

The policeman drew his silver sword and rapped a shoe sole sharply.

Then he leant closer and realized that the sole was not that of a black wooden clog but appertained to a ruby slipper that graced the foot of a very pretty, if disheveled, little lady sleeper. He laughed embarrassedly and the noise wakened the slumberer.

"Sir!" cried Lulea, Queen of the Fairies, and was for a moment disoriented. "Who dares disturb the Queen's repose?" And then she remembered where she was.

Round about, bums and drunks were stumbling to their feet with mumbles and curses and wandering away. A hasty glance aside and Lulea saw her fairy retainers cowering back from other policemen and holding their draperies before their mouths.

"Please, ladies!" she hissed. "Conceal your ankles!" The fairy had caught on to outer-world prudishness with lightning intuition.

Now she turned back to her 'own' policeman and secretly admired his crisp blue uniform and gold epaulettes and silver belt and scabbard. "What can I do for you, my man?" she demanded, trying to keep up a front.

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

The officer touched his cap brim. This was clearly no floozy requiring sending on her way with a flea in her ear. Lulea swung her feet to the ground and stood up to her full four feet. Why, it was a little girl! saw the constable. But he looked closer in the half light and realized from the fairy's features that she was a fully mature woman—and cute to boot! But he must never think of that, and he cleared his throat and said:

"Apologize, ma'am. The official proclamation states: No overnighting in public places, to wit, specifically, no sleeping on benches..."

"Where do you propose we go then?" said Lulea, seeing the position and building up some righteous dudgeon.

"To a hotel...?"

"Hah!" and no one could have plumbed the queen's bitterness. "Tell that to the marines!" she lapsed into deplorable jargon. "We've been turned away at every hostelry in this town!"

"Indeed?" The officer could hardly believe it of someone so, in her miniature way, impressive. Then he remembered where he was and believed it. "Please tell me the circumstances."

The fairy did, without any great show of satisfaction. The policeman clucked and cooed, then called his fellows around him and they consulted together. As policemen always annoyingly do, they acted as if they could by no means credit the story of the person they were interviewing. They requested Queen Lulea and her companions to follow and they all re-entered the Station Hotel across Priest Street.

Happily the fairy was not required to be present at the actual interview. She wouldn't have been pleased. It went like this:

"These travelers need rooms for the night."

"I've told them: nothing doing."

"Have you got unoccupied rooms?"

"Yes."

"The women have funds to pay fully for their expenses."

"So they indicated."

"Then why won't you accommodate them?"

"I don't like their looks."

"That's all? That's not sufficient grounds for refusing hospitality."

"It is here. We don't take in tarts."

"Watch your language! You've got no evidence they're prostitutes!"

"I don't need it. The hotel has no obligation to take in people we, for any reason, don't want."

And it hadn't. That was the law of the land. Perhaps it was the same in many lands, but in this land they invoked the law, not seldom. Merely dress too loud—or laugh too loud—and you'd had it.

Just to be sticklers the posse of police bicycled round to the four or five other hostelries and went through the same routine. With less or more surliness the result was similar in every case. Now the cops' looking for trouble had produced a neat little batch of it. The women mustn't sleep on the benches, they couldn't sleep in the hotels. Where then?

You guessed it. Lulea, Queen of the Fairies, and all her radiant band spent the rest of the night sacked out in cells at Luleå town jail. The police were obliged to turn away many drunks that night.

“Professor,” said Ozma, “will you...?” and the big bug took off to case the upper atmosphere again.

Because nothing ever changed in Cut-out County the far sky merely got darker and darker, while on the ground it remained still afternoon and no effects of storm or downpour were to be noted. But after all it was by now six o’clock and consequently evening. In other places the state of things might be quite different, so the princess sent the wogglebug up into the stratosphere to investigate.

He returned in half an hour very much the worse for wind. “Whew!” he expressed it, less than elegantly. “It’s a fierce dust storm up there! near hurricane force, I’d say. I can’t think what effects it must be having in other parts of the country that aren’t under an unchangeability spell as here.”

“Even here doesn’t seem to be totally unaffected,” remarked Ozma ruefully as she glanced at her green satin travel togs now overlaid with a smeared film of dust in just the few moments she was outside to welcome the Wogglebug back from his investigatory flight.

“No,” agreed the bug: “a gauge of how grave the situation is.

I would go so far as to characterize it as a National Emergency."

"Oh, gracious," said the concerned ruler; "then we mustn't linger here in dalliance, pleasant though it indeed is... My dear Miss Peethisaw," — she turned to her hostess — "it's been delightful! Thank you so much. But as you so rightfully warned us: the situation in this part of our land is untenable. We must away and try to cope... thought—" The princess paused, for once seeming to be perplexed. "I wonder... I haven't had to deal with actual disasters of nature before. I'm not sure to what extent mere magic—"

"Princess Ozma, may I not come with you?" Lana, to the girl ruler's surprise, entreated. "I can't help but feel it's my fault for having got you into this. Besides," — here a sigh escaped her — "I'll miss you when you've gone... And then of course you'll need me to show you the way," she clinched her case.

Ozma was touched and didn't know how to refuse. "But, dear," she objected, "there's no more room on the Sawhorse! I was silly not to use the Red Wagon, but I didn't foresee—"

"It's only half a mile to the county line," urged Miss Peethisaw. "We can all walk that far—and there you'll have a full view out into the dust storm or whatever it is."

Ozma resisted no longer. Lana ran around to draw the curtains, put out a note for the milkman, collect her pad and pencil, and throw on her little yellow riding hood, then the party left the house. They (nearly) all walked. The queen felt uncomfortable at riding while little girls of five went on foot. On the other hand, if she invited the Winkie girl to join her on the Sawhorse's back that would leave the Scarecrow afoot and they could lose valuable time waiting for him to totter the half mile to the border. As it was, Ozma requested her devoted henchman to board the horse and go on ahead. She, Lana, and Billina would trot after them at their best speed.

"It's just over Honey Hill and down Daffodil Dale," explained the little girl as she pattered along. "It isn't far. I just hope we don't get stuck."

"'Stuck'?" queried the queen.

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

“Yiss, crossing Honey Hill. I always do. That’s why I’ve never seen Daffodil Dale—just heard about it. It was all I could do to unstick myself the couple of times I tried, and it took me all day to get the last of the honey off my shoes, my clothes, and myself.”

“Perhaps I can do something to help us on our way,” enheartened Ozma and to reassure herself felt of the slim quiver the hung, Diana’s-arrow-case-like, over her left shoulder and contained her fairy’s wand.

Yes, there reared the brown-blond height of honey, glistening even in the subdued half-light of the eternal afternoon. Bees were everywhere. Indeed, the hill would seem to have the character of a vast unenclosed honey-comb. Ozma guessed that the nectar gatherers had come to realize over the ages that they had nothing to fear from natural conditions or *change* of conditions. Their honey home could never be threatened by rain or snow, cold or heat, dirt or predations, so why not just build outdoors, with immediate easy access?

Anyway the bees did. The years, the centuries, went by and the honey hill got bigger and bigger. Like miles-deep glaciers with their ice the mass of wax and honey pressed ever tighter on the strata deeper down. No doubt down there it was solid sweet rock. The bees seemed not to mind the gradual loss of that fruit of their ancient ancestors’ labors and merely rejoiced at having an ever wider outer surface to add cells of sweetness to.

The road—well, it could hardly be called more than a path—led right up and over the hill. Despite the adhesiveness of the honeyscape on every side it appeared that sufficient foot passengers had gone that way to make a slight indentation in the crushed wax to indicate which way the route led.

The fairy had out her wand now, made a pass, and invoked an old spell that would turn things solid for a limited period. Warning Billina not to consume any of the industrious insects who for the nonce were their willynilly hosts, the princess led the way. Solid-state honey proved not to be more troublesome to tread upon than, for instance, worn-out flypaper—if even *that* sticky. It was well not to linger though. Who knew what might happen if body

weight and warmth were allowed to rest on one spot for any length of time?

Yet they did stop. They couldn't help it. Fairy queen and Winkie girl could not keep back twin cries of wonder when they reached the top of the hill and saw below them in the distance a crowd, a host, of golden daffodils. They gazed and gazed, until with a start Ozma realized she was ankle deep in clinging tar. Quickly she did a reinforcing charm that outright froze the honey briefly.

Ten thousand saw them at a glance, but the yellow flowers were not dancing. Rather, they stood in solemn array entirely filling a shallow valley, not moving until now and then a faint wind would shift over them and they all nodded their heads in one direction in a long slow wave-like sweep across the field. It was so quiet. Oddly, one had the feeling that so much flower beauty ought to be uttering some kind of flower music, but all was silent. Ozma, Lana, and Billina did not speak for awe.

But when their feet stuck again they knew it was time to go. Down off Honey Hill they came, then found a narrow path among the daffodils and followed that until the magic faded. At the ridge beyond Daffodil Dale the night could be seen and the storm raged without.

Ozma turned to Miss Peethisaw. "You must turn back here, my dear. I shall go on: Billina and I—" But even the princess looked pale in the glare of lightning striking through the yellow dark. "Go back to the unchanging comfort and security of Cut-out County..."

"No, my princess," said the little girl. "It's too late for me to go back now. At first, living here, I was glad just to be alive in a safe quiet place. But now I know it isn't enough. I have to go on, just as I always did want to go on: to grow up, to experience—oh, just everything..."

The wise ruler already knew enough about the mystery of things not to fight with that. "Will you keep very close to me then? Take my hand? Or no, hold onto my cincture, while I carry Billina. We don't know how this wind is going to be. I don't see our friends anywhere. I'm rather afraid..."

‘That’s funny,’ thought the officer on the desk. ‘They look like they’ve grown!’ Pretending he had an early mosquito in it, he rubbed his eye, in fact both of them. No, it was true enough. This Mrs. McQueen—English? Australian?—was definitely a foot taller than she had been when he personally had locked her in her cell several hours earlier.

Not only that but she was dressed in severe black bombazine. But there hadn’t been room enough in that one satchel for any change of costume and certainly not changes for twenty-eight (by actual count) young women. Yet there they all came trooping in shades of black, grey, and navy. Vanished were the dubonnet taffeta, the green organdie, the watermelon georgette. Hair styles were different too: formerly flowing or floating locks were drawn back severely, parted in the middle, and concealed under uniform dark caps. The girls were even wearing hooked noses. This was Madame Reinedesfees and her corps des ballet in street dress.

Madame was inclined to be severe herself, though still quite graciously condescending to the sergeant who had been so hospitable as to save her from complete homelessness during the night. She signed the check-out book but did not hang around in

superfluous conversation.

Fairies don't need to breakfast. Just as well, because you can be very sure that no establishment throughout the length and breadth of Sweden was open for public refreshment-serving at nine o'clock of a Sunday morning in 1908. So the ballet corps just walked demurely down the street, two abreast, with eyes maidenly lowered. The girls certainly didn't raise them to look back to the southeast at the town's one landmark, the new belated-mixed-Gothic Cathedral. Not though the fairies knew, someone had blundered and instead of looking distinctive and attractive the landmark just resembled any other run-of-the-mill red brick Victorian church.

Luleå was not actually ugly, just dull. Since the disastrous fire of 1887 all the colorful old wooden buildings were being replaced by brick and concrete. Yet just ahead the walkers saw a forest! and at that fairy hearts picked up. Past one remaining charming old house in yellow plankwork with green trim and after that they were in a wood—well, a thickly tree-grown park that preserved comforting resemblances to the wild. They felt almost at home.

In the City Park there was a little museum and they lingered round it under that benign sky, watched the moths fluttering among the heath and harebelle, and listened to the soft wind breathing through the grass. To tell the truth, the fairies were by now dreading the interview that was due imminently to take place between their Queen and the local governor, mayor, and/or corporation in the big house at the end of the street.

The Governor's Mansion was a quaint building, old-fashioned already now, forty years after its construction. It was designed in the traditional country architecture of Sweden: vertical planks with thin wooden string courses sealing the intervening interstices. Traditionally too it was painted dark red, with wide window mouldings in white. Over the simple double wooden doors were the arms of Norrbotten under a carved architrave. Wide granite steps led up from grass and gravel. Queen Lulea trod the gravel with sinking heart.

An eighteenth-century footman opened when Ereol pulled the

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

bell. His appearance made all the fairies pause a moment, speechless, but Lulea was not to be overawed by a flunkey. "Will you announce to His Excellency, my man, that Lulea, Queen of the—well, Queen Lulea—has arrived in response to his invitation." Here the fairy drew herself up regally to her full height—and, forgetting herself, shot up to six feet. If he hadn't been Swedish the footman's eyes would have boggled. He did in fact *almost* stumble as he hastened to his task.

There was a considerable period of waiting in the spacious forehall, just to emphasize that the governor was the governor. Then attractive white double doors opened and a man in a morning coat came through. Protocol was followed fully. With a faint, solemn—oh, one would hesitate to say "sickly"—smile the Governor bowed. The Queen inclined her head. Neither knew which, by rights, should kiss the other's hand, so neither did, but they moved into proximity to each other and hands were agitated slightly, indicating that in a later age they might have shaken.

So far nobody had spoken. When somebody did, it was the Governor to the footman. "Tell the Governess that the—er, Queen has come." The man went.

'Why did he say "er"?' thought Lulea. 'I *am* a queen! —if not, in the present country, *the* queen.' It seemed to her that things were not boding well.

As if she had been pre-alerted to the likelihood of a call, the "Governess," who proved in fact to be the Governor's wife, appeared almost at once. She wore a severe high-chested lilac gown with white satin panels and petit-point slippers. "My dear," the governor spoke, "the—er, Queen has been so good as to call. I think: coffee." The lady gave the appropriate instructions.

There was an awkward pause of eight minutes. The governor and governess enquired how the "queen" and her attendants had enjoyed their journey. Lulea duly praised the uniformity of the fir forest they had traversed. She cast a discreet veil over the night they had spent in jail. No enquiry was made as to where the fairy band were staying nor was any invitation forthcoming to reside at the Mansion.

Now at last the coffee (in lieu of breakfast, for which by now it was rather late) was announced and they moved to an inner room where a long table, reminiscent, had anyone but known, of that in *Alice*, was set with an enormous amount of crockery though with little sign of what was to be consumed therefrom. As it happened, the coffee, exquisitely served, proved to be very good and the fairies, even if they *could* go indefinitely without eating, were glad of it. Plates of buttered slices of sweet bread were passed round.

Though pleased, the fairies were careful not to smile. In recognition of this compliance with custom the governor and wife unbent in their turn and *almost* smiled. Yet the difficult part lay ahead. After twenty minutes of protocol remarks the Governor began:

“In the time of King Karl the Eleventh commissions for the uncovering of witchcraft were active and widespread. The Devil was personally present in many regions. He was able to establish relations with particular individuals, usually women.” Here the speaker seemed to cast a sharp glance about the coffee table at his dark-clad solemn-visaged guests. “These were employed in the forwarding of his various schemes. Hundreds of women were accused, tortured, and executed for consorting with the Devil.

“This of course was a tragic misunderstanding. There is no such thing as witchcraft.” The governor expressed this thought as if it were a proven fact; Lulea of course could have undeceived him. “Nowadays we know better. Sweden is fully modern. No one now believes in witches.”

The governor paused. Now came the painful utterance: “—nor in fairies. It is *my* duty to inform you that such have been outlawed.”

Queen Lulea couldn't speak for just a moment. Finally she was able to say, “But...”

The Governor, anticipating her protest, was ready. He said extenuatingly: “Brownies still exist—but they are only allowed out at Christmas. Then of course we have trolls. You can see THEM on the street any day. But as for fairies, elves, goblins, and all such truck, they simply don't exist.”

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

“But—” said Lulea again.

“We do not speak for other countries. What is permitted there is not our concern. However, in the cause of our own national purity and freedom from harmful superstition, we have urgently to request that a native Swedish name—or any close approximation thereto—not be employed by any foreign fairies. It could lead to serious misunderstanding, even to compromise of our national reputation—”

“But...”

“I am sorry but I can brook no rebuttal. I must request you, Madame Queen, hereafter and forevermore, to cease and desist from the use of the name Lulea—”

That was as far as he got—and as far as the fairy had ever been got at in her feelings. With a piercing cry, so shrill and high it could not even be discerned by the human ear, the fairy Lulea simply vanished—followed an instant later, as soon as they caught on, by all her loyal band.

Indeed, Princess Ozma had cause to be afraid, though in fact her recent hesitant broken-off remark had been intended only to convey that she sensed that her male companions had got into difficulties in the sand storm. They had. The Sawhorse, galloping on in advance with the Scarecrow clinging desperately, had crossed the county line and promptly been snatched up by the gale and flung, not into the next county merely, but into the next country, viz. that of the Gillikins. Somewhere up in cloud nineteen the two travelers parted company, practically forever. The Scarecrow ended up flattened against the side of Flathead Mountain and, as for the Sawhorse, I don't even know where *he* came down. H.M. Wogglebug rode out the storm high on the top of a thermal.

The ladies fared scarcely better, although, with an assist by Ozma's magic, they did manage at least to stay together. Sometimes during the hours they were blowing about every which way. Billina wished she had never asked to come along on the adventure. It was proving more replete with incident than she had bargained for. Lana Peethisaw on the other hand was almost enjoying it. She felt she was really living. And Ozma? 'If we ever make a landfall,' she thought, 'God works a miracle.' In her extremity

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

she even mentioned that deity's name.

In the end, storm-tossed, sand-saturated, dust-blinded, filthy-haired and -feathered, the party did of course fall to earth. It was somewhere unspecified and unspecifiable on the edge of the Impassable Desert. Lana's yellow riding hood was torn in two and Ozma had lost her ear-poppies and looked quite naked. Worse was the loss of her wand, which had fallen none knew where, though the useless wand case which had held it, being strapped through her arm-pit, was saved. The fairy sat on a sand mound and regarded the quiver ruefully. At any rate it was by now early daylight and she *could* regard it.

"What do we do now?" said someone—Billina, I think, although she was rather preoccupied, preening for dear life.

"I'm too storm-tossed to know," confessed the girl ruler with chagrin.

"Should we send for help?" asked little Lana, who seemed to have greater faith in fairy Ozma's powers than did fairy Ozma herself at this moment.

"If only we could," wished Ozma, without, however, the wish coming true. Just in case anybody hadn't realized it, she spelled it out: "I've lost my wand."

"Oh," said Lana and looked solemn.

"I wouldn't be able to 'send'," continued the fairy, then looked a question. "—at least, anyone very big."

She glanced at Billina.

The hen noticed the pause. "Don't look at *me*," she warned, then did a double take. Ozma *was* looking at her. Quickly she retracted. "I mean: *are* you looking at me, ma'am?"

"I wonder," Ozma mused on. "With finger magic I could actually transfer goods up to a weight of eleven and a half pounds. I wonder..." she repeated and looked about her. Rapidly she muttered a spell and put some of her fingers and toes in certain prescribed positions. A shallow pit appeared in the silver-grey sand a couple of yards away. Ozma had conveyed eleven pounds of (extra) sand to the Gobi Desert.

"Oh!" cried Lana again. She was not quite sure what she her-

self weighed but she said, "Could I—" Then she broke off. She remembered.

"Oh, I'm so sorry, darling," sighed the fairy, and neither she nor the little girl referred to the idea again. "But Billina..."

She changed her tack. "But who—that is, *whom...*?" the princess went on. "Glinda the good sorceress could fetch us off this desert. The Wizard's magic isn't as yet quite up to that. But what is wanted is far beyond the scope of either stage magic or witchcraft. There's going to have to be intervention in the very forces of nature. Now who..."

Of course it didn't take the percipient Ozma very long to realize that the authority she had need of was the supremely powerful Lulea, queen of all the fairies: at least, of those on the continent of Sempernumquam: Lulea, her very own relation, arbitratress of all matters magical in this land and very influential as well in the councils of fairies everywhere. "Lulea ..." she breathed.

"Lulea?" said Lana.

"Mmm. Queen of the Fairies," clarified this other young fairy queen.

"Is that the same as Lurline?" said Billina, whose knowledge of Oz history and fairiography was there, but patchy. "The one that enchanted Oz?"

"A good question," conceded the fairy. "Actually, you know, there's some mystery in the case. Lurline's character and nature go—or went!—beyond all human comprehension. She can, or could, take on alternate appearances, alternate personalities, even, for a need, alternate histories. It's difficult to pin her down—not that one would attempt to, of course," the girl ruler hastened to add, mindful of the, in this case, unlucky resemblance between fairies and butterflies. "Too little has come down to us of actual chapter and verse in early Oz chronology. The powerful female spirit who chanced to fly, together with her attendant sprites, over Oz and enchant it long ago has not been definitely identified with that Lurline who flourished elsewhere as a water sprite or 'Water Queen.' It seems unlikely that they were one and yet the identity

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

of names is suggestive. And whether the water goddess was or was not identical with one 'Lorelei' who was the legendary mermaid spirit of the river Rhein has not been surely established either.

"But for our purposes the later history of the enchantress of Oz is of more concern. She is definitely stated to have been forgetful!: an unexpected trait in a widely powerful immortal but yet possibly of use if one were not to be too burdened with an ages-old load of recollections or with a sense of *déjà vu*, and hence boredom, at everything on earth.

"Could she possibly have forgotten that she was a river sprite and settled down in the forest of Burzee? which is about as far as you can get from rivers without being in an actual desert. It seems hardly credible, and yet for ages now—well, I don't know how long, really—there's been no news of Lurline, while the lovely Queen Lulea has throned it in Burzee and made her presence known also far beyond the confines of that storied wood—"

"Yeah," said the yellow hen and again paraded her knowledge of *Sempernumquam* history. "I was talking to King Bud of Noland at your party a while back^s and he told me all about queen Lulea's enchantments in his affairs. It was through her he got to be king! and that was years ago already."

"Quite," agreed the fairy. "In any case, it is to Lulea we must make our appeal now. If anybody can put things to rights in this matter touching the welfare of Oz, it is she. That is: if there even *is* anyone to whom we can make an appeal..." went on Ozma, displaying a regrettable doubtfulness in the efficacy of, for example, prayer.

Billina was quick of comprehension. "You want me to go to Burzee, I take it? If that storm was just blowing *south* I could almost have ridden there on that!"

But Ozma's thought processes were even quicker. "Not so fast, my dear. It's Lulea herself I must fix on, not just her accustomed home place, for I happen to know that the dear queen was off

§ See *The Road to Oz*. Editor's note.

lately on a journey to the outside world. To Sweden, in fact—”
“Va’ roligt!!” squawked the chicken. “Tänk! att jag nu äntligen ska komma till gamla Sverige!” For the fact was that Billina had grown up on the farm of Swedish immigrants in America before her miraculous translation to Oz.[§] She only acquired Evish (which is the same as Ozish, which, curiously enough, closely resembles English) upon going ashore with Dorothy from the chicken coop in Ev some years previously.

However, Ozma, after having instructed the yellow hen in what to say to Queen Lulea, ensorcelled her away, not to Sweden exactly but to wherever the fairy queen actually was.

It was with considerable puzzlement that after a moment Billina found herself on the deck of a large black ship gliding up and down under a semitropical sky.

§ See *Ozma of Oz*. Editor’s note.

"In Sweden, your grace!" put in Moth alertly.

"Don't remind me!" hissed the queen and looked about her. What she saw stirred her out of her absorption in her own emotions. All about her faithful fairies were blanching and blushing every shade from paper white to rose red. What was the matter with them?

"What's the matter with you?" she barked peremptorily. "Why are you all staring at me like that?"

"Oh, Your Majesty!" cried gentle Espa and burst into tears. Dreamewet and Vlinder followed suit.

The queen of fairies scratched her head. "I gather something awful has just happened. Sweden, you say? No, *don't* remind me," she recommanded when Kelebek seemed to be about to tell her; instead she reinvoked her forgetfulness spell.

It would seem that whatever had recently taken place was almost as painful to her followers as she gathered it must have been to herself. Yet it was apparent from their manner that it was for her sake they were so wrought up. This would never do. The queen was not accustomed to being looked at with expressions of pity, nor was she about to start. *They'd* better forget as well.

The fairy queen made ready to cast another spell but her experience immediately past prompted her not to be too impulsive this time. She took a moment to plan rather nicely the parameters of the new enchantment. For one thing her followers were not to forget their own names as she discovered, to her dismay, she had done in her own case. Still, she must have had a good and sufficient reason for fugueing from that bit of knowledge. She wondered what it was and felt her curiosity pleasantly piqued. However, she was clever enough to realize it was no good passing oblivion spells, then burning to know what it was you'd forgotten.

With her incantation efficiently drafted the fairy borrowed Ereol's tuning fork and used it for a conjuring staff to give an extra cachet of authenticity to her enchantment. She made her wish. Then she was pleased to see the expressions of shock, embarrassment, indignation, and commiseration fade from her

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

followers' faces,

"That's better," sighed the queen. "Now," she went on, "what was I about to do? Where are we off to? or something..."

At that all the fairies looked perplexed. Quite aside from their newly installed memory black-out not a syllable had ever been spoken about where they might go after their Swedish holiday was done. They hummed and hawed and looked blank.

"Never mind," dismissed Lulea-that-was. "Here! Pass before me in alphabetical order and say where you think we might take our way. *NOT* Burzee!" she added. "I'm not going home with my tail between my legs. Let's go somewhere *fun*."

Aaala stepped proudly to the head of the line and, not surprisingly, said "The Hawaiian Islands!"

"Done!" oried the Fairy Queen.

The next thing anyone knew they were all standing in a bewildered bevy on a rankly green mountainside with a dark blue sea beneath them. Not that they could distinguish anything of such colors, of course; this was not odd because it was the middle of the night.

With one accord they all sank down in the rich grass and did nothing for quite a while. Although fairies never need sleep many of them probably drifted off in naps, lulled by the mild breeze that wafted over the peaceful dark landscape. They stayed there for hours, doing absolutely naught. Oh, one fairy did something: at dawn Aaala took her friend Heartsease by the hand and led her off to show her the hollow in the macadamia tree where she had lived immediately prior to her being chosen to join the *Sempernumquam* fairy band. But that's all. They presently strolled back and rejoined their sisters.

Just before anybody got really bored Feebimble said: "Queen Lulea...?"

"What did you call me?" said that queen, removing a grass straw from her lips.

"Why, 'Lulea'," stammered her secretary, taken aback. The queen hadn't told anybody she's blotted out her name along with her memory of recent events.

"What an unpleasant name," said the royal fairy. "Are you sure?"

"Why, yes... at least... for as long as I can remember... 'Unpleasant'? I can't believe it, your grace. You were always so gratified by the name."

"That's right," chimed in Gloriana; "you said it combined the names of your dear parents: Louis and Leah."

"I remember *them* all right!" laughed ex-Lulea with surprised delight. She didn't now remember that she'd erased only her memory of *recent* events. "They were very sweet. I miss them sometimes."

"What ever happened to them, your majesty?" asked Dib.

"Oh, like all fairies, they didn't die; they just faded away... Yes, now I remember: when they finally faded completely was when I took their names. At the time I loved that combination of them, but funny: now I hate it."

The fairies all looked puzzled.

"But in that case," Feebimble took up the word again, "what will now be your grace's appellation?"

"Hmm," mused Lulea-that-was. "Let me mull on it. Of course I must be known as *something* as we make our way back to Burzee. But it must be fitting! I wouldn't want to live in the forest under the name of 'Edward Bear,' for instance."

Her fairy followers came up with various inept suggestions. Finally the queen herself had an idea. Now if she had truly forgotten everything that had happened to her in Sweden it must simply have been her original impulse reasserting itself that caused her to reinvent, off the top of her head, the name "Fay McQueen." "Fay McQueen," she said. "That's it."

Then her court spent a little while practicing getting used to the new name.

c h a p t e r f o u r t e e n

Every reader will have wondered what in the world the young, brilliant (though so modest), adventuresome Dorothy Gale *did* all the time she wasn't traveling in Oz. We never hear of her going to school or of other activities young farm girls in the early years of the century might have been expected to engage in. Apparently she just sat around cheering herself up by playing with her little dog and trying to forget how grey everything was (curious color for waving grain and healthy corn stalks which we learn of as being raised by Farmer Henry).

When she first went to Oz (at latest in early 1899 we can, I think, assume that Dorothy was at any rate no younger than six years old. Her adventures in that land lasted no longer than a few weeks. Then she was home again in Kansas until, in 1905, she went with her ailing and unprosperous uncle on a cruise to Australia. By then, by any reckoning, she would have been twelve, and looked it (Oz non-aging has never been stated to carry over and be effective for persons resuming residence outside the magical country).

Dorothy returned from Australia just in time to be caught in

the celebrated California earthquakes of 1906. Again she spent at most a couple of weeks on the way to and in Oz, the time she and the wizard, O.Z. Diggs, had alarming adventures under ground.

Now don't you know that when Dot returned to Kansas at the end of that third Oz venture she was going to be worried to death over the fate of her San Francisco friends who had been so hospitable to her during her return from Australia, when she learned that the same earthquake that had swallowed her had also leveled great parts of the California city? Of course she was. She telegraphed and phoned and sent a special delivery too. The answer was "We're safe, and hope the same applies to you." Dorothy sat right down and wrote her friends again.

"Dear Miss Matson,

"What a relief to know you are all right! and the dear Captain and Mrs. Matson too. I would have been sick if I heard that your beautiful house was damaged—or that anything had happened to you! Aren't earthquakes awful! I'm sure my life was shortened by a lot of years when I fell through that crack in the earth. But luckily it all ended well, though I have to confess it was the—how shall I say?—'gloomiest' Oz adventure I hope I'll ever have.

"It's getting so hard for me to tear myself away from my Oz friends each time I visit there. The little Queen would like me to stay too, but of course I always tell her I can't abandon my poor dear aunt and uncle—nor, now that I've found you!—such kind friends as you and your family. But oh dear, if life seemed grey here on the farm *before* I ever went to Oz, you can imagine what it's like now.

"There isn't anything to *do*. The cat and dog quarrel like mad and I'm kept on the run separating them, but of course that's not a *full-time* occupation. Sometimes I wish I cared about reading but really, I never crack a book; I wonder if I ever will. Which is not to say I'm not involved in a certain amount of 'literary' activity. Since that author man, Mr. Baum, found out about my first journey to Oz he plagues me all the time for details of all my travels there. I get through a lot of time writing him long descriptions—"

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

And so on, for several pages in the same vein.

Let's face it: how're ya gonna keep 'em down on the farm after they've seen Emerald City? Dorothy Gale had now been in the Emerald City four times, if you count the two separate sojourns during her first stay in Oz. She could never forget the glamor of those big green jewels everywhere. Even the green corn of Kansas now looked genuinely grey in comparison.

Hence, every year when the snow cleared she got itchy feet and wanted to GO somewhere. Her secret admirer from Australian days, the Shaggy Man, came along in the nick of time in August 1907 and accompanied her to Oz. Now she had gone there all the possible ways: through the air (in the adventure of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*), over water (in *Ozma of Oz*), under ground, and OVER the ground. Maybe that was it, she reflected wryly: it could be that she wasn't to see Oz again, now that she'd used up all the different ways of getting there.

And yet, she had got in the habit now of going to visit the Emerald City every year. Was she really going to miss out in 1908? Of course she could go there any day she wanted, just by making the agreed-upon secret sign. But she had to have an excuse! She couldn't just abandon her poor old relations and go traipsing off on her own.

It came then as a considerable relief when in the last days of 1907 a letter arrived from her friends in San Francisco.

"Dear Dorth" (by now the girl friends called each other "Dorth" and "Lurl"),

"Sorry it's been so long since I've written. I seem always to be on the go." (Sadly unlike Dorothy herself.) "But now something extra exciting is going to happen and I had to let you know. You remember how I was named after a ship? Well, now they're going to name a ship after me! Isn't that fun?"

"The thing is: it's all going to happen way over on the east coast. Don't ask me why! The place is Newport News, Virginia. (I do hope the newspaper there is called *the Newport News News!*) Dad and I are going. Mother intends to stay at home and 'hold the fort'. And how are we going to get there? By train, straight

across the country! Dad can't spare the time to go by ship. Ships are the greatest, but they're *not* the fastest.

"Well, I've been looking at time tables and routes and behold! Union Pacific, as the crew more or less flies, goes right through Kansas City. I thought: I can't possibly go through there without seeing Dorothy Gale. So that's what I'm going to do! I've found out there's a spur line to Butterfield and we've made enquiry and it turns out we can arrive at B. at 3 in the afternoon just 2 weeks from today. Please write back at once and say if you can meet us.

"It'll be such fun to see you again! It's been far too many ages since our cruise together..."

Oh, that cruise. Dorothy dropped the letter and flew back in memory to almost two years before. She and her uncle had been sailing for what seemed weeks (and was) across the pacific and had put in, with considerable relief for all concerned, at Hilo, where they were to change ships for the remaining lap of the voyage to San Francisco.

They had a night in a funny old rambling wooden hotel and were down at the docks next day in plenty of time to go aboard—and to watch others going aboard. As Dorothy stood at the rail she suddenly nudged her uncle's elbow. "Look, that must be the captain."

They watched as a handsome man (made more so by his smart uniform) in his fifties came across the gangplank, followed by a lady in a tall plush hat and a sprightly young girl a few years older than Dorothy herself. The Kansas girl was amused to notice that the other was wearing a modified sailor's cap and carrying a fishing rod over her shoulder. "I guess she must like the water," Dorothy giggled, and Uncle Henry nodded solemnly.

Of course in the little world of a trans-Pacific combined freight and passenger ship it wasn't long before Dorothy and Lurline Matson became acquainted. It was the name that did it. Looking over the passenger list Dorothy was struck by the fact that the captain's (pretty obviously) daughter was called *Lurline*. 'Hm,' said the girl to herself, a chord of memory plucked, and she set herself to think where she had heard the name before.

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

By the time she ran into Miss Lurline on deck Dorothy was ready. "Yes," she said gravely, when they had introduced themselves, "I suppose you're named after the famous fairy."

"'Famous fairy'," laughed Lurline. "What are you talking about, my dear young lady? I was named after a ship!"

That sounded like a story worth hearing and Miss Lurline was not at all averse to telling it, as the girls settled in canvas chairs against the bulkhead. "Start right at the beginning," urged Dorothy. "I love a story."

"'Beginning'? Hm, where would that be?" wondered the maritime girl. She had the data at her fingertips but how far back should she start? Still, it was a lovely spring day and in the lea from the breeze quite balmy on deck. She settled back with eyes half closed. "I guess it all began on the River Rhein," she said.

"'Rhein'?" said Dorothy, on whom formal schooling had made but little impression. She was glad that Lurline had said "river." That was at least a clue.

"Yes, in Germany. Well, Holland too apparently, and Switzerland, but it was in the German part that there used to be a siren on the cliffs—"

"A what?"

"A siren. You know: a sort of irresistible girl who led sailors to destruction on the rocks—oh, how funny!" Lurline broke off.

Dorothy waited patiently but the captain's daughter seemed lost in thought. Finally the Kansan prompted again. "What was it about the siren on the rocks?"

Miss Lurline came out of her daydream. "Oh, it's just that mother must have been a siren, a Lorelei, herself..."

That sounded like yet another story and soon Dorothy heard it as well. "Let's see if I can tell both these tales at once," said Lurline.

"First, there's the Lorelei—pronounced 'Laura-lye'—also sometimes written 'LURLEI'—and that's 'Lurr-lye': more like my own name. Apparently there was just one of her and she was called 'The Lorelei', kind of like 'The Sphinx' or 'The Minotaur.' Anyway she was simply gorgeous and she sat on a rock—a cliff, actually—

beside the Rhine, combing her hair with a golden comb and singing a wild song, which enticed fishermen and sailors to shipwreck on the rocks.

“Later on somebody wrote an opera called *Lurline*, all about a lovelorn water sprite and pretty obviously based on the legend of the Rhine maiden. The name from the opera was chosen by a rich family named Spreckels who called their yacht by it and the Spreckels in turn were very kind to my Dad when he was just starting out as a seaman. He sailed with them lots of times on *Lurline*—”

Dorothy broke in: “I notice sometimes you say ‘Lerr-lye’n’ but your own name you pronounce ‘Lerr-LEEN.’ How come?”

Miss Matson looked a bit awkward. “Oh, you’ve caught me,” she said. “Obviously, coming from ‘Laura-LYE’ the name ought to be ‘Lurr-lye’n.’ But somehow we always say ‘Lurr-leen’ in the family. I guess it sounds prettier. There’s something about that ‘eye’ sound that isn’t so appealing...”

She was quite right, and may have been one of the first consciously to register a sound shift that has become general in American parlance: the rejection of the ‘eye’ phoneme in favor of ‘ee’ in many words ending in ‘-ine’ or ‘-ein.’ Thirty years later it would be common practice to pronounce ‘carbine’ as ‘carbeen’ and even ‘Frankenstein’ became ‘Frankensteen’ (and similarly with many Jewish names in ‘-ein’). The flight from ‘eye’ grew even more widespread and a word such as ‘archive’ began, in certain quarters, to be pronounced ‘ar-keev.’

“But to go on: when Dad began to have his own ships he called one of them ‘Lurline’ in honor of the yacht. That was a 135-foot wooden brigantine—” Miss Matson had to stop and explain to landlubber Dorothy what a brigantine was: a two-masted sailing vessel with a square-sailed foremast and a main mast with triangular sails in front and behind. “It was launched in California in 1877 and made its maiden voyage from San Francisco to Hilo in June of that year.

“That’s when Mother got into the act. She was a schoolteacher making her first trip to the Sandwich Islands—what we mostly

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

call 'Hawaii' now. She sailed on the *Lurline*. And that's what I've just realized is so funny..."

"What?"

"Well, mother must have been a sort of Lorelei herself but with a twist. You see, my father crashed the ship against the rocks—and my mother was the first one he rescued. Of course, he'd noticed, and fallen in love with, her on the ship. But she didn't lure him onto the rocks in order to kill him, like any ordinary old siren. She did it so he could rescue her and find out he loved her!

"No wonder they named me 'Lurline'!"

c h a p t e r

f i f t e e n

"What are you doing, dear?"

Ozma leaned from the rock she was sitting on to peer over Lana's shoulder. The little girl was writing on her pocket pad.

"Oh, it's just a little lyric—to pass the time, you know," explained the young Winkie. She handed her work to the fairy, who read:

"There's wizards in the wind,
their beards long and billowing and white.
Their robes flutter all around,
scattering magical dust in their paths.
The dust sparkles and glows for an instant,
then fades from sight,
but remains visible in my heart:
my heart
that refuses to let go
of childhood dreams...
and wizards in the wind."

"But this is charming, Lana!" cried the queen, delighted. "I

didn't know you wrote."

Lana looked at the Oz ruler sceptioally. "The first your majesty knew of me was through something I wrote."

"Oh, of course!" Ozma blushed. "But that was a letter. I mean I didn't know you were a poetess."

"I'm not," disclaimed the little girl. "I just writes all sorts of things—in all sorts of styles. Sometimes some of it may rhyme a little, or have a bit of a swing to it. But it's really just thoughts, impressions, not really poetry."

"Anyway," pursued Ozma, "it's very nice. Do carry on. And did you see wizards in the wind just now?"

"I thought I did, actually, at one point," admitted the child, "but I must have been mistaken. There certainly aren't any around here just now, are there?" She gazed out on the level featureless greyness of the Impassable Desert. "I'm hungry," she added.

"I'll bet you are. I could do with a little something myself," confessed Ozma. But, wandless, there was not much she could do about it.

Lana kept on gazing. "Doesn't it look a bit lavender to you down that way, your grace?" she said and pointed to the south.

"Do call me 'Ozma,' dear," inserted the princess. "All my young girl friends do. And we are going to be friends, aren't we?"

For answer Miss Peethisaw got to her feet and drew near the boulder throne, where she placed a small kiss on the fairy's cheek. "It *IS* purplish, isn't it?" she pursued.

"What is, dear?"

"The horizon. Look." As Ozma followed the direction of the girl's finger she soon became convinced that there was, indeed, something markedly mauve about the meeting of sand and sky that way.

"Let's walk toward it," the girl ruler proposed. "Lulea will soon be able to trace us, wherever we go. Anyway, I wonder if she's coming...!" It had now been seven hours since she'd dispatched the yellow hen to fetch the fairy queen. What could have happened to hold them up? No wonder she and Lana were both bored and hungry.

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

In little more than an hour of brisk stepping out the pair crossed gratefully into the Gillikin country and left the tedious desert behind. 'Now things can begin to happen,' thought each of the young ladies, though without communicating her thought to the other.

Things did. The first thing to happen was their arrival in mid-afternoon at a vineyard. In Gillikinland the purple grapes get ripe all year round so even though it was June there was nothing surprising about seeing the workers out in the plantation filling a cart with the lustrous clusters.

"May we help?" called Ozma as they got closer.

"Sure," said the complacent peasants and paid little attention as the newcomers wandered down the rows, snipping bunches with secateurs they borrowed, and incidentally not drawing back either from making a good meal of rich grapes as they worked.

At work-day's end the two waved goodbye as the campesinos moved off with their laden cart. "Oh, what's that way?" called Ozma a moment belatedly and pointed to the path that trended upward to the south.

A bandanna-headed woman looked back. "That way? Oh, that's the way up to the ice plateau."

Ozma knew Gillikinland was the most mountainous part of Oz. She and her companion would have to face heights and climbing before long in any case, and at the moment a bit of ice sounded quite inviting, after the dust of the Winkie country and the barren dryness of the desert. The two hiked on.

"It's so funny to see everything purple around us," commented more than once young Lana, who had never traveled in Oz outside the yellow land. "I'm not sure I like it."

"I hope you'll get used to it, dear," urged Ozma. "As ruler I naturally have to like all my country colors equally, and I must say it's quite a relief for me to find that *all* Gillikinland hasn't gone yellow."

"You're right," confirmed the little Winkie. "There's no dusting over with yellow here at all, is there?"

"No; that latest dust storm seems to have blown itself out over the desert. But even so I think we will probably see yellow again

before long. If we're to continue our journey we'd better head west. It's in that direction we're more likely to get a clue as to what's happened to our lost companions."

Thus when they came to the next crossroads Ozma chose the right-hand turning. This proved to lead sharply upward and the going became more of an effort. The path was now a rugged trail. The villages and houses Ozma had thought to see were nowhere visible. Evening was coming on and she began to be a bit concerned. There would be no tenting out tonight in a pretty pavilion raised by her friend the Wizard out of her own pocket handkerchief.

Any shelter at all was going to have to do. They had been climbing for several hours; when they saw it: standing in a clearing a hundred yards off from a cross-way on the level heights to which they had now attained: an abandoned building looking like a disused general store.

"I'm sorry, Lana," apologized the fairy as they turned in that direction, as if she were herself somehow to blame for being nearly as powerless as her little companion to create any coziness about them wherein to get through the night.

"Never mind," said Lana. She walked ahead through the brittle stalks of dead weeds in the field. "Morning will come."

It did, eventually, though there had been suffering in the meantime. Inside the derelict building there was just daylight enough remaining for the two girls to see to drag dusty sheets of fallen paneling to cover holes in the floor in the most protected corner of a room. Perhaps the place *had* been a store, or a barn and farmhouse in one?, since an outer room on the far side contained a drift of grey dusty straw. The concrete floor there was *too* hard to sleep on and they carried armfuls of the musty grass to their chosen bower on more resilient wood.

Ozma's unaided fairy power was just sufficient to be able to place around each of them a cocoon of warmth—in lieu of bed-clothes. Even that protection was perhaps in large part psychological. The two talked quietly together through much of the night but exhaustion at last claimed them in sleep despite cold and dis-

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

comfort.

When Ozma woke and sat to rub the grit and dust from her eyes she saw Miss Peethisaw sitting on the floor by a low window writing. She went nearer and silently looked.

“The structure of rough wood
and corrugated iron
stood in high grass,
that sprouted rank and weedy.
It stood at the junction
of dusty roads;
and marked a barter station
where people emerged
from among the rocks
to exchange strange stones
found in extinct streams
for special goods
and magical seeds.”

The princess glanced at the girl in admiration. Her imagination was outside the ordinary. “I love the mystical bite you bring in, Lana,” commented the queen. “‘Magical seeds’: now where did they come from?”

“I don’t know. They just occurred to me. (Maybe it was something I dreamed—something I felt we could use—like wizards in the wind. But they wouldn’t do us much good now. Look!”

The girl pointed out the window to where fleecy white snow covered the weed-filled fields. At least it was prettier than it had been yesterday!

“Hm,” said Ozma, not really pleased. “I agree it doesn’t look like seed-planting time. I *thought* it had grown colder and of course we were warned that somewhere up here was to be found an ‘ice plateau.’ Still, somehow I didn’t expect...in June—”

“But you know Oz, Ozma,” rebutted Lana, putting down her pencil. “Grapes ripe one minute; snowing, the next.”

The two girls remained looking out the broken window. Instinctively they drew together. The outlook was decidedly blue. Though, with their warmth balloons about them, they were at the

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

yo' come fum?"

"Oz!" explained the hen. "Well, just north of it, that is. But please! take me to your leader." Somehow she now sensed that this was not Lulea.

"Hey! yo' gals!" cried Butterfly, delighted. "Looky heah! A chiggen! Ain' dat sum'n?"

Now if there's one thing fairies like more than another it's hens and chickens. Perhaps the wise Ozma had also had that fact in mind when she selected her envoy (admittedly, the range of choice available to her had not been great) to the court of the great immortal (—and the court just turned out to be a tennis court marked out on the main deck of a middle-sized ocean steamer). In any case, the fairies turned as one woman (they'd heard all their queen's jokes before anyway, lots of times) and went into raptures about the unexpected addition to their party.

"A *chicken!*" cried Fyerril.

"Let me get *AT* the dear bird!" almost screamed Zyzzifer and broke through to seize up the startled fowl in her arms.

"It's a hen," constated Mariposa.

"Hen, schmen," blurled Zyzzifer. "It's a chicken, regardless," and thirteen of the fairies got into a discussion as to the extent to which hens and chickens are synonymous or not.

When the furore died down the bird had been transferred to the safekeeping of the leader of the fairy band, Mrs. McQueen, who soothed her ruffled feathers and proposed a question that still had not been settled since Butterfly's original exultation: "I wonder where you came from..."

"Oz!" squawked Billina but by this time knew too well how little her words availed. She was delighting in her popularity but suffered severely from frustration at being unable to communicate. She herself had overlooked it but surely Ozma would have remembered this detail before sending her out into the great world to transact business. Of course the girl ruler knew that Lulea could cast an instant spell to enable the hen to talk fairy language, or the fairies to speak Henglish, but the hurdle was to get the queen to realize that here *WAS* an occasion for communication. 'Oh!'

thought Billina, 'if only the dear princess had thought of providing me with a leg band that said "Billina has a message," or something—!'

As it was, the fairies just assumed that the chicken had escaped from the galley and they soon trooped down there to enquire of the cooks if one of their layers was missing. When they learned that one was not their delight knew no bounds. "Oh, lovely!" they cried to the Turkish scullery boy who was showing them round. "We'll keep her for a pet."

To the practical Turk this seemed an impractical plan. He had a better idea. "You give me bird," he suggested, pinching Billina's breast familiarly. "I make you boiled hen water."

"'Boiled hen water'!?" exclaimed Mrs. McQueen. "Do you mean chicken soup? The very idea!" she fumed in dudgeon and seizing the bird from the cook's grasp she stalked out of the galley without a word of thanks to the poor immigrant. All her train followed after.

They installed Billina on the chifferobe in the cabin of Queen Lulea-that-was and all might have been well if the steward had not come to turn down the bunk a scant half hour later.

"No poultry allowed in passengers' quarters," he announced in tones of obvious regret. "Board of Trade regulations."

"Oh, dear," exclaimed Mrs. McQueen. "How very distressing. What are we to do? I'm not sure I any longer want to face the voyage without my loving hen beside me."

"It'll have to go as deck freight," declared the steward. "But don't worry. I'll have the ship's carpenter knock up a crate for your pet and it can stay right outside the cabin door."

This seemed the only solution and ex-Lulea gave way. She went down with Billina to the carpenter's shop and to the very bench itself. It was the end of her happiness and perhaps she knew it. But if she did, she didn't do enough about it. She could have defied the steward's command later that night—but, alas, she did not.

'Uh-oh,' thought Billina as the coop door slammed to behind her. This seems familiar! And it got to seeming more familiar yet

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

as the night wore on, the sea rose from mild swells to higher billows, and a sub-tropical storm came on.

At least there were no icebergs to fear and the ship plowed onward, the captain well aware of the storm warnings that had been received. The steward, however, was not thus aware, and no more was the captain, of objects not lashed down on deck.

The ship heaved more and more. The crate shifted position. Presently both ship and coop were outright tossing. Spray dashed over the bows. The deck was awash. When the vessel plunged into the deepest wave-trough yet, deck chairs went floating, quoits flew through the air, and a chicken coop with a great deal of clatter and bustle made its way over-side.

Billina folded her wings with resignation. "Here we go again," she said.

c h a p t e r s e v e n t e e n

Fay McQueen and her court had spent several days lolling around on that Hawaiian island where they first arrived, before they got too bored. They were taking the sun, discreetly clad *of course*, on their broad seaside cliff top one afternoon when Fay caught sight of a white sailing ship floating gently along on the deep blue, some distance out below them.

"How romantic," the queen sighed, and most of her band agreed with her.

"And getting more so," said Aaala, the local expert. "In my time it was all sail out this way. But now! that's the first one we've seen so far." Since the fairies had been on the island there had been a number of ugly black smoke-spouting steamers go by within sight of the headland, but *they* didn't rouse anybody to romantic daydreams.

"I wonder what it's like aboard," mused Mrs. McQueen. Her knowledge of seafaring life was virtually nil.

"Why don't we go look?" suggested Ereol. A slight odor of sizzling came from her spirit-curling iron.

"Hey?" said Fay, startled. "That's an idea. Why don't we?"

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

For her followers her question was their command. Before anyone had time even to realize that this was a daring bid to escape ennui they were all clinging in the rigging of the bark *Harvester* as it made its way rather sedately over the smooth sea from Honolulu to the Big Island.

"Whee! What fun," said Fay as she rode up and down on the gently pendling shrouds.

"Whee!" answered her devoted followers, all drastically reduced in size so that there'd be *room* for them in the shrouds.

"What do we do now?" asked Wob.

"Oh, after we've pendled a bit more we'll go have a look round," announced Fay with assurance. "That's what we came aboard for."

"Like we are?" asked Titania. "I mean, what will the sailors think if they see twenty-eight fairies?"

"That their grog was stronger than they thought it was," put in the impudent Moth.

"Shh," said Fay. "There's one of them looking now. Just to prevent confusion it might be better to make ourselves invisible."

They did so without loss of time, leaving just the one seaman to believe he'd had an hallucination, and to carefully say nothing about it to his messmates.

Concealed from view, the fairies in a body toured the ship and saw the bridge and the bilge, the poopdeck and the forecastle, the galley and the accommodations for ten passengers. "Oh, how cozy!" cried fairy Fay, peering into a tiny two-man cabin. "One could be very snug in here." Sometimes fairies got these longings to experience simple human life-styles.

The bark reached Hilo on the big island about midnight and the fairies wondered what to do then. Hanging around town in the dark was their idea of nothing to do. They presently found their way to the tiny botanical gardens and there curled up in flower cups to doze the night out for lack of more exciting pastimes.

With the stamen of a tiger lily sticking in her back queen Fay lay thinking how comfortable the bunk on the *Harvester* would be

(with herself at a different size, of course). But alack, they had seen that there was accommodation only for ten aboard that ship. Next morning the fairies covered the waterfront looking for something a bit more capacious.

Their luck was in. Admittedly the ship was one of the ugly coal-burning steel steamers but it was a regular passenger ship, one of the first in the strictly mainland-Hawaii trade, and not merely a raw-sugar freighter with a few passenger berths.

For the occasion the fairies got themselves up as missionaries and Salvation Army lasses, turned some fairy gold into just enough real gold to cover their passage, and went aboard, to while away the time until the late afternoon sailing. The run to Honolulu was only an overnight affair.

They'd been lucky with the weather too, so far. But such luck doesn't last forever. Queen Fay was thoroughly enjoying her night in the commodious luxury of her first-class cabin when suddenly she found herself on the floor.

Her surprise knew no bounds. She stumbled to the porthole and looked out. Nothing was to be seen, of course. A weak light farther, along the deck revealed nothing substantive. She only knew the ship was going violently up and down, back and forth, even, so it felt, round and round. Even as a fairy she hardly dared venture outside in the raging storm, and to what purpose?

Then she remembered. Oh, that poor chicken she and her band had befriended the previous afternoon! What would have been its fate? That the hen and her makeshift coop any longer survived on deck seemed highly unlikely. Quickly Lulea-that-was passed a spell: that if the yellow hen wasn't already dead she wasn't to be, but was to make a landfall in good order.

Fay groped her way back to her bunk and crawled in it. She hung in there for dear life and presently when the gale abated a little she succeeded in falling into a troubled sleep. The night was not, alas, the session of cosy comfort she had envisioned.

She dragged herself out bleary-eyed at dawn, reflecting that after all she'd felt fresher after the night in the tiger lily in the botanical gardens. Mab, Wob, Dib, and the rest had not fared much

out to the curb.

'Heavens, what a wreck!' thought Miss Lurline to herself when she saw the carriage that awaited. Aloud she said, "What a delightful period piece. Where did you get it?"

"Don't laugh," warned Dorothy. "That's the buggy I went to Oz in. It's terribly shabby, I know, but you see, I didn't want to change anything. Every scratch and dent is a souvenir from some adventure along the way to Oz. The carriage was almost new when we started out that time. The canopy cloth was really shiny. But it was a mess by the time Zeb got it back to the ranch—"

"But how did it get here?" demanded the visitor. "It's a long way from California to Kansas. You never drove it!?"

"Oh, no, I got uncle to pay for it and have it shipped, and Zeb came along with it for a holiday—and Jim!" Dorothy said when she saw the horseloving Lurline go to the animal and clap his muzzle comradely.

"Nice old thing," approved Miss Matson. "Rather sleek. I see you've been taking good care of him. But he *IS* rather old."

"Oh, ancient," laughed Dorothy. "Aren't you, Jim?" The horse nodded complacently. "Yes," went on the girl, "since I got both horse and buggy safely here I've kept them up the very best I could—without, however, removing any of the battle scars from the buggy. You see, I treasure everything that reminds me of the magical land."

"Oh, that magical land of yours!" said Lurline as the girls crammed themselves into the narrow back seat. Uncle Henry took the reins and they were off. "I never quite know whether to laugh or go blind when I hear you talk about 'Oz.' Can there *really* be such a place?"

Dorothy pouted. "You've got San Francisco," she riposted, "and all of the Sandwich Islands—and they're marvelous. Why can't I have Oz?"

"It's a little *too* marvelous—to hear you talk." Lurline gave her friend a squeeze. "But let's not quarrel about it. Come on: tell me about your latest adventures there! You've been back since last we met."

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

“Twice, actually. Once just after we two got acquainted when I fell through the earthquake—and then again last year.” And Dorothy told the tale of her trips with the Wizard and with the Shaggy Man, not to mention various animals and young boys who’d got into the acts. Whether the stories were true or not Lurline enjoyed them as much as if they were.

Nor were they even finished when the buggy pulled up in front of the new(ish: just eight years old) farmhouse Uncle had built since the earlier ramshackle cottage had departed for Oz. Miss Matson, who lived in a virtual palace, was polite as she could be about the modest appointments of this dwelling. But before she had a chance to do that she met Dorothy’s Aunt Em.

Lurline’s heart went out to her when she saw the gaunt careworn woman on the narrow porch of the already sun-bleached farmhouse. Aunt Em was nervous. She’d heard long and often about the glamors of the Matson mansion near Golden Gate Park. She was also tired after a week of doing what she could to make her humble home worthy to receive such eminent guests. Her old-fashioned finery looked odd in contrast to the smart sea-going modernity of the Matsons’ attire.

Everything that made the place and people unsuitable made Lurline like them that much more. Underneath her active girl-sport’s manner was a heart that was touched with tenderness when she saw people meaning well and trying to do their best. Not pity! No, pity was a suspect emotion that meant “You’re just a poor miserable creature and I in my secure and exalted position can see it clearly.” “Pity” was really just a synonym for “well-meaning contempt” and *that* wasn’t what she felt.

She stepped to Aunt Em and turned their handshake into an encirclement of the farm woman’s arm as they moved into the house. There was more to feel “tender” about in the specklessly clean austerity of the front room. Then two widely loved celebrities of Oz broke any ice that might have been about to form by staging a spat in the kitchen.

Toto at nine-years-plus should have been a middle-aged gentledog but whenever he caught sight of Dorothy’s cat Eureka

he became a lively juvenile again. His yaps and growls the white cat returned with interest, especially today when the nerves of both animals would be at the stretch. They knew very well what was planned and Eureka was all atwitter with anticipation of seeing again her (also) old acquaintances, while Toto was all set to spoil it for her if he could.

The three women appeared abruptly at the open kitchen door to see Eureka on the drain board, hissing electrically, with arched back and all claws a-tingle, while Toto on his hind legs strained to get nearer and barked furiously. "Toto!" shouted Dorothy, "stop it at once!"

"Eureka," called Miss Lurline fetchingly and the cat bounded over Toto's head to the central work table, narrowly missing the big glass bowl of purple punch that rested there, and then leapt onto the collar of the heiress' middy blouse.

After that diversion everybody felt at ease and the girls did not stand on ceremony at leaving the grown-ups to their own socializing while they ran upstairs to Dorothy's garret room, Toto skittering after, and Eureka safe in Lurline's arms.

A little later, after Dorothy had opened the old trunk and displayed the few souvenirs she had brought home from Oz, and from less "marvelous" places such as Australia, the girls sat, each in a corner of the window seat at the gable end and dreamed. Dorothy held black Toto and Lurline still plied white Eureka with reunion attention.

"Well, yes, I see what you mean," said the California miss, gazing out at the snow-covered fields that stretched with very little variation to the horizon's end. "After a few years it could get a little monotonous. Oz must surely have a lot more to offer."

"And yet I love it here," mourned Dorothy. "When we have a good year—and of course in the snowy wintertime as now—it's not grey at all. I know I'd miss it if I decided to go to Oz to stay. Yet when I think I *could* go to Oz any minute I like but only duty keeps me here, sometimes I think I hate it!"

Lurline looked at her friend speculatively—and with a secret sparkle in her eye. "You need a change," she said.

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

"Don't I know it," said the Kansan rather bluntly. Then she brightened. "That's why it's so wonderful you're here. I'll live *your* travels at second hand! Now tell me everything you're going to do between now and when you get back to San Francisco!"



Lurline absolutely insisted on being allowed to help Aunt Em do the dishes after the rather gala supper. Every dish in the crockery cupboard had come into play, so there was enough to do. The two men had gone for a walk with Dorothy in the early sunset.

"Mrs. Em," said Lurline, polishing a plated gravy ladle, "does Dorothy have enough to do here on the farm? I mean, do you ever get the feeling she's... restless?" The girl didn't like to say "bored."

"Oh, you've noticed that too, ey, Miss?" Em sloshed at the cake of Octagon soap vigorously. "No, she don't and that's a fact. She's fidgetty a lot of the time and I reckon it's only natural—"

"And yet *you're* so busy all the time, and your husband too," Lurline broke in.

"But that's the way we want it!" the aging woman intervened. "Dorothy's mother was... delicate—and much more of a lady than what I am. We've always wanted Dorothy to be a lady too, not just a common farm girl. So we've never asked her to do anything—leastways, nothin' coarse."

Lurline folded up the tea towel and began to line up glasses on a tray. "That's not very fair, seems to me," she judged bluntly. She herself thought nothing of mucking out a stable.

"But we couldn't have Dorothy swillin' the pigs! or milkin'—or, or tossin' hay!" protested the farm wife, fair scandalized.

"It's not *not* doing anything that makes a lady," declared Miss Matson forthrightly. "It's what you *do* do and the spirit in which you do it." She glanced aside at her hostess speculatively. "Would there be any chance of Dorothy going on to college?"

Aunt Em looked at her guest with a very sad eye. This was too painful. But she was not the moaning and mourning type. She

decided to put a sprightly face on it. "Dorothy'll be lucky if she keeps on eatin' regular," she blurted. "Farm times aren't good around here. We do a good bit o' worryin' "

Lurline hung up the dish towel. "Mrs. Em," she said, coming straight to the point, "I want to invite your niece to go on with us to the launching, and then for some shopping—and then—well, we'll see what happens. I think it would be... so broadening for Dorothy—and such fun for me!"

Aunt Em put her wet hands on her hips and looked at the heiress admiringly. She knew what Miss Matson meant, but all she said was, "Dorothy's found the friend she deserves."

The two were standing together at the storm-door to the porch when the strolling trio came up the path, stamping off the snow. Dorothy ran ahead and seized her aunt's hands. "Oh, Aunt Em, you'll never guess what! The Captain's invited me to go along to the launching—and oh! I'd love to go."

c h a p t e r

n i n e t e e n

The girls, the older one and the very much younger one, could not make up their minds. In the end the weather made them up for them. The snow began again and the wind got up. Walking on across the dread “ice plateau” would be frightful in such circumstances. Suppose they found no other shelter when night came on? They did not dare risk it and remained for another miserable night in the house at the crossroads. Lana Peethisaw wrote a verse for the occasion.

“Around the isolated house
on the ice plateau
snow fell and never thawed.
The wind howled,
tearing at a corner tower.
Its only light fluttered
but it was there to welcome
a rare unwise traveler
seeking something
in that remote country.
But what he knew not.”

"A light?" said Ozma, reading the composition. "I only wish we had one."

"That was my wish too," admitted the poetess. "Sometimes my writing is about what I wish, or dream rather than what is."

"Oh, Lana," cried Princess Ozma in a rare moment of near-despair, "can't you write something gay, cheerful? I really need it in a pinch like this."

Miss Peethisaw sat down again at a window and by the last grey light of the wintry day wrote, after much thought, the following:

"I seem to have lost my buggle boo.
He must have run far away.
I looked under the bed,
and out in the shed,
and everywhere he liked to play.

"I believe I will miss him a lot,
my beloved buggle boo.
But my mom doesn't mind.
Please don't think her unkind.
He lived in her best tennis shoe."

The fairy princess laughed long and heartily and then gave Lana a fond hug. The poem had given her courage to face the night, which, just then, was as much as she could ask.

The night was got through somehow or other. Time has a way of going on like that: you think you can't bear a thing and then time comes along and carries you away, back into daylight, for instance, and then you find matters have got a little better.

It was that way for the girls. When they struggled awake on the second morning, stiff, aching, famished, and more unwashed-feeling than ever, the sun was gleaming brightly over a white world. Ozma ran to a window and looked out. "Oh, Lana, how beautiful! Today *must* be better..."

Little Lana agreed with her. "Let's leave right away, shall we? Anything will be better than stopping on here."

But now that they came to depart, nostalgia set in. They wan-

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

dered one last time through the tattered dusty rooms where they had been so uncomfortable but they remembered the long intimate talks they had had and how they had suffered but how they had *lived*. To experience *anything* (except, just possibly, unbearable pain) is better than to experience nothing. Lana knew that and could never stop being grateful. She had told Ozma all about it during their time in the derelict building and Ozma understood.

“So white and clean,” said the little girl as they stepped out into the snow. “I know I’d feel ever so much cleaner and fresher if I could just roll in it.”

“I’ve thought that too,” said Ozma as they made their way along gingerly in their, anyway, serviceable walking boots. “And I could warm us up again sufficiently afterwards. But we’d just have to get back into the same grimy wrinkled clothes. I’ve always especially hated having to put on dirty clothes when all clean myself.”

One might wonder when the queen of Oz had had any such unpleasant obligation as that. But perhaps she was referring to a time when she lived as a boy in the hut of a witch, a place not noted for its bath and laundry facilities.

“We’d better leave it,” suggested Ozma and Lana was forced to agree with her.

“If only there was something to eat,” said the five-year-old, stooping to catch up a handful of damp snow which she pressed to a lump of near-ice and popped into her mouth. “That might almost make up for feeling so unwashed.”

Ozma could not agree more. Though a fairy she thoroughly enjoyed the pleasures of the table. Why, nothing, she suddenly reflected, in her life devoid of the intimacies of love, gave her more physical pleasure than the flavors of fresh-baked bread, almond chocolate, steamed clams, violet lozenges, crisp chicken skin, malted milk, lobster mayonnaise, pecan pie, rum toffee, popcorn, maple syrup, or potato chips. But it was madness to think of those things now! Instead she said consolingly:

“I know. But though we may grow desperately hungry or

terribly thin, this is after all Oz: we can't actually die."

'No,' thought Lana, 'I can't do that.' Aloud, she said something more concretely encouraging. Then they plodded on, trying to concentrate on the truly glorious beauty of sun sparkling in a thousand ice drops on the needles of pine and fir.

c h a p t e r

t w e n t y

Billina squawked and clung. That's about all she could do.

The wooden crate was unable to sink so she had no chance of drowning, unless she deliberately got down on the water side of it and stuck her head through the slats—and she wasn't about to do that. No, she was just going to be vastly wet and uncomfortable for many hours, or even days or weeks, until the box should fetch up against a shore somewhere.

Actually that happened rather soon, helped or not by an unsuspected fairy spell. Billina woke from a nap of sorts to find both sea and sky blue and a small island at no great distance. By dint of patient waiting she drifted up on the strand in an hour or so.

Now what? The hen looked out enquiringly. There was no one about who could help her out of her wooden prison. Anyway she was not sure she wanted to see any human beings capable of such. She had noticed that humans had a tendency, if one was a chicken, to help one out of the fire (symbolically speaking) into the frying pan.

She was however ravenously hungry and eventually starvation was going to diminish even her fear of being served up for

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

dinner. Meanwhile her sharp eye discovered some infinitesimal sand fleas and sea slugs in the beach slurry underneath her and she consumed those. Faintly sustained she looked about her more attentively.

This was a very strange island. The sand grains were as fine as powder. Not far off fully formed coconut palms leaned aslant of the coastline, and were all of four feet in total tallness. Away off in the interior of the island, about half a mile away, a miniature volcano perhaps twenty feet high puffed companionably. Birds, in comparison with which normal hummingbirds would appear gigantic, flitted about.

It was one or more of these who finally brought the yellow hen relief. They happened to perch on her crate and cocked their heads to peer at her enquiringly. "Are you a great Auk or something?" they enquired in Avian (spoken and understood by birds everywhere).

"Great auk?" squawked the hen. "Not that I ever heard of. I'm a normal-sized domestic fowl temporarily incarcerated but longing to be free."

"Oh," said a spokesbird, whose name was Patatipiipiapaatapapita. "We thought you might be a great auk. You're the greatest bird *WE*'ve ever seen."

"Why, thank you," simpered Billina, confused by the nuances of the word "great."

"Are you dangerous?" went on Patatipiipiapaatapapita.

"Dangerous to whom?" enquired Billina. "I'm no cannibal, if that's what you mean. I never attack my own kind—birds, that is."

"That's good to know," said the resident bird, a dwarf member of a species known as *Walaka'akukialakakua ilex latex*. "In that case we might help you to get free."

"Splendid!" crowed the hen, now feeling extremely cordial toward the locals—who were about the size of large ladybirds. "How will you do it though?" she pursued, impressed again by her friends' tininess. "You're so petite. In fact, this is the pettiest island I was ever on. Where are we exactly?"

"This is the island of Tinitiwinitihumunuo'ahonomua sometimes shortened to 'Teentyweent'," informed Patatipiipiapaatapapita. "Why do you ask?"

"Just wondering. Everything seems, so extremely *small*. Or aren't you bothered by that?"

"Bothered? No. We seem to us the size we were meant to be. On the other hand, things that wash up on shore here appear to us enormous. The rest of the world must be inhabited by giants!"

"That's one way of looking at it, indeed," admitted the hen, "—though we in our own way feel quite normal-sized also."

"We had an awful scare a couple of years back. An outer-world-sized human arrived here—"

"Pardon me," broke in Billina. "You say 'outer-world-sized human.' That might seem to imply there were human beings who were some other size."

"Of course there are! Teentyweent's not a desert island! We've got our own resident tribes of humans. They're about as tall as you are—when fully grown. They've got their own towns and villages. There's one just a few dozen yards off in that direction—" The informant bird cocked its head toward the northwest. "And they've reached rather a high level of civilization, it seems."

"Odd one's never heard of this island before," mused the chicken. "You'd think it would be a famous sight-seeing resort: everything so tiny."

"Too tiny," put in Patatipiipiapaatapapita. "That is: just tiny enough! People on ships passing by probably figure it's just an uninhabited rocky islet—and the locals prefer it that way. I believe they go in fear and trembling they'll be overrun by outsider giants one day. It would be the end of their civilization—"

"Civilization'," quoted Billina. "You referred to that before. How civilized can one get? cut off from everywhere."

"Oh, Teentyweent's not cut off from *everywhere*. The humans here maintain cultural contacts with many other *small* societies. Lilliput has quite an imposing embassy in Tiny Town. Teentyweent's a famous vacation resort in the world of miniature.

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

People come from across the seas to attend our finishing schools and colleges. Art is exported. A Teentyweent specialty is carving angels on the heads of pins. 'If it's small we've got it all' is the motto of the business community..."

Patatipiipaatapapita went on like that for quite a while, until Billina began to grow restive. She was still feeling damp and hungry and the native birds were beginning to look ever less like birds and ever more like ladybirds. At last she revealed her predicament and her friends' danger. "How'm I going to get out of here end get something to eat—other than yourselves?"

"Eat us?" chirped the birds in alarm arm and rose from the crate to circle in the air. "After such kindness that would be a dismal thing to do!"

"Mm, I rather felt that myself," admitted the hen. "There would seem then to be one of two things you might do: either bring me some provender, or else get me out of here so I can forage for myself."

At that the tiny birds flew off as one, fetched some of their comrades, and began an 'air bridge' operation, freighting in minuscule grains of corn in their beaks and dropping them into Billina's cage, where she eagerly snapped them up.

After an hour or two of that the visitor was replete. Then she had time for social amenities and harked back to a topic that had been started earlier. "I'm sorry," she apologized belatedly, "I think I interrupted you," she said to Patatipiipaatapapita. "You had been about to tell me of a scare you all had some time back."

"Yes! A shipwrecked mariner from the outer world washed up here on a broken spar. He proved to be a holy terror. He's why the local humans are so terrified of anybody else coming here from the outer world. You see, the sailor was not a person of any culture at all. As soon as he got his strength back after washing ashore he set off tramping all over the island. And I mean tramping! Or do I mean *trampling*?! Because that's what he did: flattening forests, grinding gardens into the ground, vandalizing villages. It seemed he didn't take the local culture seriously but regarded it all as one big free toy shop, loading his capacious pock-

ets with everything he could make off with: people's furniture, things out of the shops, farm implements, bicycles, boats—he even took hostages!”

“What? kidnapped people?” gasped Billina. “How shocking.”

“Not quite humans,” admitted the birds. “But almost as bad. At the boarding school in Tiny Town he caught sight of a family of pigs who had been sent there for training—Oh! we have no race prejudice on Teentyweent—and made off with the swine, all nine of them!”

“How dreadful,” sympathized the hen. “And were they never seen again?”

“Not here. Whether they were seen anywhere else we have no way of knowing. When the sailor had pillaged his fill he set out on his spar again, planning to get picked up by a ‘tramp steamer’ or something—so he boasted—and then live high on the sale of the curiosities he had acquired on this island.”

“And what of the pigs’ people?” enquired the yellow chicken. “They must have been distraught when they heard of the kidnapping of their family members.”

“Oh, frantic—from what we’ve overheard. Their father, one Professor Swyne, threatened to come here from half-way round the world—to demand restitution.”

“Where did the nine little Swynes come from?”

“I doubt if you’ll have heard of it,” confided Patatipiipiapaatapapita. “A place called Oz.”

c h a p t e r t w e n t y - o n e

The fairies really had fun on Oahu. They turned themselves into hummingbirds and sped everywhere. As winged fairies they'd have been able to get about almost as expeditiously but they wanted to avoid the complications that might have arisen if anyone had spied them, twenty-eight strong, at the bottom of his garden. After all, ex-Lulea, as a queen, rather preferred the *TOPS* of gardens, and there the blithesome band would have been discovered and no doubt put to rout that much sooner..

They hung around the hibiscus-crowded gardens of Honolulu for a day. They went up to Diamond Head for the magnificent views of sea and land. They spent a whole day doing their washing and hanging it to dry at the Upsidedown Waterfall. This was a place wonderful enough to make them feel right at home. Rivers that flowed backwards, roads on which vehicles coasted uphill, in short everything which appeared to set the law of gravity at nought was meat and drink to the sprites. It seemed so *magical*. And a cataract that plunged off a mountain brink to be blown upward by the strong and unceasing wind that scoured the valley was just the sort of play pen they adored.

As birds of course they'd have nothing to wash so just for the space of this lark they changed back to fairy form, sudsed up their draperies, and winged it, with themselves *IN* them, back and forth through the upward-flying waters. Then they hung the clothes to dry on cobweb lines on the cliff top. In the sun and prevailing breeze that took about seventy seconds.

While they waited Mme. Mcqueen and Zyzzyfer sunbathed and idled the time in chat. Zyzzyfer, as befitted her spelling, had been the last to join the fairy band and sometimes the Queen adopted a schoolmarmish tone in talking to her. "This is light matter," she said now.

"'Light matter'?" replied Zyzzy on cue. She knew that obscure vocabulary was gauntlets thrown down to encourage her to acquire new knowledge.

"Yes," instructed ex-Lulea. "Everything in the universe is divided up into light matter and dark matter. You remember that?"

"Oh, of course," laughed Zyzzyfer easily and immediately remembered rainbows, the square of the hypotenuse, and the speed of light. "Gravity," she said.

"Well, no, actually gravity's one of the dark matters," confessed the queen. "But this is light matter: the strength, speed, and direction of the wind just here combine to be greater than the force of gravity. Hence, the water mounts instead of falling. You see that, don't you?"

"Yes indeed," reassured the pupil. "But gravity now: please explain that again. I can never quite grasp it: why *should* everything be drawn toward the center of bodies of matter? To my mind it would seem much more logical that everything bobbed about loose in the universe without being attracted to anything."

"To *everybody's* mind," dismissed the queen, turning over to get a little sun on her back. "And the universe *IS* logical and so of course gravity isn't what it seems. We—and everything—are not pulled toward the center of massive bodies. We're pushed."

"What by?"

"Dark matter, of course. At once that makes it all logical, doesn't it? Two solid objects can not occupy the same space at the same

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

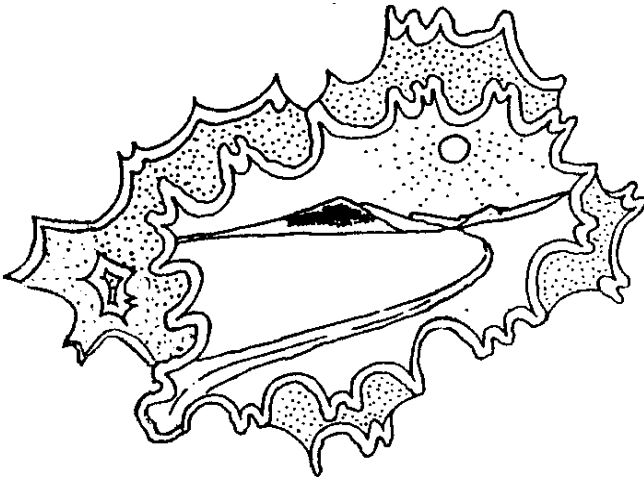
time. The very feeble pressure of the dark matter that fills the universe (all except ten percent, which we see as the light of stars, including our sun) is however just strong enough to press us against the heavenly body nearest us. Since we can't occupy the same space as that body (in our case, the Earth) we cling against its outside. And we call the result gravity."

At this point fairy Zyzzyfer always experienced an effect as of drawing aside of veils across her mind. "Of course! and dark matter—this is the part that's so hard to remember!—possesses the qualities of both solids and light waves, or rather, dark waves. It can be perceived as a solid in itself under certain conditions but it can also pass through true solids, sometimes leaving a perceptible result and sometimes not."

"Right!" ohoorted the queen. "It's all coming back to you now."

"And to think," sighed Zyzzy, reaching for her gossamer petticoat, "that you can control it all, Your Majesty!"

"Well, 'control'," murmured Fay McQueen modestly; "nay rather 'influence.' But of course. What else is one a fairy for?"



c h a p t e r t w e n t y - t w o

“Oh, Dad!” cried Miss Matson, “how terribly disappointing! But how grand!!”

The captain handed his daughter the telegram he had just read out to her. It was from Chief Clerk Printz, Matson Navigation Company, Ferry Building, San Francisco, and read: “You have been named Consul General for Sweden, for California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and Alaska. Imperative you return at once to accept honor at ceremony 13 January. Chargé d’Affaires Ekengren on good-will tour will officiate.”

“Sorry, flickan min,” said the old salt, brushing his walrus moustache across the side of her auburn hair. “You’ll have to take over for me. You can crack a bottle of champagne by yourself, can’t you? You’ve got young Dorothy here to help.”

“I don’t care!” pouted Lurline. “At least—I do: But I want to go back with you!”

“And leave *Lurline II* unchristened? You wouldn’t do that.”

Now it was Miss Gale’s turn to be a tower of strength for her friend as she was torn between two diametrically opposing desires: to turn right around and board the train back to San Fran-

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

cisco with her father or to climb the scaffolding at the shipyard two days hence end send a bottle crashing against the bow as the big black brand-new ship slid down the ways.

Dorothy was subtle. She stooped to conquer. She pretended to selfishness in order to get her friend to do what she knew her friend afterwards would be gladdest to recall having done. She said, "Yes, of course! You're disappointed. And I want to share the disappointment with you. We'll go back with the Captain right away and I'll never go shopping in Richmond or see the sights of Washington or anything. I guarantee to feel even flatter than you all the way back through the tiresome train trip to K.C. Since misery loves company, we'll be miserable together—and still have a lot of fun."

Lurline could not help smiling at her friend's droll presentation. But it pointed up a truth for her: it's scarcely fair to get your own back for a disappointment by disappointing others. She swallowed her chagrin and plumped for staying on to launch the *Lurline* on 11 January.

The ceremony went off all right and after all there was a bit of shopping for fallals in Lorfolk. The captain had left behind a generous check. But there was now no question of two unaccompanied teen-age girls attempting the round of big and dangerous cities on their own. They duly boarded their own return train on the appointed day.

"You were right, Dorth," admitted Miss Matson as they trundled across the snow-covered hills of Kentucky. "I wouldn't have felt satisfied with myself if I'd dodged the responsibility of the launching. Rut now I'm going to get my own back after all. Since you felt so keenly my obligations in this affair, it's only just that you come in for the rest of the responsibilities. It's not all over with the launching, you know. There's something called the maiden voyage. Now you wouldn't want to see that spoiled, would you?"

"I'd be very sorry," admitted the Kansas girl. "But it's nothing to do with me, surely?"

"Suppose I make it a condition of my going on the dreary old

cruise that you go along? After all, we've found out we get on like a house afire on these long-drawn expeditions. I could say I can't face the maiden voyage without you beside me!"

"'Dreary'!?" echoed Dorothy. "Do you call an ocean cruise 'dreary'? Why, nothing could be more fun!"

"Fun?! Hanging over the rail and reseeing your breakfast?" said Lurline whimsically. For here was a paradox: Dorothy, the girl from the heart of an inland America a thousand miles from the sea, was an excellent sailor. She'd shown that when she sailed off to Oz in a flying house with never a trace of *mal d'aire*. Her long Pacific voyages after that, including one in a chicken coop, but confirmed her sea legs. Meanwhile Lurline, the girl from the coast, who had virtually been born on a ship, got seasick every time. "Unhrh!" she gloomed, "I can't face it: to get on that thing—even if it is named after me—and sail all the way to Honolulu and *Lurline* again in one swoop."

"Delightful!" thrilled Dorothy. "I can't think of anything niftier. You talked me into it! When do we sail?"

"June sixth, from San Francisco. And get back there June thirtieth. Nearly an entire month at sea!"

"Wonderful. To see dear San Francisco again and all of you! and then to sail across to the Sandwich Islands—"

"People are calling them 'the Hawaiian Islands' more now," reminded Lurline, "the native name. But you remember that."

"Yes. It's going to be exactly like old times. Do you realize it's just a year and three quarters since we first met? and that's *where* we met. Oh, how lovely to be in the islands again!"

Miss Matson was steam-rollered by so much enthusiasm. "I'll pack a supply of Dad's long woolen underwear," she said and assumed a resigned expression.

"Woolen underwear?" said Dorothy in disbelief. "What in the world? That'll be in the middle of the summer."

"Mm," agreed Lurline. "Mother will be furious. 'Woolen underwear's horribly expensive.'"

"But why are you going to wear men's long-johns as we sail the tropic seas?"

THE FAIRY QUEEN OF OZ

The heiress broke out in delighted laughter. “Not *WEAR* them, silly. It’s for seasickness. I—well, Mother too—we’re the worst sailors in the world. But Dad figured out an excellent remedy. He tears up his woolen underwear and makes hot compresses out of them. To put on our tummies, you know. That feels So good...!”