

## THE MONKEYS AND THE MOON

By ANGEL V. CAMPOY \*



MR. MONKEY-MONK sat thoughtfully under a coconut tree. Since the old woman had gone away from her field of bananas everyone of his large monkey family had been kept busy all day long. They had to clean around the banana clumps, cut off the dead leaves, and plant beans between the bananas to keep the grass from growing tall under them. When the bananas began to bear fruit, they had to top off the flowers to make the fruit ripen faster. When harvest time came, every monkey was busy gathering the luscious fruit. They had all the bananas they could use and more too. They thought they owned all the bananas in the world.

They worked hard, indeed, gathering this great harvest. While they were

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working, Mr. Monkey-Monk sat thinking to himself. "All work and no play makes dull monkeys," thought he. "I must give everyone some time to play."

He thought very hard. "I have it," he said after a while. "It is only at night that the monkeys would have time to play, because during the daytime there is very much work to be done. Yes, a good time to play would be at night while the moon shines. Then all the monkeys could play 'tag' in the moonlight, or chase one another among the tree-tops. But when the moon does not shine and the nights are dark, every monkey would have to stay at home. There could be no playing then. I wish it were moonlight every night, all night long."

Then Mr. Monkey-Monk thought and thought some more. "I wish it were moonlight every night, all night long." He kept thinking this over and over.

At last he had an idea. "Why couldn't the moon be made to shine every night, all night long?" he asked. "Splendid! Then the monkeys could work all day long and play all night long."

So he called all the monkeys together. When they were gathered together he told them his plan.

"Good!" said a little monkey. "That's a fine idea! But how can we make the moon shine every night all night long?"

"That's exactly what I called you for," Mr. Monkey-Monk told them. "I want somebody to think of a plan by which we can make the moon shine every night, all night long. How can we get the moon so we can make it do what we wish?"

"That's easy," a middle-sized monkey answered. "We'll all climb to the top of

the tallest coconut tree. Then we'll climb on the top of each other's shoulders, and the monkey at the very top can reach up and get the moon."

"The very thing to do," all the monkeys agreed.

So the next evening they watched for the moon. When it shone right above the tallest coconut tree, the monkeys climbed to the top of the tree and then climbed on top of each other's shoulders.

Then they tried to get the moon, but even the tallest monkey at the very top could not reach it. After a while they all got tired and gave up for that night.

Not long after that on a moonlight evening, as Mr. Monkey-Monk sat under a tree thinking about how to get the moon, one of the wisest old monkeys came running to him.

"Oh, Mr. Monkey-Monk," he cried, "the moon has fallen down into our well. Now we can get it and make it shine for us every night, all night long."

Old Monkey-Monk jumped up and hurried to the well as fast as he could. He looked down into the clear water. Yes, it was true. The moon had fallen into the well. With his very own eyes he could see the moon right there in the water.

"Come, let us get the moon out of the well," he said to the monkeys around him.

"How shall we get it out?" asked one of the youngest monkeys.

Every monkey began scratching his head and thinking.

Finally the wisest of the monkeys made a suggestion. "This is the way, Father Monkey-Monk, that we can get the moon out of the well. Let the biggest monkey hold on to that branch of the tree over the well. The next monkey will hold on to his tail; the next one will hold on to the

tail of the second monkey, and so on. We will have a string of monkeys extending into the well. The last monkey can reach down into the water and get the moon and bring it up, so we can make it shine for us every night, all night long."

The idea sounded very good, and everybody agreed to do his part in order to get the moon. The biggest monkey climbed up and held on to the branch of the tree just over the well. The next

(Please turn to page 301.)



