

**CHAZ THE COCKATIEL:
“ADVENTURE OVER CATOCTIN CREEK”**



**... As told to George Hawkins Nunn
on his third birthday by Grandmommy.
September 8, 2018**

~~~ CAST OF CHARACTERS ~~~



**Chaz, Katherine Boutelle's  
Cockatiel**



**Katherine Boutelle, 1991**



**Chadrenne Blouin, 1991  
(Little Miss Dr. Doolittle)**

**~~~ CAST OF CHARACTERS ~~~**



**Grandmommy, 1991, when she lived on the farm.**



**Skoshi, 1954  
Aunt Pat's Parakeet**



**Grandmommy, 1954**

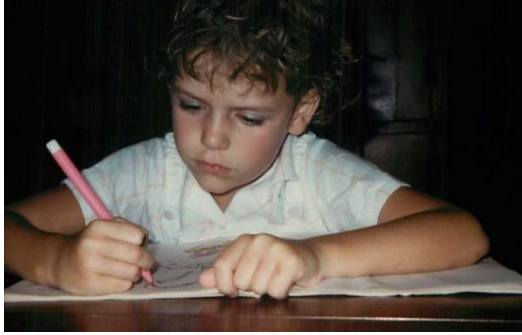


**When all the Nunn children grew up,** Catherine, Hugh and John left home to live at their schools. It was 1991, more than 25 years ago. Grandmommy was lonely, so she bought a boat named “Joyous” to live on in downtown DC, close to her work and other neighbors who also lived on boats.



But before the boat was ready to live on, Grandmommy rented two rooms in a big house on Pleasant Valley Farm in Middletown, Maryland. That’s where her horse, Foxfire, was living, so she could ride after work with all of the Boutelle sisters – Dixie, Marge and Katherine.





Chadrenne was Marge's daughter. She was 10 years old and also lived in the farmhouse. Grandmommy's chores were marketing and cooking for the family every night, and she took Chadrenne to school every morning. Chad was a good student, and always finished her homework.



Animals loved Chadrenne. We called her "Doctor Doolittle." Grandmommy's dog, Murphy, stole her hats, gloves and dirty socks and took them into his kennel with his tennis ball.



I once saw humongous Cheyenne -- Maryland's Event Horse of the Year, mind you -- stand quietly while Chadrenne climbed up onto his back with the bridle not quite right, and even though her feet didn't reach below the saddle flaps, he trotted and cantered wherever she wanted to go.



Chadrenne's cat let her dress him up in doll clothes, and sometimes she would drape him around her shoulders and walk around the house. Of course, they slept together.



Chaz the Cockatiel also lived in the farm house. Chaz was Katherine's bird, and he lived in a cage with the door open. No one wanted to clip his wings, so he flew around the bedrooms, the living room and the kitchen whenever he felt like it. He only flew into his cage when he wanted something to eat or drink.

Every evening when Grandmommy was cooking dinner, Chaz would sit on her shoulder and nibble on her earrings. That hurt sometimes, so Grandmommy crossed



two bobby-pins onto her collar so Chaz could have something else to play with.

♪ But Chaz especially loved Chadrenne. She  
♪ could whistle and say, “Pretty boy!” And he would  
fly to wherever she was.

One day, someone left the back door open, and Chaz flew outside. He shouldn't have done it, because he was a family pet, not a wild bird. He didn't know how to get food for himself. And he was a tropical bird, so he couldn't live in Middletown during the freezing cold winters.

Regardless, he was curious about the outdoors, so out he flew. He happily flew past the swimming pool, over the horse pasture, and across Catoctin Creek. He flew up to the highest branch of the biggest sycamore tree on the other side of the creek!



Sycamore trees have white bark and branches in the winter time.

Katherine said, “Oh No! Chaz has flown out of the house! I’ve lost my beautiful bird,” and she started to cry.

“Oh no! Just now?” said Grandmommy. “Where did he go?”

“He flew past the swimming pool, over the horse pasture, and across Catoctin Creek. He flew up to the highest branch of the biggest sycamore tree on the other side of the creek! We’ll never get him back into the house,” sobbed Katherine.

“Don’t give up,” said Grandmommy, “I think we can



get him back. I remember once when I was a little girl, I took care of my sister Pat’s parakeet, Skoshi,\* while she was away at school. When I came home from school I would put him on my head, and he would snuggle into my hair. He would stay on my head while I played cards with my mother, while I did my homework and while I washed dishes after dinner.

*\* Skoshi is Korean for ‘small.’ In 1954, my sister’s fiancé was stationed in Korea. When he was home on leave, he gave her this beautiful blue parakeet.*



“I was so used to having him on my head that one day I forgot he was there and I walked out of the house. He flew away -- just like Chaz!

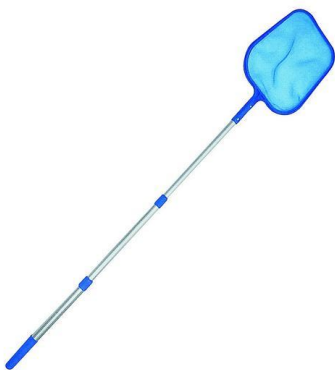
“Skoshi flew across the front yard, over the big red barn, and into the woods far away. But luckily, he circled back,



and flew into the branches of the big cherry tree outside the front door of the house. I went to the garage, got a ladder and climbed as high as I could toward his branch, and stuck out my finger. He hopped down to it, I put him on top of my head and gingerly walked back into the front door. Lucky me - Skoshi was safe!”



I said to Katherine, “Maybe we can do the same thing with Chaz, but first, let’s get Chadrenne.”



Chadrenne, Katherine and Grandmommy walked



outside and stopped at the pool to get the skimmer. It had a long handle, and a net at the end to pick up leaves and twigs that fell into the pool. Katherine wrapped her t-shirt around it so it would make a soft nest.

We walked past the swimming pool, climbed the fence into the horse pasture, and waded across Catoctin Creek. We stood below the tall sycamore and could barely see Chaz at the very top.

  “Chadrenne, call Chaz,” said Grandmommy. Chadrenne whistled and said, “Pretty boy, pretty boy!”

Chaz flew down to a lower branch. “Call him again!”  
 said Grandmommy. Again and again, Chadrenne whistled and said, “Pretty boy, pretty boy!” Down and down he flew. He perched on the lowest  
 branch. Grandmommy held up the skimmer with the soft t-shirt nest at the end.

Chaz hopped into the t-shirt nest and Grandmommy slowly lowered the ‘nest’ toward Katherine so she could gently pick him up off the skimmer. She put him under her shirt next to her chest.

We waded back across the creek, walked past the horses and climbed the fence, walked by the swimming pool and quietly walked into the farm house, holding our breath.

When we were all safe inside, Katherine opened her shirt, and Chaz flew free into the living room, the kitchen, and all around the bedrooms.

That evening, Chaz was back on Grandmommy's shoulder, nibbling on the bobby pins while she cooked dinner.

No one ever opened the farm house door again without looking around and asking, "Where's Chaz?" And slipping carefully out of the door.

***ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL!***



**Chadrenne and Mayflower, wading in Catoctin Creek on a hot summer day.**





*Dear George,  
I'll bet Chadrenne would play  
with your snails on your  
birthday. After all, she loves all  
animals, right?*

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
TO GEORGE!**

**LOVE,  
GRANDMOMMY**

**XOXOXOXOXOXOXOX**





