

SUPER SLOTH

**EPISODE 2:
REVENGE OF THE CHICK-OATS**



By Aleesah Darlison

Illustrated by Cheri Hughes

Text Copyright © Aleesah Darlison.

Illustrations Copyright © Cheri Hughes.

First published 2024

Copyright remains the property of the authors and apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the Copyright Act, no part may be reproduced by any process without written permission.

All inquiries should be made to the publishers.

Big Sky Publishing Pty Ltd

PO Box 303, Newport, NSW 2106, Australia

Phone: 1300 364 611

Fax: (61 2) 8330 9211

Email: info@bigskypublishing.com.au

Web: www.bigskypublishing.com.au

Cover Design and Typesetting: Cheri Hughes

Printed in China by Jilin GIGO International.

Author: Aleesah Darlison

Title: Super Sloth Series Episode 2 : Revenge of the Chick-oats

ISBN: 978-1-923004-94-8 (paperback)

Subjects: Middle Grade Fiction.



A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia

SUPER SLOTH

EPISODE 2: REVENGE OF THE CHICK-OATS



By Aleesah Darlison

Illustrated by Cheri Hughes

CONTENTS

Prologue.....	7
Chapter 1.....	8
Chapter 2.....	14
Chapter 3.....	19
Chapter 4.....	25
Chapter 5.....	31
Chapter 6.....	36
Chapter 7.....	41
Chapter 8.....	47
Chapter 9.....	53
Chapter 10.....	59
Chapter 11.....	64
Chapter 12.....	71
Chapter 13.....	77
Chapter 14.....	83
Chapter 15.....	89



MANHATTAN

BRONX

**CENTRAL
PARK**

**CENTRAL
PARK ZOO**

**TIMES
SQUARE**

QUEENS

**STATUE OF
LIBERTY ISLAND**

BROOKLYN

**STATEN
ISLAND**

NEW YORK, NEW YORK



PROLOGUE

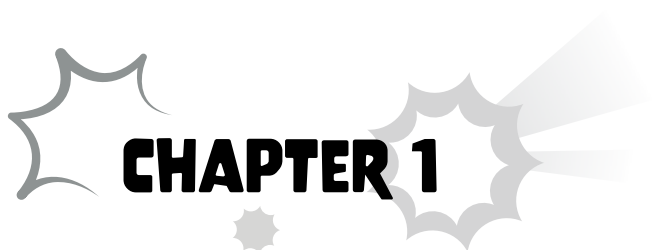
On a wild and stormy night on a tiny island in the Atlantic Ocean off the coast of Panama, Romeo Fortez was born. His birthplace was a red mangrove tree. His mother, a pygmy sloth.

As the storm raged around them, Romeo's mother held her newborn baby tight. By the flash of a lightning burst, she saw him gaze up at her with adoring eyes.

That instant, in the very heart of her, Romeo's mother knew her son was special and would one day achieve great things. Just how special and how great, no one – not even his mother – could ever have guessed.

As Romeo grew, his destiny called him to a bigger, faster part of the world. And so it was that Romeo moved to New York City where he joined a band of vigilantes determined to fight a criminal scientist mastermind named Professor Ian Weird-Warp.

This is the second story of Romeo Fortez, aka Super Sloth.



CHAPTER 1

Romeo Fortez, aka Super Sloth, had only just moved to New York City. And he had only just befriended a brave cheetah called Tulip Goldenclaw. Together, they had only just teamed up with a human girl called Beth Castlemaine and a tech-whiz pig named Hamilton Porker who had a secret hideout under the Trinity Church Cemetery. I know, a cemetery, of all places!

Not only that, Romeo had only just been given his first superhero outfit made by his friend, Percy Winterbum, the loon (very dapper birds, I must say) and tailor he met upon his arrival in the city.

The costume was a perfect fit and consisted of a blue-and-yellow superhero muscle outfit, cape, and mask. The words ‘Super Sloth’ were emblazoned across the chest and when Romeo wore the suit, he became a sloth transformed!

CHAPTER 1



He may have only been a tiny sloth, but with his super strength, super speed, and downright super cute factor, Romeo was irresistible ... and difficult to pin down. Dressed in his new superhero suit, Romeo felt invincible and more than a little heroic. Which is precisely how it should be for a freshly minted superhero. Although being the kind of sloth he was, Romeo remained incredibly humble. He wouldn't have it any other way.

The four new crime-fighting friends had recently taken on a gigantic shar-wolf that had been terrorising New York. After that adventure, they thought things would settle down for a while, but it wasn't to be.

While they were holed up in their hideout, Ham shared a news report with the team. They all watched

SUPER SLOTH: EPISODE 2

in horror as Jim Ruffnutt, the water buffalo reporter from NYC4U News, appeared on the TV to relate the latest strange occurrence.

‘Just when you thought it was safe to go back into New York, another type of mutant has been unleashed on the city,’ Jim said. ‘No one knows where these creatures came from or who is responsible for releasing them, but they’re currently tearing up Central Park. The park’s squirrel inhabitants are outraged and have already begun storing extra nuts and barricading their dens and dreys against these destructive animals. They fear they might be in for a long haul.’

‘That sure is a lot of nuts,’ Romeo said as they watched hundreds of squirrels dig hundreds of holes and fill them with nuts.

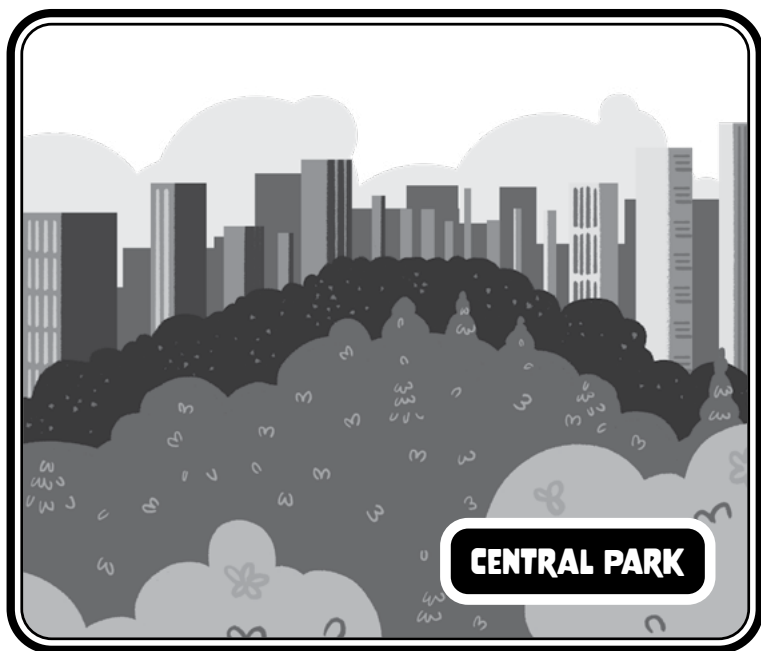
The camera then panned to several groups of mutant animals that appeared to be half-chicken, half-goat. In other words, chick-oats. And they were eating everything in sight. Romeo and his friends had no choice but to act immediately. What else could be done when an entire herd of mutant chick-oats had taken over Central Park?

‘This is clearly the work of Professor Weird-Warp,’ Beth told the others as they raced to the garage where her orange Vespa and Romeo’s black Tesla (aka the

CHAPTER 1

sloth-mobile) were parked. ‘He’s the only person capable of this.’

The others agreed.



‘Meet you on Fifth Avenue near the Guggenheim Museum,’ Beth told Romeo and Tulip before she and Ham sped off on the Vespa. Romeo jumped into the Tesla with Tulip who had taken the driver’s seat. They raced along the underground driveway towards the hideout’s concealed entrance under the John Watts Statue. Ahead of them, Beth tapped a button on the Vespa’s handlebars. An invisibility shield activated

SUPER SLOTH: EPISODE 2

around the statue and an entrance opened beneath it. The Vespa shot out of it, quickly followed by the Tesla. Seconds later, the entrance closed and no one in the vicinity was any the wiser.

Meanwhile, hundreds of pecking, squawking, baaing mutant chick-oats were racing through Central Park, devouring all in sight and scaring innocent bystanders wandering the pathways. The bizarre chick-oats had beaked chicken heads with goat horns. They had chicken wings at the front and hairy goat bodies at the back. Each animal had four stumpy legs and a long goatish tail. They made the weirdest sound ever as they stampeded through the gardens, along the paths, across the lawns, into, onto, and out of bushes, through the lakes and ponds, and over fences.

‘Berk-berk-baa! Berk-berk-baa!’ the mob of mutant creatures screamed as they rampaged through Central Park. No one was safe. And the destruction! The crazy chick-oat tornado tore through the place like there was no tomorrow.

Or next week.

Tulip pulled the sleek black Tesla up at the Guggenheim. Beside it, Beth’s orange Vespa came to a halt. Romeo jumped out of the sloth-mobile wearing his new superhero outfit with Tulip following behind.

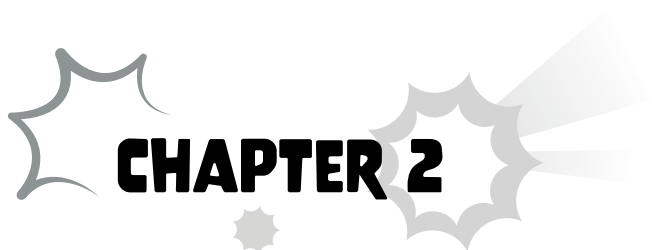
CHAPTER 1

People stepped back to stare in awe as Romeo strode past. Children and adults pointed. Several female sloths swooned. The tiny sloth cut an impressive (and super cute) figure, after all.

In the distance, treetops trembled as if being shaken by the wind. The chick-oats had already mown through the Great Lawn, disturbing picnickers and sunbathers. They had then continued towards the Manhattan end of Central Park, nibbling, gnawing, and demolishing anything in their way. Animals and people ran screaming towards Romeo and his friends, desperately trying to get out of the way of the noisy, destructive chick-oat tornado.

‘Help! Help!’ a distressed grizzly bear bellowed as he loped towards Romeo. ‘They’ve eaten my honey, now they’re after me!’





CHAPTER 2

‘Stay here,’ Romeo told his companions. ‘I’ll take care of this.’

‘I’m coming too,’ Tulip insisted.

Romeo nodded, glad to have Tulip’s support. Despite his superpowers and superhero outfit, he still felt a tad nervous.

‘You go ahead,’ Beth said. ‘We’ll meet you there.’

Romeo and Tulip took off, soon catching up with the chick-oats near The Lake. The speedy sloth raced after the mutant mob, but he soon realised there were too many to corral effectively. Glancing around for inspiration, Romeo spotted a horse-drawn cart with a newly married couple – still in their wedding clothes – being pulled around in the open-top cart.

I have an idea! he thought. He raced through a flock of pigeons attending Pecking School, sending them

CHAPTER 2

scattering and cooing angrily after him. ‘Watch where you’re going!’ the pigeon teacher shook his wing at Romeo.



Super Sloth didn't have time to stop. Instead, he dashed over to the carriage and leapt onto the reins, hanging on for dear life until the draught horse pulling the carriage came to a standstill.

‘What do you think you’re doing?’ the horse stomped his foot. ‘I’ve got paying passengers aboard, you know.’

SUPER SLOTH: EPISODE 2



‘I’m so sorry, Mr Horse,’ Romeo said, ‘but I need your cart if I have any hope of capturing those monstrous chick-oats.’

‘All right, all right,’ the horse agreed reluctantly. ‘They are rather bothersome.’

The bride and groom – who were a lion and lioness – peered over the edge of the carriage and down at Romeo. ‘I say, what’s all this fuss about?’ the lion asked, his mane shiny and golden in the sunlight.

‘No time to explain!’ Romeo said. ‘Wait right there.’

CHAPTER 2

Romeo raced over to the chick-oats who were now running along market stall tables, knocking over the owner's wares. Fidget spinners and sensory worms (rubber ones, not real ones) went flying. One of the chick-oats stopped to nibble on a Rubik's Cube, then finding it didn't taste so good, spat it out. The chunk hit a passing duck in the head, sending him staggering about.

Romeo shot towards a chick-oat and grabbed it, holding it firmly under his arm. With his other hand, he grabbed another chick-oat and held it firmly under that arm. Then he ran back to the wagon and threw both chick-oats in. Stunned, they sat there not knowing what to do while the lion and lioness stared solemnly at them.

Following Romeo's lead, Tulip raced in to help collect more chick-oats, although she wasn't anywhere near as fast as Romeo. By this time, Beth and Hamilton had caught up to them. Seeing what their friends were doing, Beth turned to those around her and began asking for their shoelaces. Then she and Hamilton set to work trussing the chick-oats up, tying their stumpy legs together so they couldn't escape. The pile of mutant animals grew larger, making the carriage strain under their weight.

SUPER SLOTH: EPISODE 2

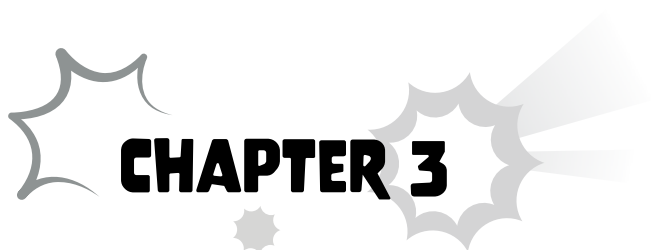
Police sirens wailed in the distance. Romeo worked at super-fast speed to collect all the chick-oats. Although they were small, there were so many of them the horse carriage was soon full. Romeo noticed the male lion eyeing the chick-oats hungrily and realised he had to come up with a better solution for capturing the mutant creatures or they might be eaten.

‘I think that’s all of them,’ Romeo said. He’d barely broken into a sweat, but Tulip, Beth, and Ham were exhausted.

That’s when a loud ‘Berk-berk-baa!’ followed by a ‘Yelp!’ and a ‘Roar!’ and an ‘Eeeeeek!’ sounded further away in the park.

‘Oh, no!’ Beth gasped. ‘There must be more of them.’

‘And it sounds like they’ve gotten into the zoo,’ Ham said.



CHAPTER 3

Romeo swung through the trees until he made it to the entrance of Central Park Zoo.

Sure enough, the chick-oats had managed to take over the place. Where there should have been seals and snow leopards lazing about peacefully, there were now hundreds of chick-oats grazing, frolicking, pecking, and splashing. Some chased zoo visitors down. Some accosted the zoo animals. Others roosted in trees dotted around the place, vigorously munching on any leaves and seeds they could get their chompers around.

Chick-oats were everywhere.

There's no way I can capture all of them, Romeo thought. *It's an infestation.*

'Oi! I'm trying to work here,' a muscular kangaroo with a broad Australian accent complained. He threw several hacky sacks in the air as he juggled them with his paws and tail. 'Shove off you pesky little critters.'

SUPER SLOTH: EPISODE 2



The kangaroo tried to bounce the chick-oats out of the way, but a horde of the mutant animals pounced on him, taking him down in a sea of feathers and fur.

‘What are we going to do?’ Tulip asked.

Romeo shook his head. ‘There’s too many of them and more keep appearing.’ He pointed at the gift shop.