



Chapter 3: Cherry Makes a Friend

□ Cherry looked up at the sky and wondered which way she should walk to find the lake. She decided to continue to follow sun because it would keep her warm and the light would last longer. She took a deep breath and made her way out of the circle and into the forest. Even though the trees got thicker, the dirt path was clear so it was easy for her to walk. The sun followed her deeper into the forest. She could feel its warmth on her back.

Suddenly, Cherry heard a loud squawking of birds. She knew they were Blue Jays because of their angry voices. They always sounded like they were arguing with each other. She smiled as she continued on her way. She copied the sounds, and the birds talked back to her. Her feet moved faster until she was skipping. Once again her adventure was fun. She stopped to catch her breath. The Blue Jays were gone and the forest was quiet.

She was just about to get that sad tummy feeling when she heard leaves cracking and loud snuffling noises. These were new sounds. "Uh-oh," she thought. "Is it a bear?" She knew many animals lived in the woods. For the first time she felt alone and even a little afraid.

She knelt ever so still in the bushes. Then she saw four big feet and long shaggy hair. Something very big was walking and sniffing all around the bushes where she was hiding. Whatever the animal was, it was covered in fluffy fur. "It smells me," she whispered.



Cherry heard the animal's footsteps stop. She peeked out from the bushes. What she saw was a big, shaggy dog. She could see his chest of snowwhite fur shining in the sunlight. He looked as if he were wearing a clean, white shirt. He snuffled and snorted and



shook his head from side to side. “How beautiful he is,” she thought. She held her breath and waited to see what he would do.

Should she run?
Or climb a tree?
Or not move at all?

She wondered so many things about her new visitor. Would he be friendly or mean? For the first time in her life, Cherry Star did not know what to do. She was scared.

The dog made low grumbling noises as he circled around. He was so tall he looked like a pony. He had long, floppy ears and small black freckles around his nose. His mouth was slobbery and made big puffs of steam when he breathed.

Instead of looking at his mouth and teeth, Cherry looked at his eyes. They were round and droopy with white circles around them and seemed sort of sad. The more she looked at them, the safer she felt. Soon she was not scared anymore.

There was something about the dog that made Cherry almost giggle. When he shook his head from side to side big globs of slobber flew every which way.

“Yuck!” squealed Cherry. She stood up slowly and stayed very still so she wouldn’t scare the dog. She was standing so still that a beautiful orange butterfly landed on her shoulder. She could feel its wings flutter by her ear. They tickled her cheek. The sun shined right on her and the butterfly. The butterfly’s wings looked so pretty in the sunlight that Cherry gave a big sigh. She felt sure that she was in a friendly place.

“How good of you to come and keep me company,” she whispered. Cherry was so busy watching the butterfly that forgot about the dog and stepped out of the bushes. He circled behind her, and then slowly walked ahead.

He kept shaking his head and looked back at her every few steps. He took a few steps, and then turned to look at Cherry. “I think you want me to follow you,” she said. She had to take big steps to keep up with him. She was careful, but she was not scared anymore.



The huge dog turned around and waited for Cherry to catch up. When she was right behind him, he lowered his head and plunked down in the dirt. Cherry stood still for a minute. She was feeling so brave. After a while, she stretched out her small hand for the dog to lick.

“I’d like to be your friend,” she said. Soon she knelt in the dirt and hugged the dog. Cherry Star knew she had made her first friend on her new adventure.



Do you like being outside in nature?
Are you afraid of animals?
Have you ever felt scared like Cherry?
Do you think Cherry did the right thing to meet the dog?
What would you have done?

