

Sky Island

By

L. Frank Baum

SKY ISLAND

BEING THE FURTHER EXCITING ADVENTURES OF TROT AND CAP'N BILL
AFTER THEIR VISIT TO THE SEA FAIRIES

BY

L. FRANK BAUM

TO

MY SISTER

MARY LOUISE BREWSTER

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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, 'n deed. 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 sail 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."