

THE MAGIC  
MIRROR

*of*

OZ

**THIS BOOK**  
is dedicated  
to the memory  
of  
**RUTH PLUMLY THOMPSON**  
with whom an element of the plot was discussed  
many years ago  
  
and of  
**SISSI**  
a young sweetheart of mine.

This Book is not intended for infants  
and should be kept out of their reach.

# THE MAGIC MIRROR

*of*

# OZ

THE OZ BOOK FOR 1944

By March Laumer

Founded on and Continuing the  
Stories by March Laumer





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## C H A P T E R O N E

“That’s funny!” said Scraps, the magic Patchwork Girl, one evening in September. In fact, it was in 1917.

“What is?” replied the genial Scarecrow of Oz, and took another piece of cake. Oh, he wasn’t going to eat it! He was just fetching it from the refreshment table for Betsy Bobbin, who had requested that boon. She was too busy talking to her great chums Trot and Dorothy to be able to go herself.

Now the Patchwork Girl always looked her clients straight in the eye as she prepared to ladle punch into their cup—or, as in this case, to allow them to take a piece of cake. That was how Scraps came to do a double take and dropped her ladle.

“Why, your eye!” exclaimed the girl.

“I know you did have two of them—

But now one’s gone away.

No, there it is! It’s just so small!

And misplaced! I must say.”

“Whatever are you on about, dear Scraps?” returned the Scarecrow mildly, not altogether pleased at the imputation that he was eyeless in Oza. He lifted his free hand to his face just to be sure.

“No, I’m foolish!” confessed his hostess. “Of course you’ve both your eyes. But there’s something queer about them. Tell

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me, wasn't it always your left eye that was bigger than your right?"

"Right!; left," admitted the straw Ambassador of the Munchkins.

"Well, it isn't now!" and the girl raised her cotton-gloved left hand to point a finger at the Scarecrow's right eye. "That one's definitely larger at this moment." Then she picked up her ladle again.

"That's funny!" said the Scarecrow.

"Indeed it is," replied Scraps, pleased at having caused a small sensation.

"No, that's not what I mean. I don't know if my eyes have been reversed—but they *see* well enough. And they see you picking up the ladle with your left hand. Are you going to dip up more punch?"

"Why, sure," affirmed the girl.

"But I always thought you were right-handed."

"I am! See there! I have shammy patches sewed on my right fingertips so they'll wear longer—because I use them more."

But what was the consternation of the Patchwork Girl when she found that the patches were on her *left* hand. She burst into cotton tears—but the quick-reacting Scarecrow dropped his piece of cake and grabbed her hands.

"Stop it! Scraps. Stop it at once, I say! You mustn't tear off the patches. See there! you're getting the punchbowl all full of cotton batting."

It was quite true. Where the girl in her frenzy had torn at the offending squares of chamois on her left fingertips and palm, gaping holes had appeared in her hand and the stuffing was coming out. She collapsed on a chair.

"I think I am bewitched!" she cried.

"I don't know left from right.

At least—I do! And that's what strikes

My soul with dread tonight."

The commotion at the refreshment table had not been long in attracting the attention of the other revellers at Princess

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Dorothy's Thursday evening tea-dance. Miss Betsy came to the board and fetched her piece of cake herself and as she did so asked, "What's up?"

"Something quite odd seems to be going on, Betsy," replied the Scarecrow gravely as he watched her pick up, with her left hand, the piece of mackerel cake he had let fall. Betsy too was, he knew, right-handed.

Mayre Griffith, otherwise known as "Trot", joined the group and ladled herself a refill of punch—with her right hand. Now Trot was known among her intimates to be *left*-handed.

"Don't be alarmed, girls," calmed the Scarecrow before anyone (besides Scraps) had a chance to grow un-calm. "Betsy, would you just mention for me?; which of my two eyes appears larger to you?"

Betsy raised her right hand (the left was full of cake) and pointed to the Scarecrow's right eye. "That one—why, how strange!"

"Yes, isn't it? And that's what's upset poor Scraps - in part." The Patchwork Girl had given up all pretense of playing drinks-dispenser and was rocking from side to side in spiritual agitation. "She may be overdoing it—but look at that clock!"

The wondering eyes of the two young sub-princesses turned to the great ornamental alabaster clock that graced the nearest wall of the Small Ballroom. The long sweep second-hand could be plainly seen moving silently counter-clockwise. Even as they watched, the minute hand clicked nearer to  $\Sigma$ . Now those two girls as well broke into tears—ones that rhymed with "fears".

"Oh, Scarecrow, what does it mean?" queried Trot.

The straw man had his chin in his hand and continued to look grave. "I'm very much afraid," he vouchsafed at last, "somehow or other, that all our directions have gone off. Right is no longer right. It's left."

"Where did it go?" asked Betsy, much disoriented—indeed, feeling for the first time what it meant to be 'occidented'.

"That's what we've got to find out," said the Scarecrow solemnly.

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The Patchwork Girl surveyed her ruined hand ruefully and intoned:

“In a world where right’s no longer right,  
What’s left? That’s what I’d really like to know.  
But if left’s left as well, good night!  
It’s time the rest of us got up to go.”

With that she quitted her chair and began to move about the room blowing out the festive candles sadly.



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## C H A P T E R T W O

It had for years been the aim of the adventurous and amiable Woozy to get his stable-mate, the Sawhorse, to accompany him on a jolly run somewhere to have fun. In the end he began to wonder if it was possible for the taciturn horse to have fun. He seemed to think of nothing but doing his duty, which chiefly consisted, it appeared, in standing in his stall stock-still (admittedly not a hard thing for one who was made of a stock) until such times as he was called for by his mistress, Queen Ozma, when he would run like the wind.

“Oh, come on, Lignum “ the Woozy pleaded for the 2012<sup>th</sup> time. “Let’s go off for an adventure somewhere, just the two of us.”

To his surprise the Sawhorse replied, “What did you have in mind?”

“Well—er.” No longer ever expecting success in his pleas the Woozy had no specific agenda ready. He wasn’t going to fail to strike while the iron seemed faintly malleable, however, and he quickly blurted; “Er, we might do a aunt to the country of Glinda the Good. I’ve never been in the Quadling country, you know.”

“That sounds all right,” admitted the Sawhorse. “Shall we start now?”

“Oh, gosh,” gasped the Woozy, “this is so seldom! But yes—

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indeed! Let's go right now. We'll just let the Girl Ruler know..."

"That'd be Princess Ozma."

"That's the one. Come on!" Without more ado the two unlikely animals, who were about of a size, raced away.

Of course Ozma had let them go—and they had had fun. It wasn't hard for them to have fun; their needs and interests were so limited. The Woozy was content to browse on buttercups and thistles - and for a special treat he would swallow a few bees. We all know what the Woozy's bee-eating amounted to<sup>s</sup>. The bees just flew (as they were pleased to do) into his gaping square maw and deposited a bit of honey in his comb-constructed interior; then they flew out again. As for the Sawhorse, he didn't (and couldn't!) eat at all, so had not even foraging to concern himself with.

Presently they fell in with Master Button Bright.

This was a strange youth who sometimes made a visitation in Oz. Unlike the arrivals (in those old days when they did "arrive", i.e., had not yet all settled down permanently in Oz) of celebrities such as Dorothy, Trot, and Betsy, the Wizard Oz Diggs, the Shaggy Man, and others from the great world, which usually seemed to be attended by fanfares or anyway upheavals, small or large, of the normal way of things, Button Bright's appearances in Oz were most often unheralded. He would just quietly fly in, for instance on his magic umbrella, and presently fetch up in a mountain of popcorn or some other quotidian feature of—the Oz—or Mo!—landscape.

This time they found him hanging by his toes from the coping of a treacle well - or, as one would say in America, molasses. When they hauled him out his head was as black as a Zulu's and his hands would not bare shaking.

"Ohdrat!" cursed Button mildly, "whatdidiyouhaveto dothatfor?" His words all sticking together. He made feeble clutching gestures as if wanting to get back in the well.

"My dear young fellow," protested the Woozy, "what if you were to fall in? You might be there for years before anyone found

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<sup>s</sup> Or if we don't, we see *In Other Lands Than Oz*, Editor's note.

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you.”

“Idon’tcare,” returned Master Bright. “I’vegottogetbackin.” And before they could stop him he had sailed down quite out of sight into the well, though well and truly clinging to the dreadfully sticky well-rope.

The Woozy and the Sawhorse put up their paws on the well edge and gazed after him. It was awfully black down in there and they couldn’t see a thing, but presently they heard a creak of the pulley, saw a jiggling in the rope, and then came a voice that said, “Haulmeup! ”

Well, bucket-hauling was not a thing that blunt-hoofed creatures could do very well but at last they managed. When Button Bright presently crawled over the coping he was black or else a very very very dark brown from head to foot—but in his hand he triumphantly held his once-blond straw hat. “Ihadtogobackforthis,” he explained, and something white appeared: his teeth in a medium-sized grin.

Unfortunately the molasses well was the only source of ‘liquid’ in the entire area. How was poor Button to get clean? In the end there was nothing for it but for him to lie down and attempt to snooze while the Woozy, who was ready for his elevenses anyway, licked him free of the sticky element.

“That’s better,” declared the boy at last, standing up in his still rather coffee-colored golf suit. Then, “Are you going anywhere in particular?”

“No,” confessed the Sawhorse and the Woozy, looking at each other for confirmation.

“Oh, good. Then I’ll come with you,” announced the paradoxical youth.

For a long time there was silence as they walked along. The Sawhorse almost never spoke, Button Bright only opened his mouth when there was a non sequitur that wanted saying, and the Woozy, though fond enough of a conversation, didn’t really like talking to himself. At last, however, he did hit on a topic of general interest. “Tell me, please, Master Button, how you got your name.”

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Button Bright was silent for a space. Then, "Do you want to hear the real story?" he said.

The Sawhorse made a grumbling noise, but Button Bright, his acquaintance since many years back, knew what he meant. "No, that's just the polite story that was given out to shield delicate girlish sensibility," he explained mystifyingly.

The Woozy, a newer-comer to Emerald City society, looked a question, so Button said, "It was told — when I first got going on my adventures — that, due to my cleverness and keen interest in everything as a child, my father said I was 'bright as a button'." Here the Sawhorse nodded and neighed a bit in satisfaction. "But that's not the real story.

"My birth was a difficult one and in fact my father did not long survive it. He just had strength to murmur the name my parents had planned for me in advance: Saladin Paracelsus de Lambertine Evagne von Smith, and then he expired."

The Woozy became in a trice so interested that he sat right down on an anthill and prepared to listen further. The normally phlegmatic boy, touched by his interest, didn't like to disappoint him and hence waxed more wordy than he had ever been known to be before.

"I was not always phlegmatic, you know," began he. "As you've heard, I was frightfully keen about everything as a baby and as a young child. Indeed, from an infant on I got so excited about every least little thing at all out of the ordinary that my mum had an awful time keeping my didies tidy.

"In the end this irritated my uncle, Dr. Bright, with whom my mother and I had gone to live, so much that when I would feel a tizzy coming on he would bring me up short by commanding, 'Come, come now! Keep—'" and here the boy leaned forward and whispered something in the Woozy's ear that sent them both off into wild titters. The Sawhorse wasn't told; he would have been shocked. The staid animal seemed not to mind being left out, however.

"So that's how I learned to be phlegmatic," concluded Button Bright. "I found it paid - in the end!"

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## C H A P T E R            T H R E E

Till Eulen(Ulen)spiegel [probably from “ulen” to sweep, and “Spiegel”, German huntsmen’s slang for ‘rump, behind’]: a popular and supposedly historical peasant jester and prankster said to have been born at Kneitlingen, Brunswick, in northwestern Germany and presumed to have died on the gallows (or else of the plague) in or about 1360 at Mölln in Schleswig-Holstein, where his gravestone has been pointed out since the sixteenth century.

Eulenspiegel was in all likelihood indeed a historical figure; the name appears in Brunswick sources of the years 1335, 1337, and 1355. The Brunswick customs historian Hermann Bote gives the date, place, and cause (plague) of his death in his world chronicle which covers the years to 1438.

Till was the hero of a popular book that appears to have been compiled in the second half of the fifteenth century by a townsman of Brunswick from invented stories and the older tales of strolling comedians. His mischievous exploits were first recorded in a low-German account that evidently appeared at Lübeck in 1478.

The first extant text of the chapbook in high-German, one of the most popular of its time, was published in Antwerp in 1515. A second text, containing like the first very many Low-German

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words and forms, came from the same press (or else one in Strassbourg) in 1519.

Till's pranks, jests, and practical jokes, which generally depend on a pun: a deliberate literal interpretation of some metaphorical command, and are broadly farcical, often brutal, sometimes obscene, were played upon nobles, clergymen, and burghers. They illustrated the plain people's contempt for a decaying aristocracy, a depraved clergy, and a rising, self-righteous bourgeoisie.

Till has retained his vitality remarkably well through the centuries. The Low-German text was also translated into English and Dutch very early. The Dutch version is the basis of the first translation into French (1532). The Belgian author Charles de Coster succeeded in making Till a delightful incarnation of the Flemish folk spirit and a symbol of the indomitable national will of the Flemings in *La Legende de Thyl Ulenspiegel* (1868). Fischart, Nestroy, Lienhard, Wedekind, and Richard Strauss have embodied his disreputable and improvident spirit in many literary, dramatic, and musical works<sup>8</sup>.

But of course Till Orangespiegel in 1917 was to know nothing of all that, though indeed members of his family, which had come up in the world, had been historians in the earliest times of their translation to the continent of Oz. It was one of these who devised the system of chronology still current today in the fairy kingdom. He simply began numbering from the year One at the traditional supposed date of the founding of his own family. This resulted in such curiosities as the ascription / of the planting by the Wizard Wam (still going strong today) of the celebrated "Travelers' Tree" to the year 1120 O.Z. (Ouwe Zeit, Low-German for 'Old Time').

No, our Till didn't even know how he got his name, although it was so anciently traditional in the family. He had devised a folk etymology to explain it when people asked. With his strange hooting laugh, so like the cry of an owl (which he strongly

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<sup>8</sup> See the *Reader's Encyclopædia* (1950), *Collier's Encyclopædia* (1960), *Die Brockhaus Enzyklopä* (1968), and *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1969). Editor's note.

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resembled), he would relate:

“My dad was a card. Even on the solemn occasion of my birth he couldn’t refrain from taking the mickey out. When he came in to see my mother in the great four-poster bed and there I was looking self-important as heir to all the Orangespiegel glories, he said, ‘What are you going to call it?’

“‘Well,’ said Mum proudly and a little complacently, ‘I think, for the time being, we’ll just call him Baby, ‘til—’

“At that instant my father let off a most violent sneeze, which quite threw my mom into confusion. He hastened to make amends by showing he had been following closely what she said. ‘You’re calling him Baby Till? That’s a nice name. He’s sure to love it.’ And in his scapegrace way he insisted on calling me ‘Baby Till’ from then on.

“In the course of time the ‘Baby’ fell away of itself—and I was left with the name you know today.”

Well, maybe.

The *family* name in any case was not left to Till to interpret. Those ancient historians had left a record. Even Sorceress Glinda had a copy of *Schicksal Der Gegenwart*, in which one could look up:

“Orangespiegel, a corruption of ‘Eulenspiegel’ (Owl-Glass or Owl-Mirror), itself a corruption of ‘Ulenspiegel’ (wipe-ass). (The family arms were two brooms, crossed, superimposed on the hind quarters of a swine and, underneath, the cryptic letters IAPA.)”

The entry went on to relate how, as the family went up in the world, they went down in the world, migrating from Schleswig-Holstein, which itself was flat and low enough, to Holland which was below sea level. This change of venue came to be reflected in the near-legendary Till’s developing from a German folk figure into a Flemish (South Dutch) one. A change was also apparent in the family surname. In deference to the ruling house of the Netherlands the pointless “Eulen” (though they did all *look* like owls!) became “Orange”.

Little was apparently known about the motives for the trans-

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fer of one branch of the family to the Forest of Burzee. Could it be that they were just a little *too* farcical—or even brutal? (one recoils from the thought that they might have been too obscene) and for that reason were driven into exile? But *when* the move was made was faithfully recorded by the historian Orangespiegels. It was in 984 O.Z.

At Burzee at least one member in each generation carried on the tradition for madcap pranks and silly jests. It may have been their baleful influence that caused even the fairies in the Forest to develop a liking for riddles and practical jokes<sup>§</sup>. But so far Oz had been left uncontaminated. It remained for a twentieth- (or, by O.Z. reckoning, twelfth-) century Orangespiegel to plant his preoccupation with looking-glasses and oranges in an obscure corner of Oz, where they presently grew to an obsession that for a while threatened the stability of the whole kingdom.

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§ See, again, *In Other Lands Than Oz*. Editor's note.



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## C H A P T E R F O U R

The Frogman squatted beside his favorite lily pond and puffed and blew. He was feeling a little flat.

Not too long ago he had been the center of great concerns in the capital of the country. He had even been promised that his picture was to appear on the front cover of the book that would be issued describing his exploits. But himself? What was he doing now to maintain his position in the eye of the world?

Nothing. Oh, he had been offered a place at the court of Queen Ozma among the ‘celebrities’ and for a time, a few months, he had revelled in hobnobbing with the great. But for all his recently acquired great size he soon came to realize he was just a small frog in a big pond at the Emerald City. He opted for returning to the land of the Yips, of which he had been made titular ruler. There his size would stand out well against the dimensions of the local pond.

So, okay: there was the pond and it was indeed small potatoes, against which he loomed enormous. But so what? There wasn’t, at the moment, a person—or a frog—in sight to mark his magnitude.

Forlornly he decided he’d hop over and visit his erstwhile traveling companion, the cookie cook. He didn’t care much for her cookies. Somehow, after all, he still preferred a succulent fly

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—though what a lot of them he had to catch nowadays! to keep up his size. And Cayke herself was no very stimulating company. She was well content to sink back into obscurity and get on with her cookie baking.

Oh, well. Hop... flop. He skipped heavily down the lane. Even gravity was against him these days. He'd been able to leap ever so much more sprightly when he was just a tiny thing.

At a bend in the path there was a lookout point with a bench and some cape myrtles. The view from there was rather fine: straight northeast—or was it northwest? He'd never been much good at directions. Frogs are guided by other senses. In the middle distance was the Castle of Light and, beyond, the land of the Quadlings. The Frogman paused.

As his great diaphragm heaved in and out from the mild exertion of the promenade he put up a flipper and rubbed his eyes. Was it his imagination or did things look slightly different than they had done a thousand times in the past?

This region was of course the border marches between Winkieland and Quadlinga but the frontier was not very sharply marked upon the landscape. After a time the yellow sands of the Winkies (the area was also immediately adjacent to the Great Desert) just gradually gave way to the red Martian grass that covered most of the domain of the great Glinda the Good. Sometimes in some places the blend looked rather orange. But today! At the moment there was an orange tinge that stretched right across the whole countryside: paler the sands, darker on the grass. Even as the Frogman looked the orangeness seemed to intensify, even going brownly in spots.

Was this the effect of drought? The Frogman did recall that his pond today had struck him as being smaller than ever. Of course it rarely rained in that arid region but still he did not think it had rained less than normally lately. Certainly there was no unusual heat to be noted. No, this discoloration of the landscape was scarcely the effect of the weather, he decided.

His eye was drawn again to the towering (but still far below him) Castle of Light. He had a notion that the orangeness

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emanated from there. Certainly the golden castle (or was it not now rather more bronze-looking?!) stood in a pool, as it were, of the purest orange color to be seen anywhere about. Even now ripples of clearer orangeness were moving out, as from a stone cast in a lake, from the castle as center to the far horizon.

But the greatest surprise was yet to come. While the Frogman watched, a commotion seemed to take place at the top of the castle's tallest tower. Suddenly a great burst of vermilion smoke poured from all the windows and moments later the sound of a great explosion reached his ears. At the same moment the turret of the tower, which the Frogman knew was the Lords of Light's observatory post, flew back on its vast hinge and something black and silver shot out and was launched toward the meridian.

The Frogman watched in awe. Up, up, faster than light, sped the object and was lost to sight in an instant. At the castle smoke still writhed and boiled, but the worst of the fireworks show seemed over.

Here was an event right enough! to put a little color into humdrum existence. The Frogman waited just long enough to be sure nothing else exciting was going to take place for the time being) then he hopped on to Cayke the cookie cook's house.

At least he thought he was making for her place—but when he got where he thought the house was located he saw the shop of Fomm the duffel-grinder—which he *knew* to be situated right at the other end of the village.

How puzzling. The poor frog was completely disoriented by now and hopped on—or rather back—disconsolately, bewilderedly, not paying much attention to where he was going. What was his surprise to come after a quarter of an hour to the comfortable quaint cottage of Cayke the cookie cook! which he knew definitely to have left in quite another place only the day before.

“Yoo-hoo!, Cayke! Where are you?” he shouted from outside her door. Everything was so strange today he was afraid to open it and look in, for fear of what he might find.

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In a moment the door flew open. "I'm here," said Cayke mildly. "Where else should I be?"

"Oh," said the Frogman a little flatly. Then to give himself a posture he said, "Are you baking?"

"No, I'm writing," answered Cayke a little surprisingly. "A letter - to Princess Dorothy's aunt. I need to know how much cardamom to put in that recipe for bismarcks she gave me."

"Oh. Is there cardamom in bismarcks? I didn't know." The Frogman still felt confused but wanted to say something.

"As a matter of fact I'm glad you dropped by," Cayke went on. "I was mentioning you to Mrs. Em. But tell me; do you write your title as one word or two? I know we always *say* 'the Frog Man' - with equal stress on the two syllables."

"Oh, no, it's one word; 'Frogman'," the Frogman hastened to affirm.

"But then," returned Cayke, whom one wouldn't have expected to know a thing about cadence, "wouldn't that be pronounced 'FROG-mun'? as for example , with 'WOOD-mun' -or ' POST-mun' . . .?"

"Or 'MAIL-mun'!" retorted the frog wittily,

"No, it isn't 'MAIL-mun', it's 'MAIL MAN' , said Cayke. "But all right. I see your point." She turned to go back inside.

"May I see what you've written?" called the Frogman.

"Very well. Come in." Cayke handed him the letter.

"Oh, dear," said her friend. "I feared it *might* just be like this. Look!—" He flipped the letter back to her. "Can you read what you yourself have written?"

Cayke retook the paper with a wee gesture of impatience. "Why, of course—I can't," she finished lamely. "Whatever is this gibberish? Did I write that?"

"Which hand did you write it with?" asked the Frogman.

"My right, naturally," said Cayke, and held up her left hand.

"See?" said Mr. F. "That's what I came to see you about. Everything's gone queer today - actually, in the last half hour."

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And then he told the story about losing her house and then finding it again.

Cayke, like the young princesses at the Emerald City, was inclined to weep at the sudden strangeness of it all. The Frogman was made of sterner stuff. "I want to find out what this all means!"

"Yes... of course," replied Cayke doubtfully. How in the world was anyone to set about doing that?

The Frogman now told of his first peculiar experience that day: the view he'd had of unusual goings-on at the Castle of Light. "I have a funny feeling all these phenomena are related," he diagnosed. "At least I date my disorientation from just the time when that strange object was propelled from the castle tower into the sky, for right up until then I know I had all my directions in good shape."

"I'm afraid I hardly see any connection," confessed Cayke. "How could the object—like an enormous tea-tray, you say?—have anything to do with left and right?"

"Don't ask me," disclaimed her friend. "But if anyone would know, it would be the Lords. They have a finger in all those pies: the revolutions of the sun and earth, the coming of day and night, the phases of the moon—all that. I think I'll mount a little expedition to go ask... Will you come with me?"

"Oh, dear, no," declined Cayke. "*One* adventure's enough for me. Indeed, more than enough. I'll just get on with my writ—" She stopped.

"Yes," said the Frogman with some complacency, "exactly. How can you get on with it? or anything else: reading your recipe books, for example—or sewing—in case everything's back-to-front as well as right-to-left. Or even going to the store—if it turns out the store is the opposite way from where you'd expect to find it?"

Then the cookie cook did look perplexed - and did shed a tear. "Oh, all right," she sniffed at last. "I don't know what good I can do, I'm sure... But maybe I'll be company for you."

The Frogman admitted that. Cayke was *not* very stimulat-

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ing company but she would be much better than nobody. Even a self-confident (and secretly enormously wise) frogman wanted to have one friend when he set out on an expedition, even if it were to be only for a day.

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## C H A P T E R F I V E

They tapped lightly at the door. They were reluctant to do more—at an hour well after midnight. Ozma might perhaps be asleep; indeed, no doubt was asleep. but she had to be summoned.

“It’s all right,” whispered Trot. “See? there’s light under the door.” And indeed, in a moment the shagreen-covered door opened and a smiling—but somewhat tired-looking—Princess Ozma looked out.

“Oh, Ozma,” exclaimed Dorothy who by now had taken charge of things in her customary way, “the most perplexing problem has come up. May we come in?”

“By all means!” and the little queen/princess stood aside to let Dorothy, Betsy, Trot, the Patchwork Girl, the Scarecrow, Professor Wogglebug, the Cowardly Lion, and the Soldier with the Green Whiskers pass in. “What is it, dears?”

The group were drawn to the only light in the room; the green-shaded hang-lamp that shone over Ozma’s big desk-cum-drawing-board. She explained: “The publishers have been at me frightfully to let them have that map elucidating the course of last year’s adventures here. I promised it ages ago! and they’ve been importunate. I thought I’d get it done this evening while you all were dancing—”

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"Yes, we missed you awfully, Ozma," breathed Trot.

"Did you have fun, dears?" asked the gracious little queen. The others were murmuring polite responses when Ozma noticed the Wogglebug bending over the board and staring with great concentration at her work. "Oh, yes! professor," exclaimed the queen. "I must thank you again for all the data supplied from the College. It's been invaluable—"

"Er—hmm!" replied the great insect warily, rubbing his platilla and eying her sceptically. "I'm very glad to hear it, I'm sure. But, your majesty—forgive me!; how useful is your map going to be?"

Ozma frowned and came a step nearer. "I don't know what you mean. It's just a map—supposed to show the route followed by the Frogman and the others in their peregrinations around the Winkie country."

"That's what I thought," concurred the learned one. "But see here: I take it this IS meant for the Winkie country?"

He pointed with his feeler at a large triangle that filled most of the sketch-plan. "Yes, of course." The girl ruler didn't even look at the drawing. She knew what she'd just been cartographizing.

"But it's over here on the right side of the sheet," pointed out the professor. "Normally—as one usually reads a map - that would place the Winkies in the East."

"East?!" exclaimed Ozma. "You don't—!" She got no further in her protest before her eye took in the full extent of the damage. "Farewells and fairies!" cried the girl (who literally never swore) . "Is that what I've spent all night creating?!"

Princess Dorothy had her arm around the shoulders of the indignant queen. "That's what we came to see you about, darling!" she hastened to explain. "Everything's so strange! We thought you might explain—"

"What?" returned Ozma. "I've no idea! How could I have done such a thing?! Look at this lettering! It's all backwards. Well, they'll just have to remedy that as best they can at the publishers'." In her chagrin the princess seemed to be going to



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pass on to others a problem that was properly her own. But she WAS vexed and somewhat distraught.

"Will you send this off?" enquired Dorothy, herself surprised.

"I don't know... ! They've been so urgent. But never mind that; what *is* wrong with things?! Look at that calendar. That didn't read backwards when I hung it up there at New Years. It clearly isn't just me; it seems that everything's turned around—"

"Yes, exactly, dear." And Dorothy enumerated all the perplexities the party-goers had experienced in the Small Ballroom.

"Now let's work this out," said Ozma decisively, having got hold of herself again. "You find that all of you now automatically use the opposite hand - or paw - from what, normally, you used to?"

Yes, they all agreed that was so. "And we note that clocks and calendars and everything written or printed reads backwards - if it reads at all," said the princess regnant wilyly .

"Yes, and Scarecs's eyes are reversed," put in Scraps.

"His left was large, his right was small.

His farmer painted them that way.

And so they ever did remain

From nineteen hundred till today."

"Actually I came to life in 1898—by Great World reckoning," demurred the Scarecrow. "That's 1167 local time, of course."

"And, Ozma," added Betsy, "my little silver ring with the peridot in it—look. It's on my right hand now—and I *know* I never took it off, so I couldn't have changed it."

"It's quite evident, my friends," declared the girl ruler, "we've suffered - well, not exactly a sea-change—but, without, apparently, even feeling it, all of us have become, within the last few hours, mirror images of ourselves. And not just us but everything. In all my acquaintance with magic I've never known such a thing to happen - or even be possible!"

"There was Alice," suggested Trot timidly.

"Alice?" said someone.

"Yes—of Wonderland. She was in a mirror-image country."

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Trot was easily the most prone to reading of the three mortal girls who consorted with the young queen.

"Yes, but she went *into* that country," protested Dorothy. After all, everybody knew who Alice was, once they got her pinpointed. "The country didn't come to her, as it were—as seems to have happened here... Anyway it all turned out to be a dream."

"I believe it's an enchantment," resumed Ozma. "But I wonder what the extent of it is. Is it just us here in the palace—or all Oz?!"

"The Wizard would know," affirmed Betsy with decision.

"Of course!" agreed Dorothy. "Let's go ask him!"

"Darlings, he'll be asleep," protested the considerate Ozma. "It's going on two o'clock - I THINK that's what the clock says."

"But, Ozma, this could be serious," said Dorothy. "I don't really think we should wait."

The ruler gave way, and so they all trooped off to see the Wizard.

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## C H A P T E R                      S I X

Just outside the Ruby City the animals and Button Bright hitched a lift in a passing buggy. Actually it wasn't the driver who stopped for them but his draft animal—who recognized in the Sawhorse an old pal.

“Hurrhmmh! “ whinnied the horse in delighted acknowledgement.

“Lignum!” cried the buff-and-blue cheetah. “By all that’s swift! What are you doing here?” - as a cloud of dust caught up with the suddenly stopping equipage.

The Sawhorse didn’t answer, of course. He just stepped up and rubbed noses with the engaging animal between the shafts. The others all knew each other, even if slightly, and they took care of explanations. The Woozy told the cheetah’s driver, one Levimeyerabloch, an itinerant salesman, how they had got there.

“Oy, Gewalt!” said the peddler when he heard about the plunge into the treacle well.

Then the beige Button Bright (faded from coffee-colored after being out in a brisk rainfall the day before) said; “Okay we ride with you?”

“A ride you’re wanting? Sure, why not?” said the affable Lev. There was plenty of room in the gig, since the only addition was the boy from Philadelphia himself. The Sawhorse and Woozy

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trotted along, one each side of the Charming Cheetah.

Now there was talk enough. Lev was not chary of speech nor was his animal, so there was one conversation on the road in front and another in the buggy. "Making for Glinda's palace, are you?" said the peddler, taking an interest.

"Search me," said Button B.

"What's your business there?"

"I don't know."

"Going to get advice from the wise witch?"

"I guess."

"She won't let you down. If she doesn't know herself, she'll look it up in her Great Book of Records. Or else she can do a spell or an incantation that will get results. Is it anything very complicated you're wanting to see her about?"

"Maybe."

"Even so, it won't take her very long. I remember once—" and the peddler in a long reminiscence filled the carriage with convivial talk till they drew up at the ornamental-wrought gates to the grounds of the red palace.

General Jinjur came out to meet them. She had hired on as drill sergeant to Glinda's corps of girl guards after making the good sorceress' better acquaintance—and giving up her ancient antipathy to her - at the famous year-end party at the palace in 1911. "Hm," said she after a glance at the party of arrivals, "bunch of males"—this over her shoulder to Brigadier Sinna Munn, her aide-de-camp. Nevertheless she tried to act cordial (for her!). She knew her mistress entertained a sneaking liking for the sly insinuating merchant.

"Name, rank, and serial number," she demanded of the driver.

"Name; Levimeyerabloch, son of Ritzeplummereczek. The rest I haven't." Lev knew the general's bluff butch manner and didn't mind.

"Button Bright, né Saladin Paracelsus de Lambertine Evagne von Smith, staff-corporal, 814369," replied the American surprisingly.

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“Pass on.” The general did not accord any notice to the mere animals that accompanied the carriage.

In the palace conservatory that afternoon they found a party in progress. Polychrome the Rainbow’s Daughter and the Shaggy Man were there and two tables of bridge were going. Witch Glinda was dummy at one table, a difficult role for her to play at any time, and she rose to come and greet the new arrivals with a smile. When it turned out that Levimeyerabloch and Button Bright were bridge fiends too, a third table was set up and they played till midnight.

“What are you doing in this part of the country, Lev,” asked Glinda over a tired grapefruit next morning.

“I’m just on my way through to pay my quarterly call on Mr. Orangespiegel,” replied the merchant, “—or the ‘Owl Practitioner’, as he asks to be called these days... I think he has slight delusions - though whether of grandeur...?”

“His *plans* are grandiose,” admitted the witch and poured out ersatz all round. The party needed perking up after the late night.

“Just half a cup, your grace,” warned the peddler.

“I thought you liked my ersatz, Lev?”

“I love the rich caffeine effect; it’s the coffee I could do without.”

“But this is Skim.”

“‘Skim’?”

“Mm. All that nasty coffee taste has been removed. It’s just pure caffeine.” Levimeyerabloch sipped — and his eyeballs spun round. “Oy, Gewalt! This is Skim? If it feels that good, you can fill it to the brim!”

“With Skim?”

They all laughed — and made a mental note to collect their checks from the sponsor.

“But to get back —” Glinda resumed. “You remember that scheme of Till’s to cast the biggest mirror in the world?.. He’s been at it for donkey’s years.”

“That he’s still busy with?” asked Lev reflectively.

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“Yes—and I think his plans are nearing fruition. I learn he’s imported an inordinate number of tons of the purest silica sand from a pit on the edge of the Deadly Desert. And I understand the gnomes are working over-time shipping in silver and lead. The glass-works Till’s had built near his spherodome are vast.”

“But how is he ever going to move his mirror once it’s finished?—if it ever is. And what’s it for?”

“I think it’s just one of his famous gags,” said the sorceress reassuringly. “As you say, it’s going to be so big it *can’t* be moved - not in any practical way. So I shouldn’t think there’d be too much mischief he can accomplish with it.”

“Actually,” said Levimeyerabloch, “I’m doing my quarterly call a bit early this time—on an urgent summons from the O.P. I wonder what he wants.”

“You’ve no clue?”

“Not unless the stuff he’s ordered is one: an old oil lamp, a pillow tick, a stack of dog-eared books, a set of gnat’s eyebrows, and a large—and, I’m afraid, rather smelly—cheese.”

“What in the world!” laughed the witch.

But unfortunately in this matter the merchant was being a little disingenuous. The Owl Practitioner’s order had read simply; “*Any* thing you have with magic in—no matter how little.” But Lev didn’t like to worry his hostess with a hint that anything untoward might be going on out there on the alkali flats. He knew Orangespiegel to be essentially good-natured - if a bit of a scamp—and figured he, Lev, would be able to handle any situation he found at the spherodome.

But that hostess was going on. “Actually, he’s made *one* strange request of me. He’s sent to ask if I could spare three hundred head of oxen! Can you imagine? I thought it might be in connection with attempting to haul his great mirror somewhere, but, rather eccentrically, he added a postscript to his letter; ‘Or else one will do.’ Now what do you suppose he meant by that?!”

No one could suggest a reasonable explanation. Then Polychrome asked, “Did you send him any oxen?”

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“Oh, yes, all I had on hand; I forget the exact number. I understood they were to be merely on loan.”

After that the group broke up. Polychrome and the Shaggy Man too were on their way elsewhere: expected, I believe, on a birthday visit to Queen Gloria, wife to Pom the gardener’s boy. They’d be leaving later that afternoon but Lev and Button Bright with their attendant creatures were off betimes. Till Orangespiegel had not been unduly urgent in his message to the peddler but he thought there was no sense in dawdling.

“But, say,” he said as Button prepared to take his seat beside him again in the buggy, “I never heard what business it was you had with Glinda. Did you get it done?”

“I think so,” said the boy provokingly. In fact, he had - but even he didn’t know it, though it would echo down the years. But if Levimeyerabloch was dissatisfied with the youth’s reply he gave no sign.

“So you’ll carry on with me yet a while... ?”

“Mmm,” said Button Bright, but remembered his training in time and added, “Please.”

## C H A P T E R                    S E V E N

The Owl Practitioner leaned back in his orangewood swivel chair that morning—not too early—and gave a sigh of satisfaction. Things seemed to be going very well indeed. Then he thought of a detail and thrust forward again to ruffle among the papers on his escritoire. He ran his finger along the wording of a formula.

“Right. Quite in order. Every point taken care of,” he muttered to himself. Things just needed to keep ticking over as they were doing and soon all would be in readiness.

He gave another sigh, then rose (though he himself would never have used that word) and went to the open oriel. It was always balmy weather, not to say even a bit torrid at times, here in the southwest close to the desert whence blew the mild scirocco. His windows stood almost always open.

Till looked down into the garden. What a sight. Marigolds and nasturtiums in every nook and cranny, and where there weren’t there were orange roses. Such a strange flower, but far the most interesting color of any rose (if one *had* to use the word), even the black ones. Dahlias and chrysanthemums of the proper shade were not lacking either and Till allowed even ugly old zinnias into his garden because they were so sensible as to grow in the right color. He didn’t stand for any yellow, red, or mauve



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ones though.

Just one thing displeased him with the sight. The red earth of Terra. There was no getting away from it, if you were Irish. Luckily he *wasn't* Irish—and he would get away from it! Or, rather, it would get away from him. That was the genius of his plan, which called for a gesture so grandiose it would flatter even *his* ego.

He peered away to the far horizon where the great construction rose (crumbs! that word again), *just* barely visible at the extreme point of the cultivable land: not really visible until the sun, at exactly the proper angle, struck a - drat it!—yellow spark from the glass. Never mind; it wasn't the right time of day. But at sunset! when the world was at its most cinnabar... Every day of the waning year drew the world nearer to the perfect configuration. By then all would be ready. There was no rush.

The practitioner's eye was drawn to that same sun. 'Orange old thing!' he thought. 'It probably belongs to me too. Anyway, in spirit. How annoying that its color, the most elemental, surely, in the universe, should have been ignored!' It was a grievance that stretched back to Till's earliest childhood recollections. On his birthday his father, his mother, and his elder sister Pill had each handed him an orange. It was the start of a love affair that never died.

But for the love of three oranges he thought he wouldn't be where he was today. The spell of the tasty spheres had entered into his soul. That's why he lived now in a round orange house he called the 'spherodome'. His mills and workshops were perforce of more functional shapes but at least in the choice of what form the place where he laid his head would have he could please himself.

He leaned on his elbows and reminisced. He remembered the house at New Burzee, the old echoing rooms, the smell of tangerine blossoms from the garden, the scratchy old gramophone, and his sister dancing to the tune of the Burzee Jounce. He and Pill had always been close and when he elected to migrate to Oz after the death of their parents she came with

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him. He never felt she shared his missionary zeal, however. She could take things orange or leave them alone.

The only time he had been seriously furious with Pill was when she wore a pink dress. It was understood by all sentient people that the most awful color combination possible was orange and pink. Since orange was the color supreme, obviously pink had to go.

Till turned again into the room and resumed work on his calculations. Oy would be here any day now, he fancied. Oy was an important part of his scheme. Till was going to have to play his cards carefully to insure the peddler's presence on the premises for at least a week. Indeed, it was partly by the arrangements for the playing of cards that he hoped to tempt him to stay.

Levimeyerabloch didn't much care for being called "Oy", reflected Orangespiegel with a smile and ruffled his feathers. It seemed like a bit of a send-up. However, it was necessary that he be 'officially' so designated for the nonce. Anyway, Till had a predilection for calling a rose by any other name.

He rolled the cloudy-orange marbles a little in the deep slot groove that ran round his work-surface. He liked to see his favorite color 'in action', as it were.

Then there was a knock at the door and his sister stuck her head in.

"There's a woozy to see you," she announced.

"What color is it?"

"Blue."

"That goes all right with orange." The practitioner reflected. "Not like with dark brown. Navy-and-sepia are almost as awful as pink-and-orange." Then suddenly, "*What* color did you say?!"

"Blue." Pill's owlish eyes grew larger.

"Naranjas! That couldn't be *the* Woozy - of Oz?!" Till was so excited he jumped from his chair. "What in the world could he be doing here?" Then the practitioner had a sudden pang. What if the celebrated Woozy — whom he had heard of for many years but never so far met - had been sent as an industrial spy? He'd

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have to be careful. "Show him in, Pill."

A pattering clumping could be heard on the stairs and then the winning Woozy came in with as big a grin on his smool as a rich spray of orange blossoms between his lips would allow. He advanced to the desk edge, put up his square paws, and laid the spray before Till Orangespiegel.

Of course Till thereupon liked the Woozy a lot. Who, after all, could resist? "I ran on ahead," the animal remarked conversationally. "Button and Oy stopped for lunch—and the others with them."

"You know his - er, nom de metier then?" said Till, pleased again. "You're traveling with Mr. Levimeyerabloch, I take it?"

The Woozy got comfortable on an ottoman and told the circumstances. "I knew there'd be bees among your blossoms so I came on ahead. I heard tell you produce the finest orange-blossom honey in all Quadlinga - if not all Oz."

"Splendid," smiled Orangespiegel. "And er, you'll be in no haste to depart?" He thought he'd just get that point clear.

"Oh, I don't think so. The Sawhorse and I are just out for a run and fun. I don't know about the others."

"Well, let me take you on a tour of the plant," proposed Orangespiegel affably. All idea of industrial espionage had been forgotten. They went out a side door into the garden, where the Woozy communed quietly with the bees for a bit.

"I just like to be with bees," he explained.

"Just as I," said Till understandingly, "like to arrange with oranges" — and he juggled a few nonchalantly.

They strolled on over the annoyingly red grass. "I haven't been able to cultivate a properly orange variety yet," lamented Till. The leisurely walk continued as far as a hedge of Osage orange almost a mile away.

"This is the border of my holdings," Orangespiegel informed, "but I hope very soon to increase them considerably. He turned and pointed, as in a travel poster, across the flat acres to the south which did give a pleasant general impression of orange. "I call this the Orange Free State," he said proudly.

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“Free for orange,” pointed out the Woozy perspicaciously. He had heard of Orangespiegel’s aversion to rose puce, ultramarine, and ochre. “I don’t see all that much yellow or blue.”

“Of course not,” agreed the O.P. “Aren’t all freedoms such? People only want freedom of expression for their own brand of kookiness. They’re really annoyed by others’ exercise of freedoms they themselves are not interested in - be it a political view or a religion or a sexual orientation or an off-brand skin color.”

“Yes, you’re quite right,” admitted the sensible Woozy.

“Now, as for colors,” went on his host, “they have all the rest of Oz to be red, blue, green, yellow, or purple in. Orange is the only one of the six rainbow hues not represented in this country. It isn’t fair.”

“No more it is.” The Woozy chalked up further points.

“So I’m going all out advocating orange,” finished Till.

“You do that,” said the Woozy. How obliging can you get?

“Now let me show you some of the glass foundry,” said the O.P., pleased.

They walked along the hedge path south until they came to a vast shallow circular concrete enclosure where oxen, harnessed to long horizontal sweep rods from which depended sharp-edged rollers, were plodding slowly round and round the circle.

“There are 201 of them,” Till explained. “The Sorceress has been very generous... Actually this is just to keep them busy. They’ve already milled the silica and lead particles sufficiently fine - but finer won’t hurt. We’ll be ready to melt any day now. I’m only waiting on Oy to arrive—and that should be today, it seems.”

“It should be right now,” exclaimed the Woozy, whose hearing was very keen. He had picked up the neigh of the arriving Sawhorse far off—out-of sight—at the wicket gate.

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## C H A P T E R            E I G H T

“I could wish now I’d commanded them to put in a regular road here—or a flight of steps,” said the Frogman, gazing down the steep side of Yip Mountain.

“No one ever wants to go down,” exculpated Cayke reasonably.

“These people are just too shut away,” lamented the Frogman. “There’s a whole great big world out there just waiting to be explored.” He gazed away with longing and nostalgia. He knew—from personal experience.

So did Cayke as a matter of fact but remained unmoved. “It’s getting dark already,” she complained. “Are you sure this is wise?”

“I very much want to find out what’s happened.” The Frogman spoke almost sharply. “It’s too bad it happened so late in the day but it’s no good waiting till tomorrow to try to get particulars.”

As a matter of fact what he had experienced today was merely the last straw to dissatisfactions that had been growing in him for months. It was simply no good being a big frog in a small pond: as unsatisfying as the reverse. The Frogman was an artist - of sorts - and knew divine discontent. Now that an excuse, be it ever so feeble, had been found for getting away from stultify-

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ing Yipville he was going to take it, no matter what the odds.

"Your jeweled dishpan isn't available, I take it?—for sliding down the mountainside in."

"No!" said the cookie cook decisively. That dishpan! It had caused her enough headaches already. It was ridiculous that she had ever come into possession of such an unlikely treasure. Sometimes she thought it had all been an unkind trick of fate—just to make her look silly. But, of course, if one owned such a valuable, one didn't give up ownership without a struggle. She wasn't going to risk it again by taking it along on this wild goose chase. Besides, it was so heavy—made of rich gold—to haul along, what time they wouldn't be coasting down the slick-grassed slope in it.

"Well, here goes," said the frog resignedly and gave Cayke a flipper to lead her down the precarious descent.

"What about the scares at the bottom?" asked Cayke, remembering too late the real reason why Yips rarely left home.

"What scares?" blustered the Frogman. "Can you name one type scare?"

"Well, no," admitted Cayke. "But everybody says they're there."

"The way they say there are torments in hell - or angels in heaven," the frog gave himself false courage, "but nobody's ever reported back with pictures or proofs."

Unfortunately for his brave words there *were* scares at the bottom. They encountered the first ones two hours later, long after full night had come and they'd reached gentler slopes near the base of the mountain.

The two climbers were not so much tired as hurt and disheveled - by the crag-anchored brambles they had had to cling to in making their perilous way down. Every exposed skin surface of their bodies was scratched and torn. How lucky the Frogman apprised himself for having taken to wearing clothes! The ravages otherwise would have been far greater. The state of his noble garments wouldn't bear thinking of, but luckily, in the dark, he couldn't see them.

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Then Cayke gave a scream and fell to the ground. "Something's on me!" she wailed. "*Several* somethings... oh, a whole lot!" She dissolved in shudders.

Now the Frogman felt them too and had his own share of the horrors. It was as if disembodied lips and tongues were gently but insistently licking and sucking at all the scratches he had acquired. It didn't hurt—exactly—but it was dreadful to feel such obscene caresses and not know what was making them. Of course he struck out at whatever it was and felt soft hairy bodies detach and fall away. But every moment more gathered.

"Cayke!" he shouted. "Are you all right? Where are you? Give me your hand!" He blundered in the pitch dark among the trees, still hitting ineffectually at the terror.

He heard Cayke's shrieks again, fainter than he expected. But the two kept calling and crying until, by constantly turning and moving in the direction of the voice, they got nearer each other. At last hand joined flipper. "We must bolt for it!" gasped the frog. "I'd leap—but these trees would bring me down. Just hang onto my coat-tails for dear life and I'll try to get us clear!"

Cayke had sense enough to do as she was told without demur, and thus they blundered among the obstructing trees till at least they were out of the woods and faint starlight was visible. Then miraculously they also felt their tormentors had dropped away, and were lost behind.

They collapsed against the last tree and tried to catch their breath. "What ever was it?" moaned Cayke.

"I tried not to find out!" gasped the frog. "Too dreadful. But I couldn't help feel they were hairy and soft and moist and about as big around as—well, your cookies. Fatter though—more like a muffin. And they seemed to have seven or eight legs."

They never did learn what had attacked them. When daylight came the two were far away and no trace of the scares could be seen on the bodies of the travelers.

What's more, no trace of the couple's painful scratches could be seen. "That's Oz for you!" commented the Frogman when at last he was convinced of the phenomenon. "Every cloud has a

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silver lining. The attentions of the scares seem to have had a curative effect!"

But oh! was the cure worth the shuddery process?

Since the adventurers were not, fortunately, to meet the scares again, it may be as well to slake the possible curiosity of readers by stating that what had attacked the two was the large variety of mouth-spiders— who lust for blood. Unlike their very distant relatives, the mouth-bats, they have no teeth to enlarge encountered wounds but just lick greedily at whatever blood is already flowing. Their saliva has a (for them self-defeating) styptic effect.