

Adventures of Chee Chee by Carol Mitchell



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Chee Chee is a vervet monkey who lives on the beautiful island of St. Kitts. He lives with his six brothers and sisters, seven if you count the new born baby still hanging on under his mother's tummy.

picture

Chee Chee and his brothers spent their days eating, drinking and playing monkey games with other monkeys. Vervet monkeys were brought to St. Kitts 400 years before this story was told and now there are twice as many monkeys as people. The brothers always travelled together and looked out for one another. Once, the oldest brother, Maw slipped down a drain pipe and hurt his paw while they were playing hide and seek. Chee Chee had to lower his long tail into the hole and pull Maw out. Another time, Chee Chee ran through a 'cosha' bush and Jon Jon, his younger brother spent hours pulling out the painful spikes.

It was the brothers' job to look for food for the rest of the family. Vervet monkeys love fruits, insects, flowers, nuts and leaves, but their favorite is fruit. They love mangoes, soursops, guavas, bananas and golden apples, but they were sometimes hard to find. Much of the delicious fruit was in gardens, behind tall walls and fences. Well, the walls and fences were not a problem for the monkeys, they could climb over anything. The problem was the dogs. Everyone seemed to have a dog roaming in their yard and they would chase the monkeys away.

Chee Chee and his brother had heard of one house where there was no such problem. They heard that the yard had many fruit trees, at least fifteen of them, and many of the monkey's favorite fruits. All year round there was something blooming. They heard that no one lived in the house, no humans and no dogs.

Every day when the brothers went hunting, they searched for this house. Maw and Jon Jon did not really believe that it existed, but Chee Chee was sure he would find it one day. And so he did, quite by chance.

It was a very hot Sunday, too hot for the monkeys to get up to their usual mischief. Chee Chee was bored and so, his mind began to work. He needed a new adventure. Chee Chee said to his brothers,

“Let’s go exploring somewhere we have never been before!”

Maw yawned and responded,

“It’s too hot to go anywhere. I am going to sit here and clean myself. I am long overdue for a bath. I’ll get momma to clean me up.”

picture

Chee Chee looked at Jon Jon,

“You coming?” he asked him, walking off as he said it, knowing that his younger brother would follow as he always did.

The two brothers wandered through the high grass and scrubs just outside their territory and found themselves on a road that they had never seen before. They spotted a tree just inside a garden, fully laden with soursops. The house had a dog, but she had taken refuge from the heat under the green stems of a thicket of ginger lilies and was fast asleep. Chee Chee and Jon Jon could hear her snoring softly.

Chee Chee whispered to Jon Jon,

“Cover me, I’m going in. Call out if she wakes up.”

Jon Jon cried out softly,

“No Chee Chee, it’s too dangerous!”

But Chee Chee had already gone. He quickly scaled the wall and scampered through the garden and up into the soursop tree. He sat there eating one and then another of the ripe but firm fruit.

Jon Jon waited outside, watching the sleeping dog. After a while he grew tired of waiting for Chee Chee. He went nearer the gate to try to see him and get him to hurry up. The monkey’s scent wafted into the dog’s nostrils and she awoke. She jumped to her feet and barked a warning – “Don’t even think about coming in here!”

Jon Jon called out in panic,

“Chee Chee, she’s up. The dog’s awake.”

But it was too late. The dog in the garden had already smelt Chee Chee and she ran to the back of the yard. When she discovered Chee Chee in the tree, the dog was furious. She barked ferociously and jumped as high as she could, snapping at the monkey. The tree was not very tall and the dog's teeth were dangerously close to Chee Chee's paws.

Chee Chee looked around and noticed some more trees in the garden on the other side of the wall. If he leapt from the tree to the wall and just as quickly from the wall into the tree on the other side, he might just escape. It was a long leap, but Chee Chee knew he could do it. He took a deep breath, made the jump and escaped into the other garden. He sat in the tree listening. No dogs, no humans. He was alone. All he could hear was his own heart beating.

Then it hit him ... "I found it!!!" he cried. "I found our paradise!" Chee Chee roamed freely around the unkempt garden, choosing his fruit. It was even better than he had imagined. Ripe mangoes, sweet guavas, huge soursop and pawpaw, all at his fingertips. And the smell was wonderful. All the smells blended together to create an odor that was simply delightful. There was even a broken jar that was filled with water. Chee Chee put his head in for a drink and almost fell in!

Picture

The longer Chee Chee stayed, the more excited he became. He could not believe that they had never found this garden before. Finally, he remembered poor Jon Jon waiting for him on the other side and he decided that it was time to leave. Chee Chee tucked some more fruit under his arms for his brothers and looked for a way to leave. He ran to the front gate, jumped on to the wall and leapt over.

ZOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! A car rushed past, just a few inches from Chee Chee's nose. Chee Chee screeched in fright and jumped back on to the wall. He was too terrified to think. When he finally calmed down, he peeked over the wall and saw a busy road right in front of the house. Large trucks, buses and cars roared back and forth on the road. To Chee Chee, so small in

comparison to the trucks, it was as if you were standing in the middle of an airport runway with planes flying past you.

To make things worse, the dogs in the house on the left had noticed the monkey and were barking ferociously. On the right side, another dog was barking and an elderly man had come out of the house. He had a long thick stick in his hand and he shook it at Chee Chee.

Chee Chee looked all around him. To his left at the three dogs, to the right another dog and human and in front of him at the busy street. He thought of his brothers waiting for him at home and made a decision. He took a deep breath and jumped over the wall towards the traffic. Staying as close to the side of the road as possible, tail high in the air and running faster than he ever had in his life, he scampered home.



About the Author

Carol Ottley-Mitchell is the author of the Caribbean Adventure Series, a series about three children and a monkey who have exciting, magical adventures in the Caribbean. Visit www.CaribbeanAdventureSeries.com for more information.



Photo by [Jaxon Photography](#)

Born in Nevis, Carol has lived in several Caribbean countries. She spent a large part of her formative years in Trinidad, where one of her favorite pastimes was competing with her father to see who could compose the best humorous lyrics to existing songs. This was just the beginning of her interest in creative writing.

Back in St. Kitts, Carol began a more serious side of her writing career in high school when she wrote public service pieces and participated in several debating competitions. After leaving high school to pursue further studies in Barbados and the United States, Carol focused her efforts on developing her information technology and business management skills, while making every effort possible to write and participate in public speaking.

Currently, Carol lives in Ghana with her husband and children.