



Carmen



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Out in the forest Carmen's climbing resembles aerial yoga as she hangs gracefully in the trees. In her sleeping enclosure she sometimes practices spinning around the middle supporting beam like a pole dancer. Her buzz cut hairstyle belies the grace with which she moves.

Carmen is self-assured in the trees. Others rush but Carmen takes her time. She spends virtually no time on the ground, climbing ever higher into the canopy. She always has to be the highest individual in the tops of the trees. Here perched atop her green tower she idly plays with vines and places a twig in her mouth. As far as nestmaking goes, she still waves branches and leaves around as if she knows that she should be doing something but is still not quite sure what it is.

During the rainy season the paths become overgrown and boggy. Carmen isn't a fan of being unable to see what is in front of her. She can hear that other orangutans have moved on deeper into the forest. As part of her aerial yoga practice, she spirals down vines head over foot towards the ground in an impressive balletic display. Carmen wants to join her peers, but they have crossed an open area through marsh and tall grass. There are no trees for her to climb and so she will have to cross over the ground. She is clearly hesitant as she is obviously forced out of her comfort zone. Carmen gingerly takes a foot off the tree trunk and places the foot onto the ground. After a moment's pause, she places the other foot down and makes a dash through the long grass.

On the other side of the tall grass, she finds her friends in the trees enjoying a bounty of fruit. Carmen wastes no time ascending the trees to join them. She can stay here for as long as she wants. With plenty to occupy her, there is no reason to move anywhere more until it is time to go back to the sleeping enclosures with her friends.

Sometimes we all have to do things we don't want to do, to get to where we need to be. For Carmen the hassle today was worth it.

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