

## CHAPTER 19 - PLANNING TO FLY FROM THE SILVER ISLAND

It was the Comfortable Camel. Waking suddenly, he found himself deserted. "Oh, where is my dear Karwan Bashi?" he roared dismally. "Come back! Come back!"

"Hush up, can't you?" rumbled the Cowardly Lion. "Do you want Dorothy and everybody to be thrown into prison on our account? We can't climb the bean pole and will have to wait here and face it out."

"But how uncomfortable," wailed the camel. He began to sob heavily. Dorothy, although highest up the bean pole, heard all of this distinctly. "Oh," she cried remorsefully, "we can't desert the Cowardly Lion like this. I never thought about him."

"Spoken like the dear little Maid you are," said the Knight. "The good beast never reminded us of it, either. There's bravery for you!"

"Let us descend at once, I'll not move a step without the Cowardly Lion!" In his agitation, the Scarecrow lost his balance and fell headlong to the ground, knocking Sir Hokus's helmet terribly askew as he passed. The others made haste to follow him and were soon gathered gravely at the foot of the beanstalk.

"I'll have to think of some other plan," said the Scarecrow, looking nervously at the sky, which showed, through the long windows, the first streaks of dawn. The Comfortable Camel controlled its sobs with difficulty and pressed as close to Sir Hokus as it could. The Doubtful Dromedary was still asleep.

"It would have been a terrible climb," mused the Scarecrow, thinking of his long, long fall down the pole. "Ah, I have it!"

"What?" asked Dorothy anxiously.

"I wonder I did not think of it before. Ah, my brains are working better! I will abdicate," exclaimed the Scarecrow triumphantly. "I will abdicate, make a farewell speech, and return with you to Oz!"

"What if they refuse to let your radiant Highness go?" put in Happy Toko tremulously. "What if the Gheewizard should work his magic before you finished your speech?"

"Then we'll make a dash for it!" said Sir Hokus, twirling his sword recklessly.

"I'm with you," said the Cowardly Lion huskily, "but you needn't have come back for me."

"All right!" said the Scarecrow cheerfully. "And now that everything's settled so nicely, we might as well enjoy the little time left. Put out the lights, Tappy. Dorothy and I will sit on the throne, and the rest of you come as close as possible."

Sir Hokus wakened the Doubtful Dromedary and pulled and tugged it across the hall, where it immediately fell down asleep again. The Comfortable Camel ambled about eating the flowers out of the vases. The Cowardly Lion had placed himself at Dorothy's feet, and Sir Hokus and Happy Toko seated themselves upon the first step of the gorgeous silver throne.

Then, while they waited for morning, Dorothy told the Scarecrow all about the Pokes and Fix City, and the Scarecrow told once again of his victory over the king of the Golden Islands.

"Where is the magic fan now?" asked Dorothy at the end of the story.

The Scarecrow smiled broadly, and feeling in a deep pocket brought out the little fan and also the parasol he had plucked from the beanstalk. "Do you know," he said smiling, "so much has happened I haven't thought of them since the battle. I was saving them for you, Dorothy."

"For me!" exclaimed the little girl in delight. "Let me see them!" The Scarecrow handed them over obligingly, but Happy Toko trembled so violently that he rolled down the steps of the throne.

"I beg of you!" He scrambled to his feet and held up his hands in terror. "I beg of you, don't open that fan!"

"She's used to magic, Tappy. You needn't worry," said the Scarecrow easily.

"Of course I am," said Dorothy with great dignity. "But this'll be mighty useful if anyone tries to conquer Oz again. We can just fan 'em away."

Dorothy pulled a hair from the Cowardly Lion's mane, and winding it around the little fan, put it carefully in the pocket of her dress. The parasol she hung by its ribbon to her arm.

"Perhaps Ozma will look in the Magic Picture and wish us all back again," said the little girl after they had sat for a time in silence.

"I doubt it." The Dromedary stirred and mumbled in its sleep.

"Singular beast, that!" ejaculated the Knight. "Doubting never gets one anywhere."

"Hush!" warned the Scarecrow. "I hear footsteps!"

"Come here." Sir Hokus called hoarsely to the camel, who was eating a paper lantern at the other end of the room. The beast ran awkwardly over to the throne, and swallowing the lantern with a convulsive gulp, settled down beside the dromedary.

"Whatever happens, we must stick together," said the Knight emphatically. "Ah--!"

Dorothy held fast to the Scarecrow with one hand and to the throne with the other. The sun had risen at last. There was a loud crash of drums and trumpets, a rush of feet, and into the hall marched the most splendid company Dorothy had seen in her whole life of adventures.