

Chapter 1 - Go-Go and Stop-Stop In the Cannibal Islands

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In the South Pacific Ocean, inside the irregular triangle formed by Tuvalu, Samoa, and Fiji, during a ferocious storm, two ships sank in the year 1861. One of the ships was a three mast sailing ship from San Francisco, California, and the other was a two mast cargo vessel from Liverpool, England. Both ships sank at almost the same location on the same evening. Only two souls survived the storm, and both were washed ashore on the tiny South Pacific island of Mali. This is their story.

San Francisco, July, 1861

Trevor Lewis was the son of a San Francisco brick maker. He had studied architecture, engineering, and philosophy, and at the age of 24 he was about to get married to Becky Williamson, the prettiest girl in California.

Trevor loved sailing ships, and every opportunity he had to visit the docks and admire the tall ships with their elegant wooden masts, beautiful sails, and interesting crews and officers, he was there to hear the stories of adventure and far away places.

One evening as he sat and listened to the crew of the *Australian Mist* chat about their many adventures in the South Pacific, the Captain turned toward him.

“Boy, what do you do?” The Captain looked hard at him and wondered why they had allowed this youngster into their midst.

“I’m good with ropes and I love sailing,” Trevor replied eagerly.

“Good,” the Captain nodded toward a tall thin man with a sailor hat crooked on his head, “then you can come with us.”

Trevor felt someone grab his shoulder, and another man conked him on the head with a heavy object. Light mixed with darkness, and he began his one-way trip aboard the *Australian Mist*.

During his voyage to the South Pacific Trevor knew he was in a very precarious position. If he didn't work hard, they would pitch him overboard for the sharks to eat. So he worked hard, and he did as he was told to do. All the crew used him to get what they needed. They would tell him what they wanted, and then they would yell: “Go-Go”. His name, Trevor Lewis, was quickly replaced by a new moniker: “Go-Go”.

Go-Go was asleep on deck when a furious South Pacific storm capsized the *Australian Mist*, but he managed to climb into a dingy which had broken loose. The next day his tiny craft was washed onto the island of Mali in the South Pacific.

Liverpool, England, July, 1861

Josh Giller was born clumsy, and as he grew older his affliction only got worse. Josh had a photographic mind, but his short term memory failed to help him appear anything other than stupid because he could not concentrate on the present.

At the age of 22, Josh was big and strong, but all his friends poked fun at him because of the dumb things he did, and Josh kept his feelings inside. He worked on the docks, and even though it was dangerous to be near the waterfront on a Saturday night, Josh liked all the noise and commotion. He thought it strange on occasion the sailors would put men in bags and throw them aboard ship. “Maybe,” he thought, “they had too much to drink or something.”

The truth was the cargo ships headed for the South Pacific often shanghaied men who were near the waterfront. The truth hit home with Josh one Saturday night in July, 1861 when he proved how strong he was by arm wrestling a burly tattooed sailor who was wearing an eye patch. Josh won the contest, but he lost the game because he found himself inside a burlap sack lying on

deck as the cargo ship *Adventure* debarked Liverpool.

During the long trip to the South Pacific Josh had been bullied by the crew, and even though they knew in a fight he would be a formidable foe, they punished him with their taunts. He was hassled to the point of frustration. The Captain would tell him to do something, and then yell: “Stop-Stop” before he could do it. Often it was done in jest, but occasionally he was about to make an incredible blunder. The crew called him simply “Stop-Stop”.

After many months at sea, the cargo ship *Adventure* was several miles from the clipper ship *Australian Mist* when the same storm smashed into her hull. The Captain had been dozing, so when the ship’s wheel began to spin wildly and the large wooden vessel turned sideways into a towering wall of water, it was too late to correct the fatal error.

Stop-Stop, aware of the approaching storm, had opened the cargo holds where he had been sleeping. He liked sleeping with the animals which were being shipped to Australia from England, and he had one particularly unusual creature which had

come aboard in Tahiti which he fed regularly although the rest of the crew would not get near. As the big ship turned sideways into the incoming storm, Stop-Stop grabbed a lifesaver ring and tied it to his belt. As the ship rolled over he was pitched outside the area of suction which marked the last existence of the *Adventure* on earth, and he was suddenly alone in a raging sea.

For a terrifying six hours Stop-Stop was pitched back and forth like a fishing cork. Only his lifesaver prevented him from drowning. In the early morning the winds died down as the storm passed, and he was safe for about ten seconds. Then he noticed the fins around him as fourteen foot sharks sized up their next meal.

Luckily the sharks were distracted by a huge school of tuna, but they would be back. Stop-Stop was a strong swimmer, and he noticed what appeared to be an island dead ahead. He swam with all his might, and almost was cut to pieces on the coral reef surrounding the island of Mali. It was noon when he slowly dragged his weary body up on the sandy beach. He had made it. He was alive.

Chapter 2 – Strangers in Paradise

Go-Go felt like every bone in his body was broken as he slowly crawled from the lifeboat. Gingerly he stretched his arms toward the blue sky, and after a short period he was feeling better. At least he was alive. Too bad about the others, but he wouldn't miss them he was sure.

He scanned the horizon, and it seemed the white sandy beach went on forever. He knew from the charts he had seen this must be the island of Mali, because there was nothing else around, except two much smaller islands, one to the East and one to the West. He was getting hungry, so he picked up a coconut and pounded it against another to split it open and drink the soft warm milk inside. Then he ate the fleshy white part.

Go-Go could see the island had a high, hilly section, but the rest was relatively flat, with a slight slope upward from sea level to the many palm trees. A few birds soared in the sky, but there was no other sign of life.

Stop-Stop was washed ashore very close to where Go-Go's dingy touched land. As Stop-Stop stumbled along, hungry and tired, he wondered where he was, and he wondered what he would eat, and he wondered what he would do. He was getting dizzy from the sun directly overhead, and he was thirsty. Looking down he saw footprints in the sand! Then he noticed he must have walked in a circle, because the footprints belonged to him.

"Gosh" he thought, "I've got to get into the trees and the shade, this sun is making me stupid." As he walked toward the trees he saw more footprints, and this time they were not behind him or around him, they were in a straight line in front of him. "Someone else is on this island" he decided.

"Hello!" A voice called from the trees. "Who are you?"

"I am Stop-Stop" he replied. "Who are you?"

"I am Go-Go" was the answer.

Both men laughed at the absurdity of their names, especially together. They shook hands and then talked about what had

happened the night before and when they were shanghaied. They talked for hours until it was growing dark. Both men were worn out. They knew the troubles they had been through were over, but they had no idea what would happen to them on the island of Mali in the South Pacific in the Cannibal Islands. With good weather and a slight breeze off the water, they both fell asleep at once.

Chapter 3 - The Storm

The following day Go-Go and Stop-Stop didn't wake up until almost noon. Stop-Stop gathered some firewood and started a fire.

"Did you see what happened when I lit the fire?" he asked Stop-Stop. Stop-Stop looked at him in amazement and said proudly: "Sure."

Overlooking the strange reply, Go-Go phrased his question another way: "Do you recall what the fire did?"

Stop-Stop didn't really understand this question either, but he replied anyway: "Sure, it burned."

"Sorry," Go-Go changed the question: "Do you remember which way the smoke went?"

"It went up." Stop-Stop smiled at the simple answer as he gave it.

"Well, you're almost correct," Go-Go commented. "Actually, all smoke goes 'up', but not all smoke goes straight up. Do you know why the smoke went straight up?"

Stop-Stop thought for a moment, putting his left hand on top of his head to help hold the thought inside his brain, and suddenly he had the answer: “Because it couldn’t go straight down?”

“No, no, no” Go-Go frowned his displeasure at the rather dumb answer Stop-Stop provided. “It went straight up because there was no wind.” Go-Go nodded in approval at his forthcoming idea, then looked into Stop-Stop’s puzzled face and told him what he suspected: “When there is no wind it means we are about to have a storm. The longer the wind doesn’t blow, the bigger the storm. It has now been several hours, and there is little wind. The waves are small too, and if you look out to sea the Man of War birds, the big black ones with long wings, are gliding in descending circles, and finally, because of no wind to support them, coming into land. There are five of them in that palm tree.” Go-Go pointed at the tree filled with birds, as other birds swooped toward the island of Mali.

“So, does that mean we need to go to higher ground?” Stop-Stop seemed frightened.

“Good, you figured it out.” Go-Go praised him for his deduction. “It looks like the same storm which dumped us on this island is coming back with a vengeance.”

“Let’s move everything of value to higher ground before the storm starts.” Go-Go turned and walked as Stop-Stop followed a few paces behind, wondering about the storm. As Go-Go walked he felt a dreary calmness around him, with no wind, and not a breath of fresh air, making the results to come even more ominous.

“Here, you carry this basket with the matches, coconuts, breadfruit, berries, and other foodstuff we gathered, and I’ll take everything else,” Go-Go said as he handed two huge baskets to Stop-Stop. Then he carefully wrapped up all the clothes in banana plant leaves, and grabbed as many things as he could carry. “Let’s hurry” he said to Stop-Stop as they both ran for the palm trees which were starting to move.

Half way up the hillside the motion of the palm trees became a synchronized swaying as the whole world moved. The sky which had been blue without a cloud was suddenly dense with huge black puffy clouds very close to the ground. Looking behind them

they could see flashes of lightning and the resultant sound of thunder.

“One, two, three, four, five” Go-Go counted after the first flash. “What’s the matter with you?” Stop-Stop asked in puzzlement. “There was only one flash of lightning.”

“I’m not counting the lightning flashes,” Go-Go replied. “I’m counting the number of seconds between the lightning flash and the sound of the thunder.”

Stop-Stop had no idea why Go-Go wanted to count anything, but then Go-Go gave him the reason: “From the time you saw the lighting to the time you heard the thunder was five seconds. Since sound travels slower than light, this means the lightning is a little over a mile away.”

Suddenly lightning hit very close to where they stood, and the sound was instant and deafening. Stop-Stop smiled a wide smile and asked: “How far away is it now?”

Go-Go spotted a cave in the hillside, and he pointed toward it as a flood of rain poured down.

Rushing into the damp, cool comfort of the cave located on high ground above the water, they paused to unload their belongings. Go-Go started a fire as the wind roared louder and louder, and an almost continuous flash of lightning penetrated the dark sky outside their shelter, accompanied by loud thunder.

Huddled over the warming glow of their fire they heard the sound of palm trees bent over double breaking in the mighty wind and stinging rain. But they could not see how high the water had risen up the hillside where they were hidden. If they could have seen the water, they would have feared for their lives for sure. Safe and sound in their cozy spot by the fire in a protective cave, both fell asleep as the fire slowly burned out during the night.

“Gosh, gosh, gosh, gosh, and double-gosh!” Stop-Stop yelled at the top of his voice in surprise as he looked around outside the cave the next morning.

At the sound of his excited voice, Go-Go ran to join him, surveying the damage to their new home. Everywhere he looked the trees were bent to the ground, some into the ground, and coconuts and breadfruit, mostly

green, were scattered everywhere. The island was a total wreck.

Looking at his companion, Go-Go explained: “It was a good thing we came to the cave. Here we are safe and even though the island is a mess, the trees will grow back up soon, and we are in no danger at all.”

What Go-Go didn't know was the storm had brought something strange and new to Mali, and that something strange and new only had one place where it liked to live: in a cave.

Chapter 4 - The Surprise

Go-Go and Stop-Stop looked over the island of Mali following the storm, and all they found was destruction.

“We need to make a home, and meanwhile we can live in the cave at night” Go-Go spoke in a resolute voice. He started picking up branches and palm leaves, then pausing for a moment he told Stop-Stop: “Why don’t you go see if you can round up some food, anything which has fallen on the ground needs to be picked up before it goes bad in the heat.” Stop-Stop grinned at him and walked off toward the beach to see what he could scavenge, and Go-Go went into the woods to gather firewood.

A small furry visitor who had arrived during the storm on a big log entered the cave where Go-Go and Stop-Stop had spent the night. Worn out from a night of relentless rain and wind, the newest arrival on Mali curled around a pile of clothes and instantly fell asleep.

As Stop-Stop walked along the beach he picked up the first coconut he saw. Examining it closely he noticed the bottom part was covered with ants. One got on his nose, and many got on his right hand. In a second Stop-Stop discovered what ants do: they bite. He shouted in pain from the stinging sensation, flinging the coconut as far as he could, then he ran into the swirling surf and rubbed his arm and nose furiously. The salt water took away the pain, leaving only a big red bump on his nose and some smaller bumps on his hand and wrist as he returned to the beach.

Having learned his lesson, Stop-Stop was more careful in his selections after the incident with the ants. Each time he found something edible, he would roll it over first to see if there were any ants on it. Then he would pick it up.

This plan worked fine until he rolled over a big log. Under it was a white snake about 10 feet long. Fortunately for Stop-Stop the snake slithered away rather than attack him. But this also served as a reminder to be careful in his search for food.

At the bottom of a Yum-Yum tree Stop-Stop sat on the ground with his back to the tree.

As he sat quietly he could hear a buzzing sound coming from

above. Looking up he saw hundreds of bees circling around something glistening in the morning sun. Wondering what it was as well as what the bees were doing, he climbed the tree and in a few seconds he was at the top with a big bee hive full of honey in front of him. Carefully he stuck his fingers into the waxy hive and tasted the honey. It was WONDERFUL. But the bees didn't like this intruder, so they attacked him in full force, stinging him repeatedly on the back and neck and face. Stop-Stop grabbed the hive full of honey and quickly slid down the tree, and the bees in a cloud were chasing him as he ran with the hive back toward the water. He wanted Go-Go to share this delicacy with him, but the bee stings were fierce and hurt. Finally, he was out in the water up to his neck, holding the hive just out of the water. With no place to land on the water because they could not take off again, the bees flew back to land and gave up the chase.

With his prize intact and the smug satisfaction of having outwitted the bees, Stop-Stop carried the honey toward his cave so he could protect it from the bees. As he

walked along he noticed funny footprints in the sand going in the same direction. The footprints were not as deep as his, and they were smaller, with indentations at the front and a wide spot at the back.

Stop-Stop decided it must be a big bird or something as he entered the cave.

He decided to take the honey to the back of the cave so it would be better protected. It was dark in the cave, with only a little bit of sunlight creeping through the entrance. As he placed the honey in the hive on a rocky ledge he felt something furry wrap around his right leg. Then something furry wrapped around his left leg. Startled but afraid to move, he looked down into the darkness. There at his feet was a brown baby bear. The baby bear had smelled the honey, and had decided Stop-Stop must be her mother. Wrapping her furry arms around Stop-Stop's legs, she hugged her new mother, hoping for something good to eat.

“Well my goodness Gosh! Gosh! Gosh!” Stop-Stop exclaimed softly as he took some of the honey on his finger and let the bear lick it off. “Aren't you sweet,” he spoke to the bear as if it were a person. The bear continued to lick his fingers, excited over

the smell of the honey and hungry as a bear for some nourishment.

“I think I’ll name you ‘Honey’.” Stop-Stop slowly reached down and stroked the back of the bear as the bear cuddled even closer to him. “Wait until Go-Go sees you,” he said as the bear closed her little eyes and fell fast asleep, both arms still holding onto Stop-Stop’s legs. “Boy, will he be surprised.” With that Stop-Stop laid his head beside the bear and fell asleep too.

What he didn’t even dream of was what the bear would do when Go-Go returned. After all, bears are ferocious when they protect their mother. And little ‘Honey’ was very protective.

Go-Go returned to the cave after working on a new hut all day in the blistering sun. He had built about half the hut, but he still had lots of work to do before it would be completed and ready to live in. He was tired as he entered the cave as the sun set over the South Pacific waters of Mali. He dropped his tools and tried to see into the darkness, but it usually took several minutes before he

could see well enough in the dark to distinguish objects. As he walked toward the back of the cave to find Stop-Stop he ran his right hand along the wall for guidance. Go-Go suddenly stumbled on something on the floor and the cave was filled with a mighty roar as the brown bear awoke when his foot struck her in the side.

Terrified, Go-Go turned and ran from the cave with Honey in wild pursuit.

Outside Go-Go scrambled up a tall palm tree even though he wasn't particularly good about climbing. He was almost to the top of the tree when he looked down and the bear was climbing the tree after him. Go-Go climbed to the top. The bear continued to climb.

“Wait, Honey, everything is o.k. It's just my friend Go-Go.” Stop-Stop yelled from the tree bottom. The bear paused and looked at its new found mother, then slowly climbed back down and put a paw around Stop-Stop's leg, watching the creature in the tree with one suspicious eye.

Go-Go started to climb down and the bear growled as he descended, sliding down most of the way. Stop-Stop calmed his baby and then introduced Go-Go to the bear. “Let

Honey smell your hand,” he cautioned Go-Go. Go-Go extended his hand carefully, hoping the bear wouldn’t bite it off. Honey sniffed, and turned back to her surrogate mother. Apparently Go-Go met her approval, but she was more interested in her mother.

It was pitch dark outside, so the threesome returned to the cave for the night. Stop-Stop explained how the bear had enjoyed the honey, and he told Go-Go all about his experiences during the day with the ants, the bees, the honey, and the bear.

As a bright full moon rose over Mali, the cave was quiet. For the moment, all was right with the world as they collapsed on the cave floor in the sand beds which Go-Go had created. Go-Go was sound asleep in a second. Stop-Stop went to sleep next, with Honey’s small paw in his hand. Honey was last. As she closed her little black eyes she was happy. She had her mother, and a father, although she wasn’t quite convinced about Go-Go yet.

Even in their worst dreams Go-Go and Stop-Stop were not prepared for what happened during the night. They had no idea about the invasion which was about to take place even

as they slumbered. But that was tomorrow, and for the moment, all was silent on the island of Mali in the South Pacific with the exception of the soft sound of a snoring brown bear named Honey penetrating the still air of the cave.

Chapter 5 - The Dragon

Go-Go had read a great deal about nature and animals, especially the animals indigenous to the South Pacific. He knew there was one enormous lizard he never wanted to encounter: the Komodo dragon. He also didn't want to excite Stop-Stop, but in all fairness he felt he had to tell his friend about the beast in case Stop-Stop found one and wanted another pet, like Honey. So, one bright morning when everything was back in place and their hut had been finished, Go-Go decided to let Stop-Stop know about the dangers involved in handling this huge, prehistoric monster with a three foot tongue.

"Stop-Stop", he asked, "have you ever heard of a Komodo dragon?"

Stop-Stop looked at him like he had lost his mind and quickly replied: "Sure, I know all about Komodo dragons." He grinned with a knowledgeable twinkle in his eye that usually spelled trouble.

"O.K., smarty," Go-Go offered, "tell me what you know about Komodo dragons."

Stop-Stop put his finger to his right cheek, which was his way of thinking, and then he said: “We had two Komodo dragons aboard our ship before it sank. I don’t know what happened to them, but they are good swimmers.” Stop-Stop paused for effect and then described in detail all about Komodo dragons. “Actually, they are not dragons at all. They are huge lizards. They were originally found on a small Indonesian Island which was called Komodo, thus the name Komodo was given to them. They can be as long as 10 feet, and they can weigh as much as 330 pounds. One of the reasons they are so large is they can eat as much as 80% of their own weight daily, plus they are cold-blooded. They are poisonous and very dangerous.” Stop-Stop’s description ended.

Go-Go was impressed. He had thought Stop-Stop was completely, hopelessly stupid and incompetent, yet most of the time it was Stop-Stop who saved the day, even though it was occasionally by accident. “You say they are poisonous and dangerous?” he asked politely to see if Stop-Stop knew anything else, positive he didn’t.

To his chagrin Stop-Stop surprised him again. “The Komodo dragon can run faster

uphill than a human can run on level ground, at least for a short distance. His mouth contains venom which can paralyze his victim very quickly.” Stop-Stop had a puzzled look on his face as he added his final fact: “Do you know the Komodo dragon is poisonous to every species except its own? In other words, if a Komodo dragon bites another Komodo dragon, the poison doesn’t work!”

Go-Go was beginning to think his silly companion was blessed with some sort of photographic memory. His idea about warning Stop-Stop about Komodo dragons was of no value now because Stop-Stop knew more than Go-Go could ever have imagined. But he cautioned Stop-Stop anyway: “If you see a Komodo dragon just don’t get too close because they like to hide in the bushes and ambush their victims.”

“Don’t worry, I know what to do,” Stop-Stop replied, not sure what he might really do if he ran across one of the large lizards.

Go-Go strolled off to get some firewood, while Stop-Stop walked in the other direction on the beach to see if anything of value had been washed ashore during the storm.

As he wandered barefoot along the beach Stop-Stop thought about the Komodo dragon and what he might do if he were chased by one. He knew there was no way for a human to outrun one. He might be able to climb a tree. He wondered if the Komodo dragons climbed trees. Nope, he was sure they didn't climb trees. But what if there wasn't a tree nearby. What if he was out in the open on the side of a hill. Would the beast simply eat him? Stop-Stop decided the best thing he could do was to fashion a spear out of bamboo. That way he could at least halt an attack with his spear. With his knife he made a long spear from a straight piece of bamboo.

As he walked on the beach Stop-Stop felt he was being watched. He didn't know what was watching him. He just felt watched. He looked around and all he could see which could be used as a hiding spot was a rather large bush about 50 yards from shore. Spear in hand at the ready, Stop-Stop headed straight for the bush. When he was only a few feet away a massive head poked out of the bush. "A Komodo dragon" Stop-Stop yelled in a nervous voice, trying to put his fear out of mind. The head turned toward him and the huge animal moved out to seize

its victim. Paralyzed with fear, Stop-Stop dropped his spear and looked in terror....until he realized it was a big Galapagos turtle which was hurtling at him at about one foot an hour. He laughed aloud, then went over and put his hand on the turtle's huge shell and admired his latest visitor to Mali. "I am going to call you 'Nodragon'!" he proclaimed in glee as the turtle crawled slowly in the sand.

When Stop-Stop returned to the hut that evening, Go-Go asked him politely: "Well did you see any dragons?" Stop-Stop glanced at his chum and told him he had seen 'Nodragon'. Go-Go chided him about his poor English. "It isn't good English to say 'I saw nodragon'. It would be better to say: "I didn't see any dragon." Stop-Stop corrected him: "But I saw nodragon. He's a big turtle."

"You silly goose," Go-Go laughed at Stop-Stop's play on words. "How can a dragon be a turtle?" Stop-Stop gave up, wanting to explain he had named the turtle nodragon because it was indeed no dragon. But he knew Go-Go would never believe him.

“Let’s go to that grassy hillside overlooking the bay for diner tonight” Go-Go suggested. Maybe your nodragon will come to visit?”

They quickly prepared a meal which they could carry to the top of the hill, and in an hour they were sitting enjoying their picnic as they watched the sun slowly sinking into the blue South Pacific water.

“Would you like a sandwich?” Go-Go asked his friend. Turning to look at the other side of the island Stop-Stop said: “Sure.” Go-Go reached into the basket, picked out a sandwich and handed it to Stop-Stop without turning around. It was snapped out of his hand instantly, and Go-Go turned to tell Stop-Stop how rude he had been. Go-Go could not believe his eyes. An arm’s length away was a huge, fully grown, Komodo dragon with its mouth full of sandwich. Backing up so he wouldn’t frighten the dangerous lizard, Go-Go pushed the picnic basket toward the animal, hoping it would satisfy his desire for food. Then he realized the picnic basket contained about two pounds of food, the Komodo dragon weighed about two hundred and fifty pounds, and could consume 80% of his weight during one single meal, and he knew

what the next meal would be for the monster: him.

Stop-Stop, who had been watching a flock of birds in the eastern sky, turned and saw the fierce looking Komodo dragon, then he took one look at Go-Go's face and climbed the nearest tree, with Go-Go right behind him. They sat in the tree for two hours while the lizard devoured their lunch, then ate the lunch basket, as well as Go-Go's straw hat and casually chewed the bamboo spear into pieces. Finally the beast scurried away chasing after a rabbit which somehow managed to just stay ahead by some luck.

Go-Go and Stop-Stop hurried home. At least here they would be safe, beyond the normal hiding places of the fearful Komodo dragon. They had left Honey the bear inside with the door shut. If they had known what they would encounter when they opened the door, they never would have done so. When the door opened, it was too late, and their fate was sealed. There, two feet in front of them was another Komodo dragon, and this one was much larger than the first.

Chapter 6 - Stop-Stop's

Beast Friend

“**SUSIE!**” Stop-Stop yelled in delight as Go-Go stood frozen in the doorway of their small hut. Then Stop-Stop ran over to the Komodo dragon and put his arm around her neck affectionately and kissed her on her forehead as she smiled as much as a Komodo dragon could smile. She ran her tongue out about three feet in delight as Stop-Stop scratched her neck.

“What, may I ask, is going on here?” Go-Go demanded from the doorway, afraid to come in. “What are you doing with that dangerous animal?” he asked, watching Stop-Stop in amazement that he wasn't eaten alive.

“This is Susie” Stop-Stop replied, continuing to hug and love the Komodo dragon. “I fed her on the boat I was on. I fed her every day. The rest of the crew was afraid of her, and she was starving, but I would go into the cargo hold and take her some meat and vegetables every day. She

became my friend. See how affectionate she is?”

Go-Go watched in awe as the huge creature moved into Stop-Stop's lap, her tail wiggling in happiness as she almost crushed her friend with her three hundred pounds. She put her hands across his legs and closed her eyes.

From the back of the hut came a rather timid growl. Honey was afraid of nothing, but apparently she had been totally intimidated by the dragon monster which had come swaying into the hut as an uninvited guest. Now, Honey wanted the safety of Stop-Stop's arms, but he was busy. Slowly Honey approached and put one paw rather lightly on Stop-Stop's shoulder, and she carefully touched the huge Komodo dragon. Susie opened one eye and seemed to accept her new friend immediately. Honey stroked her neck like she had seen Stop-Stop do a few minutes before, and the two animals were inseparable.

“Can I touch her?” Go-Go swallowed hard as he approached. “Sure” Stop-Stop told him softly. As Go-Go's hand reached out suddenly the three foot long tongue wrapped around his wrist in a split second motion.

Go-Go didn't dare take his hand back as the giant beast tasted the salt in his skin, then decided he wasn't worth eating, and he might as well be a friend too.

Go-Go was allowed to pet the animal, and for about an hour they all played with their new friend.

Finally Go-Go stood up and announced: "Let's all go on a picnic today!" Stop-Stop cheered, Honey let out a growl of approval, and Susie opened both eyes at once wondering what everyone was yelling about.

"I'll make some sandwiches, and you get some bananas and fruit," Go-Go ordered Stop-Stop as he exited the hut. Once outside he cut down several bread fruit to make the sandwiches. Stop-Stop came out of the hut, followed by Honey and Susie. Honey was riding on Susie's broad tail, and Susie seemed delighted to be able to provide transportation as the bear squealed in delight.

Stop-Stop picked some fresh bananas, then gathered some tomatoes from the small garden Go-Go had so cleverly created. Then he picked some black berries from nearby bushes, and pulled some oranges which

were actually yellow in color from the orange trees hidden in the jungle just beyond the palm trees along the shore line.

Go-Go had warned Stop-Stop a week earlier about the dangerous sand which was on the far side of the orange tree grove. He had called it quicksand, but he had not explained why it was dangerous. Stop-Stop was so busy picking oranges he failed to notice he had entered the area which was prohibited. As he reached for an orange, he felt his body starting to sink. He slowly was being pulled downward into the mushy sand. He watched as his companions, Susie and Honey remained on more firm ground. They instinctively knew, as all animals did, about the dangerous quicksand.

“Help me!” Stop-Stop yelled, as he realized he was sinking. The quick sand was up to his waist now, and before long it would be up to his neck, then over his head, and he would not be able to breathe. “HELP ME” he yelled louder, hoping Go-Go would somehow hear his cries, but he knew Go-Go was too far away.

Honey urged Susie a bit closer to Stop-Stop, then climbing out on her massive head the bear offered a claw to help Stop-Stop get out

of the quick sand which was now up to his neck. Stop-Stop reached with his arms as far as he could, but the bear's paw was still too far away to help. Stop-Stop was really in trouble as he took one last breath and extended his arms as far as he could and his head went under the quick sand.

Susie knew what to do next. In a split second she whirled around, dumping Honey on the hard ground beside her and flipped her long tail into Stop-Stop's flailing arms. When Susie felt Stop-Stops hands grab her tail she lunged forward with all her might, pulling Stop-Stop from his sandy trap. With his head covered in wet sand, Stop-Stop lay gasping on the firm earth. Susie licked his face clean with her long tongue, while Honey brushed the rest of the sand from his body. His two friends had saved his life. He was very grateful.

Later that afternoon they had their picnic on the side of a high hill overlooking Mali bay, and Stop-Stop told Go-Go all about how his friends had saved his life. Go-Go, happy to hear how everything had worked out, did not condemn Stop-Stop for his carelessness. He knew this was a time for celebration, so he broke open a coconut for everyone to enjoy as the sun sank slowly in the Western sky.

As they watched the day fading away, they didn't notice the tiny boat drifting ashore on the East side of Mali.

They didn't see the small passenger get off the boat as it washed up on the beach. And they didn't know how this new resident would soon change their lives. All they knew was they were alive and well and friends as they cuddled together back in their hut that evening, and Honey, Susie, Stop-Stop and Go-Go were happy. They were so tired they fell asleep with the door wide open. That would prove to be a big mistake.

Chapter 7 - The Invasion

Go-Go and Stop-Stop were in dreamland, and Honey was snoring in a continuous snorting loud noise when the invasion began. It was a slow process at first, but by the time the invasion ended it was the craziest scene imaginable. The ants arrived first. Following a broken trail of honey dripped on the ground, the entire colony of ants, some 20,000 strong, flowed into the hut. As they got closer to the honey comb in the back of the hut, they became more frenzied in their rush to get something fantastic and sweet to eat. Their antics were exaggerated as they rushed toward the honey, piling over one another as they hurried along.

The ants had barely entered the hut when a huge swarm of mosquitoes flew into the hut. Hundreds of flies, also searching for food, had watched as the mosquitoes flooded into the hut. They too joined the invasion. Then the colony of bees which had been fooled when their hive was stolen by Stop-Stop decided to get into the fracas. They flew through the door opening into

the melee. From their treetop perches, hundreds of bats had been watching the activity too. In unison they flew into the hut. The storm had driven many of the wild pigs into the woods, and sensing a feast and smelling the honey, they ran squealing in delight into the cave. Finally, several ducks had been at the open doorway for some time. They waddled into the hut, quacking loudly. The invasion force was complete.

Go-Go awoke to the sound of the quacking ducks. Shaking his head hard he thought he must be dreaming based on what his eyes were telling him. The honey comb was covered with bees, ants, mosquitoes, several wild noisy pigs grunting loudly, and two ducks who were pecking at the pigs to get out of their way. Then it happened. The bats swooped into the fracas and began to eat the mosquitoes and flies and a long nosed anteater swayed through the door and began to lick up the ants and bees.

“Stop-Stop”, wake up Go-Go shouted as the entire hut turned into a battlefield of ducks, pigs, mosquitoes, bats, bees, flies and one rather busy anteater.

Stop-Stop sat upright and was too puzzled to move. Go-Go yelled at him: "Let's get out of here!" With that he pulled on Stop-Stop's arm and the two ran for the entrance. "Wait", I have to save Honey", Stop-Stop pulled his arm free and ran back into the hut. "No, leave the honey there or you will bring all the problems outside." Go-Go yelled after him, not realizing Stop-Stop was referring to his newly found companion, the bear.

Suddenly a mighty roar filled the hut as Honey woke-up and found her honey supply was in danger. Her roar was so fierce the ants, the mosquitoes, the bats, the ducks, the pigs, the anteater, and the flies all fled from the hut in a mad scramble. Outside Go-Go was almost knocked down by the scattering invaders.

Honey had saved not only her honey, but also their new home. When Go-Go and Stop-Stop found her in the back of the hut she was asleep once more, this time with her furry arm firmly around the honey comb.

It was early morning, and the invasion was over, thanks to Honey, but Go-Go knew what had to be done as quickly as possible. "Tomorrow, oops, I mean today....when we

wake up, we need to put a lock on this door.” He looked at Stop-Stop, waiting for the inevitable question. It didn’t take long: “Aren’t we awake?” Stop-Stop asked.

“I mean when it gets light enough to see,” Go-Go patiently explained to his friend. “I see,” Stop-Stop replied, then thinking about what he had said he laughed aloud at his own comment.

In ten minutes they were all asleep again, waiting for what today would bring. If they had known what was coming next, they would not have slept so soundly. Today was another day.

Chapter 8 - Go-Go's Bad Dream

The little hut Go-Go and Stop-Stop had built was becoming smaller every day. With the addition of one rather medium sized but constantly growing bear and one monster of a Komodo dragon, they knew they would have to enlarge the hut, and they would have to do it soon. Tonight, as Go-Go and Stop-Stop slept peacefully in their hammocks, at first there was silence. Then Stop-Stop snored a little bit. Not to be outdone, Honey snorted through her nose (SNOOOORT!), making an awful sound. Komodo dragons breathe out loudly, and they make a popping sound which at first is tremendously loud, then it slowly dwindles down. Go-Go was so sound asleep he heard none of the noise inside. He was having a wild dream, and he moved from side to side and his left hand held his right hand in a tight grip.

Go-Go's dream was in color. He was on an island very similar to Mali, but it had a volcano in the center. There was an intense red glow coming from the top of the volcano. As he sat under a coconut tree he felt he was being watched. He looked all

around, but he saw nothing except for the fire in the night sky. Suddenly something flew past him in the dark. Was it a person? Was it an animal? He didn't know. Was it friendly? He didn't have a clue because it disappeared into the surrounding darkness. Then he realized he was having a dream. He opened his eyes.

Again something flew past him in the dark. It was so quick it took him by surprise. Was he still dreaming? He pinched his arm. It hurt. He was awake. But what was it in the tiny hut with them. Whatever it was it was very elusive. Then, in the reflected glow of the full moon outside he saw two beady eyes peering over the top rafter of the hut.

“Hey, come here!” Go-Go shouted at the creature. He watched as it swiftly dropped to the ground and ran out the only door onto the porch. Go-Go followed it into the surrounding trees and dense undergrowth.

As he entered the thick grass the worst possible thing happened. The other Komodo dragon, the one which was unfriendly and had previously tried to eat them during their picnic on the hillside, leaped into the clearing, ready to attack. Go-Go knew he didn't stand a chance. The

Komodo dragon moved into position for a charge. He lowered his ugly head. He wasn't as big as the female, but he was a whole lot meaner. He was just about to charge when a monkey grabbed his tail and pulled it. Snarling, the dragon looked around, giving Go-Go time to run for the hut. The monkey quickly darted away from the rather awkward beast, swinging gracefully into a nearby tree. The Komodo dragon scurried after Go-Go. Entering the hut at full speed Go-Go woke everyone up. Honey was not happy to be waked up. Stop-Stop was not happy to be waked up. But what Go-Go didn't know was you NEVER wake up a Komodo dragon. Apparently they become very irritated and rowdy. Susie raised her head in a challenging position. Her tongue came out and darted in all directions as she hissed and rose up on all four short legs. She really snorted now. Then she saw the reason Go-Go was so excited. Outside on the porch was her husband. With a leap she was on the porch to meet him. When her husband saw her he calmed down, and in a few minutes she turned him into a family friend.

“The monkey saved me!” Go-Go exclaimed for all to hear. “The monkey pulled the dragon's tail.” No one was listening. No

one believed him. They all thought he was just having a bad dream. No one saw him leave the hut. No one else saw a monkey. “Go back to sleep,” Stop-Stop advised him, slumping into his hammock for another few hours rest. “But there was a monkey. I wasn’t dreaming. There really was one.” Go-Go pleaded for attention, then, receiving none, fell fast asleep again, this time accompanied by one more member of the tribe: one more Komodo dragon to feed.

The next morning Stop-Stop was out bright and early, followed by Honey. As they walked along the white sand beach, Stop-Stop paused every so often, watching the bear as she investigated each item in her path. As they rounded a curve Stop-Stop didn’t notice the small boat which had washed up high on the beach. But Honey noticed it, and she lumbered toward it in a coordinated gallop. She poked her nose underneath the back of the boat. All of a sudden she screeched in pain and backed up about ten yards. Something was under the boat, and that something had pinched her nose. Honey growled in anger as Stop-Stop carefully lifted the edge of the boat.

Before he could say, “Gosh”, a nimble furry monkey leaped into his arms, then

scrambled to the top of his head when Honey growled fiercely. Wrapping his tiny arms around Stop-Stop's head, Stop-Stop could not see anything for a moment. Then he took the monkey's hand in his, placed the monkey on his shoulder, and told Honey: "Everything is o.k. This is my friend too....just like you." Honey growled a jealous growl then wandered off.

"I'm going to call you 'Jocko'. Stop-Stop smiled at his new pet. "You and I are going to become best friends." With that he hurried back toward the hut to introduce his new buddy.

Go-Go was in the process of enlarging the hut when Stop-Stop arrived. He was at a critical point in positioning the main rafter which supported the hut.

Just as Stop-Stop showed up, both Komodo dragons spotted the monkey on top of Stop-Stop's shoulder and they had the same thought at the same time: "Food!" Komodo dragons loved to eat monkeys, and these two were no exception. Their tails swayed wildly, knocking Go-Go off his feet. The main rafter crashed to the ground, and the walls of the hut collapsed in a big pile of

thatched palms leaves, bamboo, mud, and mess. Their home was destroyed.

Racing toward Stop-Stop, both Komodo dragons paused as Stop-Stop yelled: "This is Jocko. He is my friend. You cannot eat my friend." He stood his ground as the two animals circled him. Finally they decided it would be best not to mess with Stop-Stop. After all, he was kind of crazy and he might do anything. So they wandered toward the undergrowth to see if they could find something else to eat.

Go-Go pulled his body from the wreckage of the hut. "O.K. Stop-Stop," he said to his friend, "I told you I saw a monkey last night. And you said I was dreaming."

"You were dreaming" Stop-Stop admonished him. "I found Jocko today under a boat," he commented. Then he added, "Well, actually Honey found Jocko under the boat. I wonder where Honey went?" Stop-Stop looked all around.

"You found a boat? Let's go get it. That may be our chance to get off Mali and back to civilization." Go-Go ran toward the beach, followed by Stop-Stop and Jocko

who was holding on for dear life, frequently covering Stop-Stop's eyes by accident, causing him to go left and right in a lurching pattern as he ran for the beach and the boat.

"It was over there." Stop-Stop pointed at the spot where he had last seen the small white boat. "It's not there now." Go-Go insisted. "And neither is Honey."

"From the marks in the sand it looks like the boat was dragged into the water. And from the prints, I would say Honey took the boat." Go-Go glanced toward the open water of the shark infested Mali bay.

"There she is over there" he shouted as he spotted Honey in the open white boat about fifty yards offshore. "How can we save her?" Stop-Stop asked, not knowing what to do. Jocko had jumped down to the sand and had run into the undergrowth.

"We can't swim out to save her because of the sharks." Go-Go scratched his head trying to figure out the best way to save not only Honey, but also the boat, which might prove useful.

When Go-Go looked around he noticed the male Komodo dragon had returned and was

beside them watching the boat in the water with Honey aboard. It was as if the monster understood the situation. All of a sudden Jocko came running from the high grass with some vines. He jumped on the back of the Komodo dragon and both took off into the water after Honey and the boat. Komodo dragons look a lot like alligators when they are in the water, and they swim very well. With Jocko on his back, the big beast swam quickly to the boat. Jocko tied the vine to the front of the boat, then tied the other part around the Dragons head and leaped into the boat with a scared and wet Honey. As the Komodo dragon pulled the boat to shore the sharks circled close by, but the huge size of the dragon kept them away. After all, sharks don't want to be eaten either.

With the vine in his mouth the Komodo dragon calmly walked from the surf, pulling the boat, Honey, and Jocko behind. He was the hero of the day.

“I am going to call you ‘Hero’ from now on,” Go-Go proudly announced to his growing family. He took the small boat high up on the beach way above the water line and tied it firmly to a tree. Then with Honey, the Komodo dragons, Susie and

Hero, Stop-Stop, and Jocko trailing behind, he headed for what was left of their home, which wasn't much. But he had friends now, so it really didn't matter.

What they found when they arrived home was unbelievable. Honey was amazed. Susie and Hero were dumbfounded. Stop-Stop couldn't begin to commence to believe his eyes. Neither could Go-Go. But Jocko smiled broadly because he knew how it had happened.

Chapter 9 - Monkey Business

Go-Go led the way home, followed in single file by Stop-Stop, Honey, Suzie, and Hero. Jocko raced ahead swinging through the coconut palms. As they neared what remained of their home which had been totally destroyed, Go-Go heard a strange sound coming from the tree tops. It sounded like the twitter of birds, but suddenly it stopped and the only sound was silence, which was almost deafening.

“We have a lot of work to do, my friends” Go-Go briefly turned his head toward the group trailing behind. “First we have to put up the wall poles, make the roof, and build the walls. This time we need to make our home stronger and bigger, because our family is growing.” He looked back again and saw Stop-Stop smile, Honey patted her paws together, Suzie ran her three foot long red tongue out in a stream as a sign of anticipation over her new home, and her husband, Hero showed little interest in the forthcoming work.

Entering the clearing where their home had been, they stood in bewildered amazement.

In front of them was a brand new hut. It was larger, and taller, and it was beautiful!

“Gosh oh golly!” Stop-Stop blurted out in excited glee. “Where’d that come from? I don’t remember building it.” He glanced at Go-Go who was standing with his mouth wide open.

Sudden movements in the tree tops caught their attention. Jocko swung down from a nearby tree and pointed his finger toward the nearby trees, jumping up in down in his excitement to explain what had happened.

Go-Go, who understood some monkey talk, translated: “Jocko says these are his friends who came with him in the small boat. They have been hiding because they were afraid of us. After our home was destroyed and we went off to the beach to save Honey, they decided to build us a new home.”

The applause was interesting if not very loud: Stop-Stop clapped his hands in approval, Go-Go applauded strongly, Honey beat her paws together but

the sound was muffled because of the heavy pads on her feet, and the two Komodo dragons, Suzie and Hero beat their tails

together, which made a big WHACK about every three seconds.

As the group entered their new quarters they were surprised to find so many nice things which the monkeys had provided. A hole in the roof with palm leaves above it allowed smoke from the fireplace to exit into the South Pacific sky, yet it kept the rain out. The monkeys had created a unique loft for Honey to climb into, sleeping above the floor because bears never like to sleep on the ground. Honey quickly climbed into her cozy loft, curled up, and slept like a bear. The monkeys also had constructed a platform for each of the Komodo dragons, with an extension for their long tails, so they would be comfortable. For Go-Go and Stop-Stop they made bunk beds. "I want to be on top!" Stop-Stop demanded. "O.K. with me," Go-Go replied, knowing Stop-Stop would probably fall out on his head during the night, hoping he wouldn't damage the floor.

The monkeys had carefully crafted a kitchen with running water which came in through a bamboo tube from the spring on the hillside. They also made a dining room table out of logs, and stools for Go-Go, Stop-Stop, and

Honey, as well as a place at the dinner table for Suzie and Hero.

“What a marvelous home, who can we thank for this?” Go-Go spoke to Jocko. Jocko was pointing upward with his right finger. Go-Go looked up and there were at least 15 monkeys who had come in through the hole in the roof for the chimney. All these monkeys, who had worked so hard to make them happy, were looking down at them with quiet anticipation.

“Hip-hip-hurray! Hip-hip-hurray! Hip-hip-hurray!” Go-Go and Stop-Stop cheered in unison in appreciation for what their new found friends had done.

Looking up at his new and growing family Go-Go said: “You built us this home, and from now on it will be your home too. I officially name it: ‘Monkey House’. You can stay here safe and sound with us forever.”

With that pandemonium broke out as monkeys swung down to extend their little hands and fingers in greeting, shrieking in delight over their good fortune and new family. Susie’s tail almost conked one of the monkeys scurrying by, but other than

that it was a perfect get together for Go-Go and Stop-Stop's growing family.

A loud "BOOM. BOOM. BOOM" reverberated through their new home, shaking the walls, and fear gripped everyone as they realized something or someone else was coming to Mali. As they scattered outside, running toward the beach, they could only glimpse through the trees the outline of a big ship, apparently a British Man-of-War battleship, with three white square sails on each huge mast. A large object sailed through the air and exploded on the beach, throwing sand into the air a hundred feet. As they peered from behind the trees, more shells exploded on the beach. The cannon were belching fire and smoking on the deck of the ship. Mali was under attack!

Go-Go and Stop-Stop hid behind the trees, Susie and Hero swayed into the nearby hills for safety, and Honey returned to the hut in terror from the loud explosions. But the monkeys were something else. They gathered together in a large coconut palm, chattering as only monkeys can do. After a lot of intense chatter, they all climbed down and scattered in different directions. At first Go-Go and Stop-Stop thought they were

simply afraid from the cannon fire. Then they discovered how wrong they were in assuming their little furry friends to be cowards. A few of the monkeys ran into the hut, scaring Honey when they burst through the doorway. They grabbed the honey comb which was wrapped in a palm leaf, then ran out. Other monkeys were all over the beach picking up big pieces of balsa wood, which they quickly coated with honey from the honey comb. Then they ran to where the fire ants kept their mounds, stomped once on the top of the mound to excite the ants, laid the balsa wood coated with honey on the ground, and waited.

Several other monkeys had gone to get the Komodo dragons from their hiding place. When they returned with Susie and Hero, both dragons knew what to do. It was growing dark and the sun had set when the dragons entered the water, each with several monkeys on their back, holding a piece of honey coated balsa wood in such a way that they would not be stung because fire ants really can sting. As the Komodo dragons reached the coral reef, they swam only a few yards beyond, then the monkeys threw the pieces of balsa wood covered with ants into the South Pacific water, watching as it drifted toward the Man-of-War nearby. No

one aboard ship had seen them, and no one would know anything until morning. It would take that long for the ants to work their way onto the ship to greet the crew.

Go-Go and Stop-Stop met Susie and Hero as they returned, patted their broad backs, and stroked them behind their little ears. “Good job, my friends, good job,” Go-Go praised them and the monkeys. “Let’s see how brave the crew is tomorrow.”

In the morning they all watched from the shore. Aboard the British Man-of-War ship there was little activity until the sun came up. Finally the crew met for muster on the deck. All lined up in their uniforms, and they looked very professional. Well, they looked professional until one crewman standing at attention started to scratch at his pants leg. Then another crewman took off his hat which apparently was filled with fire ants. He ran screaming down the deck as all the men, covered by fire ants who had invaded them during the night, ripped off their uniforms and dove into the water. That was a good idea until they saw the black fins rippling through the water toward them. “Sharks” they yelled, terrified. They all scrambled back aboard ship. With only their

white long-handled underwear on, they pulled up anchor and sailed away from Mali.

From that day on Go-Go and Stop-Stop always appreciated the monkeys on Mali, as well as the monkey business they had performed. The only thing they weren't prepared for was what happened on Mali the next day. Even the monkeys could not help when it happened. And this time everyone was in real danger.

Chapter 10 -The Raft

Go-Go and Stop-Stop were sound asleep when the balsa log raft bumped onto shore on the West side of Mali in the South Pacific, and a large rusty red kangaroo bounded off into the high grass and trees. In search of food the nimble mammal leaped in 6 foot jumps as it tried to regain its composure after almost two weeks at sea. Spying a breadfruit tree the kangaroo tried to leap high enough to grab one of the delicious morsels from the tree, but the tree was too high. During the night there had been a lot of wind, and a few breadfruits had fallen to the ground. The kangaroo quickly spotted them, and gulped them down, unaware company was coming.

Stop-Stop usually was the early bird. He liked to get up before everyone else for two reasons. First, it was quiet, and he liked the peaceful glow of the sun as it came out of the sea each day. Second, Go-Go wasn't around to question what he was doing. Stop-Stop didn't want to explain things in the morning because sometimes he didn't know what he was doing. This morning was no exception as he strolled along the beach on the West side of Mali, enjoying the soft

sound of the surf. As he scanned the horizon, Stop-Stop could see something at the edge of the beach in the water. He quickened his pace, and as he got closer he could see it was a balsa raft made from five trees, tied together with rope from a coconut palm. Because the ocean was trying to pull the raft back out to sea, Stop-Stop grabbed the front of the raft and dragged it onto high ground.

The rusty red kangaroo was observing Stop-Stop as he saved the raft from destruction. Instinctively he knew what Stop-Stop was doing, and he also knew he had a new friend, so he bounced out in huge leaps toward Stop-Stop who was bent over examining the raft. A little too exuberant, his last leap proved his timing was not too good because he landed from above right in the center of the raft, frightening Stop-Stop.

“Goooooosssh!” Stop-Stop finally spoke as he examined the kangaroo. The animal was playful and extended his small arms as a gesture of friendship. Stop-Stop reached out and took the small hand and looked into the bright black eyes of the kangaroo. They were friends. Stop-Stop had a way with animals, maybe because they never feared him, and they knew he was harmless, and

also because he had a friendly, kind of goofy face, he was always accepted.

“My name is Stop-Stop.” He looked into the furry delicate face of the rusty red kangaroo. “What’s your name?”

The kangaroo squealed a noise which sounded like: “Roo”. “O.K., Roo,” now that we’ve met, come with me and I’ll introduce you to my other friends. The two of them headed for the Monkey House, with Stop-Stop bouncing around trying to imitate Roo and Roo trying to imitate the awkward gait of Stop-Stop. They really looked silly as they playfully bumped together in their display of the sincerest form of flattery: imitation.

The family in the Monkey House was awake, but they were not prepared for such an early morning event. Roo bounded through the doorway and plopped down next to the fireplace, shocking almost everyone. Hero and Susie hung onto each other in fright. Jocko swung instantly to the top of the Monkey House and started chattering in a frightened tone, and all his monkey friends stared down at the rusty red kangaroo. They had never seen such an animal before.

Go-Go was on his feet ready to fight this intruder. As he lifted his hands above his waist the kangaroo stepped forward and with a right uppercut clipped Go-Go on the side of the head, knocking him down, but mainly hurting his pride. Stop-Stop entered in time to stop the brawl. “Wait, wait, don’t hurt Roo,” Stop-Stop pleaded. Go-Go was not about to stand up only to get knocked down again.

“This is Roo, and he is my friend.” Stop-Stop introduced his friend. Honey stood up in the corner and came forward to offer a paw to Roo. Roo’s tiny hand gripped the wide paw of the brown bear and Honey and Roo became instant friends. Although she was scared, Susie crawled over to the big animal and wiggled her tail in greeting. Roo wiggled his long tail in reply. Jocko swung down and landed on Roo’s shoulder and clasped his face with both hands, planting a kiss on the nose of the kangaroo. Roo gave the monkey a tug from his small hand in appreciation. Only Hero wasn’t satisfied this beast was a friend. He glared at Roo from his platform, never moving his tail. Rubbing his chin, Go-Go extended a hand as he stood and said: “Wow, you’ve got a real punch!” Roo took his hand and put both his little hands around it in a move of

friendship, and put his arms around Go-Go and squeezed softly, giving a Roo hug to his new buddy.

Go-Go sniffed the air: “I smell smoke,” he said loudly. Then the sound of drums invaded their quiet world: “Bum bum bum bum....bum bum bum bum.” The sound was coming from the beach.

With a puzzled look they crept from the Monkey House, with Go-Go leading the way. Hidden behind the trees they peered out to see where the drum beat was coming from, and they saw the cannibals. There were three who had come ashore in an outrigger war canoe. They were fierce looking with bones in their noses and ears, they had huge heads of black hair, and they were a shiny black color. One of the cannibals had a spear and was dancing around the fire they had started. Off to the side was a fat pink pig tied to a stake. It was squealing in terror each time the cannibal approached. In the center of the fire was a big pot. They were going to cook the pig and eat it.

Go-Go and Stop-Stop were brave, but they were not so foolish as to try to attack three wild men from the South side of Fire Island.

It would be best for them to stay hidden until the men had their meal and left. Honey was terrified by the awful looking natives dancing on the beach. Apparently in her past life she had encountered these same cruel men, and she cringed at the thought of meeting them again. Susie and Hero didn't care at all, and they swayed off into the high grass for something to eat.

But Roo was livid. Roo was getting more excited by the second. At first it wasn't apparent how mad he was, but then in an explosion of speed he burst out of his hiding place in the trees and bounded in ten foot leaps toward the three unaware cannibals. Before the startled eyes of Go-Go and Stop-Stop Roo kicked the cannibal with the spear in the stomach with his large hind foot. Roo kicked the savage so hard the wild man ended up in the water thirty feet away, his spear broken in two. The shocked cannibals tried to attack the kangaroo, but Roo was so quick it was unbelievable. With a swift right hand he knocked one of the cannibals to the ground, and with his left hand caught the second under the chin. All they could see was stars. But the stars quickly became a thick cloud pouring from the sky. A large swarm of mosquitoes descended on the three men lying askew on the beach. Rolling over

in the sand several times and groaning loudly, the three wild men raced to their outrigger canoe and paddled away, chased by the mosquitoes.

Roo untied the pig, and the pig calmly came over to smell this new friend. The pig sniffed and grunted a noisy approval, and Roo placed his hand on the pig's head. All of a sudden a cloud of bats from the caves on Fire Island came down from a funnel cloud resembling a tornado. In a flash they ate the remaining mosquitoes and began to circle Roo and the pink pig. Go-Go, Stop-Stop, and Honey raced to their aid. Honey was so excited she accidentally stepped on Roo's tender tail. Roo let out a high pitched screech which was the exact wavelength of the bat's ultrasonic radar used to guide them in flight, and many of the bats crashed to the beach in confusion.

Honey gave Roo a pat of apology for stepping on his tail. Roo understood, and as the bats returned to Fire Island everyone knew they would not come to Mali again soon because their navigation system had been compromised.

Stop-Stop looked at the fat pink pig whose life had been spared by Roo's attack on the

cannibals. “I am going to call you Porker,” Stop-Stop grinned his usual silly grin as he patted the pig on the neck. Porker responded with a loud grunting sound as all gathered to meet the newest member of the family.

Jocko climbed aboard Porker’s back, and they all walked the path to their home in the Monkey House. If they had known what would happen on the way home, they would have gone another direction. But for the moment, they were happy.

Chapter 11 – Surrounded

Jocko rode on the wide back of Porker, occasionally hanging onto his ears for support. Hero and Susie were side by side in the middle of the group. Go-Go was first, with Stop-Stop close behind, and Roo following. Honey plodded along as the tail of the kite. Entering a large bunch of coconut palm trees, a deep voice called out: “Don’t move! I’ve got you surrounded!” It was the voice of a pirate.

Go-Go stopped so abruptly Stop-Stop bumped into him, knocking him off balance for a moment. Roos ears were up like an antenna, which meant he was listening for where the voice was located. Hero and Susie didn’t take another step. Honey kept walking. She walked around the group and ignored the threat.

“I’ll blast you if you take one more step!” the voice cried out in warning.

Honey kept going. Everyone else waited for the imminent gun shot. Nothing happened.

Roo pointed a finger toward a nearby tree. There in the branches about thirty feet above the ground was a beautiful parrot looking

down at them. The parrot opened its beak and shouted: “Hey matey, where’s the treasure?”

Everyone smiled when they realized they weren’t surrounded and there was no danger. It was only a talking bird. Only Honey had known the difference. The parrot flew down and landed on Stop-Stop’s head, right on top of his hair. Perched there the parrot said loudly: “I’ve gotcha now, landlubber.” Stop-Stop held out his arm and the bird quickly transferred to his wrist. Stop-Stop looked at the beautiful colors and then offered a name for the new friend. “I’m going to call you ‘Rainbow’” Stop-Stop told the bird. The parrot gripped his wrist in agreement, and said in a wild voice: “Run for your life, they’re after us!”

“See how silly and brainless parrots are,” Go-Go laughed as he commented, adding: “All they can do is repeat things they have heard before. All they can do is repeat what you say. Rainbow is a pretty bird, but she’s not very smart.”

“Well I think Rainbow is smart,” Stop-Stop turned and abruptly walked toward the beach, mad at his companion’s hurtful remarks. As he walked along with the

parrot on his shoulder he talked to the bird. “Rainbow, I’m sorry Go-Go treated you so badly a few minutes ago. I know you like to mimic what people say, and I know you can repeat the sounds other animals make, but I know too you have a good brain and you are a sweet bird.” Stop-Stop fed a banana to Rainbow, and Rainbow responded by clutching the banana in a claw while perched on Stop-Stop’s left shoulder.

Then Rainbow softly said: “Go-Go is the one who isn’t very smart. He called me a “she”, and everyone knows brightly colored birds are “he”.

“I knew you could talk and think too,” Stop-Stop replied as the bird ate a huge bite of banana. “I had a feeling inside you were smart.”

“Please do me a favor and don’t tell anyone,” Rainbow pleaded as he pecked gently at Stop-Stop’s ear. “I want them to think I don’t know what’s going on, and that way I can help in case of an emergency.” “O.K.,” Stop-Stop whispered. “This will be our secret.” The two new companions walked toward the beach with a simple understanding: no talking around the others. “Do you want to know where the pirates are

right now?” Rainbow asked Stop-Stop. “Sure, where are the pirates?” Stop-Stop was curious. “They are on Devil’s Island, to the West, and yesterday they saw the fire on the beach so they are coming to see if anyone besides the cannibals might be living here.” Rainbow’s information excited Stop-Stop because Stop-Stop knew the problems the pirates might cause if they returned to Mali, and Stop-Stop didn’t want that to happen ever again.

“What can we do to keep them away?” Stop-Stop asked in a nervous voice.

“Don’t worry, I know what to do when they get close,” Rainbow proudly proclaimed. “I’ll take care of them!”

Later in the evening as they sat at the dinner table Stop-Stop wanted to tell Go-Go about the pirates, but he had promised Rainbow he would not let anyone know he could talk. Finally Stop-Stop could stand it no longer and he blurted out: “The pirates are coming.” “How do you know the pirates are coming?” Go-Go asked, amused at his friend’s sudden excited state. “I just feel they are coming.” Stop-Stop looked around at the smiles he was receiving. Honey held her paw to her mouth to keep from laughing. Susie swished her long tail but looked the

other direction, trying not to respond. Hero grinned as only a Komodo dragon can grin, but his tail stayed still. Roo made a high pitched sound which resembled a twitter, and Jocko shrieked with a monkey laugh.

“We’ll talk about it tomorrow.” Go-Go halted all the silliness and Stop-Stop didn’t bring up the subject again. In his head he was thinking: “Maybe they won’t come. Maybe Rainbow is mistaken.” The next day would be the proof of the pudding.

In the morning the sunrise was beautiful. Go-Go was the first to go to the beach because he wanted to drag the balsa raft higher up the beach before it was swept out to sea in a high tide. As he tugged on the heavy logs his eye picked up the outline of a ship on the Western horizon. The ship was a pirate ship coming from the direction of Devil’s Island. Go-Go ran toward the Monkey House for help.

As the pirate ship got closer and closer to Mali the assembled group had no idea what to do next. They watched, frightened and scared. When the pirate ship was only a hundred yards off shore and slightly beyond the breakers, Rainbow pecked Stop-Stop on

the ear and took off in a straight line of flight toward the big ship.

“Where’s Rainbow going?” Go-Go asked in a hushed voice.

“I don’t know,” Stop-Stop replied. But he knew Rainbow was going to do something to get rid of the pirates.

Rainbow arrived on the pirate ship just as the captain was giving the order to launch the dingy to go ashore on Mali. Sitting on a cross mast above the captain’s head Rainbow said for all to hear: “There’s scurvy, disease, and death on Mali. Everyone’s is dead. Don’t go. Don’t go.”

Quickly the pirates turned the ship toward the North. They wanted no part of scurvy, disease, and death. In their haste to depart the pirates barely noticed as Rainbow returned to Mali. They were glad the parrot had warned them in time.

Rainbow landed on Stop-Stop’s head and shouted: “All gone. All gone.” Go-Go immediately criticized the parrot: “How would you know, you are just a dumb parrot.” Rainbow could stand it no longer. He looked straight at Go-Go and replied:

“I’d rather be a dumb parrot than someone who doesn’t know the difference between male and female birds.”

Go-Go shook his head in disbelief. “You mean you not only can talk, but you also can think?” Go-Go asked in wonderment. “If you can think, I suppose you will tell us the secret of what you said to the pirates to make them go away?” Go-Go waited for the answer.

“I simply told them there was someone named Go-Go on Mali, and Go-Go had not had a bath in a long time and he smelled so bad even the pigs ran away from him.” Rainbow broke everyone up with his comment, especially Porker.

“I must apologize to you, Rainbow. From now on I will treat you the same as everyone else, and I will give you the respect you deserve.” Go-Go held out his arm for the parrot to grasp. Rainbow flew to his arm, pecked him on the finger one time in a sign of affection, and flew off into the darkening sky.

The mighty group returned to the Monkey House. Tomorrow was another day, and they wanted to get inside before Mother

Nature brought a storm to visit. Mother Nature had more than a storm in mind, and she was not about to wait until morning to let them know who was in charge, and it wasn't Go-Go, that was for sure.

Chapter 12 - Scavenger Hunt

Honey, always the last one in, had barely closed the bamboo door and locked it when the wind started to blow. The sky outside to the North had turned black and ugly, and ominous low clouds brought a heavy rain in almost horizontal sheets. Stop-Stop had a candle lighted inside the Monkey House, and everyone could hear the increasing roar of the wind outside.

“This is a cyclone!” Rainbow announced for the benefit of all present.

“No, it’s not a cyclone because cyclones only appear far North of the equator, and we are South of the equator.” Go-Go corrected him.

“I think it’s a hurricane.” Stop-Stop thought he had the answer.

“No, it’s not a hurricane because hurricanes come from the Southeast and always travel to the Northwest. This storm is straight from the North.” Go-Go quickly dismissed Stop-Stop’s conclusion.

Jocko twittered something into Stop-Stop's ear at this point. Stop-Stop, who understood some monkey talk, spoke again: "Jocko thinks it is a monsoon. He said he was in one just like this a few months ago, and that was how he ended up on Mali."

"Wrong again." Go-Go assuredly proclaimed. "Monsoons occur only in Asia, and we are thousands of miles from Asia."

Outside the storm grew stronger as the wind screamed, palm trees bent double and coconuts thudded to the ground like cannon balls. Water was penetrating beneath the front door, so Go-Go placed a few rags by the door to keep the water out.

"This is a bad storm, isn't it?" Stop-Stop watched Go-Go's face for a first clue to an answer. Go-Go's face wrinkled into a frown, and he spoke softly so he wouldn't frighten anyone: "This is just a wind and rain storm, like a big thunderstorm. Suzie sighed audibly, letting out her breath and licking her lips with her long red tongue."

Jocko talked to Stop-Stop who then explained to the other monkeys what was happening. Rain was coming down almost horizontally, and the wind was about fifty

miles an hour. Several drips came through cracks in the palm leaf roof, and Hero had to move or get wet. The monkeys tried to patch the leaks as quickly as they occurred, but more leaks sprang up instantly.

“This is the type of storm that brings strange things to Mali,” Go-Go spoke his voice barely discernable above the wind. “It wouldn’t surprise me if we have some interesting items which are forced ashore.” His words were punctuated by bright flashes of lightening followed by thunder which echoed off the leaden sky. “As soon as this ends we can start a search party to see who finds the most interesting object. We can have a scavenger hunt!”

“Whoever finds the most unusual item will be King,” he glanced at Suzie and Honey and added, “or Queen for a day. The King or Queen will be served hand and foot by everyone else for one full day. Would you like to participate?” Go-Go barely finished the question when his friends all jumped up and down and clapped, beat their tails against the ground, or screeched at the suggestion. They could hardly wait for the storm to end.

Early morning light was filtering through a few cracks in the Monkey House, and the storm had passed, leaving the usual mess in its wake. Roo woke up first and bounded out the door, making so much noise as he unlocked the door his commotion caused everyone to wake up. Next out was Porker, moving his nose sideways several times to smell the situation. Stop-Stop and Go-Go shook the sleep out of their eyes and hurried out to the beach to see what they would find. Both wanted to be King for a day. They split, Go-Go went East and Stop-Stop West. Suzie and Hero wandered out of the Monkey House. They didn't have to hurry. The race was not always to the swift. Like Porker they had a nose for things, and if anything interesting was on the beach, they would find it first. Honey rubbed her eyes, displayed a big bear yawn, and strolled out to join the crowd. By this time Jocko and the monkeys had scattered through the trees, disappearing in their haste to discover the most interesting object in the scavenger hunt.

Go-Go discovered the first object as he walked along East beach. He had seen it glistening in the sand from a hundred yards away. He raced to it and bent down to retrieve it from the ocean's edge. It was a

gold pocket watch. The cover was tightly sealed keeping it water proof. He flipped open the lid and inside the inscription said: "Time heals all wounds." Go-Go pondered that statement briefly, closed the lid, put the watch in his pocket and continued his quest, smiling with the satisfaction he would win and be King for a day.

On West beach Stop-Stop could find nothing of interest. He surveyed the flat sandy beach, but as far as his eye could see nothing looked out of place. A Man-of-War bird circled overhead offshore, and as Stop-Stop walked along watching the bird he tripped over a piece of metal in the ground, stubbing his toe and yelling loudly in pain. Looking down he could see the top of a chest. Quickly he cleaned the sand away from the chest and lifted the heavy cover. It was filled with silver coins, shiny pieces of eight were everywhere, surrounded by pearls, jewels, and gold coins. It was one of the pirate's treasure chests. Stop-Stop was so excited. He carefully marked the spot with a bamboo pole, put several of the coins in his pocket, and continued on his search for more items. He was sure he would be King for a day.

Flying high over Mali, Rainbow had a bird's eye view of the entire island. As he glanced to the South he could see a funny looking object at the water's edge. Quickly he flew down to retrieve it before it washed out to sea again. It turned out to be a copper lantern which had a wick inside and used oil to light the wick. "This should win first prize," Rainbow thought to himself, grasping the thin handle in his beak. He could barely fly with the lantern in his mouth, but he was able to fly a short distance, then rest, and after a few minutes fly some more. It would take him most of the day to get his treasure back to the Monkey House, but he was sure he would be King for a day.

The Komodo dragons, Hero and Suzie, were crawling along North beach looking for something they could bring back for the scavenger hunt. Something white in the surf caught Hero's attention. It was a sailor's hat. He grabbed it in his mouth and flipped it to his head at a jaunty angle. He was showing off for Suzie, and she responded by flipping her tail in a sign of delight. He was a dashing sailor to say the least. Suzie spotted something on shore and pushed it out of the sand with her nose. It was a purse. But it was closed and she didn't

know how to open it, so she just pushed it around for a moment or two and finally gave up. Jocko had been watching when she found the purse, and he came to help. With his nimble hands he was able to open the purse. Inside there was lipstick, false eyelashes, and mascara, as well as a small case with a mirror. Since Suzie didn't talk monkey talk, Jocko talked to her in sign language, pointing first at the lipstick and then at her. Suzie understood and sat quietly while Jocko put a red band of lipstick around her huge mouth. Jocko attached the false eyelashes around Suzie's big round eyes. As a final touch, Jocko added some mascara around the fleshy part under her eyes. Suzie was beautiful! Jocko screeched in joy at his creation. When Hero looked at Suzie his heart started to beat faster and faster. She was so pretty. He started to drool, and he rolled over and over in excitement. He had to replace his sailor cap, and then Hero nuzzled Suzie softly with his nose and they disappeared into the thick brush with their treasures, but not before Suzie turned to thank Jocko with a massive wink, and he winked a tiny one back.

Porker had discovered a small rocking cradle on the beach. He wasn't sure what it was, but he knew it might win the prize, so he pushed it with his nose and it slid along on the pieces of wood on the bottom like a sled. He was going to push it all the way back to the Monkey House. He knew this would be the most unusual object found in the scavenger hunt. Porker wanted to be King for a day because he had been a pig forever. This was his chance.

Along North beach Roo was bounding around in anticipation of finding something unique. Following one giant leap, he found a short black tube in the sand. Using his tiny fingers he picked it up and when he pulled one end it got longer and longer until it was a foot and a half long. Wondering what it was, Roo looked through the big end which had a piece of glass covering it. "Wow!" he thought, look how small the island looks. Then he turned the tube around and looked through the other end. Now the island looked really large, and he could see Honey searching the beach to the right. "This will win first prize," Roo thought to himself as he tucked the tube under his arm and bounded away. "I'm going to be King."

Honey was one of the last to find something for the scavenger hunt. In the warm sand she almost smashed the big round, white egg which was half-buried. Picking it up tenderly, she wondered what it was because she had never seen an egg before. Carefully she carried it back toward the Monkey House to see if she might win the prize for the best and most unusual item found. She could picture herself with a crown as Queen for a day. The best part was she could have the attention and affection of all her friends, even if it were only for one day. That was what Honey wanted.

After helping Suzie decorate herself, Jocko had swung through the trees with his friends as he searched for something he could bring back to the scavenger hunt. He almost didn't notice the small wooden box at first because it was hidden under a balsa log. When he opened it he knew he would win first prize. It was a beautiful curved pipe, and it must have been owned by the Captain of a sailing ship because it was ornately carved from ivory, with a black handle. A small sack of tobacco was in the box too, as well as matches. Jocko filled the pipe and then lit the tobacco. He had seen sailors do the same. The other monkeys chattered their approval, and all the monkeys headed back

to the Monkey House to see who would be King or Queen. Jocko led the way, the fine pipe hanging down out of his mouth and a cloud of smoke trailing behind.

Everyone arrived at the Monkey House about the same time, and each participant in the scavenger hunt placed their find in the courtyard in front of the Monkey House. Rainbow was first, flying in with the copper lantern. He had cleaned the lantern and made it shiny and bright. When he placed it on the ground he was sure he would be King. Go-Go arrived and placed his fine gold watch on the ground with the lid open so everyone could see the inscription and how well it worked. He had guessed at the time. Go-Go was sure he would be King. Roo bounded into the clearing and placed the black tube he had found in the circle. He had extended it so it looked larger.

“That’s a telescope,” Go-Go shouted his approval of what Roo had found. Roo was glad to find out what it was called, but he was not too certain what it was good for and he didn’t want to appear dumb by asking, so he kept quiet, hoping to be King.

Stop-Stop excitedly ran into the circle of friends and dumped some silver and gold

coins as well as some pearl necklaces on the ground. "I've found the pirates treasure," he shouted in glee. "I put a pole down by the shore to mark the spot several hours ago," he added.

"Several hours ago was low tide," Go-Go replied. "Since then the tide has come in so your pole will be gone by now. Do you remember where the chest is buried?" Go-Go looked into Stop-Stop's sad face. "No, but it's on the beach someplace." Stop-Stop knew his chance to be King was gone with the tide.

Jocko showed up with all his monkey friends. He was smoking a long, white, curved pipe. He looked very silly as he puffed on the pipe and held it out for everyone to admire. He screeched something in monkey talk, and Stop-Stop translated: "Jocko says he will be King."

Grunting and making weird noises Porker joined the group. He was pushing a baby's rocking cradle with his nose, and he shoved it into the assembled pile of scavenged items. Porker knew he would be King, as everyone admired his find.

Hero and Suzie startled everyone as they strolled into the growing collection of items and just stood there for all to admire. Hero looked dashing with his sailor hat tilted jauntily on his head. Suzie stole the show with her ruby red lips, eyelashes a half a foot long which she constantly blinked in order to capture the attention of all her friends, and the mascara which made her look very exotic to say the least. She knew she would be Queen. Hero knew he would be King.

Finally the last participant in the scavenger hunt showed up. Honey proudly walked into the inner circle and placed the large white egg in the rocking cradle which Porker had pushed all the way home.

Hero glanced at Suzie. Suzie looked back at Hero. Both of them waddled to the cradle excitedly and admired the egg. Honey thought for sure she would win and be Queen for a day for bringing this egg.

At that moment the egg shell started to crack open. A tiny little nose poked out as the baby Komodo dragon pushed its way out of the shell. Finally it was out, and everyone was astounded, especially the proud parents, Hero and Suzie.

Go-Go proclaimed in a deep voice: “This new arrival to Mali shall be known as “King”, and he will be King not only for a day, but for many days to come.

As the sun set on Mali, order was finally restored and everyone took their new found treasures to play with, but Hero and Suzie had the greatest treasure of all, and they knew it.

Chapter 13 – Tsunami

Stop-Stop awoke first. He thought he was still dreaming because as he looked around all he could see was a bright red glow. Something was on fire! He hurried outside and as he cleared the doorway all the sky was on fire and the source seemed to be Fire Island to the East. As he watched in awe, Stop-Stop noticed a golden stream pouring down the mountainside on Fire Island. The golden stream was very pretty, and Stop-Stop turned around to go tell Go-Go about what he had seen when everything started to move at once. The shaking began slowly, but increased in strength until Stop-Stop was knocked off his feet and hanging onto a coconut tree. Finally it stopped and he hurried to the Monkey House where everyone was just waking up.

“It’s on fire! It’s on fire!” Stop-Stop yelled loudly.

“What’s on fire?” Go-Go asked with a frown.

“The sky is on fire!” Stop-Stop pointed toward Fire Island.

“That, my friend, is a volcano.” Go-Go paused and stared at the excited face of his buddy.

“What’s a volcano?” Stop-Stop really had no idea what Go-Go was even talking about.

“A volcano is a mountain which rises up and has a crater in the middle. Hot lava escapes from deep underground and flows over the sides of the volcano.” Go-Go clued him in.

“What is lava?” Stop-Stop really didn’t know.

“It is molten rock which comes from the center of the earth,” Go-Go replied, amazed at how little Stop-Stop knew about some things.

“What was the shaking all about?” Stop-Stop looked at him again for an answer.

“That was a small earthquake which is the result of the escaping gases and high pressures which drive the molten lava to the surface.” Go-Go filled him in once more, aware more than ever that Stop-Stop simply did not have much brain power.

“What about the Tsunami?” Stop-Stop asked, completely out of the blue.

“What’s a Tsunami?” Go-Go asked, unaware of what Stop-Stop was talking about.

“It’s Sue-Nam-e” Stop-Stop said softly, correcting his friend’s pronunciation. What it means is a gigantic wave, sometimes a hundred feet high is created, and that wave can totally destroy an island.”

“You mean right now a Tsunami could be headed toward Mali and we all could drown?” Go-Go asked in total amazement at the sudden knowledge his friend displayed.

“Yes!” Stop-Stop glanced toward Fire Island, and in an instant his right index finger came up and he pointed in the direction of Fire Island. “Like that wave there!” He shook his finger in the direction of Fire Island where a huge wave was developing offshore.

“O.K., I’m convinced. Let’s head for higher ground, now.” Go-Go grabbed some food from a shelf in the Monkey House, and they all ran for the exit at the same time. Two Komodo dragons, one brown bear, a

kangaroo, and Go-Go and Stop-Stop were stuck in the single doorway for a moment as Rainbow and the monkeys departed through the hole in the roof, and in a burst of speed they all headed for the mountain top. They didn't stop to look back, and in ten minutes they were on higher ground, looking down at the approaching wave.

The wave grew in size until it dwarfed the sea around it. It must have been a hundred feet high when it smashed into Mali, knocking down palm trees and bringing water on shore for several thousand yards. The water swirled in an intense effort to sweep everything off the island, and finally it started to subside and was sucked back into the blue Pacific Ocean. Fortunately for everyone concerned, the Tsunami did not reach their new home, but it was too close for comfort, and it knocked down trees and made a mess of the island.

“You saved our lives!” Go-Go proudly proclaimed to Stop-Stop as he patted his back in appreciation. “You are so smart. You knew all about the Tsunami, and I had never heard of it.” Go-Go praised him one more time.

“But you knew all about earthquakes and volcanoes and molten lava and things like that” Stop-Stop returned the compliment. “You are really smart, Go-Go,” he said with a smile.

When they returned to the beach they found debris scattered all around. Most of it was stuff from prior shipwrecks which had taken place along the coral reef. But there was one strange shiny white object which Stop-Stop called to Go-Go’s attention. “See this. What is it?” he asked in amazement.

“That’s a bathtub” Go-Go replied.

“What do you do with it?” Stop-Stop had no idea.

“You take a bath in it?” Go-Go was getting bothered by the questions.

“What’s a bath?” Stop-Stop asked, pretending to be totally stupid.

“Well, you get in the tub and we will show you” Go-Go smiled as he set up his friend.

Stop-Stop sat in the tub. Go-Go brought buckets of salt water from the ocean and dumped them in on Stop-Stop. The

Komodo dragons brought buckets of sand, and dumped them in on Stop-Stop. Honey brought some fresh black dirt from the garden and dumped it in on Stop-Stop. And Jocko had his monkey friends fill the rest of the tub with bananas, papayas, breadfruit, and grapes. Roo pitched in a few coconuts for good measure.

As they all walked away from the gigantic mess which was called “Stop-Stop’s First Bath”, they laughed and giggled at how Stop-Stop had fallen for their trap.

Stop-Stop, unaware anything different had happened, sat in the gleaming white tub filled with salt water, sand, dirt, and fruit and watched the sun go down. He knew he was their hero, because after all, he knew what a Tsunami was.....and they didn’t.

What he didn’t know....was what a bath really was.

On the Western horizon as the sun sank into the Pacific, there was something bobbing in the water. It was offshore about half a mile, but the next day it would be on the beach in Mali. And it would change everyone on the island when it arrived.

Chapter 14 - Captured by Cannibals

A slight early morning breeze wafted through the coconut palms and filtered into the Monkey House where Go-Go, Stop-Stop, Rainbow the parrot, Honey the bear, the Komodo dragons Susie and Hero and their new baby King, Jocko the monkey and his pals, Roo the kangaroo, and Porker, the pig lay sleeping.

It was Sunday, and the prior evening Go-Go had carefully explained: “Tomorrow is Sunday. Sunday is a day of rest. So everyone can sleep as long as they wish in the morning.”

Go-Go was lying on his side with his legs stretched out until they almost touched the wall of the hut. Every now and then he scratched unconsciously at his arm, but he was dead to the world in slumber. Rainbow hung upside down from his perch, sometimes allowing one leg to dangle down in defiance of gravity while clutching the wooden support with a strong grip. Honey was curled up on a blanket, snoring softly in her dreams. Susie and

Hero looked like hunks of lead with just enough space between them to support their baby. Roo leaned in a corner against the thick bamboo wall, oblivious to the light of day or the sounds of morning. With an open mouth Porker snored loudly for such a small pig. Only Stop-Stop was awake.

Quietly Stop-Stop stepped over the sleeping bodies and quickly went outside. He had been dreaming just a minute before, and in his dream he had found a treasure buried on the South side of Mali. Now he was awake, but he still remembered his dream, and even though he had never been to the South side of Mali, he decided to explore for himself while everyone else slept. He might even be back before the rest woke up if he hurried. What he didn't know was the trip would take longer than he thought, and he might not come back at all, because he was going to be invited for dinner later that afternoon, but it wasn't as a guest.

Strolling through the thick woods which led into the high hills, Stop-Stop was in the best of moods. Today was his day. This was going to be fun, and he would prove to everyone he could bring home a treasure. As he stepped around a tree his foot caught on a root, and Stop-Stop fell flat on his face

into the grass. He heard a noise directly in front of him. Raising his face he suddenly was just inches away from a black and white cat of some kind. He had never seen one like this before. The cat wasn't scared. Instead it was smiling at him.

Stop-Stop smiled back. "You are a beautiful cat," he said softly, not wanting to scare his new friend. The cat licked his face in reply. "I'm going to call you 'Smiley' he proclaimed as he petted the small animal. He noticed the wide white stripe ran all the way down the back of the cat, and the strip continued on into the broad, thick tail.

"Would you like to go with me?" Stop-Stop asked as he looked into the small black eyes. The cat pushed up against his leg, and he knew he had a companion for his trip to the South side of the island.

As he continued his journey, every now and then he looked back and there was Smiley just a few steps behind apparently enjoying the companionship as much as Stop-Stop.

An hour of fast walking later Stop-Stop stepped through the palms on the South side of Mali, and he was exhausted. So was his small friend. Stop-Stop took a drink of

coconut milk and offered some to Smiley who gulped down the sweet liquid. "I think it's time for a nap," Stop-Stop said aloud. He selected a small curved palm, placed his back against it, and with Smiley at his side, fell fast asleep.

As Stop-Stop slept, a war canoe with three cannibals landed on the beach a short distance away. Immediately the cannibals who had bones in their noses and wild looking hair and ten foot long spears spotted Stop-Stop, and they noticed a funny cat running away as they surrounded the lone figure.

"Mummm", was the only sound which came from one of the cannibals mouths. The other two men grabbed Stop-Stop by the arms and tied his hands behind his back before he could even wake up. When he did wake up Stop-Stop thought he was dreaming again, so he smiled and said pleasantly: "How are you?" Suddenly the dream ended. With a practiced expertise the cannibals lifted Stop-Stop up in the air and plunked him down in a large clay pot filled with cold water, and then one of them began to light a fire.

Back at the Monkey House everyone was wide awake and enjoying their morning off. No one was aware Stop-Stop was missing until Go-Go needed some firewood, but Stop-Stop was nowhere in sight. “Wonder where he went?” Go-Go looked all around. So did everyone else. Finally Stop-Stop asked Rainbow to fly out to see where Stop-Stop had gone.

Rainbow flew high over the beach, but found no sign of Stop-Stop. Then he flew higher until he was up almost into the clouds. With his sharp eyesight he could see Stop-Stop on the South side of Mali. But he could not believe his eyes, because Stop-Stop was in a big clay pot, and smoke was starting to come from a fire being set under the pot, and he was surrounded by hungry cannibals.

Screeching as he flew back to the Monkey House, Rainbow blurted out: “Stop-Stop has been captured by cannibals. He is on the South side of the island. Follow me, hurry!”

The entire community took off after Rainbow as he led the way. Go-Go was first, followed by Roo bouncing along, with Jocko swinging from tree to tree, Honey running on all four legs as fast as she could,

the two Komodo dragons sprinting behind, followed by Porker who always had trouble keeping up with the rest. They had to save Stop-Stop, and as Rainbow continued to screech high above, they hurried as fast as they could.

Back on the South beach Stop-Stop had discovered much to his displeasure, the dream was now reality. The fierce looking men were inviting him to dinner, only he was the meal. With his arms tied securely behind his back, Stop-Stop stood in the pot as the water got hotter and hotter. They really were going to eat him!

Just as the water was getting too hot to stand, his new found friend the little black and white cat came sauntering down the beach right toward the three savages, wiggling its nose as it approached with tail held high. The men ran toward Smiley with spears readied, hoping to add something new to their meal. Just as they were positioned to throw the spears, Smiley turned his back on the three men, lifted his tail high, and sprayed a fine mist into their ugly faces.

Even Stop-Stop who was quite a distance away could smell the awful smell. It was overwhelming. Stop-Stop watched as the blinded and stinky cannibals panicked and ran full speed to their war canoe and launched it into the surf, almost forgetting to take along their paddles. In terror they wiped at their blinded eyes and made awful faces as they realized the smell was going to be with them a long time.

With the war canoe out of sight, Stop-Stop yelled for his friend to help him. Smiley pushed a log against the burning wood and forced the fire away from the pot. Just as he finished, much to the relief of Stop-Stop, they heard a commotion coming from the woods.

Go-Go was yelling like a wild man, and he was followed by a group of strange looking beasts, at least they were strange to Smiley who wasn't sure whether to run or spray.

“No, don't worry,” Stop-Stop said to the animal, “They are friends.”

With a sweep of his thick tail Hero knocked over the big clay pot, and Stop-Stop spilled out on the sand. Jocko untied the knots and freed Stop-Stop's hands while Stop-Stop

told how his new friend, this pretty cat called Smiley had saved him from the cannibals.

Honey looked at the black and white cat. So did Roo. The Komodo dragons already knew about the cat. Jocko laughed. Porker snorted and made a loud burping sound of approval as he sniffed the creature. And Rainbow landed on the ground beside Smiley and notified Stop-Stop that Smiley was not a cat. Smiley was a skunk.

Stop-Stop stroked Smiley and replied for everyone to hear: “From now on, just so you will know how I feel about this friend who saved my life, Smiley is not a skunk. Smiley is a cat.

With that the happy group headed back toward the Monkey House on the far side of Mali with the greatest treasure of all: a new friend named ‘Smiley’ the cat.

Chapter 14 - Stop-Stop's Brilliant Plan

One beautiful morning Stop-Stop had an idea about how to get rid of the pirates and the cannibals at the same time. He didn't say anything to Go-Go because he wanted to impress Go-Go with his clever idea. Besides, Go-Go would probably tell him he was crazy and the idea would never work.

As soon as Go-Go had returned to their hut in the palm trees to pickup the morning supply of coconuts which had fallen down in the wind the previous night, Stop-Stop went into action.

Even though he didn't know East from West, Stop-Stop had realized the pirates came from the left side of the island across a narrow strait of water which they had called "Ho-Ho-Ho", while the cannibals always came from the right, an island appropriately called "Fire Island".

Along the shoreline to the left he placed various items from their junk pile: a piece of brightly colored cloth on a stick, followed by a bottle from their collection of bottles which had washed ashore, which he located

several yards from the cloth. In this way he fashioned a trail which the pirates would most surely follow. The trail ran into the woods quite a distance behind their hut which was deep in the palm trees and well hidden. Having taken care of the pirates part of the plan, he then went to the right side of the beach and did the identical thing for the cannibals, so that when they came to the island the first thing they would see would be a trail leading into the woods, and of course, he reasoned, they would follow it.

Go-Go had returned to see what Stop-Stop was doing and why he wasn't helping with the morning chores such as gathering wood and coconuts and breadfruit and yams.

“What are you doing?” Go-Go asked in an irritated tone of voice.

“Nothing,” Stop-Stop replied nervously.

“Sure looks like you are doing something” Go-Go said quickly.

“No, I am doing nothing” Stop-Stop insisted again. “See, I'm not even moving.” He stood absolutely still to prove he was really doing nothing.

“Why are you doing “nothing”?” Go-Go asked, looking at him in amusement?

“I don’t know,” Stop-Stop replied, hoping Go-Go would not notice the brightly colored pieces of cloth every few yards along the beach.

“Well, come along, I need your help with the firewood.” Go-Go pulled on his arm and Stop-Stop finally moved out of his frozen position of doing nothing.

In his mind Stop-Stop was contemplating his trap for the pirates and the cannibals. If he could only have the pirates come from the left at the same time he had the cannibals come from the right, then they would meet each other in the deep woods and fight each other and that would be the end of them and they wouldn’t ever bother Go-Go and Stop-Stop again.

The more he thought the more his head hurt. Then, when he was gathering fire wood the crucial flaw in his plan filtered through his head: How would he get the pirates and the cannibals to show up at the same time? If the pirates came first and found the trail, and there were no cannibals, then the pirates

would realize someone was on the island of Mali, and they would search until they found Go-Go and Stop-Stop. If the cannibals arrived and found the trail, and there were no pirates to stop them, they would also search and discover Go-Go and Stop-Stop on the island. How could he make sure they both arrived on the island at the same time?

Stop-Stop had picked up about many pieces of firewood when the idea hit him. All he had to do was build a big, smoky fire in the early morning darkness. Then when the pirates saw the flames and smoke, they would come running. Also, the cannibals would come too.

So Stop-Stop started piling firewood on the beach directly in between the trail markers he had so cleverly planted. Every now and then he took a load of firewood to their hut in the trees, but most of the time he dumped the wood onto the growing pile on the beach.

The next morning while Go-Go and the rest of his friends were sleeping and it was still dark outside, Stop-Stop put his plan in action. He took one of the matches and snuck down to the beach. In a second he had the fire lighted and as the flames leaped

into the sky he put several oily rags onto the burning logs, creating a huge cloud of black smoke which drifted into the morning sky. By the time Go-Go woke up the fire was raging, and black smoke was everywhere.

“Have you lost your mind?” Go-Go shouted at him as he ran toward the fire. “Why are you burning those logs? Don’t you know the pirates and the cannibals will see this fire and they will come after us?” Go-Go was furious at him as he yelled at the top of his voice.

“I was cold” Stop-Stop lied, fearful if he told Go-Go his plan and the truth he would be condemned further.

“Well, we’d better get to our hut and off the beach, because they will be coming now for sure.” Go-Go grabbed Stop-Stop’s hand and they ran for the hut as the sun came up out of the South Pacific water and the black smoke rose thousands of feet into the fairly calm morning air.

As predicted, about an hour later a pirate ship flying the skull and cross-bones flag appeared to the left, headed straight for Mali. To the right several war canoes came into view. Fortunately they could not see

each other on the water because of the way Stop-Stop had created the fire, at a point on the island.

From their hiding place in the trees Go-Go and Stop-Stop watched as the pirates came ashore in two skiffs, rowing frantically to see who was messing with their treasures buried on Mali. And the cannibals, like ants, had pulled their war canoes up on the beach and were running in all directions until, like the pirates, they spotted the trail which Stop-Stop had so cleverly created.

Furiously the pirates ran down the trail into the woods on one side, and the cannibals ran down the trail on the other side. Then Go-Go and Stop-Stop heard gunshots and screams and yelling as both sides attacked each other.

After about thirty minutes the sounds of fighting diminished.

Then, amazingly, a few cannibals limped out of the jungle overgrowth toward their war canoes. Wounded and in bad shape, and knowing they had been led into a trap by the pirates, they crawled into their boats and headed back across the open water.

On the other side of the beach the pirates also were suffering, and they pulled a few of their comrades back toward their skiffs as quickly as they could, sure they had been led into this trap by the cannibals and their signal fire on the beach. They rowed to their pirate ship and sailed away.

“Gosh, I wonder why they all ran into the woods?” Go-Go looked at Stop-Stop in wonderment.

“I lied to you, and I’m sorry” Stop-Stop hung his head as he stood in front of Go-Go.

“What do you mean?” Go-Go asked, not sure, as usual, what Stop-Stop was trying to tell him.

“I set up this trap for the pirates and the cannibals” Stop-Stop said, finally telling the truth. “It was my idea to create a trail which they both could follow, then they could get rid of each other and leave us alone.”

“So the fire you made really wasn’t just to get warm?” Go-Go looked at him smiling.

“Not really.” Stop-Stop looked into his face.

“Well, I feel better for two reasons” Go-Go added. “First, you did a wonderful job of getting rid of these two menaces, and second, I thought you had lost your mind because it is about eighty five degrees today so if you were cold....well....”

“I might have been a little cold?” Stop-Stop tried to add, not understanding the compliment.

“Never mind my friend, never mind. Thanks for your intelligence! You are my best friend ever.” Go-Go hugged him and patted his back proudly as the sun rose higher and the clear sky was a harbinger of better days to come for everyone as Porker, Rainbow, Roo, Hero, Suzie, Honey, Jocko, and Smiley gathered for lunch in their little hut on the island of Mali in the South Pacific.

Chapter 15 – Stop-Stop’s Swimming Lesson

Stop-Stop liked to get up early every morning and explore the island of Mali, and for five days he had quietly sneaked out of the thatched roof hut at the first hint of morning light and followed a pathway through dense underbrush over a hill to the west to a secret lagoon. The lagoon was hidden in the center of several huge rock cliffs which jutted into the sky, and the only way into the lagoon was to crawl through a cave entrance covered by tropical foliage.

Stop-Stop had not mentioned anything about his secret spot to anyone. He had almost told Hero the Komodo dragon, but he was afraid Hero would tell his wife Susie, and she would tell King, their growing infant. Soon everyone would know, and then the spot would not be secret anymore. So Stop-Stop had kept quiet, and he was the only one who knew what was in the pristine, quiet waters of the secret lagoon.

As he slid down the slope to the lagoon, Stop-Stop held tightly to a sack of sardines in his right hand, and his left hand was on

top of his head holding his straw hat firmly to his head. The lagoon was small, and the entrance to the lagoon from the sea was through two weather beaten rocks.

“Here George. Here George.” Stop-Stop yelled loudly from the sandy beach around the lagoon, hoping his new found friend would appear so he could feed him as he had been doing for several days.

“Maybe if I enter the water he will hear me better” he thought as he splashed into the clear, clean water. Stop-Stop could see 20 feet in the water, but he did not see his friend anyplace. Stop-Stop had arrived on Mali during the big storm, and he was a strong swimmer and unafraid of the water. Wading into the water further until it covered his shoulders, with the sack of fish trailing behind, Stop-Stop called out again: “George! George! Where are you?”

The noise he was making, as well as the smell of fish in the water, did not go unnoticed. Stop-Stop saw a few ripples in the distance. “That’s George” he thought to himself, smiling. When the ripples got closer he could see they didn’t belong to George. He sensed the danger even as he

noticed three separate fins protruding from the water. Sharks!

They were rapidly approaching him as he desperately turned toward shore. They were only a few feet away when he felt a tremendous tug at the sack of fish which was floating behind him as he scurried toward the beach surrounding the lagoon.

The bag was ripped from his hand as the sharks attacked the smelly fish. But the bag had been tied around Stop-Stop's waist. With the big sharks ripping and tearing at the bag, and even though he was a good strong swimmer, he felt himself being dragged out to sea toward the entrance to the lagoon. He took one last huge breath of fresh air as he was pulled underwater, but he could not undo the knot in the rope around his waist.

Underwater Stop-Stop looked in horror as the 14 foot long sharks swam toward open water with the bag in their huge mouths and he was trailing behind. As his last breath of air dwindled he saw them turn in his direction, dropping the bag of fish, and intent on pursuing another meal. Stop-Stop struggled toward the surface as the bag broke loose.

Suddenly there was an enormous wave underwater as a giant Orca whale gave chase to the sharks. Flashing white and black motions swirled the water violently as the Orca made a quick meal of the three sharks. If there was anything an Orca liked it was shark meat. Then the Orca turned in Stop-Stop's direction. Swimming under him, the Orca gently lifted Stop-Stop to the surface and took him to shore as Stop-Stop spit up water and gasped for the air he had been denied.

Recovering his senses, Stop-Stop realized he was on the back of an Orca whale. The whale was blowing water into the air which sprayed down around Stop-Stop as he revived.

“George! George” he yelled at the Orca he had been feeding for several days. “You saved my life. I love you!” He put his arms around the whale and gave George a kiss.

In response George made a high pitched sound which stood for “I love you too,” and he allowed Stop-Stop to slide off into the shallow water.

From high over Mali Rainbow the parrot had spotted Stop-Stop when he was about to be eaten by the three sharks, and he had flown back to the hut for reinforcements. Go-Go, Hero, Susie, King, Honey, Roo, Jocko and Smiley had all come to the rescue. Thanks to Rainbow they had found the secret lagoon, and they arrived just as Stop-Stop was taking a ride standing up on the back of his new found friend, George. Needless to say they could not believe their eyes.

When Stop-Stop explained how George had saved his life, they all got in the water and patted the back of the 20 foot long 2,000 pound white and black Orca whale as Stop-Stop introduced each one of his family members.

From that day on the secret lagoon was no longer a secret, but it was a very safe place to swim, and George was well fed by his new friends on Mali.

If only the residents of Mali had known there would soon be a sea monster coming to visit they would not have rested so well that evening as the orange sun sank into the deep blue water off Mali's shore. But, for the moment, they all slept like babies, even

as the newest arrival was swimming toward shore.

Chapter 16 – The Sea Monster

Two small horns poked out of the calm morning water in the not so secret lagoon on Mali. They were quickly followed by two large ears sticking straight out horizontally, two large black eyes, a thin elongated face with two nostrils above a rounded mouth, and lots of spots on a neck which seemed to go on forever. The strange animal blew water out of his nose for a moment, and finally stood up in the deepest part of the isolated hiding spot where Stop-Stop had encountered George the Orca whale a few days before. Even in the deepest part of the lagoon the creature's head and body stood high out of the water. A noise on the shoreline frightened the beast, and he quickly sank back into the water with only his horns protruding above water.

Back at the Monkey House Stop-Stop had awakened early and decided to play a joke on Hero. Carefully Stop-Stop touched a feather shed by Rainbow to the tip of Hero's nose to see if he could awaken the Komodo dragon from deep slumber. What Stop-Stop did not understand was Komodo dragons are extremely ticklish, especially around their

noses. Stop-Stop had no idea of the chaos he was about to cause. As he moved the feather across Hero's nose the Komodo dragon twitched, then he suddenly sucked in a lot of air for almost 15 seconds. Finally, still asleep he sneezed so hard the front door of the hut blew open, and in a reflex motion his giant tail swung to the right, knocking the support out from under the bed where honey the bear was sleeping peacefully.

Honey's roar woke everyone as she tumbled down the slanted bamboo bed where she had been sleeping. Her rolling body slammed into Roo who was standing up, and Roo fell backwards into Go-Go, knocking him out of bed onto the floor. Inside the hut pandemonium broke out when Smiley raised his tail in defense and almost sprayed everyone. Jocko was first out the open door, followed by Rainbow, the three Komodo dragons, and the rest of the inhabitants. Stop-Stop was the last to leave, but wisely he had dropped the feather and now he was playing innocent, pretending he didn't do anything.

Everyone was fully awake, and it was a beautiful morning, so they decided to go to the lagoon for a swim. Go-Go packed some coconuts and breadfruit and papayas for

breakfast, and they took off for the not so secret spot hoping they would encounter George, the Orca whale in the clear blue water.

Rainbow arrived first because he flew high over the palm trees in a direct line. From the air he could see the circular lagoon. Something was in the water, probably George. As Rainbow drew closer he began to realize by the shape of the animal in the water it sure wasn't George. As he zoomed down to get a closer look the water seemed to explode as the creature stood up. Rainbow suddenly knew: ***IT'S A SEA MONSTER!***

In his haste to return and warn the others about the sea monster, Rainbow lowered one wing and lost control as he smacked into a nearby tree. He wasn't seriously injured, but he was so dazed he could not fly back to warn the others.

Go-Go was first in the water as they all entered the lagoon. He quickly swam toward a couple of sticks in the water near the center of the lagoon. As he neared the two sticks he turned and waved to the others and yelled: "Come on in, this is wonderful!" Hero, Susie, and King were

entering the water, along with Stop-Stop, Roo, Jocko, and Honey. Even Smiley was considering a swim. They all saw Go-Go wave, then the sky behind Go-Go was filled with the form of a huge monster. From the nearby woods Rainbow's voice finally warned: "It's a sea monster! It's a sea monster!"

"What's a sea monster?" Go-Go yelled back as a giant shadow blotted out the morning sun behind him as the creature rose to its full height of 16 feet and contemplated Go-Go's splashing below his nose. Go-Go turned, looked up and up and up at the strange monster, then fainted from fright. His inert body quickly sank and he would have drowned, but the sea monster gently grabbed Go-Go's pants in its mouth and slowly walked with him to shore, depositing his new friend on the sandy shore as all the other inhabitants crowed around. Go-Go quickly came to and realized this wasn't really a sea monster, it was a giraffe.

Go-Go introduced all of his friends to the giraffe. Stop-Stop liked to name everything, so he loudly proclaimed: "We are going to call you 'Rescue' because you rescued Go-Go from drowning. Rescue's large black eyes winked and his tongue fell out one side

of his elongated mouth in a sign of approval. Gently he put his nose down in greeting for his new found family, and he sniffed his approval of everyone except Smiley. One whiff of Smiley and that was enough, even for a sea monster.

With Honey on his back and Jocko hanging onto his neck, Rescue walked with his friends to their home by the beach on the North side of Mali. Along the way he knocked coconuts and breadfruit to the ground for everyone to enjoy.

Eager to show Rescue their home, Stop-Stop proudly opened the door before he realized Rescue was too tall to enter. “We are going to build you a home beside our home,” Go-Go explained to the giraffe, as all the family started construction on a home for Rescue.

After a few hours with everyone working together they had a suitable home for Rescue. It was very tall because giraffes like to stand most of the time, and it had a window at about 14 feet for Rescue to poke his nose through.

“Be quiet! Listen!” Rainbow, who had recovered fully from his encounter with a tree shouted.

“I don’t hear anything” Stop-Stop said softly.

Rainbow had better hearing than anyone, so he flew high into the sky and quickly returned to announce: “We have visitors on North Beach, and they are headed this way.”

Chapter 17 - Voices From the Beach

Go-Go slowly stood up and the sudden silence was punctuated by the faint but unmistakable sound of two people talking and laughing. Someone was on Mali.

Silently Go-Go motioned for the group to follow him as he walked to the top of a nearby hill. Reaching the top, he looked over the edge at the beach below. On the beach there were two sailors and a tiny boat, with two oars almost as big as the dingy.

The dingy was so little Go-Go was prompted to say: "I wonder where they wind it up?" Everyone laughed except Stop-Stop. He frowned and stated the obvious: "Well, at least they have a boat!"

In the distance around the curve of the island they could also see a three mast man-of-war was anchored several hundred yards offshore.

Apparently the two sailors had been sent ashore to look for fresh water. They had

deliberately rowed out of sight of their shipmates. The reason was readily apparent because both men had bottles of rum which they were drinking like it was water. As they drank they talked and laughed, getting louder and louder.

“What are they saying?” Stop-Stop asked softly, glancing at Go-Go for an answer.

“I don’t know, but it sounds like Russian,” Go-Go replied, not too sure of his answer.

Rainbow had very sensitive hearing, and he clucked several times as he listened to the conversation below.

“I think it is Spanish,” Stop-Stop blurted out, not really knowing what it was but wanting to participate in the discussion at hand. Susie, Hero, and King all beat their tails against the sand in approval. It sounded like Spanish to them.

Finally, Rainbow ended the guessing game: “It’s French.”

Turning to Rainbow Go-Go smiled and asked: “O.K. smarty, how do you know it’s French? Do you speak French?”

Rainbow ignored the comment and pointed with a finger on his foot toward the two men on the beach. They had unfurled a huge blue, white and red flag and stuck it in the sand as if claiming the island. It was a French flag.

“Yes,” Rainbow answered the question. “I speak French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Danish, English, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, and Greek.” He smiled at Go-Go in contempt and flew to the top of a coconut palm for a better view and to discover what the two sailors were planning to do on their island.

After ten minutes Rainbow returned to his friends and companions.

“What’s going on?” Go-Go asked, hoping Rainbow would be kind enough to let him in on the plans.

“They are supposed to be looking for fresh water for the ship. Instead they are drinking those bottles of rum which they brought. They can barely talk they are so stupid.” Rainbow was disgusted with the behavior of the sailors. “They are taking a nap now, and when they wake up I imagine they will have some really big headaches from the rum.”

Rainbow half-closed his eyes to indicate how they might look when they awoke.

Stop-Stop came up with a brilliant idea: “Let’s all go down to the beach dressed up in brightly colored clothing. We, I mean you, can surround them and they will think they have gone crazy. Go-Go and I will stay behind and monitor the situation, but if we do it right, it will be fun and when they leave Mali they will be so shook up they will never return.”

Rescue had been peering over the top of the palm tree, hiding behind the thick branches, and he bent down and gave a sloppy kiss to Stop-Stop for this excellent idea. The others also were smiling as they strolled down to their hut to get ready for the surprise.

On the beach the French flag fluttered in the breeze at a 45 degree angle as the two drunken French sailors snored loudly into the warm fresh air. The sun was about to set as Rescue appeared first. Dressed in two pair of pants, one on the front and one on the back, and sporting a black derby hat with his two horns poking through, he silently approached the sleeping sailors and stood towering above them with Jocko and four other monkeys on his broad back.

Smiley the “cat” was wearing a red bandana around his neck, as he placed his tail strategically close to the ugly unshaven face of the larger of the two drunken sailors. He winked at Roo who was sporting two blue socks on his outstretched little fists, and someone had pasted a fake moustache under his black beady nose.

Hero and Susie were terrifying. Susie had put a frosty paste around the big mouth of her husband, and he looked like he had rabies. She had also painted his eyes with dark shades of red, with black streaks. He really looked mean. Susie had eaten some fresh garlic and her breath smelled awful. She had a pink hat lopsided on her head, and Stop-Stop had slipped a long pink petticoat along her entire body to the point where she could barely get her legs out. Whatever she was supposed to be, it was frightening. They didn’t let King take part in the “ceremony” because they were not sure what would happen next.

Rainbow was positioned on top of Rescue’s horns, ready to teach the two sailors a lesson which would be remembered for a long time. Rainbow had a bright yellow ribbon which soared in the Pacific breeze in a long

arc as he flew down to the two men and quickly tied their hands together as they slept.

As he finished the smaller man started to wake up. Full of rum and very dumb he opened one bleary eye and as it went from left to right he was sure he had died and gone to join the devil. First he saw something towering over him. It was spotted and had bunches of jeering monkeys on its back. It had horns and a black derby hat. It was looking down at him as if it were going to eat him. The sailor opened his other eye and the terror continued. On his left was a dragon dressed in pink with a hat to match. It was breathing heavily on him, and the stench was awful. On his right was another monster with its mouth wide open showing four rows of sharp teeth. The mouth opened wider until he could see way inside the animal. The sailor's heart skipped a beat as he shook his head and shouted for his companion to wake up.

His companion stirred slowly, half opening his eyes at first and then suddenly both eyes were wide open as he felt Hero turn his gaping mouth toward his face. Before he could see too much Rainbow started shouting in French: "Get off the island. No

water here. There is only death to those who don't leave!"

Before either of the sailors could comprehend what was going on Smiley did his thing: he sprayed each of the men fully in the face, doing his best to not hit Susie or Hero or spray one of the long legs of Rescue.

At that exact moment Honey with fish blood all over her mouth stepped up to the two terrified sailors and roared as loud as she could directly into their faces. Through the awful smell and all the noise they were scared almost to death as they leaped from the sand with their hands tied in yellow ribbon and staggered almost blindly for their little boat. The biggest man got to the boat first and he dived in head first, almost knocking the bottom out of the boat. He reached for an oar as his companion jumped into the boat, screaming in absolute terror.

Rowing as fast as possible for the open sea and their man-of-war, suddenly they were shocked as George, the Orca whale, joined in the melee and bit an oar in two as he splashed water into the boat, almost capsizing it. Then George bit the other oar

in two as the two men paddled furiously with just sticks.

When the boat was swept out of sight by the tide, all the Mali crew got together for a laugh. “That was the funniest thing I have ever seen,” Stop-Stop could not stop laughing as he praised his friends for the fantastic show. “Can you imagine what they will tell the crew?” Go-Go smiled broadly as he thought about that moment. “Thanks to Smiley the smell will probably get them thrown in the brig for the rest of their journey.” Smiley smiled at the recognition and praise.

In the distance they watched as the French ship abruptly pulled up anchor, put up three sails, and disappeared from view. Calmly Go-Go pulled up the French flag fluttering in the breeze and tied it around Honey’s thick furry neck as a bandana.

As the sun set on another day on Mali the entire group was united once again in the happy knowledge no one would invade their small wonderful world and get away with it. But tomorrow was another day, and as they prepared for bed that evening Go-Go had an uneasy feeling something was “in the wind”.

Chapter 18 – The Mali Magic Show

Stop-Stop was swinging lazily in the morning sunshine. His rope hammock was pulled back and forth by a rope tied to the tail of Susie on one side and Hero on the other. They were repaying Stop-Stop for the fabulous fish dinner he had prepared the night before.

“I’m bored,” Stop-Stop announced to everyone who would listen. “I am really bored,” he pleaded for attention.

“Plop!” A large coconut missed Stop-Stop’s head by an inch as it sank into the soft sand beside him.

“Hey, why did you throw that coconut at me?” Stop-Stop asked Jocko who was high in a palm tree which acted as a support for his hammock.

Jocko screeched something and laughed. Rainbow translated the monkey talk to English: “He says he didn’t want you to be bored.”

“I don’t want to be killed either!” Stop-Stop glared at the monkeys who obviously were enjoying the confrontation.

Go-Go stepped out of the hut and stretched in the warm breeze coming off the ocean. “Gosh, this looks like a magic day.”

“Magic day?” Stop-Stop looked at Go-Go in amazement. “That’s a wonderful idea,” he added, to the puzzlement of all. “Let’s make this a truly magic day.”

“So, what do you propose?” Go-Go asked his swaying friend in the hammock.

“Let’s all pick out a magic trick, and tonight we can have a Mali Magic Show. After the show we can all vote on the best trick, and whoever does the best magic act will get a day of royal treatment by everyone.” Stop-Stop smiled at his brilliance.

Roo clapped his approval, his tiny hands making only a small amount of noise. Rainbow flew to Go-Go’s shoulder, fluttered his brightly colored wings, and said: “Magic! Magic! Magic! I’m gonna win the prize!” Rescue who was nibbling at something in the top of a tall palm stomped

his hind feet in approval. Honey rolled over and over in the sand showing her acceptance of the idea. Smiley blinked his bright black eyes in a “Yes!” Then Susie and Hero announced their acceptance by swishing their tails at the same time in the same direction, forgetting the ropes tied to the hammock. Stop-Stop was dumped into the sand unceremoniously, to the delight of all the Mali inhabitants.

“OK, it’s settled.” Go-Go glanced around the assembled excited group. “Tonight will be the first Mali Magic Show. So everyone, get your act together today, and at sunset we can have a great fire, good food, and the best magic possible.”

Even George the Orca whale had been listening, and just off the beach he was squirting water 30 feet high in approval. He would participate too. So everyone began to think about what kind of magic they would perform, and the ideas were incredible.

Each participant presented their idea for magic to Stop-Stop who was the organizer. It was up to Stop-Stop to make sure none of the performances were the same. Variety was the key word, and Stop-Stop listened

carefully as the ideas were presented one by one.

“I’m going to do a coin trick,” Jocko’s excited chatter was translated by Rainbow.

Susie looked at Stop-Stop with a serious expression and announced through Rainbow: “I am going to throw knives at Honey.” Honey flinched but didn’t say anything since she had never seen an act like that before.

Rescue looked down at Stop-Stop, then made some rather strange sounds. “He says he wants to do a levitation act. He will make King float in the air!” Rainbow explained.

“I’m going to show everyone a juggling trick,” Honey smiled at Stop-Stop.

Smiley quickly jumped into the fray and said, thanks to Rainbow: “I have a math trick I am going to perform.”

Roo looked at Smiley and announced boldly through Rainbow’s translation service: “I am going to saw Smiley in two!” Smiley returned a surprised look of astonishment, but he didn’t comment. After all, everyone

had to be a good sport or the show wouldn't work.

"I'm going to be a fire-breathing dragon"
Hero announced via Rainbow.

King indicated he would be presenting a puzzle to everyone.

With a flapping of his wings and great flare, Rainbow said: "I am going to do a card trick."

Even George got into the act, and Rainbow said George would make a "Transformation", whatever that was supposed to be.

Stop-Stop couldn't wait for Go-Go to tell him what his plans were. Instead, he blurted out in his excitement: "I'm going to pull a hat from the rabbit!"

Everyone laughed at the same moment. Finally, it was up to Go-Go to complete the program for the Mali Magic Show. He glanced around at the gathered group and with a mysterious voice said: "I am going to make Stop-Stop disappear!" Stop-Stop flinched nervously, but said nothing.

“OK, tonight at sunset we all will meet here and the Magic Show will begin.” Stop-Stop’s boredom had evolved into sheer delight, and the Mali family scattered in all directions to prepare for their magic acts.

As the sun sank into the sea and the dark shadows of palm trees swayed in the breeze casting moving shadows, Stop-Stop lit the bonfire in front of their hut. With orange flames leaping into the cool night air, and everyone gathered for food and fun, the Mali Magic Show began with Jocko’s coin trick.

Jocko, dressed in a black hat and coat, complete with black cape dragging on the ground, stepped to the wooden stage for his performance. His eager audience applauded his costume, with Hero making the most noise by beating his huge tail against a nearby tree, almost knocking it down in his enthusiasm.

Jocko showed the audience his coin, a large Spanish silver 8 reales coin taken from the pirates. He placed it in his right hand and held it high for everyone to see. Then he quickly passed it through his left hand in a smooth practiced motion. Turning to King he twittered something. “He is asking you

to indicate which hand the coin is in now,” Rainbow translated.

King instantly pointed to Jocko’s right hand because he knew that was where it was. Jocko’s smiled and showed his right hand was empty. Then he reached behind King’s left ear with his left hand and announced: “See it is behind your ear!”

Everyone applauded wildly, enjoying the fire, food, and magic. Everyone except King. King made some funny sounds, then Rainbow said: “Do it again.”

Jocko replied: “A good magician never does the trick again.”

“Do it again!” everyone pleaded in unison.

“OK, watch more carefully this time,” Jocko said as he placed the coin in his right hand, quickly passed it through his left hand, and turned to King again for an answer to where it went. King didn’t say anything.

“Where is it?” Jocko asked. “Is it in this hand?” He held up his right hand and shook it. “Or is it in this hand?” He held up his left hand. King didn’t say anything.

“Well, which hand do you choose?” Jocko asked again.

“Neither” was the soft reply.

“What?” Jocko was furious. “You have to choose one hand or the other” he said angrily. “Where is the coin?”

King looked puzzled, then to the amazement of everyone he said simply: “It’s behind my ear, don’t you know the trick?”

Everyone applauded King’s answer because it was so creative, and they also applauded Jocko’s good coin trick.

It was time for Susie’s knife throwing act. She carefully placed Honey against a large board, spread-eagled with furry arms stretched up and out and legs apart. She had drawn an outline in red paint on the board so Honey would know where to place her body, but Honey’s chubby body overlapped the outline in places.

“Don’t move!” Rainbow spoke for Susie.

Roo reached down and attached a large knife with a very sharp blade to Susie’s tail in a leather pouch. Susie had been

practicing her trick all day. But she had never had such a good live target before. She smiled as she turned sideways to throw the knife.

The blade of the knife gleamed in the firelight as the knife sailed through the air toward Honey who had shut her eyes knowing this was her last moment on earth. The knife landed with a thud about an inch from her right hand, sinking into the board. The assembled group applauded as a shaky Honey was led away from the board.

Just to show her audience how good she was, Susie used the outline for one more throw. The outline in red was supposed to be her target, but the knife went astray and penetrated the very center of the outline. A huge “OH!” was gasped by the assembled crowd as they realized Susie probably needed more practice.

It was Rescue’s turn to perform some magic. Rescue had put black cloth over his long legs, and since he stood 17 feet above everyone, he commanded everyone’s attention. In the center of the stage King was absolutely motionless. Rescue made some weird noise, and Rainbow spoke:

“You are now going to see some giraffe magic. Watch and learn about the magic of levitation.”

In total awe the audience watched as King slowly began to float into the air at the sound of Rescue’s voice. Apparently the magic words caused him to be lifted higher and higher. King’s body was lifted to about 10 feet, then with Rescue’s voice growing softer and softer, King was lowered back to the stage.

The applause was deafening. Everyone loved this trick, and Rescue’s act was the best so far. No one had the slightest idea how it was done, but everyone knew it was some very special magic.

On cue as Rescue moved off stage, Honey appeared, carrying some rather strange items. One was an axe, another was a long knife with a very sharp blade, another was a piece of broken glass, and finally a hammer completed the odd assortment. Instantly Honey pitched everything into the air and with a blurring motion juggled each item very precariously, somehow managing to keep everything going at the same time.

After several minutes of juggling, Honey lost her concentration when Smiley stomped impatiently at the edge of the stage. The knife fell to the ground, sticking in the stage. The hammer bounced off the stage and almost hit Go-Go. The piece of glass crashed to the stage and broke into a million pieces. But Honey managed to catch the axe, which she wanted to throw at Smiley for messing up her performance, but being a good performer, she bowed to the gracious audience and stepped down.

Smiley stepped up front and center, and with Rainbow's help asked the audience: "How many fingers do I have?" Holding up her tiny paws, it was hard to tell. "Five," someone yelled, obviously trained to keep the show going. "No, I mean on both paws" Smiley asked again. "Ten" was the shouted reply. Carefully Smiley counted down from ten as he held up his paws: "Ten, nine, eight, seven, six" and that took care of one paw. Looking at his audience, Smiley asked: "How much are six and five?" "Eleven!" everyone screamed aloud. "So, you see, I have eleven fingers!" Smiley laughed at his own trick.

"I don't get it?" Stop-Stop looked at Go-Go in confusion, as the rest of the group

applauded politely, hoping to get Smiley off the stage without causing a stinky incident. Satisfied, Smiley stayed on stage because he would be part of the next act.

Roo, complete with a magic wand and a long box set on two tables, stepped to the center stage and the crowd went wild as they watched Smiley step into the box and his little paws and part of his tail were protruding from the end of the box while his head was at the top, protruding from a hole which had been carefully cut in the box.

“Roo says he is going to cut Smiley in half!” Rainbow spoke in a serious tone.

“He will stink us all up if he does!” Stop-Stop shouted with glee.

“Just watch the trick” Go-Go advised his delirious friend.

Roo took out a big saw and with Smiley looking terrified, began sawing the box in two. Finally, after sawing for a minute or so, the saw cut completely through the box as Smiley closed his beady eyes and hoped for the best. Placing a cloth over each open end of the two boxes, Roo pulled them apart.

On one end was Smiley's head with his eyes shut tightly. On the other end was Smiley's tail and little feet, and his tail was wiggling!

The audience applauded and stomped their feet. This was the best trick yet, but they wondered if their little black and white friend was feeling any pain. They watched in anticipation as Roo pulled the two boxes back together, said a few magic words, which Rainbow said were: "Abra cadaver", and when the box was opened, out stepped Smiley, a bit shaken, but back in one piece.

"What a wonderful trick!" Go-Go yelled his approval, adding: "Bravo! Bravo!" and the crowd joined in as Roo tipped his wand and acknowledged their acceptance.

As Roo left the stage, Hero jumped into the center of the stage and faced the fire behind the stage. With a quick gulp from the clay jar beside him, he filled his giant mouth, looked at the fire, and sprayed out a mist which instantly resulted in a flame about 30 feet long. It was spectacular to see, and the entire area was lighted up from this display. Hero did the same thing three times, and each time it was more spectacular and the flames were longer and longer. Then he

stepped down to a wild applause of approval. His fire-breathing act left everyone breathless.

King stepped to the stage, and with Rainbow's help asked: "What is black and white and read all over?" Everyone knew the answer, but they pretended it was a good puzzle. Finally, King told them the answer: "A Newspaper!" The applause was polite as the show continued.

Rainbow flew to the stage and landed on a perch which had been placed in the center. Holding up one claw, he displayed a deck of cards. He nodded to Go-Go to pick a card. Go-Go stepped forward and from the middle of the deck, selected a card. Showing it to the audience, Go-Go then turned back to Rainbow and placed it back in the deck. Without hesitation, Rainbow said in a magic laden voice: "Your card was the King of Hearts."

"What a good trick" Stop-Stop shouted, clapping his hands together with the rest of the crowd. "Can you show us another one?" he asked Rainbow.

"Nope. A good magician....well, you know." With that Rainbow left the stage as

everyone wondered how he had done the trick.

The fire was casting long shadows throughout the clearing as Stop-Stop stepped to the stage. In his right hand was a big, white rabbit. The rabbit obviously was not too happy about being part of the act, but there was little the rabbit could do about it because Stop-Stop had it by the ears in his right hand.

Reaching toward the rabbit with his left hand, Stop-Stop touched the rabbit's head and suddenly a big, black magician's hat appeared as he pulled his hand back. This was the first time anyone had ever pulled a hat from a rabbit, and the gathered group loved it. They yelled and screamed for more, but unfortunately that was all Stop-Stop had to offer. No matter what, they loved his presentation.

It was Go-Go's turn to perform. In a black cape, top hat, and with a magic wand with a white tip, he stood tall on stage as he had Stop-Stop come front and center. Stop-Stop acted like it was his last moment on earth, and his legs trembled as he anticipated being removed forever from his friends and family on Mali. Uttering the magic words:

Charge! Charge! Charge! Go-Go opened his right hand and threw some powder into the fire. For a moment everyone was blinded by the explosion, and as the smoke cleared Stop-Stop was nowhere in sight. He had simply disappeared!

“Wonderful!” shouted Rainbow. The entire assembly went crazy with applause and jumped to their feet in recognition of the best magic act yet. They applauded and applauded until their hands hurt. As the applause wore down, the sudden realization their friend Stop-Stop had disappeared came over them.

Sadly, Roo asked Go-Go: “Will we ever see our friend Stop-Stop again?”

From behind the fire a voice replied: “Sure, I’m right here!” And Stop-Stop rejoined the happy group.

“All the magic acts were great,” Stop-Stop assured his friends, “but now we need to decide which was the best, and that person will receive the Royal Treatment tomorrow, it will be their day to be pampered and treated kindly by everyone.

All the contestants huddled closer together as the vote was about to be cast.

All of a sudden from the shoreline a terrible noise filled the cold night air. “It’s George!” Rainbow explained. “He wants a chance to perform too.” The entire group hurried to the beach where George had almost beached himself trying to attract their attention. Now was his chance to participate and have a chance to win the prize.

Slowly George circled in the shallow water. Then, with a huge explosion of water which cascaded into the air, almost soaking his admirers, he was transformed into a very small Orca. From 2000 pounds, he became a 50 pound whale. No one could believe their eyes. What a fantastic trick! How did he do it? No one knew, but they were sure this was the best trick of all, so they awarded the prize to what was left of George. Having presented the little Orca with first prize, they tied the blue ribbon around his neck. Just as they were tying the ribbon, George reappeared and made whale noises which Rainbow explained: “George says he wants you to meet his son, Sami.”

Everyone now understood the trick, but still it was the best, and Sami, their newest friend

on the island, would be treated Royally on the next day. With all the fun and games and magic acts over with for the moment, all the inhabitants decided to call it a night, and the boredom which had started their day had been turned into a very pleasureable time indeed!