

Chee Chee's Big Plan

Part 2 of the Adventures of Chee Chee

By Carol Ottley-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.

Chee Chee and his two brothers had discovered a wonderful garden full of fruit trees of every kind. There was nothing they would love more than to spend their days swinging through the fruit trees, eating. No one lived in the house with the garden so the monkeys could eat without being disturbed.

There was just one problem. The house was surrounded by danger. In the house on the left, there were three Rottweilers, very fierce dogs who spent most of their time curled up in the shade of the front steps of their house. The minute that the monkeys set even one foot near their yard, the dogs would be up on their feet, barking a deep ferocious bark that made even a brave monkey like Chee Chee run for cover.

The house on the right was even worse. Not only did a dog live there, but there was an elderly man who was always at home who would come out waving a stick to chase the monkeys away.

The dog in the house behind the monkey's paradise, Shura, was quite mild mannered. She hardly barked at people, but she particularly disliked monkeys

and would snarl and snap as they walked by. Chee Chee had made it past this dog once, and that was how he discovered their abandoned garden. He had not been able to get past her since that time. Shura considered the monkeys to be trespassers and would chase them away if they ever tried to come near.

So, why didn't they come from the front? Well, the road in the front of the house was busy with vehicles all day. As brave as Chee Chee was and as delicious as the fruits in the yard were, the monkey would not take a chance with the traffic.

Chee Chee walked thoughtfully around some lines on the ground. He had drawn the problem in the dirt. He drew a square for each house and he used stones to represent the dogs, people and cars. He moved the stones into one position, then shook his head and moved them again.

"There *must* be a way in," he said at last.

"Let me go in," Jon Jon pleaded, "I can get by, I know it. Anyway, it's my turn."

"Let me think. The weakest point is Shura," Chee Chee said thoughtfully. "Every lunch time she sleeps soundly under the ginger lilies. If she stays fast asleep and the three Rotweilers are also asleep, we can run along the wall of her house to the corner and jump down into our garden. But if any of them awake, it's big trouble. If you don't make it along the wall, you can hide in the trees in her

garden, but it's a long jump from the trees in Shura's garden to the wall of our garden. I barely made it the last time and that was only because I was terrified!"

"I can do it, I know I can," Jon Jon interrupted. "I am the fastest monkey ever!" and to prove it, he raced off down the road and back up again.

"I don't know, it's a long jump," Chee Chee replied.

"Piece of cake," Jon Jon said, "I'm the long jump champion in my class." And he demonstrated once more, taking a running leap in front of Chee Chee.

Chee Chee scratched his head. "I don't know, you won't have a running start if you are up in a tree," he said slowly.

But Jon Jon insisted and eventually Chee Chee gave in.

"OK. We'll wait until Shura is asleep on this side of the house and I will stand guard here." He drew an 'X' in the ground in front of Shura's house. "If she wakes up, I'll call out to you and you will have to run. We cannot see the Rotweilers so we just have to hope that they are also asleep."

"I'm ready," said Jon Jon, "they'll never catch me!"

So the monkeys kept watch over the house where the dog called Shura lived.

When the sun was at its highest point, she got too hot and tired to roam the yard. She took her customary place under the shade of the ginger lilies and went to sleep. The monkeys waited a while until they thought she was in a deep sleep. Chee Chee approached the wall slowly until he was close enough to touch it, but Shura did not wake up.

He signaled to Jon Jon and the little monkey came running. He scampered up on to the wall and ran along it towards the back of the house. Half way there, he stopped. The Rotweilers were awake and already snarling at him.

He called out to Chee Chee. "The Rotweilers are up."

"Don't panic," Chee Chee said softly, "jump into the trees in Shura's garden, she's still asleep."

So little Jon Jon jumped into the fruit trees and made his way from one to another until he was in the last tree before their paradise. It was a plum tree with thickly intertwined leaves and branches, so he was hidden from the sight of the dogs below. He crept to the edge of the furthest branch and stopped. He looked at the distance that he had to jump.

"Chee Chee," he cried out in a plaintive voice. "I don't think I can do it."

Shura rolled over in her sleep.

Chee Chee ran over to the other side of the front of the garden. “Shhhh,” he said urgently, “you’ll wake up Shura.”

“I can’t do it, I can’t” wailed Jon Jon.

Chee Chee encouraged him, “Of course you can, you’re my long jump champ, remember, you can do it.”

“I can’t, I can’t.”

Chee Chee realised that Jon Jon was terrified. “Okay, don’t fuss,” he said, “just turn around and come back before Shura awakes.”

But it was too late. While Chee Chee was talking to Jon Jon, he did not notice that Shura had awoken and slunk around the house. She was now standing under the tree. Little Jon Jon began to move and Shura started barking. She ran under the plum tree searching for the monkey. Jon Jon was well hidden, but in his fright, he left his long tail hanging down just within Shura’s reach. He pulled it up, but not before she had leapt up and taken a nip out of it.

“Owwwww!” Jon Jon cried out, and he scampered quickly through the trees and over the wall to where Chee Chee was waiting.

The two monkeys ran back to their home. Jon Jon's mother wrapped leaves around his tail to soothe the cut. Jon Jon sat whimpering. "I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I was so sure I could do it!"

"Don't worry, it's very difficult and we'll get by one day," Chee Chee comforted him.

"She would not have caught me if my tail had not been hanging down. That's the only way she saw me in those thick leaves." Jon Jon looked at his wounded tail mournfully.

Chee Chee jumped up and shouted. "That's it! Jon Jon, you got it, you found the answer!"

Jon Jon looked puzzled, but pleased that he had actually helped his big brother.

Chee Chee said to Maw, "I have a plan, come with me."

The two monkeys left Jon Jon nursing his tail and went back to the drawing that Chee Chee had made in the dirt. Chee Chee quickly explained his plan.

Maw thought about it and then agreed. "Yes, if we move quickly, it just might work. But I will go this time, I am bigger than both you and Jon Jon and if I have to jump from the tree to the wall, I just might make it.

The monkeys went searching for what they needed and they soon found it; a long coil of rope about 2 feet long. Maw hugged it in his arms tightly so that it absorbed his monkey smell and they headed back to Shura's house.

Shura was still awake and alert. She started barking as soon as she heard the monkeys coming. Carrying the rope, Maw leapt bravely on to the wall. Then he leapt from tree to tree until he got to the plum tree. He went out to the furthest branch and looked at the jump to the wall beyond it. It was really quite difficult without a running start.

At this point, Shura was beneath the plum tree. She was running in circles, jumping and barking because she could smell the monkey in the tree, but could not see him. Maw tied the rope to a branch and let it hang down until it was just out of the dog's reach. It looked and smelt like a monkey's tail. She started jumping at the rope, barking angrily and trying to bite it but try as she might, she could not touch the rope.

Shura was so busy with the rope tail that she did not see Maw slink into a nearby tree, down the trunk, across the lawn and over the wall into their abandoned garden. He ate to his heart's content and gathered fruit to carry for his family.

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.



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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.

Carol began the CAS in 2008 with Adventure at Brimstone Hill. Pirates at Port Royal was released in 2009 and the third book, based in Trinidad is anticipated in April 2011.

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

