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The
wonderful

L. FRANK
BAUM

WIZARD of OZ

Introduction by Donald Wollheim



COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

The
wonderful
WIZARD
of
OZ

L. FRANK BAUM

With Illustrations by
ROY KRENKEL



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The wonderful WIZARD of OZ



L. FRANK BAUM

(1856-1919)

INTRODUCTION

Two strangely contradictory distinctions marked the Oz books of L. Frank Baum during his lifetime. The first distinction, and surely the nicest, was that they enjoyed the enthusiastic applause of all the children of the United States.

The second distinction—and certainly a baffling one as far as the author's personal feelings must have been concerned—was that *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and its many sequels received only the silence of the critics.

Almost to this very day those same contradictions hold true. The book is still a favorite among children (and grownups, too) and they are still generally ignored by the so-called critics and students of juvenile literature.

It is almost as if a spell by the Wicked Witch had been cast on the librarians and critics! They have been denied passports to the eternally youthful and joyful land of Oz. They are doomed to stray outside on the far edges of the Deadly Desert which borders that fairyland. Touch its sands and their sternly unimaginative selves will shrivel up into little cold grains of stone, just as deadly as the spell Queen Lurline put upon those sands to protect her favorite realm.

But the rest of the world is not under that evil interdict. We can read and enjoy *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* and join with its author in the warm adventures waiting

within its magical frontiers. And millions do, and millions will continue to do so. Perhaps that is all that is necessary. It is all that L. Frank Baum could have wished for.

Lyman Frank Baum wrote *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* in 1900. He was then forty-four years old and living in Chicago. It was not his first book, but it was his first full-length novel for children. He had very definite ideas as to what a children's novel should be. As a child he had read such fairy tales as Grimm's and had been fascinated by them—and also annoyed by certain terrifying aspects of them. Some of the things in those old tales are quite horrible and Baum remembered how he disliked the feelings he got as a child from those accounts of cannibalistic witches, heartless parents, miserly kings, and malicious dwarfs. They were, he felt, wrong for childhood. He thought something should be done about it.

But it was to be a while before he could undertake the task of producing a fairy tale that would change that scene.

L. Frank Baum was born May 15, 1856, in Chittenango, New York, a small town near the city of Syracuse. His father was an oil magnate and his boyhood was spent on a large estate. He received his schooling entirely from private tutors and thereby escaped many of the frictions attendant upon going to regular schools.

As he grew up, his interest developed in two fields. One was writing and printings; the other was the world of the theatre. As a boy he had been given a small printing press and proceeded to put out a small amateur monthly called the *Rose Lawn Home Journal*. Liking this type of work, he went to New York in his late teens and became a reporter on the *New York World*. Two years later, he left that to start his own newspaper, the Bradford, Pennsylvania, *New Era*—which is still in existence.

But he found the work of editing and printing not quite as stimulating to his imagination as he had hoped, and so he began to devote more time to his second love, acting. He traveled as part of theatrical companies for a while, even setting up and directing his own group doing the works of William Shakespeare. This in turn fed his ambition to the point where he wrote a musical comedy of his own, directed and acted in it, and brought it to Broadway successfully. After its New York run, he produced it around the country for several years.

It was at this period of his life that he married, and when finally his wife became a mother, he stopped his theatrical wanderings and settled down back at his old home locale. But at this change his luck began to turn. Eventually finding himself the father of four sons, his acting enterprises failed to provide enough income. So he moved West and tried his hand again at newspaper publishing. That did not work out, and he at last made his final move, going to Chicago.

There he was successful at founding and publishing a trade journal for shop window decorators. This was finally to bring him back to the pleasures of the writing craft.

As the father of four children, he could not help but recall his own childhood feelings about the existing types of fairy tales—too often dull, ponderous, and full of tiresome morals and “lessons.” He invented what seemed to him to be more pleasant tales, enlarging on old nursery rhymes. And, in 1897, he put them together in a book entitled *Mother Goose in Prose*. It was a success.

A little collection of verse came next, and then another nursery rhyme book called *Father Goose, His Book*. This was beautifully illustrated by an artist friend, W. W. Denslow, and was also profitable.

Three more slight books of verse and short stories appeared, one of them still in print under the title of *The Magical Monarch of Mo*. And then he wrote the immortal story of Dorothy Gale of Kansas and her experiences after being carried off by a cyclone—*The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

It very nearly failed to get published. Baum had written the kind of story he liked, and it did not fit in with the ideas of children's book editors. The manuscript was turned down by every publisher.

But Baum had faith and he also had the funds, so he took his book to a small publisher in Chicago, George M. Hill, and paid him to publish it. He got Denslow to illustrate the story in colors, very extensively, and finally got a beautiful edition out late in 1900.

That first great children's book of the Twentieth Century has never stopped selling!

In it Baum established what might be called the first American fairy tale. For although Oz is a kingdom (of sorts), and although it has its quota of crowned heads,

it is peculiarly American in thought and texture. Its heroine, Dorothy, is an American girl who bows her head to nobody and speaks her mind freely. Its chief characters, no matter how odd their forms—Scarecrow, Tin Woodman, or Cowardly Lion—also speak out, think for themselves, and are decidedly American in mood. The Wizard himself turns out to be a former showman from Nebraska, and as engaging a humbug as any side-show carnival magician in the United States.

In his introduction to the book, Baum stated that he wanted no monsters and evil beings to scare anyone. Yet the reader will note that it does have dangerous creatures—wicked witches, and fearsome risks. But, wicked as these witches are, they are always unable to face up to simple American candor and courage. The wickedest of them cannot face the terrors of a simple bath! And so Baum made his point. Nobody ever gets nightmares from *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

(Of course, this does not apply to the famous color movie made many, many years later, and often shown as a special holiday treat on television. True to the Hollywood tradition, the movie version does have really terrifying scenes and is further distorted by an extra ending, making the whole adventure just a dream. Whereas everybody knows Oz is real, and is just hiding from its would-be discoverers!)

The Wonderful Wizard of Oz established Baum as a writer. He wrote steadily from that time until his death in 1919. Also, utilizing the money from his book sales, he kept up his interest in the stage, arranging the presentation of Oz on stage and later in films. The first staging of an Oz book was in 1902 as a musical comedy. This ran very well and Baum was to continue to take interest in this type of presentation until his death.

When Baum wrote *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, he did not have in mind making it the first of a series. It was to be an isolated adventure, complete in itself. But its success called forth an increasing demand for a return to that wonderful country. People wanted to know what was going on now in Oz, after Dorothy had left. Finally Baum wrote a sequel in 1904, called *The Land of Oz*. Meanwhile, he had written *Dot and Tot in Merryland*, *The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus*, and *The Enchanted Isle*

of Yew. Each of these books involved a secret country and the wonderful inhabitants thereof.

He hoped he had settled the demand for Oz with this second book and turned out two more stories of other lands, *Queen Zixi of Ix* and *John Dough and the Cherub*. But they did not satisfy the Ozites. In 1907, the third book appeared, bringing Dorothy back to meet the Scarecrow's successor and the rightful ruler of that fairyland, *Ozma of Oz*.

From that time until his death, new Oz novels appeared regularly, about one a year. In sequence, they were, *Dorothy and the Wizard in Oz*, *The Road to Oz*, *The Emerald City of Oz*, *The Patchwork Girl of Oz*, *Tik-Tok of Oz*, *The Scarecrow of Oz*, *Rinkitink in Oz*, *The Lost Princess of Oz*, *The Tin Woodman of Oz*, *The Magic of Oz*, and, a year after his death, his last book—and one of his best—*Glinda of Oz*.

Oz had caught on. Oz was part of the American tradition. As his stories developed, Oz grew more real, took on geography and history, opened up its wonders to reveal ever new ones. A couple of generations grew up on them, believing in them, enjoying them, rereading them. But the basis of the structure, the foundation of the Oz lore, was *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*. In it is described the basic geography of Oz, its four divisions, its capital, the Emerald City, and its chief magic-workers.

What is it about the Oz books that did this? Why, when there were other efforts at imaginary lands, did this one strike a fire in its audience? I think it is because Baum did touch on the spirit of the Twentieth Century—the investigative mind and the dawn of the age of science. In Oz, magic is a science. It is not something handed down in the dark of the moon at haunted graveyards. It is studied, it has laws that are obviously similar in structure to the laws of science every American came to realize as the basis of their newly rising civilization. The wizard at first performed his tricks by scientific stunts. But Glinda showed him that there was a real science of magic and that it could be learned.

The Oz stories are fairy tales, but they are also of the same basic stuff of which science-fiction is made. Oz is somewhere on Earth; it can be reached, but it is hidden for causes that are made clear and are possibly explicable.

Sorcery can be learned, it requires tools, it follows established methods. Not everything can be done by magic—only some things are possible and they must be found by experiment and thoughtful ingenuity. That is the basis of the scientific method, too, and perhaps this is one of the things that makes Oz so credible to its young readers of this age of scientific marvels. It isn't too different from the science-created world of modern America. It is only happier, more idealistic, and more Utopian . . .

In this dreamworld of Oz, integrity must always triumph. Those who are mean cannot win for long. Honesty and free speech cannot be thwarted. Each person can find happiness in his own way, and have it to keep. Such is surely the American dream. And it is this, in my opinion, that makes L. Frank Baum's Oz eternal.

—DONALD A. WOLLHEIM

May, 1965

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Chapter 1

The Cyclone

DOROTHY lived in the midst of the great Kansas prairies, with Uncle Henry, who was a farmer, and Aunt Em, who was the farmer's wife. Their house was small, for the lumber to build it had to be carried by wagon many miles. There were four walls, a floor and a roof, which made one room; and this room contained a rusty looking cooking stove, a cupboard for the dishes, a table, three or four chairs, and the beds. Uncle Henry and Aunt Em had a big bed in one corner, and Dorothy a little bed in another corner. There was no garret at all, and no cellar—except a small hole, dug in the ground, called a cyclone cellar, where the family could go in case one of those great whirlwinds arose, mighty enough to crush any building in its path. It was reached by a trap-door in the middle of the floor, from which a ladder led down into the small, dark hole.

When Dorothy stood in the doorway and looked around, she could see nothing but the great gray prairie on every side. Not a tree nor a house broke the broad sweep of flat country that reached the edge of the sky in all directions. The sun had baked the plowed land into a gray mass, with little cracks running through it. Even the grass was not green, for the sun had burned the tops of the long blades until they were the same gray color to be seen everywhere. Once the house had been painted, but the

sun blistered the paint and the rains washed it away, and now the house was as dull and gray as everything else.

When Aunt Em came there to live she was a young, pretty wife. The sun and wind had changed her, too. They had taken the sparkle from her eyes and left them a sober gray; they had taken the red from her cheeks and lips, and they were gray also. She was thin and gaunt, and never smiled, now. When Dorothy, who was an orphan, first came to her, Aunt Em had been so startled by the child's laughter that she would scream and press her hand upon her heart whenever Dorothy's merry voice reached her ears; and she still looked at the little girl with wonder that she could find anything to laugh at.

Uncle Henry never laughed. He worked hard from morning till night and did not know what joy was. He was gray also, from his long beard to his rough boots, and he looked stern and solemn, and rarely spoke.

It was Toto that made Dorothy laugh, and saved her from growing as gray as her other surroundings. Toto was not gray; he was a little black dog, with long, silky hair and small black eyes that twinkled merrily on either side of his funny, wee nose. Toto played all day long, And Dorothy played with him, and loved him dearly.

To-day, however, they were not playing. Uncle Henry sat upon the door-step and looked anxiously at the sky, which was even grayer than usual. Dorothy stood in the door with Toto in her arms, and looked at the sky too. Aunt Em was washing the dishes.

