

## **Chapter IV - Presto Digi, the Magician**

"AND now, if you like, we will be pleased to have you visit some of our houses," said Mr. Bowko, the Mayor, in a friendly tone.

"But we can't!" exclaimed Twinkle. "We're too big," and she got up and sat down upon the bank, to show him how big she really was when compared with the prairie-dogs.

"Oh, that doesn't matter in the least," the Mayor replied. "I'll have Presto Digi, our magician, reduce you to our size."

"Can he?" asked Twinkle, doubtfully.

"Our magician can do anything," declared the Mayor. Then he sat up and put both his front paws to his mouth and made a curious sound that was something like a bark and something like a whistle, but not exactly like either one.

Then everybody waited in silence until a queer old prairie-dog slowly put his head out of a big mound near the center of the village.

"Good morning, Mr. Presto Digi," said the Mayor.

"Morning!" answered the magician, blinking his eyes as if he had just awakened from sleep.

Twinkle nearly laughed at this scrawny, skinny personage; but by good fortune, for she didn't wish to offend him, she kept her face straight and did not even smile.

"We have two guests here, this morning," continued the Mayor, addressing the magician, "who are a little too large to get into our houses. So, as they are invited to stay to luncheon, it would please us all if you would kindly reduce them to fit our underground rooms."

"Is that all you want?" asked Mr. Presto Digi, bobbing his head at the children.

"It seems to me a great deal," answered Twinkle. "I'm afraid you never could do it."

"Wow!" said the magician, in a scornful voice that was almost a bark. "I can do that with one paw. Come here to me, and don't step on any of our mounds while you're so big and clumsy."

So Twinkle and Chubbins got up and walked slowly toward the magician, taking great care where they stepped. Teenty and Weenty were frightened, and ducked their heads with little squeals as the big children passed their mound; but they bobbed up again the next moment, being curious to see what would happen.

When the boy and girl stopped before Mr. Presto Digi's mound, he began waving one of his thin, scraggy paws and at the same time made a gurgling noise that was deep down in his throat. And his eyes rolled and twisted around in a very odd way.

Neither Twinkle nor Chubbins felt any effect from the magic, nor any different from ordinary; but they knew they were growing smaller, because their eyes were getting closer to the magician.

"Is that enough?" asked Mr. Presto, after a while.

"Just a little more, please," replied the Mayor; "I don't want them to bump their heads against the doorways."

So the magician again waved his paw and chuckled and gurgled and blinked, until Twinkle suddenly found she had to look up at him as he squatted on his mound.

"Stop!" she screamed; "if you keep on, we won't be anything at all!"

"You're just about the right size," said the Mayor, looking them over with much pleasure, and when the girl turned around she found Mr. Bowko and Mrs. Puff-Pudgy standing beside her, and she could easily see that Chubbins was no bigger than they, and she was no bigger than Chubbins.

"Kindly follow me," said Mrs. Puff-Pudgy, "for my little darlings are anxious to make your acquaintance, and as I was the first to discover you, you are to be my guests first of all, and afterward go to the Mayor's to luncheon."