

A LITTLE TALK TO MY READERS

WITH "The Sea Fairies," my book for 1911, I ventured into a new field of fairy literature and to my delight the book was received with much approval by my former readers, many of whom have written me that they like Trot "almost as well as Dorothy." As Dorothy was an old, old friend and Trot a new one, I think this is very high praise for Cap'n Bill's little companion. Cap'n Bill is also a new character who seems to have won approval, and so both Trot and the old sailor are again introduced in the present story, which may be called the second of the series of adventures of Trot and Cap'n Bill.

But you will recognize some other acquaintances in "Sky Island." Here, for instance, is Button-Bright, who once had an adventure with Dorothy in Oz, and without Button-Bright and his Magic Umbrella you will see that the story of "Sky Island" could never have been written. As Polychrome, the Rainbow's Daughter, lives in the sky, it is natural that Trot and Button-Bright meet her during their adventures there.

This story of Sky Island has astonished me considerably, and I think it will also astonish you. The sky country is certainly a remarkable fair land, but after reading about it I am sure you will agree with me that our old Mother Earth is a very good place to live upon and that Trot and Button-Bright and Cap'n Bill were fortunate to get back to it again.

By the way, one of my little correspondents has suggested that I print my address in this book, so that the children may know where letters will reach me. I am doing this, as you see, and hope that many will write to me and tell me how they like "Sky Island." My greatest treasures are these letters from my readers and I am always delighted to receive them.

L. FRANK BAUM.

"OZCOT" at HOLLYWOOD in CALIFORNIA

Chapter 1

A MYSTERIOUS ARRIVAL

"Hello," said the boy.

"Hello," answered Trot, looking up surprised. "Where did you come from?"

"Philadelphia," said he.

"Dear me," said Trot, "you're a long way from home, then."

"'Bout as far as I can get, in this country," the boy replied, gazing out over the water. "Isn't this the Pacific Ocean?"

"Of course."

"Why of course?" he asked.

"Because it's the biggest lot of water in all the world."

"How do you know?"

"Cap'n Bill told me," she said.

"Who's Cap'n Bill?"

"An old sailorman who's a friend of mine. He lives at my house, too—the white house you see over there on the bluff."

"Oh; is that your home?"

"Yes," said Trot proudly. "Isn't it pretty?"

"It's pretty small, seems to me," answered the boy.

"But it's big enough for mother and me, an' for Cap'n Bill," said Trot.

"Haven't you any father?"

"Yes, 'ndeed. Cap'n Griffith is my father, but he's gone most of the time, sailin' on his ship. You mus' be a stranger in these parts, little boy, not to know 'bout Cap'n Griffith," she added, looking at her new acquaintance intently.

Trot wasn't very big herself, but the boy was not quite as big as Trot. He was thin, with a rather pale complexion, and his blue eyes were round and earnest. He wore a blouse waist, a short jacket, and knickerbockers. Under his arm he held an old umbrella that was as tall as he was. Its covering had once been of thick, brown cloth, but the color had faded to a dull drab except in the creases, and Trot thought it looked

very old-fashioned and common. The handle, though, was really curious. It was of wood and carved to resemble an elephant's head. The long trunk of the elephant was curved to make a crook for the handle. The eyes of the beast were small red stones, and it had two tiny tusks of ivory.

The boy's dress was rich and expensive, even to his fine silk stockings and tan shoes, but the umbrella looked old and disreputable.

"It isn't the rainy season now," remarked Tot with a smile.

The boy glanced at his umbrella and hugged it tighter. "No," he said, "but umbrellas are good for other things 'sides rain."

"'Fraid of gett'n sun-struck?" asked Trot.

He shook his head, still gazing far out over the water. "I don't b'lieve this is bigger than any other ocean," said he. "I can't see any more of it than I can of the Atlantic."

"You'd find out if you had to sail across it," she declared.

"When I was in Chicago I saw Lake Michigan," he went on dreamily, "and it looked just as big as this water does."

"Looks don't count, with oceans," she asserted. "Your eyes can only see jus' so far, whether you're lookin' at a pond or a great sea."

"Then it doesn't make any difference how big an ocean is," he replied. "What are those buildings over there?" pointing to the right, along the shore of the bay.

"That's the town," said Trot. "Most of the people earn their living by fishing. The town is half a mile from here, an' my house is almost a half-mile the other way, so it's 'bout a mile from my house to the town."

The boy sat down beside her on the flat rock.

"Do you like girls?" asked Trot, making room for him.

"Not very well," the boy replied. "Some of 'em are pretty good fellows, but not many. The girls with brothers are bossy, an' the girls without brothers haven't any 'go' to 'em. But the world's full o' both kinds, and so I try to take 'em as they come. They can't help being girls, of course. Do you like boys?"

"When they don't put on airs or get roughhouse," replied Trot. "My 'sperience with boys is that they don't know much, but think they do."

"That's true," he answered. "I don't like boys much better than I do girls, but some are all right, and—you seem to be one of 'em."

"Much obliged," laughed Trot. "You aren't so bad, either, an' if we don't both turn out worse than we seem, we ought to be friends."

He nodded rather absently and tossed a pebble into the water. "Been to town?" he asked.

"Yes. Mother wanted some yarn from the store. She's knittin' Cap'n Bill a stocking."

"Doesn't he wear but one?"

"That's all. Cap'n Bill has one wooden leg," she explained. "That's why he don't sailor any more. I'm glad of it, 'cause Cap'n Bill knows ev'rything. I s'pose he knows more than anyone else in all the world."

"Whew!" said the boy. "That's taking a good deal for granted. A one-legged sailor can't know much."

"Why not?" asked Trot a little indignantly. "Folks don't learn things with their legs, do they?"

"No, but they can't get around without legs to find out things."

"Cap'n Bill got 'round lively 'nough once, when he had two meat legs," she said. "He's sailed to most ev'ry country on the earth, an' found out all that the people in 'em knew and a lot besides. He was shipwrecked on a desert island once, and another time a cannibal king tried to boil him for dinner, an' one day a shark chased him seven leagues through the water, an'—"

"What's a league?" asked the boy.

"It's a—a distance, like a mile is. But a league isn't a mile, you know."

"What is it, then?"

"You'll have to ask Cap'n Bill. He knows ever'thing."

"Not ever'thing," objected the boy. "I know some things Cap'n Bill don't know."

"If you do, you're pretty smart," said Trot.

"No, I'm not smart. Some folks think I'm stupid. I guess I am. But I know a few things that were wonderful. Cap'n Bill may know more'n I do—a good deal more—but I'm sure he can't know the same things. Say, what's your name?"

"I'm Mayre Griffith, but ever'body calls me 'Trot.' I's a nickname I got when I was a baby, 'cause I trotted so fast when I walked, an' it seems to stick. What's YOUR name?"

"Button-Bright."

"How did it happen?"

"How did what happen?"

"Such a funny name."

The boy scowled a little. "Just like your own nickname happened," he answered gloomily. "My father once said I was bright as a button, an' it made ever'body laugh. So they always call me Button-Bright."

"What's your real name?" she inquired.

"Saladin Paracelsus de Lambertine Evagne von Smith."

"Guess I'll call you Button-Bright," said Trot, sighing. "The only other thing would be 'Salad,' an' I don't like salads. Don't you find it hard work to 'member all of your name?"

"I don't try to," he said. "There's a lot more of it, but I've forgotten the rest."

"Thank you," said Trot. "Oh, here comes Cap'n Bill!" as she glanced over her shoulder.

Button-Bright turned also and looked solemnly at the old sailor who came stumping along the path toward them. Cap'n Bill wasn't a very handsome man. He was old, not very tall, somewhat stout and chubby, with a round face, a bald head, and a scraggly fringe of reddish whisker underneath his chin. But his blue eyes were frank and merry, and his smile like a ray of sunshine. He wore a sailor shirt with a broad collar, a short peajacket and wide-bottomed sailor trousers, one leg of which covered his wooden limb but did not hide it. As he came "pegging" along the path—as he himself described his hobbling walk—his hands were pushed into his coat pockets, a pipe was in his mouth, and his black neckscarf was fluttering behind him in the breeze like a sable banner.

Button-Bright liked the sailor's looks. There was something very winning—something jolly and carefree and honest and sociable—about the ancient seaman that made him everybody's friend, so the strange boy was glad to meet him.

"Well, well, Trot," he said, coming up, "is this the way you hurry to town?"

"No, for I'm on my way back," said she. "I did hurry when I was going, Cap'n Bill, but on my way home I sat down here to rest an' watch the gulls—the gulls seem awful busy today, Cap'n Bill—an' then I found this boy."

Cap'n Bill looked at the boy curiously. "Don't think as ever I sawr him at the village," he remarked. "Guess as you're a stranger, my lad."

Button-Bright nodded.

"Hain't walked the nine mile from the railroad station, have ye?" asked Cap'n Bill.

"No," said Button-Bright.

The sailor glanced around him. "Don't see no waggin er no autymob'l," he added.

"No," said Button-Bright.

"Catch a ride wi' some one?"

Button-Bright shook his head.

"A boat can't land here; the rocks is too thick an' too sharp," continued Cap'n Bill, peering down toward the foot of the bluff on which they sat and against which the waves broke in foam.

"No," said Button-Bright, "I didn't come by water."

Trot laughed. "He must 'a' dropped from the sky, Cap'n Bill!" she exclaimed.

Button-Bright nodded very seriously. "That's it," he said.

"Oh, a airship, eh?" cried Cap'n Bill in surprise. "I've hearn tell o' them sky keeridges; someth'n' like flyin' autymob'ls, ain't they?"

"I don't know," said Button-Bright. "I've never seen one."

Both Trot and Cap'n Bill now looked at the boy in astonishment. "Now then, lemme think a minute," said the sailor reflectively. "Here's a riddle for us to guess, Trot. He dropped from the sky, he says, an' yet he didn't come in a airship!"

"Riddlecum, riddlecum ree;
What can the answer be?"

Trot looked the boy over carefully. She didn't see any wings on him. The only queer thing about him was his big umbrella. "Oh!" she said suddenly, clapping her hands together. "I know now."

"Do you?" asked Cap'n Bill doubtfully. "Then you're some smarter ner I am, mate."

"He sailed down with the umbrel!" she cried. "He used his umbrel as a para—para—"

"Shoot," said Cap'n Bill. "They're called parachoots, mate; but why, I can't say. Did you drop down in that way, my lad?" he asked the boy.

"Yes," said Button-Bright. "That was the way."

"But how did you get up there?" asked Trot. "You had to get up in the air before you could drop down, an'—oh, Cap'n Bill! He says he's from Phillydelfy, which is a big city way at the other end of America."

"Are you?" asked the sailor, surprised.

Button-Bright nodded again. "I ought to tell you my story," he said, "and then you'd understand. But I'm afraid you won't believe me, and—" he suddenly broke off and looked toward the white house in the distance "—Didn't you say you lived over there?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Trot. "Won't you come home with us?"

"I'd like to," replied Button-Bright.

"All right, let's go then," said the girl, jumping up.

The three walked silently along the path. The old sailorman had refilled his pipe and lighted it again, and he smoked thoughtfully as he pegged along beside the children. "Know anyone around here?" he asked Button-Bright.

"No one but you two," said the boy, following after Trot, with his umbrella tucked carefully underneath his arm.

"And you don't know us very well," remarked Cap'n Bill. "Seems to me you're pretty young to be travelin' so far from home an' among strangers. But I won't say anything more till we've heard your story. Then, if you need my advice, or Trot's advice—she's a wise little girl, fer her size, Trot is—we'll freely give it an' be glad to help you."

"Thank you," replied Button-Bright. "I need a lot of things, I'm sure, and p'raps advice is one of 'em."

Chapter 2

THE MAGIC UMBRELLA

When they reached the neat frame cottage which stood on a high bluff a little back from the sea and was covered with pretty green vines, a woman came to the door to meet them. She seemed motherly and good, and when she saw Button-Bright, she exclaimed, "Goodness me! Who's this you've got, Trot?"

"It's a boy I've just found," explained the girl. "He lives way off in Phillydelphy."

"Mercy sakes alive!" cried Mrs. Griffith, looking into his upturned face. "I don't believe he's had a bite to eat since he started. Ain't you hungry, child?"

"Yes," said Button-Bright.

"Run, Trot, an' get two slices o' bread-an'-butter," commanded Mrs. Griffith. "Cut 'em thick, dear, an' use plenty of butter."

"Sugar on 'em?" asked Trot, turning to obey.

"No," said Button-Bright. "Just bread-an'-butter's good enough when you're hungry, and it takes time to spread sugar on."

"We'll have supper in an hour," observed Trot's mother briskly, "but a hungry child can't wait a whole hour, I'm sure. What are you grinning at, Cap'n Bill? How dare you laugh when I'm talking? Stop it this minute, you old pirate, or I'll know the reason why!"

"I didn't, mum," said Cap'n Bill meekly. "I on'y—"

"Stop right there, sir! How dare you speak when I'm talking?" She turned to Button-Bright, and her tone changed to one of much gentleness as she said, "Come in the house, my poor boy, an' rest yourself. You seem tired out. Here, give me that clumsy umbrella."

"No, please," said Button-Bright, holding the umbrella tighter.

"Then put it in the rack behind the door," she urged.

The boy seemed a little frightened. "I—I'd rather keep it with me, if you please," he pleaded.

"Never mind," Cap'n Bill ventured to say, "it won't worry him so much to hold the umbrella, mum, as to let it go. Guess he's afraid he'll lose it, but it ain't any great shakes, to my notion. Why, see here, Button-Bright, we've got half-a-dozen umbrellas in the closet that's better ner yours."

"Perhaps," said the boy. "Yours may look a heap better, sir, but—I'll keep this one, if you please."

"Where did you get it?" asked Trot, appearing just then with a plate of bread-and-butter.

"It—it belongs in our family," said Button-Bright, beginning to eat and speaking between bites. "This umbrella has been in our family years, an' years, an' years. But it was tucked away up in our attic an' no one ever used it 'cause it wasn't pretty."

"Don't blame 'em much," remarked Cap'n Bill, gazing at it curiously. "It's a pretty old-lookin' bumbershoot." They were all seated in the vine-shaded porch of the cottage—all but Mrs. Griffith, who had gone into the kitchen to look after the supper—and Trot was on one side of the boy, holding the plate for him, while Cap'n Bill sat on the other side.

"It is old," said Button-Bright. "One of my great-great-grandfathers was a Knight—an Arabian Knight—and it was he who first found this umbrella."

"An Arabian Night!" exclaimed Trot. "Why, that was a magic night, wasn't it?"

"There's diff'rent sorts o' nights, mate," said the sailor, "an' the knight Button-Bright means ain't the same night you mean. Soldiers used to be called knights, but that were in the dark ages, I guess, an' likely 'nough Butt'n-Bright's great-gran'ther were that sort of a knight."

"But he said an Arabian Knight," persisted Trot.

"Well, if he went to Araby, or was born there, he'd be an Arabian Knight, wouldn't he? The lad's gran'ther were prob'ly a furriner, an' yours an' mine were, too, Trot, if you go back far enough; for Ameriky wasn't diskivered in them days."

"There!" said Trot triumphantly. "Didn't I tell you, Button-Bright, that Cap'n Bill knows ever'thing?"

"He knows a lot, I expect," soberly answered the boy, finishing the last slice of bread-and-butter and then looking at the empty plate with a sigh. "But if he really knows ever'thing, he knows about the Magic Umbrella, so I won't have to tell you anything about it."

"Magic!" cried Trot with big, eager eyes. "Did you say MAGIC Umbrel, Button-Bright?"

"I said 'Magic.' But none of our family knew it was a Magic Umbrella till I found it out for myself. You're the first people I've told the secret to," he added, glancing into their faces rather uneasily.

"Glory me!" exclaimed the girl, clapping her hands in ecstasy. "It must be jus' ELEGANT to have a Magic Umbrel!"

Cap'n Bill coughed. He had a way of coughing when he was suspicious. "Magic," he observed gravely, "was once lyin' 'round loose in the world. That was in the Dark Ages, I guess, when the magic Arabian Nights was. But the light o' Civilization has skeered it away long ago, an' magic's been a lost art since long afore you an' I was born, Trot."

"I know that fairies still live," said Trot reflectively. She didn't like to contradict Cap'n Bill, who knew "ever'thing."

"So do I," added Button-Bright. "And I know there's magic still in the world—or in my umbrella, anyhow."

"Tell us about it!" begged the girl excitedly.

"Well," said the boy, "I found it all out by accident. It rained in Philadelphia for three whole days, and all the umbrellas in our house were carried out by the family and lost or mislaid or something, so that when I wanted to go to Uncle Bob's house, which is at Germantown, there wasn't an umbrella to be found. My governess wouldn't let me go without one, and—"

"Oh," said Trot. "Do you have a governess?"

"Yes, but I don't like her. She's cross. She said I couldn't go to Uncle Bob's because I had no umbrella. Instead she told me to go up in the attic and play. I was sorry 'bout that, but I went up in the attic, and pretty soon I found in a corner this old umbrella. I didn't care how it looked. It was whole and strong and big, and would keep me from getting wet on the way to Uncle Bob's. So off I started for the car, but I found the streets awful muddy, and once I stepped in a mud-hole way up to my ankle. 'Gee!,' I said, 'I wish I could fly through the air to Uncle Bob's.'

"I was holding up the open umbrella when I said that, and as soon as I spoke, the umbrella began lifting me up into the air. I was awful scared at first, but I held on tight to the handle, and it didn't pull very much, either. I was going pretty fast, for when I looked down all the big buildings were sliding past me so swift that it made me dizzy, and before I really knew what had happened the umbrella settled down and stood me on my feet at Uncle Bob's front gate.

"I didn't tell anybody about the wonderful thing that had happened, 'cause I thought no one would believe me. Uncle Bob looked sharp at the thing an' said, 'Button-Bright, how did your father happen to let you take

that umbrella?' 'He didn't,' I said. 'Father was away at the office, so I found it in the attic an' I jus' took it.' Then Uncle Bob shook his head an' said I ought to leave it alone. He said it was a fam'ly relic that had been handed down from father to son for many generations. But I told him my father had never handed it to me, though I'm his son. Uncle Bob said our fam'ly always believed that it brought 'em good luck to own this umbrella. He couldn't say why, not knowing its early history, but he was afraid that if I lost the umbrella, bad luck would happen to us. So he made me go right home to put the umbrella back where I got it. I was sorry Uncle Bob was so cross, and I didn't want to go home yet, where the governess was crosser 'n he was. I wonder why folks get cross when it rains? But by that time it had stopped raining—for awhile, anyhow—and Uncle Bob told me to go straight home and put the umbrella in the attic an' never touch it again.

"When I was around the corner, I thought I'd see if I could fly as I had before. I'd heard of Buffalo, but I didn't know just where it was, so I said to the umbrella, 'Take me to Buffalo.' Up in the air I went, just as soon as I said it, and the umbrella sailed so fast that I felt as if I was in a gale of wind. It was a long, long trip, and I got awful tired holding onto the handle, but just as I thought I'd have to let go, I began to drop down slowly, and then I found myself in the streets of a big city. I put down the umbrella and asked a man what the name of the city was, and he said 'Buffalo'."

"How wonderful!" gasped Trot. Cap'n Bill kept on smoking and said nothing.

"It was magic, I'm sure," said Button-Bright. "It surely couldn't have been anything else."

"P'raps," suggested Trot, "the umbrella can do other magic things."

"No," said the boy. "I've tried it. When I landed in Buffalo I was hot and thirsty. I had ten cents car fare, but I was afraid to spend it. So I held up the umbrella and wished I had an ice-cream soda, but I didn't get it. Then I wished for a nickel to buy an ice-cream soda with, but I didn't get that, either. I got frightened and was afraid the umbrella didn't have any magic left, so to try it I said 'Take me to Chicago.' I didn't want to go to Chicago, but that was the first place I thought of, and I soon saw this was going to be another long journey, so I called out to the umbrella, 'Never mind. Stop! I guess I won't go to Chicago. I've changed my mind, so take me home again.' But the umbrella wouldn't. It kept right on flying, and I shut my eyes and held on. At last I landed in Chicago, and then I was in a pretty fix. It was nearly dark, and I was too tired and hungry to make

the trip home again. I knew I'd get an awful scolding, too, for running away and taking the family luck with me, so I thought that as long as I was in for it, I'd better see a good deal of the country while I had the chance. I wouldn't be allowed to come away again, you know."

"No, of course not," said Trot.

"I bought some buns and milk with my ten cents, and then I walked around the streets of Chicago for a time and afterward slept on a bench in one of the parks. In the morning I tried to get the umbrella to give me a magic breakfast, but it won't do anything but fly. I went to a house and asked a woman for something to eat, and she gave me all I wanted and advised me to go straight home before my mother worried about me. She didn't know I lived in Philadelphia. That was this morning."

"This mornin'!" exclaimed Cap'n Bill. "Why, lad, it takes three or four days for the railroad trains to get to this coast from Chicago."

"I know," replied Button-Bright. "But I didn't come on a railroad train. This umbrella goes faster than any train ever did. This morning I flew from Chicago to Denver, but no one there would give me any lunch. A policeman said he'd put me in jail if he caught me begging, so I got away and told the umbrella to take me to the Pacific Ocean. When I stopped I landed over there by the big rock. I shut up the umbrella and saw a girl sitting on the rock, so I went up and spoke to her. That's all."

"Goodness me!" said Trot. "If that isn't a fairy story, I never heard one."

"It IS a fairy story," agreed Button-Bright. "Anyhow, it's a magic story, and the funny part of it is, it's true. I hope you believe me, but I don't know as I'd believe it myself if it hadn't been me that it happened to."

"I believe ev'ry word of it!" declared Trot earnestly.

"As fer me," said Cap'n Bill slowly, "I'm goin' to believe it, too, by'm'by, when I've seen the umbrel fly once."

"You'll see me fly away with it," asserted the boy. "But at present it's pretty late in the day, and Philadelphia is a good way off. Do you s'pose, Trot, your mother would let me stay here all night?"

"Course she would!" answered Trot. "We've got an extra room with a nice bed in it, and we'd love to have you stay just as long as you want to, wouldn't we, Cap'n Bill?"

"Right you are, mate," replied the old man, nodding his bald head. "Whether the umbrel is magic or not, Butt'n-Bright is welcome."

Mrs. Griffith came out soon after and seconded the invitation, so the boy felt quite at home in the little cottage. It was not long before supper was on the table and in spite of all the bread-and-butter he had eaten Button-Bright had a fine appetite for the good things Trot's mother had

cooked. Mrs. Griffith was very kind to the children, but not quite so agreeable toward poor Cap'n Bill. When the old sailorman at one time spilled some tea on the tablecloth, Trot's mother flew angry and gave the culprit such a tongue-lashing that Button-Bright was sorry for him. But Cap'n Bill was meek and made no reply. "He's used to it, you know," whispered Trot to her new friend, and indeed, Cap'n Bill took it all cheerfully and never minded a bit.

Then it came Trot's turn to get a scolding. When she opened the parcel she had bought at the village, it was found she had selected the wrong color of yarn, and Mrs. Griffith was so provoked that Trot's scolding was almost as severe as that of Cap'n Bill. Tears came to the little girl's eyes, and to comfort her the boy promised to take her to the village next morning with his magic umbrella, so she could exchange the yarn for the right color.

Trot quickly brightened at this promise, although Cap'n Bill looked grave and shook his head solemnly. When supper was over and Trot had helped with the dishes, she joined Button-Bright and the sailorman on the little porch again. Dusk had fallen, and the moon was just rising. They all sat in silence for a time and watched the silver trail that topped the crests of the waves far out to sea.

"Oh, Button-Bright!" cried the little girl presently. "I'm so glad you're going to let me fly with you way to town and back tomorrow. Won't it be fine, Cap'n Bill?"

"Dunno, Trot," said he. "I can't figger how both of you can hold on to the handle o' that umbrel."

Trot's face fell. "I'll hold on to the handle," said Button-Bright, "and she can hold on to me. It doesn't pull hard at all. You've no idea how easy it is to fly that way after you get used to it."

"But Trot ain't used to it," objected the sailor. "If she happened to lose her hold and let go, it's goodbye Trot. I don't like to risk it, for Trot's my chum, an' I can't afford to lose her."

"Can't you tie us together, then?" asked the boy.

"We'll see, we'll see," replied Cap'n Bill, and began to think very deeply. He forgot that he didn't believe the umbrella could fly, and after Button-Bright and Trot had both gone to bed, the old sailor went out into the shed and worked a while before he, too, turned into his "bunk." The sandman wasn't around, and Cap'n Bill lay awake for hours thinking of the strange tale of the Magic Umbrella before he finally sank into slumber. Then he dreamed about it, and waking or dreaming he found the tale hard to believe.

Chapter 3

A WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE

They had early breakfasts at Trot's house, because they all went to bed early, and it is possible to sleep only a certain number of hours if one is healthy in body and mind. And right after breakfast Trot claimed Button-Bright's promise to take her to town with the Magic Umbrella.

"Any time suits me," said the boy. He had taken his precious umbrella to bed with him and even carried it to the breakfast table, where he stood it between his knees as he ate; so now he held it close to him and said he was ready to fly at a moment's notice. This confidence impressed Cap'n Bill, who said with a sigh:

"Well, if you **MUST** go, Trot, I've pervided a machine that'll carry you both comf'table. I'm summat of an inventor myself, though there ain't any magic about me."

Then he brought from the shed the contrivance he had made the night before. It was merely a swing seat. He had taken a wide board that was just long enough for both the boy and girl to sit upon, and had bored six holes in it, two holes at each end and two in the middle. Through these holes he had run stout ropes in such a way that the seat could not turn and the occupants could hold on to the ropes on either side of them. The ropes were all knotted together at the top, where there was a loop that could be hooked upon the crooked handle of the umbrella.

Button-Bright and Trot both thought Cap'n Bill's invention very clever. The sailor placed the board upon the ground while they sat in their places, Button-Bright at the right of Trot, and then the boy hooked the rope loop to the handle of the umbrella, which he spread wide open. "I want to go to the town over yonder," he said, pointing with his finger to the roofs of the houses that showed around the bend in the cliff.

At once the umbrella rose into the air, slowly at first, but quickly gathering speed. Trot and Button-Bright held fast to the ropes and were carried along very easily and comfortably. It seemed scarcely a minute before they were in the town, and when the umbrella set them down just in

front of the store—for it seemed to know just where they wanted to go—a wondering crowd gathered around them. Trot ran in and changed the yarn, while Button-Bright stayed outside and stared at the people who stared at him. They asked questions, too, wanting to know what sort of an aeroplane this was and where his power was stored and lots of other things, but the boy answered not a sound. When the little girl came back and took her seat, Button-Bright said, "I want to go to Trot's house."

The simple villagers could not understand how the umbrella suddenly lifted the two children into the air and carried them away. They had read of airships, but here was something wholly beyond their comprehension.

Cap'n Bill had stood in front of the house, watching with a feeling akin to bewilderment the flight of the Magic Umbrella. He could follow its course until it descended in the village, and he was so amazed and absorbed that his pipe went out. He had not moved from his position when the umbrella started back. The sailor's big blue eyes watched it draw near and settle down with its passengers upon just the spot it had started from.

Trot was joyous and greatly excited. "Oh, Cap'n, it's gal-lor-ious!" she cried in ecstasy. "It beats ridin' in a boat or—or—in anything else. You feel so light an' free an'—an'—glad! I'm sorry the trip didn't last longer, though. Only trouble is, you go too fast."

Button-Bright was smiling contentedly. He had proved to both Trot and Cap'n Bill that he had told the truth about the Magic Umbrella, however marvelous his tale had seemed to them. "I'll take you on another trip, if you like," said he. "I'm in no hurry to go home, and if you will let me stay with you another day, we can make two or three little trips with the family luck."

"You mus' stay a whole week," said Trot decidedly. "An' you mus' take Cap'n Bill for an air-ride, too."

"Oh, Trot! I dunno as I'd like it," protested Cap'n Bill nervously.

"Yes you would. You're sure to like it."

"I guess I'm too heavy."

"I'm sure the umbrella could carry twenty people if they could be fastened to the handle," said Button-Bright.

"Solid land's pretty good to hold on to," decided Cap'n Bill. "A rope might break, you know."

"Oh, Cap'n Bill! You're scared stiff," said Trot.

"I ain't, mate. It ain't that at all. But I don't see that human critters has any call to fly in the air, anyhow. The air were made for the birds, an'—an' muskeeters, an'—"

"An' flyin'-fishes," added Trot. "I know all that, Cap'n, but why wasn't it made for humans, too, if they can manage to fly in it? We breathe the air, an' we can breathe it high up, just as well as down on the earth."

"Seein' as you like it so much, Trot, it would be cruel for me to go with Butt'n-Bright an' leave you at home," said the sailor. "When I were younger—which is ancient history—an' afore I had a wooden leg, I could climb a ship's ropes with the best of 'em, an' walk out on a boom or stand atop a mast. So you know very well I ain't skeered about the highupness."

"Why can't we all go together?" asked the boy. "Make another seat, Cap'n, and swing it right under ours. Then we can all three ride anywhere we want to go."

"Yes, do!" exclaimed Trot. "And see here, Cap'n, let's take a day off and have a picnic. Mother is a little cross today, and she wants to finish knitting your new stockin', so I guess she'll be glad to get rid of us."

"Where'll we go?" he asked, shifting on his wooden leg uneasily.

"Anywhere. I don't care. There'll be the air-ride there an' the air-ride back, an' that's the main thing with ME. If you say we'll go, Cap'n, I'll run in an' pack a basket of lunch."

"How'll we carry it?"

"Swing it to the bottom of your seat."

The old sailor stood silent a moment. He really longed to take the air-ride but was fearful of danger. However, Trot had gone safely to town and back and had greatly enjoyed the experience. "All right," he said. "I'll risk it, mate, although I guess I'm an old fool for temptin' fate by tryin' to make a bird o' myself. Get the lunch, Trot, if your mother'll let you have it, and I'll rig up the seat."

He went into the shed and Trot went to her mother. Mrs. Griffith, busy with her work, knew nothing of what was going on in regard to the flight of the Magic Umbrella. She never objected when Trot wanted to go away with Cap'n Bill for a day's picnicking. She knew the child was perfectly safe with the old sailor, who cared for Trot even better than her mother would have done. If she had asked any questions today and had found out they intended to fly in the air, she might have seriously objected, but Mrs. Griffith had her mind on other things and merely told the girl to take what she wanted from the cupboard and not bother her. So Trot, remembering that Button-Bright would be with them and had proved himself to be a hearty eater, loaded the basket with all the good things she could find.

By the time she came out, lugging the basket with both hands, Cap'n Bill appeared with the new seat he had made for his own use, which he attached by means of ropes to the double seat of the boy and girl. "Now then, where'll we go?" asked Trot.

"Anywhere suits me," replied Cap'n Bill. They had walked to the high bluff overlooking the sea, where a gigantic acacia tree stood on the very edge. A seat had been built around the trunk of the tree, for this was a favorite spot for Trot and Cap'n Bill to sit and talk and watch the fleet of fishing boats sail to and from the village. When they came to this tree, Trot was still trying to think of the most pleasant place to picnic. She and Cap'n Bill had been every place that was desirable and nearby, but today they didn't want a nearby spot. They must decide upon one far enough away to afford them a fine trip through the air. Looking far out over the Pacific, the girl's eyes fell upon a dim island lying on the horizon line just where the sky and water seemed to meet, and the sight gave her an idea.

"Oh, Cap'n Bill!" she exclaimed. "Let's go to that island for our picnic. We've never been there yet, you know."

The sailor shook his head. "It's a good many miles away, Trot," he said, "further than it looks to be from here."

"That won't matter," remarked Button-Bright. "The umbrella will carry us there in no time."

"Let's go!" repeated Trot. "We'll never have another such chance, Cap'n. It's too far to sail or row, and I've always wanted to visit that island."

"What's the name of it?" inquired Button-Bright while the sailor hesitated to decide.

"Oh, it's got an awful hard name to per-nounce," replied the girl, "so Cap'n Bill and I jus' call it 'Sky Island' 'cause it looks as if it was half in the sky. We've been told it's a very pretty island, and a few people live there and keep cows and goats and fish for a living. There are woods and pastures and springs of clear water, and I'm sure we would find it a fine place for a picnic."

"If anything happened on the way," observed Cap'n Bill, "we'd drop in the water."

"Of course," said Trot, "and if anything happened while we were flyin' over the land, we'd drop there. But nothing's goin' to happen, Cap'n. Didn't Button-Bright come safe all the way from Philydelfy?"

"I think I'd like to go to Sky Island," said the boy. "I've always flown above the land so far, and it will be something new to fly over the ocean."

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