because her dad's remark frightened her.

"Michelle, I know we've played it before, but you didn't freeze when I said. So now, we need to play that "freeze" game some more."

"Kay," came the small voice. Her dad had said that right after a nap was normally the best time to teach her something, because she wouldn't feel as much like refusing to obey.

"Whenever someone says freeze," DJ explained, "you have to stop all movement. If you don't you go in the playpen."

Stephanie showed the same great big smile her mother always did - and that Michelle usually did. "And if you do stop, you get a big hug."

Kimmy raised her hand. "Does Brad Pitt know this game? I'd like to play it with him."

Stephanie shook her head. Not even DJ talked about boys like Kimmy did. She didn't know how her sister put up with Kimmy. However, she thought she remembered someone - maybe her mom before she died - explaining how DJ wanted to be "the best example anyone could be."

And part of that was showing someone like Kimmy how to behave, even if her parents didn't. Maybe that was why DJ hung around Kimmy.

She didn't care. To her, Kimmy's obsession with boys was just totally nuts. In fact, to Stephanie, Kimmy was totally nuts.

DJ let Michelle off her lap, and the little girl ran toward Stephanie. "Freeze, Michelle," spoke DJ. When Michelle stopped right away, Stephanie gave her a big hug. DJ embraced her, too.

"Good girl, you froze!" Stephanie never had to fake excitement. On the other hand, she wished Kimmy would at least pretend to be thrilled. "Why don't you hug her, Kimmy?"

Kimmy: looked dreamy. "I'm thinking about what boys in my class I want to teach this to. I could have them all hugging me at once."

"Gibbler, if you were running toward something dangerous, all the boys would let you."

Michelle took off running toward the kitchen. DJ hollered "Freeze, Michelle," but she didn't listen.

Stephanie ran and scooped her up, shouting "no, Michelle, bad!" in a voice slightly louder than she'd wanted.

She felt sorry as Michelle began weeping and looking fearfully at her. "I'm sorry," she spoke softly and sadly, "but we're trying to help save you."

DJ picked Michelle up and put her in her playpen. She shot her other sister a slightly harsh

look. "Stephanie, she doesn't need to be scared like that."

Kimmy stuck up for Michelle, too. "Yeah, you dork, she's only one and a half, let her have a life."

Stephanie glared at Kimmy, and cracked "maybe I should, she'd have more of a life than you, then." Kimmy quickly grabbed Stephanie. "Hey!" She carried Stephanie over to Michelle's playpen while the six-year-old complained. "Hey, what are you doing! Cut it out, put me down."

Once seated by Michelle, she folded her arms. "I can't believe you'd put me in Michelle's playpen! How ruuuude!"

Joey entered at that moment and looked at the playpen. "Whoa, Steph, I thought you knew how to obey a "freeze" command," quipped the comedian.

Stephanie pointed at Kimmy. "She did it."

Michelle started to climb out, but Stephanie pulled her down. She forced herself to speak calmly, so she wouldn't scare the tot. With only a slightly raised voice, she told Michelle "no, you can't go out yet."

"Yes," stated the toddler, testing the limit.

"No," Stephanie stated simply, her head going forward a little as she said it.

The battle of "yes" and "no" continued for several more rounds. Finally, Stephanie said "yes" hoping Michelle would say "no." Unfortunately, Michelle still said "yes."

Stephanie couldn't believe it. Mad at herself, she placed her hands on her hips. "How come I always said no when DJ did that?"

Michelle tried to climb out once more, and Stephanie said "freeze, Michelle!"

The toddler stopped and looked over her shoulder. Stephanie gave her a big hug and spoke joyfully. "Oh, Michelle, that's the way to do it, I'm so proud. You need to stop because that could save your life."

Tired of being in the playpen, Stephanie stood and began to climb out herself. However, she heard Michelle say "f'eeze." She stopped and shrugged, while Michelle hugged her.

As the sisters embraced in the playpen, Stephanie spoke warmly. "I guess I'll do anything to protect you, even if it's crawling around in a playpen."

Jesse returned a short time later. Joey and the girls ran to greet him. "I am once again a Katsopolis," their uncle remarked.

"Oh boy!" shouted Stephanie.

"Mom would be glad," spoke DJ. Michelle toddled out the door, unseen by the group.

"Doesn't she know it?"

Joey explained. "Steph, it's so fabulous where she is, anything her eon Earth would be boring."

Stephanie grinned. A place with no pain, no suffering, and no hurting did sound great. She was glad Michelle had sent the message, so their mom would know she could say "I love you."

Thinking of Michelle made Stephanie glance around. Her eyes grew wide, and she dashed outside. "Freeze," she cried.

She ran out to Michelle, who stood still about three feet from the street, facing it. Michelle looked behind her as Stephanie approached, with the others following. A big grin was on her face.

Stephanie picked Michelle up and spun her around before hugging her. A huge grin was on

her face. "Oh, Michelle, I'm so happy, you stopped just like you were supposed to!"

Jesse, Joey, and DJ all embraced the youngest two. "Steph," Joey proclaimed proudly, "you saved her."

"Oh, please, Joey," Stephanie told him modestly, trying to hide her anxiety as a car went past them slowly, "there was no traffic. A car would have had plenty of time to stop. I think. Unless they didn't see her. Or what if she fell down...no, there was plenty of time," came the rapid fire monologue. "I think. Please tell me I'm right," she spoke, slightly nervous.

"There's no guarantee of that," Jesse reminded her.

DJ concurred. "If someone wasn't watching the road, or couldn't stop, or she just decided to sit down and play so nobody could see her..." She stopped herself. Stephanie could tell her older sister was very pleased and excited. "Listen to me, I sound like Dad. But, you're right, that car was going very slowly."

Stephanie's mind boggled. The six-year-old pondered all the things DJ had said. She truly had rambled like their dad in that instance; Stephanie was even more prone to it. However, maybe it was true. Perhaps she did save Michelle. It was certainly fun to think that. "Well, pin a rose on my nose," she remarked, trying to remain humble.

"Hey, let's go call Danny at the station," suggested Jesse. "I bet he'll be thrilled."

Stephanie watched and waited, with a big grin on her face, as Jesse spoke to her dad. She was stunned at all the things he was saying. Hero? Could it be? She'd never imagined that she could be that good. She was only six. However, as she watched Michelle in her playpen, she wondered if it could be true.

She tried to sound modest for her dad, though. She knew he'd be extra proud no matter what she said. "Oh, Daddy, all I did was yell freeze."

"But it was still you that did it this time," Danny noted. "You really are a champion."

"Oh, I don't know if I'd say that..." She paused a moment. She liked hearing him say thank you...what had it been, ten times already? And they'd only been speaking a minute. "But, you're certainly welcome to say it."

"Listen, you watch my sportscast this afternoon, I'm gonna have to mention this one."

Stephanie bounced later while seated on the couch. The family was watching the 4:00 sportscast, with Michelle having laid down for her afternoon nap.

"There's Daddy," Stephanie reported as Danny's face appeared on the screen.

Before he spoke about sports, he informed the weatherman of an important house rule. "All parents should know this. It's called the freeze' command, though any word like it will do. We just play it for fun when it's not important, but everyone in our home knows they have to stop when they hear that word. And, anyone can say it. And the reason I'm saying this, this afternoon I'm so proud." He sounded a little choked up. "Because my little Stephanie, only six years old, hollered it when my baby girl Michelle was running toward the street, and it saved Michelle's life.

Steph, honey, you and DJ do such a great job of teaching her that. We talk about how we look up to sports stars, but let me tell you, my Stephanie is the greatest kind of hero."

"Wow," proclaimed Stephanie, totally stunned. "Maybe you can pin a rose on my nose."

Jesse suddenly walked over to the baby monitor. "Did you hear that?"

"Hear what," inquired DJ.

"It sounded like a thud," Jesse told them.

Joey shook his head. "I think it was more like a thunk."

Stephanie shook her head and swiftly jumped up from the couch. "Thud, thunk, whatever," she proclaimed speedily. "To the Batmobile!" She ran upstairs.

All four gathered in Michelle's room at once. "Where is she?" Joey wanted to know.

Greatly concerned, Stephanie glanced around the nursery frantically. "Phone booth, phone booth! I need a phone booth!"

Jesse and DJ snickered as they located Michelle under a pile of stuffed animals. "Here she is, Stephanie heard her uncle say. She exhaled quickly.

"Hi," came Michelle's smiling greeting.

Joey walked up to Michelle. "Michelle, you knocked that over when you got out of your cot, didn't you? At least you stayed in here for your nap."

Stephanie jokingly shook her finger at her. "Yes, we were very worried about you. Dr. Sinclair says we have to keep you alive."

Joey knelt beside Stephanie. "Steph, you don't need to get carried away with this hero thing."

"Yeah, she'll be fine," DJ assured her.

"I don't feel like she'll be fine," Stephanie told the group. "She could have run into traffic earlier today, you said so yourself!" The more she thought about that incident, the more she thought maybe the others were right. She'd reacted on the spur of the moment, but now, the moment seemed much scarier than it had before. Their concern over the baby monitor noise added to that.

Suddenly, all looked around them. Michelle had wandered off again. She normally wasn't this much trouble, as she would usually stay by others. Today was one of those days when she tried to test all the limits, however.

Stephanie raced out the door and hollered "freeze" as she saw Michelle entering the bathroom. She ran to the toddler and picking her up, hugging her again. "Whee, you did it again, you froze!"

"I don't think you had to say it that time," DJ told her.

"But I don't know when I'll need to," she spoke anxiously. "I have to keep saying it." She rubbed her chin. "In fact, I should probably take flying lessons, to be extra safe. They have those in first grade, don't they?"

"Hey, don't worry," Jesse remarked, "all our medicine and things have childproof caps."

Joey walked over to the medicine chest and took out a bottle of Flintstones vitamins. "That reminds me, I didn't take my Flintstones chewables today."

Jesse gawked at Joey opening the childproof cap. "On second thought, children can get in them." He turned to Stephanie. "But, that doesn't mean she's unsafe in this house. As long as we watch, she's perfectly safe."

"Of course she's perfectly safe," came a more confident Stephanie. "She has me."

Stephanie walked down the steps singing. Her pretty voice filled the house. "Believe it or not, I'm walkin' on in, I never thought I could feel so fre-ee-ee."

"Guess she'll never have a problem with self-confidence," joked DJ.

Joey nodded. "I oughta start knitting that Superman cape now for Halloween."

Soon before Danny arrived home, Stephanie turned on the news on the radio. She and DJ

were playing, when Stephanie heard a reporter telling about a car crash in which several people had died.

Stephanie began to consider the accident in which her own mother had died. She grumbled slightly. "That's not fair!"

"I know, it doesn't seem fair, does it," her sister spoke compassionately.

"All my work teaching her to freeze," Stephanie complained. She threw up her arms, and marched upstairs, somewhat teary. "What good is it if something like that can happen!"

Danny walked into Stephanie's room a short time later. She was moping on her bed, snuggling with Mr. Bear. "Hey, honey. You wanna come down and eat?"

"I don't feel like it," muttered the girl.

Danny sat beside her on her bed. "What's wrong?"

Her voice seemed littered with tears. "Everything! I'm supposed to be this super heroic person, and yet I couldn't save the people in that accident on the news!"

Danny knew his daughter cared for others, but he also knew the accident might have reminded her of something else. He put an arm around her. "Are you thinking about Mommy, too?"

"A little." She sniffled. "What if I'd been in the right place like I was with Michelle today. Mommy might still be alive."

Danny hugged the girl, nestling her head in his arms. "Oh, sweetheart, I know how you feel. I kind of thought of Mom too, when that news came into the station. I know it's hard, but it was just your mommy's time to go."

"Then what good does it do to help Michelle, how do we know her time won't come soon? Then all I've done will be for nothing," the six-year-old remarked.

DJ walked in with a piece of paper. Stephanie could tell it contained someone's writing.

Danny told her it was impossible to know when someone's time was. "Look, DJ has something for you."

Stephanie took the paper.

DJ grinned, and sat on the other side of Stephanie. Danny explained. "When you went upstairs crying DJ thought you might need to see this. It's a memo from Heaven, the angel who wrote it said to give it to you."

Stephanie read it. It reported that Pam loved the note Michelle sent, and that God was sorry, but that it had been her time to go. It also said to keep up the good work with Michelle, because she had many more good years ahead.

Stephanie studied the printing. "Something looks verrrry familiar about this." She turned to her dad and spoke very skeptically. "Are you sure an angel wrote this?"

Danny chuckled, and extended his arm to touch DJ's shoulder. "I think this angel wrote it."

DJ nodded. "I just can't hide my writing very well, can I?"

"You're all my angels. And the fact is," Danny told them, "the time we go isn't up to us. When our time is up, there's nothing anyone can do. Part of caring for a toddler like Michelle is that we make sure nothing happens before her time."

He placed Stephanie on his lap so DJ could move closer, and he embraced both. "We never know who's going to be in the right place to do something. You were today, Steph, it might be DJ tomorrow. Or Uncle Jesse, or Joey, or me, or someone else. The fact is, I think Mom and I, and DJ, and the others probably each kept you from getting hurt several times when you were that

age."

"Is it really that dangerous," Stephanie wondered.

"No, honey, those several times came over a period of years. We'll all get our chances to protect Michelle. And somehow, we all get that instinct that something's wrong right when we need it. You don't need to be a superhero to get that instinct."

"I don't," came the stunned reply. She felt relieved, in a way. She didn't know how she could have handled much more of the stress. "So I don't have to take flying lessons?"

"Of course not." He held up the letter DJ wrote. "This letter may be pretend. But the same God who decides when it's our time to go gives us that instinct right when we need it, so nobody does go before their time. And as long as we act on that instinct when we feel it, then Michelle, and you, and DJ, and I, and all of us will be safe."