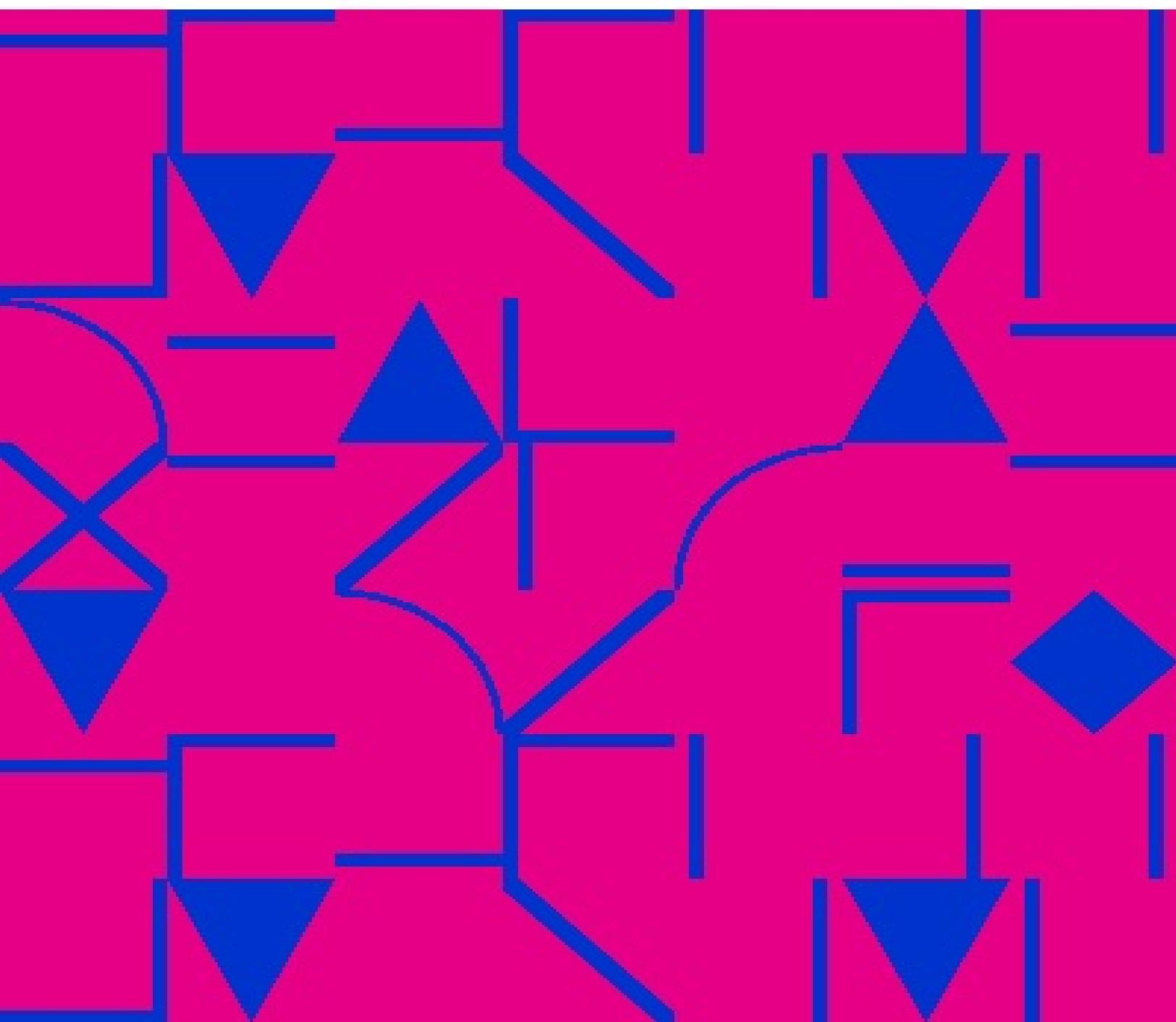


Dorothy's Mystical Adventures in Oz

Robert J. Evans



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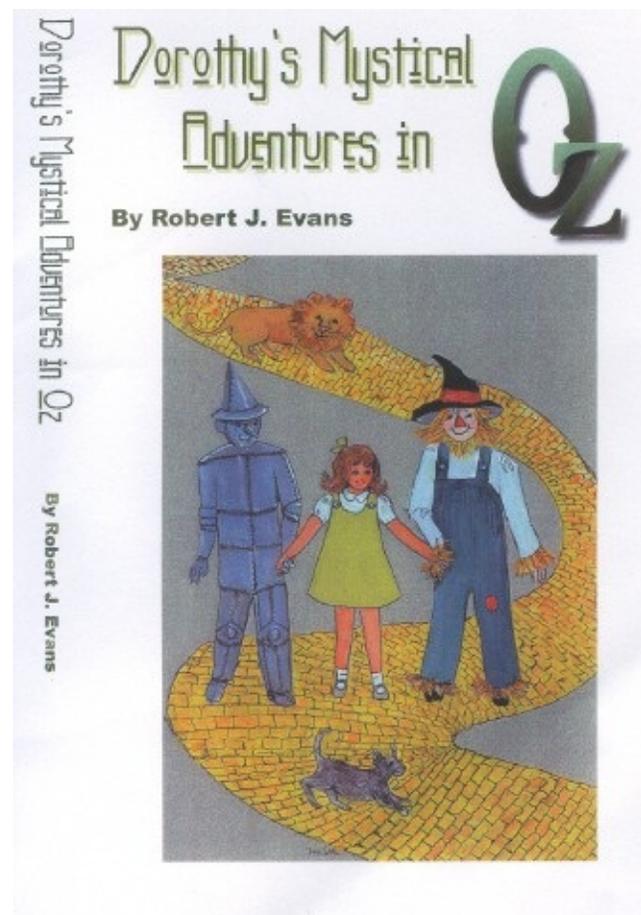
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Dorothy's Mystical

Adventures in Oz

By

Robert J. Evans

This book is dedicated
L. Frank baum, who was the
first mortal to discover
The marvelous land of Oz —
and to my son, Robert Jr.,
whose love of Oz inspired
this story.

Contents

1. Market Day
2. Dorothy Reminisces on Oz
3. Dorothy Returns to Oz
4. The Pinheads
5. A Visit From The Wicked Witch of The Deep South
6. The Dainty Land of China
7. The Girrephalumps
8. Lion Country
9. The Mission Begins
10. A Philosophical Discussion
11. Octapongland
12. The Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebugs
13. Princess Saari"s Colorland
14. Tickleland
15. Elfland

16. Thoughtformland
17. Americanindianland
18. UFOland
19. Americanpresidentland
20. Captured
21. A Surprising Reversal
22. A Political Discussion
23. At last, The Emerald City

Chapter One:

Market Day

It was a warm summer morning. Dorothy was sitting out on the front porch, gently rocking back and forth in Aunt Em's rocking chair. Toto, her little dog, lay sleepily at her feet. Aunt Em and Uncle Henry were hustling and bustling inside the house, getting ready to go to market.

"Oh, Dorothy ..." called Aunt Em.

No answer.

"Dorothy, do you hear me?"

Still no answer.

Aunt Em marched out on the porch. Toto, sensing trouble, scampered off, while Dorothy — hearing Aunt Em's heavy footsteps, turned to see what the commotion was.

Needless to say, Aunt Em did not look too pleased. She stood in front of Dorothy with her hands firmly planted on her hips.

"What is the matter with you, child? Didn't you hear me calling?"

"I'm sorry, Auntie Em."

"Were you sleeping?"

"Oh no, I wasn't asleep, Auntie. But ... well I was kind of thinking about things, and ... well ..."

Just then, Uncle Henry appeared. He was struggling with his collar.

"Would you help me with this, Em?" he asked.

"Just a minute, Henry," his wife answered.

She spoke sharply to the girl. "I'm afraid I don't understand you these days."

Dorothy looked up at her aunt with her big brown eyes. A hint of a tear appeared.

"I've tried to explain to you, Auntie."

Aunt Em just shook her head. "Now, I don't want to hear any more of your tall tales, Dorothy. Not right now."

"We're running late, Em," interrupted Uncle Henry.

"All right," answered his wife. She turned back her niece. "You'd better hurry and get yourself ready, young lady. We'll talk about this later."

Dorothy started to leave, then hesitated for a moment. "Auntie Em, could I stay home today?"

Aunt Em looked surprised, for Dorothy usually looked forward to market day.

"Are you feeling poorly?" she asked, putting her hand on the girl's forehead.

"I'm just a little tired," Dorothy replied weakly. "I don't think I'm quite up to walking around all day."

Aunt Em looked again at Uncle Henry who just shrugged his shoulders.

"Well ... all right," said Aunt Em. "But I want you to rest. Now, don't leave the house. We'll be home around eight, I expect."

After Dorothy went inside, Aunt Em began to help Uncle Henry with his collar. He could see by the expression on Aunt Em's face that she was very much concerned.

"Aw, don't worry, Em," he said. "The girl's been through quite an ordeal, with that twister an' all. She'll be fine bye an' bye. She just needs plenty of rest."

"But she looks so pale," replied Aunt Em. "And what about the strange stories?"

"You mean about Oz?" asked Uncle Henry.

"Yes, Oz." Aunt Em replied. "How did she ever think up such a name?"

"It does seem strange," agreed Uncle Henry.

"And what about all the funny characters she says live there?" continued Aunt Em. "A talking scarecrow and lion, and a tin woodman of all things — not to mention a wicked witch! That must be where her mind is; it's certainly not here in Kansas."

"Now, Em," said Uncle Henry, "don't fret so. Dr. Gabriel told us not to worry, that she's temporarily confusing her dreams with reality — something to do with that bump on the head, he said. She'll come out of it; she'll be her old self in no time — you'll see."

Meanwhile, Dorothy decided she'd best do as her aunt had said, so she went into her room and lay down on the bed to rest. She was just drifting off when she heard the sound of horse hooves outside. She quickly

got up and waved from her window as Aunt Em and Uncle Henry drove by in the wagon.

"Now don't wait up for us, Dorothy," called Aunt Em. "And be sure to get plenty of rest!"

"I will, Auntie," called Dorothy. "Have a good time!"

Just then, Toto jumped through the window into the girl's arms. She fussed over him as she carried him back to her bed. The little dog curled up at her feet and went to sleep.

Chapter Two:

Dorothy Reminisces on Oz

As Dorothy rested, she thought about Aunt Em and Uncle Henry, and how upset they were with her for daydreaming so much. But with the reality of her Oz adventures so fresh in her mind she could not help but dwell on them.

A smile came over her face as she recalled the first time she met the Scarecrow, and how surprised she was when he first spoke to her. When he said he did not have any brains she agreed to take him with her to the Emerald City to ask the Great Oz to give him some. Of course, as it turned out, the Scarecrow did have a brain after all. But, because he did not believe that he did, the Great Oz had to go through the motions of presenting him with one.

Then there was the Tin Woodman: Dorothy and the Scarecrow were greatly surprised when they first came across him in the forest. He was standing perfectly motionless with an uplifted ax in his hands. Apparently, he'd been caught in a rainstorm and had rusted solid. After Dorothy had found an oil-can and oiled his joints, he was just fine. She recalled how anxious he was to accompany them when he found out their destination, for he insisted that he did not have a heart, and was certain that the Great Oz could provide him with one.

Just then, a slight breeze blew at the curtains, awakening the girl out of her dream-like state. She sat up and looked at Toto. He was still sound asleep. She lay back again as her mind drifted back to when the brave little dog tried to defend her and her friends from the Cowardly Lion. It had scared them all half to death when they heard the terrible roar as the Lion bounded into the road in front of them. Of course, they did not know he was cowardly at the time. That is, until Dorothy punched him in the nose for attacking her little dog. Then he cried like a baby. When he found out about their mission, he asked if he, too, could accompany them in the hopes that he would be able to obtain courage from the great magician. Needless to say, he was a welcome addition to the little group.

The Lion actually proved himself to be quite brave during their journey; but like the Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman, he thought he needed the magical powers of Oz to give him what he felt he lacked.

Reliving her recent adventures in Oz caused Dorothy to feel quite restless. She missed her friends terribly.

She got up again and walked over to the window. The room grew dark as rainclouds gathered. A summer thunderstorm seemed imminent. She closed the window and shivered as she recalled the Wicked Witch of the West. She couldn't imagine her to be cowardly in the least. Perhaps people like her were mean

because no one loved them. If that were true, their bitter attitude only made matters worse. Well, thank goodness the witch was dead. It seemed wrong to wish someone dead, but the Land of Oz was well rid of her for she had brought fear and misery to everyone who came into contact with her. The little Munchkins were no longer afraid now that she was gone, and could enjoy a peaceful life once more.

"Even outside of Oz," thought Dorothy, "there are certain leaders who keep their people in fear." She wondered how they had behaved when they were children.

She began to think of her friends again. She could not help but wonder how they were and what they were doing right now.

She thought of Aunt Em and Uncle Henry. How *could* they disbelieve her story? It made her sad to think that no one believed her. It couldn't have all been a dream — of that she was sure. Everything was so real and vivid in Oz. All the events that occurred there couldn't have been her imagination. Why, even the colors of the flowers were ten times more intense than in Kansas. The flowers in her garden — pretty as they were — couldn't compare. They seemed faded in comparison. In fact, Kansas seemed faded in comparison.

A strange thought suddenly occurred to her: What if Oz was the real world, and Kansas but a shadowy dream world? Oz her real home and Kansas just a place she was somehow visiting in her dreams...? No, that couldn't be. Aunt Em and Uncle Henry and the others were all a very real part of her life. But then, the Scarecrow, Tin Woodman and Lion were all a part of her life, too. And so were the Munchkins, the Good Witch of the North, and Glinda — even the Wicked Witch of the West. They were all as real as anyone in Kansas.

A feeling of utter confusion came over her. "Oh no, what if I can't distinguish between the real and the unreal?"

Chapter Three:

Dorothy Returns to Oz

Dorothy's head began to throb. She wondered if the injury that she suffered during the tornado had caused some permanent damage. A feeling of extreme dizziness came over her. She walked over to her bed and lay down again.

As she lay back, the room began to spin. Had she been standing she was sure she would have fallen. She imagined she could hear a voice inside her head telling her she must return to Oz. Suddenly it appeared that the floor gave way as she felt herself falling ... falling ... twisting and turning over and over as she fell. She began spinning around very fast. Her body felt like it was being torn apart. "Oh, no!" she cried. "What is happening to me? Please! Someone! Help me!"

The thought raced through her mind that she was being sucked into a huge vortex by a great evil force. A tremendous fear filled her heart. She visualized the leering faces of a hundred wicked witches swirling around her. The faces were cackling with loud screams of hideous laughter. A hundred pairs of ugly hands

with long bony fingers clutched at her as she fell.

"Now we've got you!" screamed the witches in unison. "You'll never get away from us this time, little Goody-Two-Shoes!"

"Help me, someone. Please help!" Dorothy cried.

As she called out for help, the witches' images began to fade; the screaming to diminish. In their place a shining metallic substance appeared. It spun around her so fast it seemed like a solid sheet of metal. Whatever it was, it appeared to slow her fall.

Gradually, the spinning object slowed. As it did, her image was reflected each time it passed in front of her. Suddenly she saw two dangling arms and legs attached to the spinning form, and a shiny face grinning at her.

"Nick Chopper!" she cried, recognizing the Tin Woodman and lunging toward him with her arms outstretched.

CLUNK! There was a dull thud as the soft material of her body made contact with the woodman's metal body. They both fell the last few feet to the ground, laughing uproariously.

"You know," Dorothy said, when their laughter subsided, "before I realized who you were, I kept seeing my face reflected as you spun by me. It is reflected now on your chest, right where your heart is."

"Oh, Dorothy!" said the Tin Woodman, starting to cry. "I'm so happy to see you."

"Now don't you cry," said Dorothy, wiping his eyes with her handkerchief, "you'll rust up again."

"It's wonderful to have a heart," the Tin Woodman said, "and to have all the feelings that a human has; but a heart can grow very heavy when someone you love has to go away. Of course, it enables you to be filled with joy when they return. That is why I am crying, because I am so happy."

"I know how you feel," replied Dorothy, her own eyes beginning to mist. She held him tightly for a long time.

"Well," said the Tin Woodman at length, "how would you like a nice cup of tea?"

"That would be lovely," answered the girl.

"Then let us adjourn to my castle," he replied.

As they walked, each brought the other up to date on the latest developments in their lives.

"After you returned to Kansas, Dorothy, everyone settled down to their usual routine. It was wonderful with the Wicked Witches of the East and West gone. And with fear no longer a part of everyone's lives. Oz was the happiest place in all creation."

"Was the happiest?" questioned the girl. "Isn't Oz a happy place now?"

The Tin Woodman was about to answer when they arrived at the castle. "Let me put the kettle on and I'll continue with my story," he said.

While the tin man was in the kitchen, there was a knock at the door. "Would you get that?" he called to Dorothy. "It's probably the Scarecrow."

Dorothy ran to the door excitedly. Sure enough, it was her old friend. When he saw Dorothy, he threw his arms around her. "Oh, Dorothy," he said. "How wonderful to see you!"

At that, the Tin Woodman entered the room with Dorothy's tea. The Scarecrow stared at him with a questioning look. "Is Dorothy going to help us again?" he asked. "Help you?" said Dorothy. "Why, what do you mean? What has happened?"

"Let us sit down while you have your tea," motioned the Tin Woodman. "I'll explain everything."

As Dorothy sipped her tea she wondered what terrible things could possibly have occurred since she left.

The Tin Woodman looked at Dorothy rather seriously. "Do you remember when you first arrived in Oz and your house fell on the Wicked Witch of the East and killed her dead? And how angry the Wicked Witch of the West was?"

Dorothy nodded. She remembered only too well ... especially when the magical Silver Shoes were given to her by the Good Witch of the North. The Wicked Witch of the West couldn't contain herself; she was absolutely furious. First her sister killed, then the Silver Shoes stolen from right under her nose!

"Well," continued the Tin Woodman, "there was a third sister; the Wicked Witch of the Deep South. She heard about all this just before you left Oz. Then, after you returned to Kansas, the news reached her that you'd thrown water over her favorite sister — the Wicked Witch of the West, and liquidated her. Oh, was she angry! She was livid! And when she found out you'd escaped from Oz she screamed so loudly that her false teeth fell out and all the Munchkins fell down laughing. That really made her mad. She screamed at the Munchkins and told them if you ever come back to Oz you can kiss yourself goodbye, because you'll never see yourself again."

"What a horrible thing to say!" exclaimed Dorothy. "What a terrible person she must be."

"Oh, she is," said the Scarecrow. "She's worse than the Wicked Witches of the East and West put together. It's a good thing you left Oz when you did. Even the Silver Shoes would not have been strong enough to stop her."

Dorothy was about to speak when a familiar figure walked through the open door . It was Glinda, the Good Witch of the South. The girl ran to her friend and hugged her.

"How wonderful to see you again," said Glinda, holding Dorothy tightly to her. "We all missed you terribly when you returned to Kansas."

"I missed all of you, too," replied Dorothy. "More than I can say."

"But why have you returned so soon?" asked Glinda. "I know you longed to be with your family again."

"I don't really know why I've returned," replied the girl. "It's true I miss my friends, but it's more than that. Some strange pull has brought me back. I even heard a voice asking me to return. Does that sound bizarre?"

"I think I understand," said Glinda. "You see, there is a Supreme Intelligence in Oz. It is a highly creative force which is spiritual in nature. This force knows all things, and wants only good to prevail. This was the voice you heard."

Dorothy nodded as Glinda continued: "This force cannot of itself make changes. It can only prod, and try to make contact with those that are given to evil ways. When this contact is not possible, it becomes necessary for mortal intervention. That is why you have been called. To try to bring the Wicked Witch of the Deep South to a higher understanding. I myself have tried and failed."

"But what can I do?" asked the girl. "If you, a very powerful witch, cannot make her give up her evil ways, what hope have I?"

"You have a very special power," said Glinda. "Also, this Intelligence — otherwise known as the Great Wizard — is about to bestow the essence of His wisdom on you. Actually, he is merely unlocking your own inner wisdom. You will gradually become aware of this. The words you speak during this particular excursion to Oz will reflect this wisdom. It is hoped this will bring enlightenment to the witch, as well as others. Do you feel guilty about killing her sisters?"

"No," replied Dorothy. "I do not. In both cases it was an accident. It wasn't my fault that the cyclone picked up my house and dropped it on the Wicked Witch of the East. And as far as the Wicked Witch of the West was concerned, I was furious that she stole my shoe. That's why that I threw a bucket of water over her. But how was I to know the water would melt her down to a puddle? I was sorry I destroyed her at first, but later quite relieved. I believe she would have killed us all."

After a moment's contemplation, the girl continued, "Of course, being the cause of someone's death is nothing to be proud of. But since it happened anyway, Oz is a lot happier place for it."

"Yes, and because of that," said Glinda, "the Munchkins think of you as their Queen. Their wish is for you to stay in Oz forever and rule all of Munchkin Country."

"Oh, I couldn't stay in Oz forever!" exclaimed Dorothy. "I mean, I'm most honored that they want me to be their Queen; but much as I love this beautiful Land of Oz and all my friends here, I love Kansas and Aunt Em and everyone else too."

"Well, as it happens," said Glinda, "your life is in mortal danger. The Wicked Witch of the Deep South is not playing games. Even as we speak she is scheming up the most horrible things. She is in no mood to give up her evil ways, I'm afraid."

"Well, I won't be pushed around by her," said Dorothy emphatically. "Tomorrow we will find the Lion and make our plans."

Glinda nodded her head and put her hand on Dorothy's shoulder. "You're a brave girl," she said. "I'm very proud of you. I'll be standing by to help in any way I can."

Glinda departed.

"You go on to bed, Dorothy," said the Scarecrow. "We'll get things ready for our journey." Dorothy yawned as she bid her friends goodnight. "I am awfully tired," she said. "And we do have a long journey ahead of us." The Scarecrow had previously made a most comfortable bed up for her. She fell asleep almost as soon as her head touched the pillow.

Chapter 4:

The Pinheads

The following morning, bright and early, Dorothy and her friends started out for the forest where the Cowardly Lion lived. The Lion had stayed there to help all the animals who lived in the forest to fight a fierce monster, and was now King of the Beasts.

"Perhaps we should order a Pinhead river and raft to take us as far as the Dainty China Country," said the Scarecrow.

"But I can't swim," replied the Tin Woodman. "What if I fall overboard?"

"Oh, don't worry about that," said the Scarecrow. "Pinhead rivers are only a couple of feet deep. The worst that can happen to you if you fall in the water is a rusty joint or two."

"Well, I'd better pack my oil-can then," replied the Tin Woodman seriously.

"The Pinheads," explained the Scarecrow, turning to Dorothy, "are almost an extinct breed. You'll find them very interesting. The few that are left live in a small village nearby."

Dorothy looked completely perplexed. "But order a river? You mean you can order a river on demand? Just like that?"

"Just wait and see," replied the Scarecrow, with a knowing grin.

As they approached the Pinheads' village, a few Pinhead children ran out to meet them. Dorothy could see why they were called Pinheads. Their heads really were the size of a pin, and when they spoke, their voices were high and squeaky.

"Have you come for R and R?" squeaked one of the Pinhead children.

"R and R?" questioned Dorothy, "You mean rest and recreation?"

With that all the pinhead children burst into a fit of high squeaky laughter.

"That's river and raft," explained the Scarecrow, trying to ease Dorothy's obvious embarrassment. "The Pinheads make their living from supplying rivers and building rafts." Then, turning to the Pinhead child,

he asked, "How much will it cost?" Just then some adult Pinheads approached.

"That depends," said a Pinhead male who appeared to be their leader.

"Depends on what?" asked the Scarecrow.

"On whether or not you have a pin cushion," the leader replied. "If you do, the R and R will be free."

"Well, I don't have one," said the Scarecrow.

"And neither do I," said the Tin Woodman.

"I have one!" exclaimed Dorothy, digging into her purse. "But what on earth do you want a pin cushion for?"

"Well, as you can see," replied the Pinhead, "our feet are pointed; and since we sleep standing up, pin cushions make wonderful beds. We just hold our feet tightly together and jump onto the pin cushion and sink down to our heads. It is so cozy and warm, you wouldn't believe it."

"I don't understand how that can be," said Dorothy. "I know you are not very big, but this pin cushion seems far too small for you to stand on, let alone sink down to your head."

"Oh, that's not a problem for us," replied the Pinhead. "You see, we have the ability to make little things big. How do you think we could make a big raft for you giants? We just make the raft out of match-sticks and thread, and when it's enlarged it looks like it's made out of big logs and rope."

"But how do you do that?" exclaimed the girl.

"Oh, that's easy," replied the Pinhead. "You see, after the object is made, we look at it under our big magnifying glass. This magnifying glass is no ordinary magnifying glass, but has the ability to magnify things permanently. It was given to our ancestors by a male witch who had no further use for it."

"Why don't you look at each other's heads with it?" asked the Scarecrow seriously. "Then you'd all have bigger heads."

"Oh, it won't work on living things," replied the Pinhead. "Besides, we like the way we look. How would it be if everyone in Oz looked the same? All skinny or all fat, all tall or all short, all white or all yellow, all blue or all green, all —"

"All right, all right! You've made your point," said the Scarecrow. "My brain is fairly new and it's just not used to thinking that much yet."

"I agree with you, Mr. Pinhead," said Dorothy. The world would be a very dull place if everyone looked the same. Imagine what it would be like if everyone looked exactly alike, thought exactly alike, and talked exactly alike! There would be no point to existence."

"My sentiments entirely!" said the Pinhead.

"Getting back to the business at hand," said Dorothy. "I'm still mystified as to how you create a river to

order?"

"Well," answered the Pinhead. "It's quite simple, really. We have this huge reservoir that was created by building a dam to capture the tears of a giant that was a bit of a cry-baby, to say the least. The slightest little hurt would set him off on a crying spell. We turned his excessive crying into a cottage industry by utilizing the stored up tears for our new company, *Rivers on Demand, Inc.*, and since the tears have magical qualities we can direct the river to and fro', uphill or downhill, exactly as we wish to suit the customer's order. The river even knows to avoid dwelling places and other inhabited areas, and to return immediately to the reservoir when its passengers have disembarked."

"Remarkable!" replied Dorothy. "Just remarkable."

With that, they all went down to the newly created river to board the raft that had just been completed for them. After stepping aboard they barely had time to wave goodbye to their new friends as the river quickly whisked them on their way.

Chapter Five:

A Visit from the Wicked Witch of the Deep South

"My, the river's flowing fast. I'm glad it's not that deep," said the Tin Woodman, after they were underway. "If it were, and I fell overboard, I could rust up solid for all eternity. Do you think the raft will stay big? Oh dear, what if it gets little again? We'll all be spilled into the water!"

"Don't worry so much," said Dorothy, smiling. "You'll worry yourself to death."

"Can people really do that?" asked the Tin Woodman. "Worry themselves to death?"

"Of course not," laughed the girl. "But I suppose a person could become quite sick if he constantly worried over things."

"Never worry worry, 'til worry worries you," said the Scarecrow in a matter-of- fact tone.

"What is that supposed to mean?" inquired the Tin Woodman.

"I think it means," answered the Scarecrow, "don't worry about something until it actually happens."

"Oh! I see," said the Tin Woodman. "In other words, most of our worries never materialize, so why fret constantly over something that in all probability will never occur?"

"I think you've got it," said Dorothy.

"I think you've got it," echoed the Scarecrow.

Everyone laughed uproariously. Then the Tin Woodman broke into song....

"Oh ... never worry worry

*'til worry worries you,
'cause if you worry worry
your worry'll worry you."*

Dorothy and the Scarecrow joined in:

*"Oh ... never worry worry
'til worry worries you,
'cause if you worry worry
your worry'll worry you."*

Suddenly a dark shadow covered their raft, and a piercing scream filled the air. They all looked up to see the Wicked Witch of the Deep South on a huge broomstick sweeping down on them. She had the ugliest, meanest face Dorothy had ever seen. As her eyes met Dorothy's, she pointed a long bony green finger at her and screamed, "I'll get you, Deary! You killed my sisters. You'll never leave Oz alive!" Then she screeched with terrible laughter as she roared away.

Everyone except Dorothy was shaking with fright. Dorothy was shaking too, inside, but she didn't show it.

"N-n-n-never w-w-worry w-worry 't-t-till worry w-worries y-you," stuttered the Tin Woodman.

"Now pull yourself together," ordered Dorothy. "She's gone.... I think I see the Dainty Land of China. We should be there in a few minutes."

Chapter 6:

The Dainty Land of China

The Tin Woodman did very well steering the raft to the bank of the river. As the Dainty China Country came into view he became quite excited, but then a little confused. "I wonder what happened to the wall," he said, half to himself. "But looks like there's a welcoming party awaiting us."

Dorothy and the Scarecrow stood up at once, almost toppling the Tin Woodman into the water. Sure enough, quite a large entourage was waiting by the dockside. Several china soldiers ran down to the raft as the Tin Woodman steered it into the dock.

As everyone disembarked from the raft they heard a big whoosh as the river reversed course to return to its source. They were immediately informed by the soldiers that the King and Queen wished to speak to them. The soldiers took Dorothy and her friends by the arms and escorted them to where the King and Queen were standing.

"You are most unwelcome!" snapped the King.

"Most Unwelcome!" echoed the Queen. "The last time strangers were here they broke several of our

people."

"And we had to pay the menders overtime," said the King.

"Not to mention the expense of the glue," said the Queen.

"And glue's not cheap, you know," said the King.

"Not cheap, you know," said the Queen.

"We're terribly sorry," said Dorothy. "We'll be extremely careful, won't we everyone?" she said as she looked around at her friends.

"Oh, yes," they all chorused. "Extremely careful."

"I hope so," said the King.

"I hope so," said the Queen.

"It would take us several days to get to the Lion's forest if we had to go around your country," said the Tin Woodman.

"Very well," said the King. "The sooner you get started the better. It makes me very nervous to have you here. We had a high protective wall around us until a wicked witch zapped it off to some other realm out of spite. Now we are getting all kinds of riffraff wandering through our lands stepping on people willy-nilly. My army will escort you to the border to make sure you do not break anything, or anyone. If you do, my soldiers will attack you, for that is what they are trained to do."

"You can rest assured," said Dorothy, "that we will take every precaution."

As Dorothy spoke, she stepped back slightly to curtsy, but the heel of her shoe caught the Captain of the Guard's horse, causing it to rear up. The Captain dropped his sword with a clatter on the ground, breaking it into several pieces.

"My sword! My sword!" he cried, looking at it in dismay.

"Call the menders," ordered the King in a very loud voice.

"Call the menders," echoed the Queen in an equally loud voice.

The Captain of the Guard's face was red with anger and embarrassment.

"Attack!" he shouted to his men. "Attack! Before they break us all up!"

The soldiers rushed at the little group, poking at their feet and ankles with their swords and lances. Of course, this didn't bother the Tin Woodman. In fact, several more swords were broken as the soldiers jabbed at him. However, they did hurt Dorothy. It felt like someone was sticking needles in her feet and ankles.

The Scarecrow and the Tin Woodman attempted to defend Dorothy by waving their hands in the faces of the soldiers.

"Run for it!" shouted the Tin Woodman.

The three ran as fast as their legs would allow and soon outdistanced the soldiers. Fortunately, they had run across a flat area devoid of houses and people. Otherwise they could have caused great damage.

As they ran, they noticed the ground getting steeper and more slippery. Large china boulders were scattered everywhere. To make matters worse, a mist suddenly descended, making it difficult to see more than a few feet in front of them.

The terrain rose sharply as they felt their way around some large rocks. The Tin Woodman slipped and fell several times, but, of course, didn't hurt himself. However, the going was getting rough, and Dorothy was getting tired.

The voices of the soldiers could now be heard in the distance, but through the mist Dorothy caught a glimpse of a little path winding its way up the mountain.

"Quick! Over this way," she said to her companions. The three managed to make their way over to the path.

The mountain path was a bit slippery, but not too steep. It was certainly a lot easier going.

When they finally reached the top of the mountain, the mist had cleared. Apparently, the soldiers had decided against following them, for they could be clearly seen setting up camp at the base, thereby ensuring that Dorothy and her friends did not attempt to return the way they had come.

The view from the top of the mountain was quite beautiful. The china homes and farms was spread out in a colorful panorama below. The only barren part was the segment of land they had traversed to make their escape.

"It's a shame everything is so easily breakable here," said the Tin Woodman. "I can't blame the china people for not wanting visitors."

"I don't know why the Captain of the Guard was so angry," said the Scarecrow. "Dorothy didn't try to make him drop his sword."

"I think he was so embarrassed," said Dorothy, "that he was just trying to save face in front of his men."

Dorothy was about to sit down to rest, but the light began to fade rather quickly. "Perhaps we should be on our way," said the girl.

"No question about it," said the Tin Woodman.

"Absolutely!" said the Scarecrow.

As they started down the other side of the mountain, the path became extremely slippery and steep. Suddenly the Tin Woodman started to slide very fast. He called out to Dorothy: "Help! Dorothy! I can't

stop!"

At that moment, the Scarecrow slipped and sat down with a thump. Then Dorothy did the same. She and the Scarecrow sped down the mountain path so fast they caught up with the Tin Woodman. The impact caused him to fall backwards into Scarecrow's lap.

"Wheee..." They all yelled as they whizzed around the hairpin bends.

"What fun!" cried Dorothy.

As they neared the bottom, their descent slowed. They came to a stop in front of a big sign:

YOU ARE NOW LEAVING

DAINTY CHINA COUNTRY.

THANK YOU FOR VISITING

(But thank you more for leaving)

!!!PLEASE DON'T HURRY BACK!!!

"What a funny sign," said Dorothy. "But it's plain to see that they get very nervous when non-china people are in their midst. I suppose they'd be quite happy to be left entirely alone."

"I can't say I blame them," said the Tin Woodman. "If I were a small delicate person made of china, I wouldn't want big clumsy people around."

"Thank goodness you're a big clunk!" said the Scarecrow. Dorothy laughed as the Tin Woodman chased the Scarecrow around the sign. As he did so, Dorothy's eye caught what appeared to be another sign a little further on. She walked up to it and read the following:

YOU ARE NOW ENTERING THE DOMAIN

OF THE GIRREPHALUMPS.

PLEASE KNOCK TWICE TO INDICATE

YOUR REQUEST FOR OUR SERVICES.

Chapter Seven:

The Girrephalumps

By this time, the Tin Woodman and the Scarecrow had joined Dorothy at the Girrephalump sign.

"What do you make of it?" asked Dorothy.

"Well, there's only one way to find out what it means," said the Tin Woodman. "And that's to knock twice and see what happens."

"Go ahead," said Dorothy. "With your metal fist, you should be able to knock loud enough for the Girrephalumps, whoever they are, to hear."

BANG! BANG!

The Tin Woodman knocked so hard that he almost knocked the sign down. Immediately there was a roar like thunder as a herd of animals descended on the sign from seemingly nowhere.

And what strange looking animals they were: Each had a giraffe's head and neck, but an elephant's body. Also, they were pink in color, with large white and blue dots all over.

The leader of the Girrephalumps walked right up to Dorothy and said, "You knocked, madam?"

Dorothy put her hand to her mouth to hide a smile. "Why, yes we did," she answered, glancing sideways at the Tin Woodman.

"Well," continued the Girrephalump, "where do you wish to go? We are the official transportation of Oz... Of course, we also clean upstairs windows and replace the light bulbs in street lights. But I am sure that at the moment it's transportation you want. Am I not correct?"

"Why ... yes, you are perfectly correct," replied the girl, not a little bewildered.

"Well, where do you wish to be taken?" asked the Girrephalump. "And what is the purpose of your journey?"

"We wish to travel to Lion Country," replied Dorothy. "To visit our friend the Cowardly Lion, except that he's not cowardly any more."

"And your purpose, my dear?"

"We wish to join forces with the Lion because we have a very important mission to perform."

"Hmmm," said the Girrephalump. "And what may that mission be, if I may be so bold as to ask?"

"Well," answered Dorothy, "we're not totally certain. But we wish to confront the Wicked Witch of the Deep South and speak with her."

"OH, NO!" called out the Girrephalumps in unison, as they drew back.

"We must have a conference," said the leader.

The Girrephalumps all huddled together for several minutes.

"We are afraid to take you to Lion Country," said the leader to Dorothy as he returned. "We could very well be attacked by the Wicked Witch. You will never get to Lion Country alone, for there are dangerous swamps, and only we know the way. Besides, you would be very foolish to continue with this mission."

You are not only endangering your own life, but also the lives of your companions. You must return at once!"

"But I cannot!" exclaimed Dorothy, almost in tears. "We have come so far, and we must go on. This is very important to us — to all of Oz."

"Hmmm," said the leader again. "We must have another conference."

Once again, the Girrephalumps went into a huddle. This time they took much longer.

At length he returned, but looked very solemn. "Well," he said after looking at Dorothy for a long time. "The majority vote has predominated. But this is very unwise of you to insist on going on. If we are attacked we will desert you and you will die in the swamps. Do you understand?"

Dorothy looked at the Tin Woodman and the Scarecrow, and swallowed. "Yes," she said. "We do."

"Very well; so be it!" the leader replied. "The results will be on your head."

The Scarecrow whispered to the Tin Woodman. "What did he say would be on Dorothy's head?"

"The results of her decision," answered the Woodman.

"Oh," said the Scarecrow, as he thought the whole thing over.

"Well, let's be on our way then," the leader said, kneeling down for Dorothy to mount him. Two others did the same for the Tin Woodman and the Scarecrow.

Although the journey took almost two days, there were, fortunately, few incidents. However, there was one particular situation that had left everyone more than a little shaky: The first indication that trouble was brewing was when a loud thumping sound could be heard in the distance. It sounded at first as if a bunch of people were beating on drums. But as the thumping got louder it became apparent that some sort of stampede was in progress. The Girrephalumps seemed ready to make a run for it when the deafening roar came to a sudden halt. Everyone looked at each other in complete bewilderment. One moment they had been ready to run for their lives; now there was only a deathly silence. The Girrephalumps stood perfectly still for the longest time. Then their leader motioned his head slowly towards a wooded area where he had detected some movement.

"G-G-Good gracious," stammered Dorothy, as about fifty grizzly bears emerged. The strange thing is that they didn't exactly lumber towards the little group as one might expect. They were bobbing up and down in place as if they were all on trampolines. It then became apparent to all, that these were not ordinary bears, but were kangaroos with bear bodies, or, if you prefer, bears with kangaroo legs and tails. It was the most incredible sight imaginable!

One bear, larger than all the others, approached (perhaps that is not the word to use, hopped would be more like it). He hopped over to the leader of the Girrephalumps and growled very loudly in Dorothy's face. Unfortunately, he had very bad breath which caused Dorothy to quickly turn away.

"Look at me when I speak to you," growled the bear. "You are in Krizzlie Bear country now. You will show the utmost respect."

"I'm terribly sorry, Mr. Krizzlie ... Mr. Bear ... ER, Mr. Krizzlie Bear. I didn't mean to be disrespectful, sir. But I, I thought I was about to sneeze and didn't want to sneeze in your face."

"Hmmm, is that so?" mumbled the bear, looking a bit suspicious. "Well, what are you people doing here in the first place? We don't like visitors. Didn't anyone tell you that?"

"We didn't even know you existed," replied the Girrephalump leader. We have traversed these lands many times, and know every swamp and bog. And we have never come across another living creature. In fact, we thought this whole area was devoid of life. It is so barren and inhospitable, we didn't think anyone would want to live here."

The bear was becoming angrier by the minute. "Are you saying you think our neighborhood is run down, and you don't think any decent person would want to live here? Is that what you're saying? Is it? Is it? 'Cause if it is, we can take care of that right now. We'll just eat you all up and that will end the argument immediately, if not sooner. Don't you agree?"

"But I am not arguing with you, Sir Bear. Really," insisted the Girrephalump.

"You are arguing right now. You are disagreeing with me. I'd call that arguing, wouldn't you?" snorted the bear. "Wait! Did you say Sir Bear? Is that what I heard you say? Sir Bear?"

"Indeed you did," replied the Girrephalump. "Sir Krizz, I believe the queen will dub you when she hears how kind you were to us, and how you let us pass safely through your vast estate. I have recommended several knighthood"s to her in the past and she has accepted every one without question."

"Really!" said the bear. "Well, upon further reflection, perhaps I have been a little harsh with you people. You say you will mention how kind I've been?"

"Indeed," replied the Girrephalump. "I will tell her how exceedingly kind you were. And I will recommend a knighthood in the strongest of terms. Your title is guaranteed. You have my word as an officer and a gentleman!"

"Very well. You are all free to go," said the bear. "As you know, I have been joking all along. It was pretty funny, huh? If you just follow this little path, it will take you safely into Lion Country. And goodbye and good luck to all of you."

Chapter Eight:

Lion Country

As they approached the Lion's camp, they could see the warm glow of a big fire. The Lion was laying by the fire, propped up on some cushions, roasting marshmallows. When he saw them approaching, he jumped up and bounded over to meet them.

"How wonderful to see you all!" he said as he embraced each in turn. When he got to Dorothy, he gave her an extra big hug. "This is really a pleasant surprise, Dorothy. I wasn't expecting to see you again. At least, not for a long time."

"Being back in Oz is just as much of a surprise to me," replied Dorothy. "It's true I had been thinking of you all an awful lot; and I did miss you all terribly. Perhaps my longing to see you all again had something to do with it; I'm sure it did. But it seems I have a definite mission, and that is the real purpose for my being here."

"Well now," said the Lion. "How interesting. Let us sit by the fire and I'll make you some hot chocolate and marshmallows and you can tell me all about it."

After everyone had settled around the fire (everyone, that is, except the Scarecrow, for fire made him very nervous), Dorothy told the story of her return to Oz. The Lion listened intently without interruption. When Dorothy was finished, he thought for a moment: "You know," he said at length, "it's interesting to note that you have helped each of us here; you have helped the Munchkins and in fact all of Oz by getting rid of two very evil witches. And now you are ready to do battle again on behalf of our wonderful land. We have much to be grateful for. It seems you are playing a very important role in the history of Oz. You are almost a savior."

"Please!" said Dorothy. "I am just an ordinary person trying to help people. I don't want you to think of me as someone unusual. I am doing no more than any good friend would. Besides, I have grown to love Oz and all of you more than words can convey."

At that, Dorothy became quite pensive.

"Is anything the matter, Dorothy?" asked the Lion.

"Well, I am somewhat concerned," replied the girl. "The Wicked Witch of the Deep South is a mean one. There's no telling what she might do to everyone because of me."

"Now don't fret so, Dorothy," the Lion replied. "She's not going to frighten us into deserting you. We'll stick by you through thick and thin."

"Thick and thin what?" said the Scarecrow, genuinely curious.

"It's just an expression," said the Tin Woodman, giving him a nudge.

"Oh!" responded the Scarecrow. "Oh, yes."

"We won't let that old witch get us down, Dorothy," said the Tin Woodman, patting her on the back.

"No indeed!" echoed the Scarecrow. "Don't you worry your pretty little head, Dorothy."

"Well, I know you're tired," said the Lion. "Let's turn in. Everything will look a lot brighter in the morning. We'll discuss our plans right after breakfast."

The Lion brought out some more cushions and blankets. He ordered six leopards and six tigers to stand guard around the camp. The Tin Woodman and the Scarecrow stood by Dorothy's bed (they always stood guard at night because they don't need any sleep themselves).

Chapter Nine:

The Mission Begins

The next morning, as Dorothy awoke to feel the warm sun on her face, she was surprised to find that the Lion and the others had prepared a breakfast of exotic fruits for her. As she bit into one of the luscious soft fruits the juice burst forth with a flavor that can only be described as divine. Nothing, absolutely nothing she had ever tasted before could compare.

"We let you sleep a little longer, Dorothy," said the Lion, as she ate. "You needed a good rest. Isn't it a beautiful day?"

"Indeed it is!" answered the girl. "Between this wonderful fruit and the beautiful surroundings, I feel I'm in paradise.

The dew was glistening on the grass and there were pretty little wildflowers everywhere. Hundreds of birds of every variety were chirping away happily as they searched for their breakfast. The sweet early morning smell of the forest permeated the air, and running through the camp was a bubbling brook of crystal clear water with little fish happily darting about the little pools.

"You certainly have a lovely home here, Lion," said Dorothy.

"Thank you," the Lion replied. "It is beautiful, isn't it?"

"You must be very happy here," went on the girl.

"Oh, indeed I am. Yes, indeed," the Lion replied. "Only ... only ..."

"Only what?" interceded Dorothy.

"Well, it does get a little lonely at times."

"You mean there is no lady lion to keep you company?" said Dorothy with a sly wink.

"That is true," answered the Lion. "I am the only one here."

"Well, I'm sure we're bound to run into another lion on our journey," said Dorothy encouragingly.

"Oh, very doubtful," replied the Lion. "I've never heard of another one."

"There are parts of Oz," said the Tin Woodman, who had been listening intently, "that are unexplored. No one knows what's there."

"You see!" Dorothy exclaimed.

The Lion shrugged. "It would be nice," he said, "if we came across a lady lion. Very nice indeed."

"Well, we'd better start some plans," said Dorothy. "Did anyone bring a map with them?"

"Oh, yes, I did," said the Tin Woodman, opening a little door in his side. "I kept it here to make sure it wouldn't get wet."

They unfolded the map and placed it on the ground.

"Now, let's see," said Dorothy. "We're here," pointing her finger at a circle which said "Lion's Forest."

"We can't go due south," said the Scarecrow, "or we'll run into swamplands. We'll have to head west through Octapongland, then southwest through Colorland."

"Octapongland?" said Dorothy. "How strange! And Colorland?"

"These are newly discovered lands," said the Lion.

"Haven't you heard the song?" said the leader of the Girrephalumps.

"What song?" said Dorothy.

"The Octapong song, of course," said the Girrephalump, and in a deep baritone voice he sang,

"In the country where I'm from,

there are lots of Octapong.

Octapong are people who,

have eight feet but only one shoe.

That one shoe goes clippity-clop,

while the other feet go hippity-hop.

With a hippity-hop and a bing-bang-boo,

those Octapong are after you.

If you see one, run, don't stop —

'cause if you do, your shoes he'll cop."

"Oh my," said Dorothy. "How terrible. Must we go through Octapongland?"

"I'm afraid we must," said the Lion. "There's no other way."

"And what about Colorland?" asked Dorothy. "What's that like?"

"No one lives in Colorland," said the Scarecrow. "It's just a place to visit for therapy."

"Therapy?" said Dorothy, looking perplexed. "Yes," said the Tin Woodman. "For example, if you're feeling sad, you spend a half-hour in the Yellow Belt."

"Yellow Belt?" Dorothy said, looking puzzled again.

"Yes. You see," said the Lion, "Colorland is divided into seven Color Belts; each is a half mile wide. There's the Red Belt, the Orange Belt, the Yellow Belt, the Green Belt, the Blue Belt, the Indigo Belt, and the Purple Belt."

The Lion could see that Dorothy was still very puzzled. "Let me explain," he said. "You see, each of the seven colors affects you in a different way. For example, the first color we will pass through will be the Red Belt. Now you should never go into the Red Belt feeling angry."

"Why not?" asked Dorothy.

"Well," said the Lion, "you've heard the expression 'so and so makes me see red'?"

Dorothy nodded. "Well, red is associated with anger," said the Lion. "So if you walk through the Red Belt feeling angry or resentful, it will just make you more angry or resentful."

"How does it make you feel if you're not angry or resentful?" said Dorothy.

"Then it will have a positive effect on you," said the Lion. "It will give you lots of energy, and if you're cold, it will make you feel nice and warm."

"How strange," said Dorothy. "It will certainly be very interesting. We'd better look at the map again to see what comes after Colorland."

As Dorothy studied the map, the Scarecrow started to get the giggles. "Oh dear!" he said, giggling uncontrollably. "Not again!"

"My goodness," said Dorothy. "What's going on?"

"Don't you see the name of the land next to Colorland?" said the Scarecrow. Dorothy peered at the map.

"Tickleland?" she said as she started to laugh. "I can't wait for you to explain this one."

"Let me explain," said the Tin Woodman. "The Scarecrow and myself are probably the only ones here who are not ticklish, so we're not concerned about traveling through Tickleland. But for you it will be an ordeal, believe me."

"An ordeal?" said Dorothy.

"I'm afraid so," replied the Tin Woodman. "You see, Tickleland is filled with Ticklemonsters. They are cousins of the Octapong; and whereas the Octapong have eight feet, the Ticklemonsters have eight arms, and that makes forty fingers to tickle you with if they catch you."

"Oh my goodness!" said Dorothy.

"You can imagine what it's like to be tickled all over at the same time," said the Scarecrow.

"Why on earth do they do that?" asked Dorothy. "And how can you get them to stop?"

"Well," said the Tin Woodman. "The reason they do it is quite simple: they do it for food, and the reason

—"

"For food?" interrupted Dorothy. "Now you've lost me. What on earth has food got to do with it?"

"Well, they don't eat solid food like you do," said the Tin Woodman. "They absorb their nourishment through the skin, and the sound of laughter is to them what food is to you. You see, the laughter energizes their skin molecules to give them energy and sustenance."

"Well, I never," said Dorothy.

"You never what?" said the Scarecrow.

"That's just another expression, silly," said the Tin Woodman.

"It's like saying, 'Well, I never would have believed that,'" said Dorothy.

"Well, anyway," said the Tin Woodman, "that's why they are called Ticklemonsters and why the land they live in is called Tickleland."

"Will they stop tickling you if you ask them to?" said Dorothy.

"On the contrary," said the Tin Woodman. "If you ask them to stop, they'll just tickle you all the more."

"What happens if you ask them to tickle you more?" she asked.

"Then they'll stop," said the Tin Woodman. "They don't like being told what to do, so they'll just go and find someone else to tickle."

"That's really something," said Dorothy, shaking her head. "I suppose we must go through Tickleland?" she asked.

"I'm afraid we must," said everyone.

"If they just look at me threateningly, I'll laugh," said Dorothy. "I'm so ticklish you wouldn't believe it"

"I'm not ticklish, but I laugh a lot when people say funny things," said the Scarecrow.

Dorothy smiled. "How long do you think our journey will take?"

"Oh, weeks and weeks," said the Scarecrow.

"My, that is longer than I expected," replied Dorothy. "Do you really think it'll take that long?"

"Yes, but we'll survive, I'm sure," answered the Scarecrow.

"It'll take some time to cross Elfland," said the Lion.

"Elfland?" questioned Dorothy. "That sounds fascinating. How long ago was their land discovered?"

"Oh, quite recently," replied the Lion. "Of course, Elves have always existed. This particular type of elf

visits the mortal lands all the time. They do a lot of work there."

"Well, I'm really looking forward to visiting their country," said Dorothy.

"Let's look at this map again to see what comes after Elfland." She spread the map out on the ground, and they all peered at it intently.

Chapter Ten:

Philosophical Discussion

"I don't think that map will do us much good after we cross Elfland," Dorothy said, as she looked at the words LARGELY UNEXPLORED which marked the area between Elfland and the Deep South Territory.

"We'll just have to take our chances," she continued. "You know, when I was here before I didn't realize that there were so many other cultures within Oz. I met a lot of Munchkins and some Quadlings, and all those other interesting people and animals and creatures. I wonder how many varieties there are?"

"There are an infinite number of lands and cultures within Oz," said the Tin Woodman. "That's what makes Oz such an interesting place. It would be a monotonous land indeed without variety. But I don't think Oz will ever be fully explored. The Great Wizard who created Oz must be quite pleased with his creation."

Dorothy looked puzzled. "You mean the Great Wizard that Glinda spoke of?"

"Oh, yes indeed." Answered the Tin Woodman. "There's only one Great Wizard. All worlds are created by him, and he loves every soul who resides in his creation: even the Wicked Witch of the Deep South."

"How could He love someone so evil?" questioned Dorothy.

"I was wondering that myself," said the Scarecrow.

"Well," said the Tin Woodman. "He must realize that she's her own worst enemy, and he's just waiting for her to catch on to that fact. I don't know why some people are so filled with hatred. As I told you, Dorothy, ever since I've had a heart I've been having a lot of feelings, and I've been trying to understand why some people have a lot of love inside them, and enjoy helping others; while some only care about themselves. Perhaps the people who can't feel love and compassion have no heart at all."

"Or perhaps something happens to them that causes their heart to harden," said the Lion.

"Not to change the subject," said the Scarecrow. "But I've been reading about the creation of mortals. There are lots of books on the subject, and sometimes the books contradict one another. Some talk about the slow evolution of tiny simple organisms into large complex organisms. While others talk of the instantaneous creation of complex organisms, for example, Adam and Eve — who were, supposedly, the very first mortals. It's all very complicated.

"Well," said the Tin Woodman. "You don't have to accept everything you read; you have to form your own opinion. That's why you've got a brain. Books are just people's ideas, No one can really prove anything.

Even scientists differ in their analysis of the same evidence.

"That's correct," said the Scarecrow. "Ever since I got my brain, I've been thinking a lot. And some of the things I've read, I agree with, and some I don't agree with. I know some people who have read only one book in which the creation of mortals is explained, and they say that version is true because the people who wrote it were inspired by the Great Wizard."

"I haven't thought a lot about it," said Dorothy. "But I think people should read all the books written on a given subject before drawing a conclusion. Even if they didn't accept everything they read, they would at least be stimulated by the many ideas put forth. I've heard that people who have a long established belief about something will often refuse to study all the available literature on the subject, but will close their minds off completely. They have made their minds up as to the truth of the matter, and don't want to hear another word on the subject."

"Truth is where you find it," said the Tin Woodman.

"What does that mean?" said the Scarecrow.

"Isn't that the point of the whole thing?" said Dorothy. "Since no one really knows for sure what is totally true or not true, we owe it to ourselves not to be satisfied with what is told to us, but to question and to search for ourselves. In other words, continue the search for truth all of our lives with an open mind."

"But, as Scarecrow said, it is confusing to read all those different ideas about things?" said the Lion.

"It can be," said the Tin Woodman. "But whatever we read, we must learn to discern deep within ourselves what is true and what is not true, and then to ask the Great Wizard's guidance for the ultimate answers. After all; if he knows all Truth, he is going to guide us to it if we ask him. But he won't force it on us."

"How do we know if he can hear us, or even that he exists if no one has seen him?" the Lion said.

"Well," interceded the Tin Woodman, "from all that I've read, people throughout history have heard him speak. But to be able to hear him, we have to go into a very quiet state within ourselves every day, and learn to communicate with him."

"How do we do that?" asked the Lion, still recalling the traditional tale of Lurliné.

"Well, I've been doing it for some time," said the Tin Woodman, "and although I haven't actually heard a voice yet, I often receive answers to my questions in symbolic form, which I am told is the language of the soul."

"Can you describe it to us?" said the Lion.

"Of course," said the Tin Woodman. "But you know, we have talked here for a long time. We really must get underway if we are to accomplish our mission. I'll tell you what happened when we get to Colorland. We'll stay overnight in the Yellow Belt and I'll explain everything."

"Why the Yellow Belt?" asked Dorothy.

"Well, the color vibration of yellow is very conducive to learning. The Winkies always subconsciously knew this. In fact, when you take a test at school, be sure to wear yellow and you'll do very well on your test."

"Really?" said Dorothy. "I must remember that."

"Now then, everybody up," said the Lion. "Let's be on our way. We can take the Girrephalumps as far as Octapongland. After that we'll have to walk."

With that, the Girrephalumps sat down so everyone could climb aboard. The leading Girrephalump, who belonged to Dorothy, turned his head to her as she climbed aboard and said, "Forgive me if I don't talk, but I have a sore throat. Mind you, none of us care to talk much," he continued. "We have such long and delicate throats that we have to take the utmost care that we don't overdo things."

"That's quite all right," replied Dorothy. "I do hope you feel better soon."

"Oh, I shall. Don't worry," said the Girrephalump. "When I return from this trip, I will take a short vacation. I can't take too long or I'll get too far behind with my other work."

"What other work do you do?" asked Dorothy.

"Well," said the Girrephalump, "as I told you before, besides being part of the main transportation system in Oz, we are required to change the streetlight bulbs when they burn out, and to keep all the upstairs windows clean. If we get too far behind, people can't see out of their upstairs windows in the daytime; and when they're out at night they can't see what they're doing, so it's important work that we do."

"It is indeed," said Dorothy. "How long will it be before we get to Octapongland?" she asked.

"Well, I can see it in the distance already," said the Girrephalump. "But it's still quite a way off. We'll probably be there by nightfall."

"Have you seen the Octapong before?" said Dorothy.

"Oh, I've seen them all right, answered the Girrephalump, 'course they don't bother me, since I don't wear shoes."

"You see, the trouble is," he continued "their one shoe gets a lot of wear and tear, clippity-clopping along all day, and production simply can't keep up with demand."

"So they have to steal other people's shoes?" interceded Dorothy.

"That's just about it," said the Girrephalump.

"Well I think it's disgusting," the girl said angrily. "Why do people have to go around stealing other people's things? How would they like it if someone stole from them?"

"They probably wouldn't like it at all," said the Girrephalump.

"They should learn the Golden Rule," said Dorothy.

"What's the Golden Rule?" asked the Girrephalump.

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," she quoted.

"That's a good rule," said the Girrephalump.

"If everyone lived by it, no one would steal anything from anyone," said Dorothy. And no one would hurt anyone either."

"That's amazing!" said the Girrephalump.

"What is?" said Dorothy.

"Why, if that one rule were practiced by everyone it would make the mortal lands a beautiful place to live as well as to visit."

"It would indeed," said Dorothy. "If every single individual followed that one simple rule, we could unlock all of our locks and throw all the keys away."

"And you could melt down all of your guns," said the Girrephalump. "Don't mortals understand that?"

"Oh, they understand all right," said Dorothy. "But many just don't want to live by that rule."

"Perhaps if they were taught these things as children..."

"Some children don't want to live by that rule either," she replied.

"I can't imagine why anyone wouldn't want to," replied the Girrephalump. "Think how happy they would all be — with each mortal having nothing to fear from another, just treating each other with kindness and respect. Why, it would be heavenly. Don't your people want to be happy?"

"I'm sure everyone wants to be truly happy," said Dorothy. "But it's the nature of some to find a twisted kind of happiness in hurting others. Some even steal from others to get money to buy chemicals for their mind, for example."

"Now I'm really confused," said the Girrephalump. "Chemicals for their mind?"

"Yes," said Dorothy, realizing that she had more awareness of these issues than would be considered strictly proper for a child of her age and background. "You see," she continued, "if a person is unable to find happiness within himself, or in his home, school, work or social environment, he may try to buy some synthetic happiness in the form of certain chemicals called drugs."

"Good gracious!" was all the Girrephalump could say.

"Yes, it's very sad," said Dorothy. "But the happiness they feel is not true, so when the effects of the chemical wear off they feel even worse than before. Then, in a desperate effort to feel better again, they take even more chemicals. Of course, they are doomed to repeat the cycle over and over. This causes great anguish — not only for themselves — but for their family and friends."

"How frightening!" gasped the Girrephalump.

"Yes, it's an awful, awful thing," said Dorothy. "Now the chemical is the master. It now directs the person's life. He or she has lost control, and is now a slave to this new master. Not only that, some of these chemicals can affect the brain in such a way as to cause the person to do awful things to other people, or to themselves. At the very least their personality becomes distorted: they can have terrible mood swings, and their natural drive and creative ability severely diminished. Sometimes seizures, or even death can occur."

"Can't anyone stop all this?" said the Girrephalump. "Why do people make these chemicals and sell them?"

"For money," said Dorothy. "They love money so much, they don't care who gets hurt."

"Thank goodness I don't have to live in your mortal lands," said the Girrephalump.

"Well, it's not all bad," said Dorothy. "There are many kind and wonderful people there — like Aunt Em and Uncle Henry. It's just the few that spoil things for the many."

"It still seems to me that the place to start is with the little children," said the Girrephalump. "If mortals were taught kindness and love and gentleness and understanding, and all of these things as children, the world would be a very happy place when they grew up, and they could teach their children the same things. Then, by the time they grew up, all the bad adults would have died off."

"I'm afraid it's not that simple," said Dorothy. "Some parents are full of hate and resentment, or show contempt for other races or creeds by the way they talk. This all influences the children."

"Why can't the schools teach the children differently?"

"I'm sure they do their best," said Dorothy, "but they are busy teaching reading, writing and arithmetic."

"Well, I don't see much hope," said the Girrephalump.

"Yes, mortals are sort of locked into their ways of thinking," said Dorothy.

"Perhaps when you get back to Kansas, you could write a book about your experiences in Oz," said the Girrephalump. "Then children who read it will know that there's a place where no one really hurts anyone. And perhaps they will treat each other a lot better. And when they grow up they will be loving and kind to one another too, so that your country will be as happy a place as Oz."

"That's an excellent idea," said Dorothy, though she knew that she was far too young to write a whole book by herself and would have to confide in an adult for help.

"Well, here we are at Octapongland," said the Girrephalump. "My, I've talked a lot," he said. "And do you know, my throat isn't sore."

"That's wonderful," replied Dorothy.

"I really enjoyed meeting you, Dorothy," he said. "I've learned a lot. I hope I'll see you again soon."

Dorothy put her arms around his neck and kissed him. He sat down slowly while Dorothy slid down his

back to the ground.

"Now everyone stick close together," called out the lion, and walk quickly. The Octapong are very sneaky, so be alert."

Chapter Eleven:

Octapongland

The entrance to Octapongland was a huge archway. An inscription over the top read, "*Beware all ye who enter the land of the Octapong.*" As they passed under the archway, they became aware of a group of Octapong children playing in the distance. As they approached, the Octapong stopped their activity and turned to stare. Dorothy tried not to look at them, although at the same time she was very curious. They were certainly strange creatures, with their eight legs and only one shoe. As they returned to their play, one could hear that shoe going clippity-clop, clippity-clop.

Suddenly, Dorothy became aware of several adult Octapong gathering on each side of them as they walked. The Tin Woodman said, "Perhaps we should walk a little faster." As they did, the Octapong walked faster, too. And each foot with the shoe came down in unison to make a deafening crash on the ground. As Dorothy's group walked faster and faster, so did the Octapong, until everyone was running like the wind.

Suddenly they all came to a screeching halt as a huge brick wall loomed up in front of them. The brick wall stretched for miles right across Octapongland. There was no way anyone could escape.

"SO!" roared one of the Octapong. He appeared to be their leader. "Thought you could get away, eh? No one escapes the Octapong. You see, my dears, with the help of our trapping wall here, and our little system of running you into it, we are guaranteed a fresh supply of shoes every time anyone crosses our land. Now, off with your shoes," he shouted.

"You're just a bunch of thieves!" said Dorothy angrily.

"We're *not* thieves," said the leader of the Octapong. "Are we, Boys?"

"NO!" they all called out together.

"There," said their leader. "You see?"

"Well what do you call it?" said Dorothy. "Taking people's property without their consent?"

"Let's call it a toll for the use of our land."

"You don't have any signs posted," said Dorothy. "So that makes it stealing."

"I'm beginning to lose my patience with you, little girl," said the leader. "Now give me your shoes. You, too," he said to the Scarecrow.

"Now look here," said the Lion. "Stop pushing my friends around. Who do you think you are?"

"Who are you?" asked the Octapong leader.

"I'm King of the Beasts," said the Lion defiantly.

"Well I'm King of the Octapong," said the leader.

"Is that so?" said the Lion, gearing up for a fight.

"Yes, that's so," said the Octapong.

"Well," said the Lion.

"Well what?" said the Octapong.

"Nothing," snarled the Lion. "Just well."

"What's the use of a well without a bucket?" said the Octapong.

"What?" said the Lion.

"I said, what's the use of a well without a bucket?" he shouted.

"A well without a — ho-ha bucket ... a ho-ho bucket," roared the Lion with laughter. "That's very funny!"

"Do you think so?" said the Octapong.

"Yes, I do," said the Lion.

"Well thank you," said the Octapong appreciatively. "You know, we've been a little hasty; you seem like nice people, and we have a very good stock of shoes on hand right now. We'll let you go this time."

"Why thank you," said the Lion. "You're very kind."

"Don't mention it," said the Octapong. And with that, he walked over to the wall and said "You may go through." Everyone looked at each other with a puzzled expression.

"But there's no door," said Dorothy.

"Not necessary," responded the Octapong.

"Well, how do we go through?" said the Lion.

"You just walk through," said the Octapong.

They all stood there looking more puzzled than ever.

"Like this," said the Octapong as he walked into the wall and disappeared.

"Did you see that?" said the Tin Woodman.

Just then, the Octapong returned to view, having walked back through the wall again.

"How did you do that?" asked the Lion.

"Why, it's easy," replied the Octapong. "This wall is made with special bricks. You see, all matter is made of atoms, which are tiny particles of electricity. There are very large spaces between these atoms even though the material appears solid. We have magnetized the atoms in these bricks in such a way that they push away the atoms of any other material that comes in contact with them. So when the atoms of your body come close to the atoms in the bricks, they just step aside so to speak and slide through the empty spaces. It's quite simple, really. And it works very well. So well, in fact, that not one person has ever tried to walk through that wall. They all believe the wall to be solid — so for them, it is."

"Why that's incredible," said Dorothy.

"Now be off with you," said the Octapong. "Before we change our minds."

Dorothy gingerly touched her shoe against the wall and, sure enough, the toe of her shoe disappeared into the wall. With that, they all walked into the wall and disappeared. As they reappeared on the other side of the wall, Dorothy remarked on the strange sensation. "Aunt Em will never believe this!" She would be repeating these words many times during her journey through Oz.

The border of Octapongland was just a short distance away, and they all breathed a sigh of relief when they reached it. After they crossed the border, they all sat down to discuss the situation.

"That was quite an experience," declared the Tin Woodman.

"Indeed it was," answered the Scarecrow. "The Lion was the one who saved us."

"He certainly did," replied Dorothy. "And we're all very proud of you," she said, turning to the Lion.

"Well, quite truthfully," said the Lion, "I didn't feel all that brave inside."

"But you had the courage to defend us," said the Tin Woodman. "And that's the important thing. Besides, you got us out of the situation, didn't you?"

"I hope we don't have to return this way," replied the Lion. "I don't think I could pull it off again."

"Let's look at the map," said Dorothy. The Tin Woodman opened the little door in his side, pulled out the map, and spread it out on the ground.

"Let's see," said the girl. "We're here," she added, pointing her finger to the border between Octapongland and Colorland. "Why don't we stay here overnight," she said, "and get an early start in the morning?"

"That's fine with me," yawned the Lion.

Dorothy walked down to a little stream close by and sat down on its grassy bank. Little wildflowers were everywhere, and the crystal-clear water bubbled with life as it cascaded into a miniature waterfall. She cupped her hands together, dipped them into the water, and took a long, cool drink. Mmmm, the water tasted so good. As she sat, she studied the little flowers, their delicate, tiny petals were in perfect

symmetry; each tinted with the colors of the rainbow. The colors were just breathtaking! So rich, so vibrant, so alive. She noticed a rose in bud, and gently touched it and wished that it would bloom. As she did, little blue sparks appeared at her fingertips and, ever so slowly, the bud unfolded to reveal the most beautiful rose she had ever seen. She lay back on the ground, closed her eyes, and listened to the water bubbling and splashing. She concentrated on the delicate fragrances of the flowers, and the sweet smell of the grass. She could hear birds chirping away happily in the distance. A beautiful feeling came over her: a peace she had never known before. She became one with nature. She knew that all mankind, all nature, was one as she fell asleep.

Chapter Twelve:

The Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebugs

Dorothy was awakened by a cold wet nose nuzzling her arm. She heard a voice say, "Move over please, move over." The nose and the voice belonged to a round, bright yellow furry ball with huge round dark brown liquid eyes.

"Who are you?" inquired Dorothy.

"The name of my species," replied the animal tartly, "is Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. Would you move over please? You're blocking the entrance to my home."

"Oh, I'm sorry," said Dorothy, sitting up.

"That's quite all right," said the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. "No harm done." The Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug promptly disappeared into a hole under a large clump of grass. He reappeared a moment later and looked quizzically at Dorothy. "Would you care to have tea with me? It's not too often that I have a guest for tea."

"Why thank you. I'd love to," replied Dorothy. "But I'm afraid I'm too big."

"Oh, dear," said the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. "I hadn't thought of that. Well," he said brightly, "we'll soon take care of that problem. Just stay right where you are." He disappeared again, and this time returned with a bright yellow tablecloth and a bright yellow picnic basket. He then laid out the tablecloth on the grass, opened up the picnic basket, and handed Dorothy a bright yellow cup and saucer. He then returned to his hole and reappeared promptly with a bright yellow teapot on a bright yellow tray. "Would you care for milk and sugar?" he asked as he poured her tea.

"Just a little of each, thank you," replied Dorothy, helping herself from a bright yellow milk jug and a bright yellow sugar bowl. "My, you certainly like yellow," said Dorothy as she sipped her tea.

"Of course," replied the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug without explaining further.

"I'm surprised that you don't make your home in Colorland in the Yellow Belt," said Dorothy. "I would think you'd be right at home there."

"Oh, no," answered the little creature emphatically. "That would be too much for us Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebugs, but we do visit there twice each week. You see," he explained, "we Fuzzy Yellow

Wogglebugs must absorb a great deal of yellow if we are to keep our pretty yellow fur. Otherwise it would fade very quickly to a dirty brown color like the other animals. We are very proud of our color; we surround ourselves with yellow so that we constantly absorb it."

"I see," said Dorothy thoughtfully. "Well, I must admit it is a very bright happy cheerful color."

"Yes indeed," replied the little creature. "That is why we Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebugs have such bright, happy cheerful dispositions — which is just as well, I might add. You see, some of the other animals don't like us; they are quite jealous of our bright yellow color, and can be quite hurtful at times."

"I'm so sorry," said Dorothy. "But you are so nice, why would anyone want to be hurtful?"

"Well, unfortunately, they only see our color; they don't see the person. We are personalities just like them, but they don't choose to see beyond our color, so they won't have much to do with us. Why, just the other day, my little girl was playing at school with a little brown girl bear she had become friends with, when the other bigger brown bears took the little girl brown bear aside and said, 'Why are you playing with that Yellow Wogglebug?' My little girl's friend said, 'Because she's very nice to me, and we're friends.' 'Well, don't mix with those Yellow Wogglebugs,' they told her. 'Play with your own kind.' So now the little brown girl bear and my little girl are quite sad and, needless to say, lonely, because they liked each other more than anyone else at school."

"You know," said Dorothy, "the bigger brown bears that told the little girl brown bear not to play with your little girl are the ones I feel sorry for."

"Sorry for them?" exclaimed the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug in surprise. "Why would you be sorry for them?"

"Well, they are the real losers," said Dorothy, "for they must go through life with all that hatred and resentment inside them. Not very conducive to becoming a happy well-adjusted person."

"You show great insight for one so young," said the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. "What you say is so true. Yet many people fail to see it."

"It seems to me they don't want to," said Dorothy.

"But why not?" asked the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. "Do they prefer to be miserable?"

"It appears that way, doesn't it? I was just discussing this with my friends. People are often their own worst enemy. They are at the mercy of their thoughts, so to speak. They do not make a concentrated effort to control their thoughts, so their thoughts control them."

"You talk as if thoughts have a mind of their own," said the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug.

"In a way they do," replied Dorothy. "Of course, people's thoughts revolve around themselves a great deal, since our main concerns are to do with our own physical comfort. After all, everyone wants to be warm and dry, and to be well fed and secure. So our thoughts, quite naturally, center on our own feelings. But as a consequence, we can become self-centered, even selfish. Some people can take selfishness to the point of depriving others of their basic needs so they can acquire more for themselves. A good example of this is a Dictator of a country amassing for himself a fortune, while the majority of his people are starving

to death. Or a business which is not satisfied with a reasonable rate of return, but extracts an exorbitantly high profit at the expense of people who are struggling to make ends meet. Now, there is nothing wrong with using one's own talents to make a pleasant life for one's self; to acquire a nice home, and to have an abundant life, for we are meant to enjoy life. But this abundant and joyous life cannot come by taking from others what is not rightfully ours to take; but can only come by maintaining a fair exchange of each other's goods and services, and by leaving the element of greed out of all transactions. Thoughts that are greedy thoughts are our mortal enemy."

"Do you know," said the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug, "that thoughts have shapes?"

"They do?" said Dorothy in surprise. "That I didn't know."

"Oh yes, as a matter of fact, the area around the Wicked Witch's castle is called '*Negativethoughtland*.' Negative thoughts are, as you know, the worst kind of thoughts there are; so you can imagine what monstrous thoughts must dwell around that castle, just laying in wait for unsuspecting travelers."

"You mean you can see them?" asked Dorothy, her eyes getting big.

"Oh, yes," answered the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. "You see, every thought you think is a new creation, so it has to go somewhere and do something. Now, if it is a good thought, like, say...."

"Like I'm thinking right now," said Dorothy. "That I love my Aunt Em, and that I wish I was with her."

"Yes," said the Wogglebug. "That thought is a thought of love and will go right to your Aunt Em and help to make her feel good."

"What does that thought look like?" asked Dorothy.

"It looks like a soft crimson projectile like a comet. When it hits your Aunt Em, it will burst and shower her with little explosions of pure love."

"That sounds beautiful," said Dorothy. "Can you tell me the shapes of some other thoughts and what their effects are?"

"When you go to *Negativethoughtland*, you will see some awful shapes; they are visible to everyone there."

"Can they hurt me?" asked Dorothy anxiously.

"They cannot come near light," said the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. "In fact, light dissolves them. But if you have a lot of negative thoughts yourself, you will attract them to you and they will make you more negative; so you must think positive thoughts. Be happy, optimistic and cheerful; loving and kind. And as long as you do that, these negative thoughts will never come near you — for they cannot stand the light that positive thoughts are made of. So when you go through *Negativethoughtland*, visualize light all around you — this will protect you. Learn to do that every day as you walk to school. Put light around your house in Kansas every night. Be enthusiastic. Face each day with determination and know that you can master any problem that the day may bring. As you go through life you will face many difficulties ... but everything's not going to happen to you all at once. So just take one day at a time and do the best you can with that day — that's all that is expected of you. Each day that you live, you can be earning your way to a better place

— a better life. But you must do the earning yourself; you must do the work. No one else can do it for you."

"What you are saying makes a lot of sense," said Dorothy. "When I get back to Kansas, they're going to see a new me."

"Well," said the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug, "that's very commendable; but don't set too high a standard for yourself. Don't say, 'I'm going to be perfect,' or 'I'll never lose my temper again,' or 'I'll never do this or that again.' Just say 'I'm going to do my best; but if I make a mistake, I'll try to do better next time.' At least you will be trying to control your thoughts and emotions, and that's half the battle right there."

"You know, Mr. Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug," smiled Dorothy, "you may not have much of an education, but you have a great deal of wisdom and understanding. Some educated people don't have that."

"Why thank you, Dorothy," replied the Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug. "I suppose I do try to compensate for my lack of education by thinking about things. It's good to think, don't you agree?"

"Oh, yes," answered Dorothy. "One should always take the time to quietly think about things. By the way, may I ask you a question?"

"You may indeed," replied the Wogglebug.

"Well, this is sort of a personal question," said Dorothy.

"That's quite all right," replied the Wogglebug. "What is it?"

"Well, it's about your name," answered Dorothy.

"What about my name? Don't you like it?" asked the Wogglebug kindly.

"Oh, yes I do," replied Dorothy. "I love your name. But I just wondered what *Woggle* meant. And you are not a bug, exactly."

"Oh, that's easy to explain," said the Wogglebug. "You see, in ancient times, the Oz word for work was woggle; and in those days, we were the workhorses of Oz, so to speak. We worked mainly in the fields. We harvested the wheat and the corn, the rye, et cetera. Our daily pay was six pennies and a pocket full of rye or wheat — whatever we were harvesting at the time (of course, money is no longer necessary in Oz, as you know) and you're right, we're not bugs at all. We're animals; anyway, we came to be known as Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebugs and that name is now our official title. Also, we are on good terms with the commonly-known Wogglebug insects, and consider it an honor to share the name with those industrious creatures. Would you like to hear the famous Wogglebug song? We used to sing it in the fields while we worked, and it's still very popular today."

"Oh, I'd love to hear it," replied Dorothy enthusiastically.

The Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug cleared his throat and said, "It goes like this." He began to sing in a beautiful, rich baritone voice:

"I'm a Fuzzy Yellow Wogglebug, I woggle all day long,

I wobble in the morning, at night I sing my song.

I sing a song of sixpence, with a pocket full of rye,

I'm a Fuzzy Yellow Wobblebug, I'll wobble 'til I die.

I'm a Fuzzy Yellow Wobblebug, I'll wobble 'til I die —

hey!"

As he finished the last line, about fifty Fuzzy Yellow Wobblebugs came out of their little mounds and started to sing and dance:

"We're Fuzzy Yellow Wobblebugs, we wobble all day long,

We wobble in the morning, at night we sing our song.

We sing a song of sixpence with a pocket full of rye,

We're Fuzzy Yellow Wobblebugs, we'll wobble 'til we die.

We're Fuzzy Yellow Wobblebugs, we'll wobble 'til we die —

Hey!"

When the other yellow Wobblebugs finished singing, they all turned to Dorothy, and said shyly, "Nice to have met you, Dorothy." Then they all disappeared back into their little mounds. Dorothy turned to her little Wobblebug friend, but he had disappeared, too. She bent down and tapped at his little door. The door opened, and the yellow wobblebug's face appeared.

"I didn't mean to be rude, Dorothy. But I must get recharged. My yellow is beginning to fade, and I wouldn't want you to see me without my yellow. I'd just be plain old ordinary brown."

"Oh, that's all right," said Dorothy. "I'd love you just as much — no matter what your color. It's you I love, you know."

"I know," said the Wobblebug. "But I wouldn't feel myself without my yellow color."

"I understand," sighed Dorothy. "Well, it's been a great pleasure meeting you. I hope to see you again very soon."

"Thank you, Dorothy," said the little creature. "I hope so, too. Very much." He reached up and kissed Dorothy on the nose; then disappeared inside his house.

Chapter Thirteen:

Princess Saari's Colorland and the Conciencez

"Dorothy! Dorothy! Where are you?" It was the Lion. "We must be on our way!" he said.

"I'm ready," replied Dorothy. "I've just had the most delightful experience with a Wogglebug."

"Oh, yes," said the Lion. "Aren't they just the most adorable creatures?"

"Yes indeed," said Dorothy. "I wish I could take one home with me to Kansas."

"I wonder what your Aunt Em would think," said the Lion. "To see a fuzzy yellow animal that talks."

Dorothy laughed. "That would be quite a sight. I'd love to see Aunt Em's face if that happened."

"What if you brought us all home?" said the Lion. "She would really be surprised then!"

Dorothy smiled at the thought of it. She could just see the expression on Uncle Henry's face as she introduced her friends to him. And if she took them all to school, how exciting that would be. Her school friends would really be surprised to see a scarecrow, a tin man and a lion walking around and talking. As it was, she knew no one would believe her when she did return. She knew that she really would not be able to tell anyone about her adventures. They just would say she had been dreaming like the last time.

"Well, let's be on our way," repeated the Lion. "Do you see that red haze, Dorothy?"

"Yes," said Dorothy. "I do. I see some of the other colors, too. It looks like a big rainbow on the ground." As they walked toward Colorland, Dorothy began to think about her adventures so far. She was having a really exhilarating time. She felt somehow she was undergoing a learning experience, and felt good about it. She realized, thinking back on her life, that it was all a learning experience. That she was learning and growing and expanding in awareness and understanding. She sensed that somehow there was a guiding force behind her life, gently nudging her into different directions and into different experiences. She felt that it was important to somehow try to get in tune with this force and not to get upset when things did not go exactly her way, but to accept gracefully the bad with the good and to try to learn from each experience. She sensed that if she did this, and especially if she asked for guidance each day, that perhaps some of the bad experiences that she was yet to go through in her life might not be as harsh as they otherwise would have been. She realized that her own attitude during each experience was the key to the whole thing. If she allowed herself to become agitated and upset over every little thing that happened, or over the way other people behaved or talked, her life would be one of constant turmoil. But if she maintained a positive, optimistic attitude and did not allow the negativity of others to affect her, and if she tried to understand the motivation behind others' actions and words and tried to help them where she could, her own life would be happier and more meaningful. She knew that a great deal of what others said or did was through lack of understanding. She vaguely remembered a saying somewhere: "*Forgive them, for they know not what they do.*"

"Well, here we are." The Lion's voice awoke her from her thoughts. As they approached the Red Belt, Dorothy could sense a strange vibration. It was not at all unpleasant; in fact, as they got closer, she felt a warm glow all over. As they were about to enter, a young lady appeared in front of them. She was tall and beautiful, with long black hair, and wore a robe of pure white. As she spoke, her dark eyes flashed with merriment.

"Welcome," she said. "My name is Princess Saari. It is a pleasure to see you all. I am to be your guide

through Colorland. Please feel free to ask questions; I know you will find this to be a most pleasant and enjoyable experience." Princess Saari turned. "Come," she said, beckoning them to follow.

As they all walked into the Red Belt, the feeling of heat became stronger. It was not a hot heat, but more of an intense glow. The sound of the musical note "Do" could be heard faintly in the background.

"How do you feel, Dorothy?" asked Saari.

"Oh, glorious," replied Dorothy. "I feel full of energy."

"When you return home to Kansas," went on Saari, "should you feel low on energy, take a few moments to imagine yourself bathed in a deep rose red, just as you are right now. Breathe the red deeply, relax and see every cell of your body and mind bathed in the red. As you breathe the red out again slowly, let your consciousness become one with the red, and visualize every cell of your body renewed and vibrant and full of energy. Do this two or three times, and I'm sure you will feel much better. If you wish to help a friend or relative who is tired or rundown, visualize them bathed in the red and see them as vibrant, energetic and happy; be sure to feel a lot of love toward them as you do this, and I'm sure they will be helped. Now, we mustn't stay too long in any one color; you can get too much of a good thing; we must keep a balance. Before we go into the Orange Belt let me explain the negative aspects of the red. Since it is an energy color, a person who is angry or very upset creates a great deal of it around himself for as long as he allows himself to be in that discordant state of mind. This would not be a good time to visualize the red around that person. By the same token, an excitable person who is easily upset should not wear clothing that is red in color. Now, you may quiet emotionally disturbed people by surrounding them with the color blue. If someone becomes angry with you, don't be angry back, but see that person bathed in a cool blue light. Now, if you are all ready, we will enter the Orange Belt."

As they all walked into the golden orange color, Dorothy felt the changing vibration and hear the continuous tone of the musical note "Re." Princess Saari said, "Breathe in the orange deeply; it's like oxygen to your lungs. Do you feel the power as you breathe in? See this golden orange color in your lungs sending its vital energy into your bloodstream and carrying that energy to every cell of your body. Feel yourself filled with vitality and enthusiasm. How do you feel?" asked Saari, turning to Dorothy.

"Just wonderful," she replied. "I can't wait to see what the yellow feels like."

The little group walked on in silence until the Yellow Belt began. As they walked into the yellow, they could feel a cheerful mood coming on. Dorothy could feel her skin tingling. She could hear in the background the musical note, "Mi."

Princess Saari said, "This ray promotes optimism and cheerfulness. It also has a cleansing effect on the skin. It has a quieting effect on the nerves and stimulates the mental faculties."

Dorothy said, "I always thought that color was just plain color, plain and simple. I didn't know that each color had a different effect on you."

"There is a great deal that is not known," said Princess Saari. "At least, not known to the general public; you see, throughout history, there are those who have been knowledgeable on certain subjects: subjects which are generally not taught. Not too long ago these people were burned at the stake by those who feared them. One always fears what one doesn't understand. Even today these people do not say too much,

as they know that much of what they might say would not be accepted. However, for one such as yourself who has an open and curious mind, books are available on these subjects and can be found."

The Scarecrow interceded, "We discussed this recently, didn't we, Dorothy?"

"Yes, we did," said Dorothy. "We all had quite a discussion on the subject of knowledge and truth and books?"

"What was the general consensus?" asked the princess.

"Well, that we should not accept blindly that which adults teach us, but that we should sift and question and think for ourselves. And if we're not happy with the answer to something, we should find out more about it."

"And if we should become confused by conflicting ideas," said the Tin Woodman, "we should meditate on the subject and ask the Great Wizard to give us the truth or to guide us in the right direction."

"Do you know who the Great Wizard is?" asked Princess Saari.

"I was telling Dorothy something about Him," said the Tin Woodman, "but couldn't quite explain how it is that He loves everyone — even the Wicked Witch..."

"Well, I'll be happy to explain a little more about Him," said Princess

Saari.

"Couldn't you also cover meditation?" said the Tin Woodman. "I was going to explain this to Dorothy, but I would prefer that you teach us."

"I'll be glad to," said the princess. "We'll discuss the Great Wizard as we go into our meditation. Any further questions can be answered before you leave Colorland. All right, let's begin," said the princess. As she spoke, a chair appeared behind each of them. "Please be seated," she said. "Sit upright with your back straight and your legs together. Place your hands upon your knees and turn the palms of your hands upwards. Now, close your eyes and think of the sun; feel its light and warmth on your face; now think of the Great Wizard standing in the middle of the sun. You can't see Him, but you know He's there. Feel his warmth and love pouring down on you. Breathe in that light. As you breathe in the light, visualize a little bright light inside you, like a tiny sun. See that little light inside you grow brighter and brighter until you are filled with this great light. Within this light are all the colors of the rainbow. You may send this great light within you to anyone you know who is sad, or not feeling well, or perhaps you have a pet cat or dog, or even a horse you want to help — this light can be used for any purpose, to help anyone, even to make your plants and flowers grow beautifully. Remember, as you send this light, feel that beautiful love in your heart. Become one with the light.

"Now let us go into deeper meditation. There are many ways to do this, but I think you will especially like this one. Imagine a little door in the middle of the light inside you. As you look at the door, you see some words on it. As you get closer, you see that the words say '*secret place*' and above these words is your name. For example, '*Dorothy's secret place.*' Around your neck is a beautiful gold chain with a tiny gold key attached. You take the chain off over your head and place the key in the lock, turn it, and open the

door. You walk inside and close the door behind you; then you place the key back in the lock and lock the door from the inside. You then put the chain back around your neck. As you turn to observe your secret place, you hear the most beautiful music and feel an outpouring of love showering down upon you. You are filled with a joy and peace that you have never known before. This is your secret place; no one can enter without your permission.

"As you look around you, you see your favorite scene. Perhaps a beautiful sandy seashore. The surf gently tumbles over the rocks and sends a fine spray of salty mist into your face — you can even taste the salt in the spray. Everything smells so fresh and clean. The soft sand under your feet is pure white, and as you walk into the wet sand, the surf gently laps over your feet.

"You may prefer that your secret place be a garden filled with flowers, by a lake, or in the mountains. Wherever your favorite place is, take the time to enjoy your surroundings — the colors of the flowers, the shapes and textures of different objects and materials. And be still — listen to sounds, such as the surf, a waterfall or a fountain splashing. Smell the aroma of a thousand flowers, of freshly cut grass. Just drink everything in and enjoy it.

"Your favorite place may be a book-lined study, with a thick, luxurious carpet and a large, comfortable easy chair. You may keep the same secret place or change as you wish. But wherever you are, visualize yourself as laying down or sitting down and closing your eyes and relaxing. Don't try to control or stop your random thoughts - let them gradually settle down and become very still. Think of the feeling of love inside you, of the beauty of a flower. Think of the Great Wizard as a loving father, who wants you to be happy. Imagine as you think of Him, a soft blue light appearing in front of you, and ever so slowly the blue light takes the form of a majestic being in a beautiful white robe. As the face forms, you observe the kindest eyes you have ever seen. You feel waves of pure love radiating toward you. These waves of love are so strong that tears fill your eyes and roll down your cheeks.

"The being speaks to you in a most serene and gentle voice. 'My child, I am so happy that we could meet at long last. I have known you from the beginning, but you would not take the time to become ever so still in order to seek me; for you had forgotten me. Now that we are together again, we must maintain contact. This is your sanctuary. You can be alone here. It is good for you to come here each day, and when you wish to speak with me, know that I always hear you. In time, as you become ever so still, you may see images, which as you learn to interpret them, will bring answers to your questions. These images and symbols are my way of communicating with you. Of course, you might at times also hear my voice.'"

After a moment of silence, Princess Saari continued, "The Great Wizard is a doer of good, but the work He wishes to do can only be done through you. He needs you very much. But He says if your mind is full of worry or fear, He cannot work through you. You must bring your worries and fears to Him. When you have problems, great or small, wrap them in a package and bring the package to Him. He will open the package and study each item one by one. He will keep them and help you to work them out. You may hear His voice in answer to your questions, or you may see a picture, just as when you dream, or, you may not receive anything at that time. But, be assured, everything is known.

"Now, this work that He has for you to do is to bring light to others. A kind word here, a smile there; people will be drawn to you. He has other work for you to do as your life unfolds. There is much darkness and ignorance in your mortal world. He wants you to learn that you may inspire and uplift and be an example for others to follow. The ignorant will be cruel to you. They sneer at goodness. But forgive them, for they know not where their true happiness lies. Send them love and light to help them. Picture

them in your mind as perfect expressions of kindness and love. Do this often, and I think you will begin to see a change in their manner. If you were to just hate them back, you would feel as bad as they do.

"Ah, if you could but catch a glimpse of what is in store for each and every one, you would be amazed. You see, it is the "I" within you that goes before you to prepare a place for you, and it is the good that you do, and think, and feel, that is building that place. So be strong, have courage, feel love in your heart, and nothing shall overcome you.

"Remember, there is someone who is with you always. Together, you can do anything; be anything; nothing shall be impossible for you. And never, never think of yourself as inferior. With the power that is within you, you can rise above any situation. For you are as strong as a lion."

"Why, thank you," said the Lion. "I take that as a compliment."

Everyone laughed.

As they arose, Dorothy turned to thank Saari. "That was a wonderful talk," she said. "Thank you very much."

"You mustn't thank me," replied Princess Saari. "You are being taught these things because of your desire to learn and to grow, and to expand in consciousness. As you now know, the Great Wizard wishes to bring light into your realm as so many there live in darkness. And when you return from Oz, you will take this light with you and be an inspiration to those around you. Then, as each person in your personal sphere of influence allows the light of love to shine brightly, so shall your country be transformed to a world of light. You will truly have Oz in America.

"We do have some minor problems in Oz, as you know. But we have a great love for one another. Many emotions and problems that you have in Kansas are unknown in Oz. We have no hate or greed. We have no need for money. We are rarely sad, and never bad. Well, hardly ever," the Princess said with a twinkle in her eye. "If we're bad, it's in a good way, if you know what I mean."

Everyone smiled.

"I just love Oz," said Dorothy. "When I get back to Kansas, I'm going to do everything I can to make it just like Oz."

"It may take a little time," said Princess Saari. "People don't change quickly. One day Oz and the mortal realms will be as one. When people finally come to the realization that most of their unhappiness is brought about by their own attitudes and negativity, then change will begin to take place. For example, when love is substituted for animosity, and generosity for greediness; and patience for temper, and as jealousy, envy and hatefulness are eliminated, then you shall see a true peace on earth. In your dealings with others, you must remember to be kind and courteous. Do not speak or think negatively or allow yourself to be placed in a negative state by them. Never speak ill of others or speak harshly against them. If you do listen to people who may influence you in the wrong direction, stop and think of the consequences before you are won over into their darkness. You will grow in the light and walk in that beautiful illumination. You will know that you have created that light through your own desire, and you will keep it aglow by working in harmony with others and by your daily meditation. You are not expected to be an angel among mortals; only to do your best.

"Now, we really must go into the Green Belt. We have stayed a little too long in the Yellow."

Everyone arose and followed Princess Saari into the Green Belt. At once it felt cool and serene. The musical note "*Fa*" could be heard clearly. Princess Saari turned and motioned them all to sit. They did so, and quickly absorbed the green light. The feeling of serenity and peace almost made Dorothy fall asleep. Princess Saari explained, "The green is identified with growing things: grass, trees, flowers and so on. It is a strong healing color. Doctors and nurses often have green around them, along with other healing tones. Green also has a calming effect on the mind and nerves. So, relax everyone, and soak up the green. Breathe it deeply and hold it for a few seconds. See it flow to every cell of your body. Now breathe it out slowly, hold; breathe it in again. Doesn't that feel good? It is good to feel the quiet and calm. The outer noise and turmoil is far removed from us. The more light we allow into our lives, the less the outer restlessness, discord and confusion affects us. We can remain calm and peaceful in all circumstances. It makes us feel good about life; about ourselves, and nothing can come to us of an inferior nature."

Just then, Dorothy noticed a movement out of the corner of her eye. She turned to Princess Saari anxiously. "Excuse me, but did you see something?" she said, rather worriedly.

Saari placed her arms around Dorothy, saying, "You know there's nothing to worry about here."

"Of course," said Dorothy. "I'm sorry. But I saw something move."

"Oh, I think we have guests," said the Princess. "I was wondering if they would appear. They're a little shy, you know."

"Who?" inquired Dorothy.

"The Conciencez," repeated Saari. "That's pronounced *Con-ci-en-chez*. The reason you can hardly see them is that they are green."

Everyone peered hard into the green. Sure enough they began to make out the forms of several creatures. When the creatures saw that they were recognized, they tilted their heads to one side; they cupped their heads in their hands and made a sound in unison: "*Aummmm*."

"What are they doing?" said Dorothy.

"They are tuning in with nature," said Saari. "They like you. You must like plants."

"Why yes," replied Dorothy. "I'm very fond of growing things. I have my own little garden back in Kansas."

"Well, the Conciencez know that," said Saari. "That's why they came to see you. They would never have come if you didn't like plants."

"Do they like plants, too?" asked Dorothy.

"Yes indeed," replied the Princess. "The plant world is their world — they are the protectors and keepers of the plants. Without them plants would not be so beautiful and would hardly grow at all."

"My goodness," said Dorothy. "I thought that if plants had light and water and food in the soil, they just

grew."

"That's what most people think," said the Princess. "But if they could see the Conciencenz at work, they would be very surprised.

"Plants to the Conciencenz are as important as people are to us. They protect them and care for them. Each Conciencenz has many plants under his charge. They start work at dawn with a great joy and happiness. They draw their feelings of joy from the flowers and other plants which are themselves filled with happiness at the coming of each new dawn.

"The Conciencenz hover near the plants they are in charge of and try to find out if anything is wrong — sort of like a doctor making the rounds of his patients. They often stay with a flower if it's not doing too well; petting it and loving it like a baby until it feels better. They will work also with people who love plants and will help them, although they don't like to be seen unless they know that you will understand and not be frightened. As you can see, they have a resemblance to humans, but their facial features can barely be made out. Their eyes are almost nonexistent, with no eyelids or lashes. They have a slight suggestion of a nose and of ears and just barely a slit for a mouth, although if you look closely, you will see a funny yet merry appearance in their faces. They have no hair at all, as you can see. They cannot hear or see as we do, but they feel the radiation of light and sound with their entire body. They don't eat food; but they gain their nourishment from the perfume of the flowers by bathing in the various fragrances daily. They don't have inner organs as we do, but where the ear would be is a glowing pulsating golden light. They tune the pulsation's to the pulsing vibrations of the plant, and become one with the plant. Remarkable, isn't it?"

"It's just amazing," said Dorothy. "People don't know the half of what's going on right under their noses — it's as if they were half asleep."

"Well," said the Princess, "it's like a surface fish in the ocean. He's totally unaware of the world above the surface or deep below. What he perceives with his senses in his own world is to him all there is." Princess Saari stood and beckoned everyone to follow as she walked into the Blue Belt and the sound of the musical note "So." As they walked, Saari explained, "The blue is a very interesting color. If you have a temperature, the blue will have a soothing effect on you; it is a serene color and quiets the nervous system. It's good to visualize the blue around you as you go into a quiet state or begin a creative activity. Incidentally, you might like to experiment with all of these colors; take a glass of water and allow the sun to shine on the water through a color filter for a few minutes or, if you don't have a color filter, just hold the glass of water in your left hand and hold the fingers of your right hand over the glass pointed downwards toward the water. Now, visualize the color you wish as flowing from your hand into the water. Do this for about five minutes. You may then drink the water several times during the day using a small glass. Experiment with different colors to see what effect each color has on you. Perhaps, for example, if you have trouble sleeping, you may wish to drink the blue and violet treated water, as these colors have a soothing effect on the nerves. At night, when you go to bed, visualize these colors swirling around you, since they are relaxing colors. When you drink the color-treated water, do so very slowly, while at the same time mentally absorb the color and see yourself in a deep peaceful sleep and tell yourself that upon awakening the next morning you will be fully rested, vibrant, full of enthusiasm, and ready to be up and at 'em.

"All right, everyone," said Princess Saari, clapping her hands, "it's time to be moving along. We will now enter the Indigo Belt. As you enter, you will become aware of the musical note 'La.' Indigo is the dark blue. In ancient times, this color was associated with intuition, with the seeking of wisdom and truth. It is

the color of highly developed sensitivity. You will feel, as you enter the dark blue, a strange awareness. The stirring of memories deep within, remembrance of other places, other times. You will know that you are, always have been, and always will be. And that you are being molded according to your inner desire. As you think in your heart, so shall you be. No one else makes you as you are, only you. If you are loving and kind, patient and understanding, you are allowing that inner and higher self to have an expression. You are the master of yourself and you will allow no thoughts of an inferior nature into your kingdom, for you are the supreme ruler. You have power, you have peace, you are all there is. And so many wonderful things will come unto you that there shall not be room to contain them. If all the children in the world were to grow up with this understanding, the world would be heaven on earth, fear would be unknown; guns and locks would be museum curiosities. Those mind-bending chemicals and the alcohol would no longer be used to bring people into false states of happiness. For each would have so much happiness within, it would be bubbling over and shining from their eyes.

"This force within you is a mighty limitless energy that will flow freely, unless you cut off that flow with words like *'I can't; I'm not; I won't; I hate;* and such as — *'I can't do that; I'm not able; I haven't the ability; I won't do it; I hate to do that.'* Every time you say *'I'* you are arousing that great fire and power within you — that power can bring you untold misery or unhappiness to others as well as yourself. And generally, if you unleash misery to others, you are automatically unleashing it to yourself. Just as when you make another happy, you feel good inside. It is impossible to be angry or upset with someone and to feel good at the same time. Repeat this to yourself as you start your day:

"I am the power to be peaceful or warlike,

I am the power to be harmonious or irritated,

I am the power to be happy or unhappy,

I am the power to be generous or stingy —

in thought, feeling, words or actions.

I am the power to be constructive or destructive."

"You see, you are largely a do-it-yourself project. You may also repeat these words of power:

"I am the mighty, electronic cosmic energy. Flowing through,

filling and renewing every cell of my mind and body right now. As I go

out into the world, expressing ever-widening circles of creative and

constructive activity, nothing shall be impossible to me; nothing has

power over me. I am the master of myself."

Dorothy commented to Princess Saari that she was learning a great deal. Princess Saari replied, "Colorland is a university of the highest order. Many come here to learn as they absorb the energy of the

colors. You are fortunate to have earned this privilege. Not everyone has reached a point in their evolution where this teaching can be given to them, for they are not ready. To give this teaching to some would be like sowing seeds on stony ground; the thoughts given here could not take root in their consciousness, but would wither and die for lack of nourishment.

"Now, lastly, but certainly not least, we enter the seventh color — purple. The Purple corresponds to the seventh level of consciousness that you will one day reach."

As they entered, Dorothy felt the most beautiful sensation pulsating through her being. She felt as light as a feather — almost as if she were floating. In fact, as she looked down, she saw that she was hovering about twelve inches above the ground. The musical sound of the note "Ti" was vibrating softly throughout. She turned to see that all the others were floating, too, including Princess Saari. Everyone looked at each other in great surprise, with the exception of the Princess, whose eyes twinkled. She explained, "It is impossible for the density of matter to exist in the purple, due to its high frequency. As you enter the purple, you leave the atoms of the physical behind you — only the higher vibrating counterpart of the atom — the '*anim*,' can enter. Hence, your lack of weight. As you can see, you appear solid to each other, as indeed you are; but, were you back in your homes, you could walk through the walls of your houses. Incidentally, there's no need to hover above the ground, unless you want to. Your thoughts now control everything. You can choose to walk to a given destination, or just think yourself somewhere, and there you are — in the twinkling of an eye — even thousands of miles away. Distance makes no difference. For example: think of yourself at your home...." No sooner did Dorothy think of herself in her house than she was there. No one was home and, for a moment, she wasn't sure if she was dreaming. However, as she looked around, she saw Princess Saari appear through the wall.

She smiled, as she took Dorothy's hand. Together they walked through the outer wall to Dorothy's little garden. "I see the little flowers you planted are doing just fine," said Saari.

"Everything looks exactly as I left it," said Dorothy.

"Of course," replied Saari. "Now, let's discuss the purple further. The purple is the highest vibration of the spectrum. It is the seventh color ray, and seven is a very mysterious number. The Purple is a blending of the red and the blue. It is the color of royalty. As you bathe in it, drink it in, you will feel that you are master of all things — that you are all there is.

"Well, this is where your journey ends and where we must part," said Saari. "I hope you have enjoyed your visit to Colorland, and that it has inspired you to learn more about the nature of color. I will miss you all very much."

"We will miss you, too, Princess Saari," said Dorothy. "Thank you for a wonderful experience." Dorothy reached up and gave Saari a big hug and kiss. Saari embraced each of them in turn. As they left, her eyes filled with tears. She had grown to love them all very much. Dorothy turned to wave as Saari disappeared from view.

Chapter Fourteen:

Tickleland

As they approached the borders of Tickleland, Dorothy became apprehensive. "I'm so ticklish. I'll just die if the Ticklemonsters catch me," she said.

"We'll do our best to protect you, Dorothy," said the Tin Woodman as the Scarecrow nodded his head.

"What about me?" said the Lion. "I'm ticklish, too, you know."

"Well, we'll do our best," said the Tin Woodman. "But there's only two of us to protect you, and there's an awful lot of Ticklemonsters."

"All you have to do is tell them 'don't stop'," said the Scarecrow.

"Tell them 'don't stop'?" questioned Dorothy in surprise.

"Yes. Don't you remember what I told you?" said the Tin Woodman. "The Ticklemonsters don't like being told what to do, so if you tell them to stop, they'll just keep going, and if you tell them to tickle you, they won't."

"What if they're really hungry?" said Dorothy.

"Hungry?" echoed the Tin Woodman.

"Yes," replied Dorothy. "You said that Ticklemonsters don't eat regular food, but that the sound of laughter energizes molecules in the air around them, and that they absorb the energized molecules through their skin."

"Oh yes, of course," said the Tin Woodman. "I almost forgot. Well, to answer your question, the Ticklemonsters are so stubborn that they'd rather go hungry than do as they're told."

"Once, I was sent to bed without any dinner for not doing as I was told," said the girl.

"Well the Ticklemonsters are gluttons for punishment," said the Scarecrow. "They simply won't do as they're told — no matter what. So they go hungry a lot."

"Why do they hate having to do as they're told so much?" asked Dorothy.

"I don't know," replied the Tin Woodman. "They just don't like it. They want to do what they want to do, and not what someone else wants them to do."

"Well, I guess we are all sort of like that," said Dorothy. "We're told what to do by our parents and by our teachers, and then when we leave school to go to work we have a boss telling us what to do. It does get a little tiring."

"Yes, but imagine what it would be like if no one ever told you what to do," said the Tin Woodman.

"Would you help around the house without being asked? Or get up in the morning in time for school, and go to bed at a reasonable hour? Would you behave in school, and concentrate on learning all you could? And do your homework without putting up a fuss?"

"I might do all those things if given a chance, said Dorothy. "But grown-ups automatically assume that you

have to be pushed and prodded all the time. They don't leave you alone. It's '*do this,*' and '*do that,*' and '*why aren't you doing so and so?*' It's just too much at times. Sometimes you feel like verbally lashing back at them, or just going off and not doing anything at all."

With that, they arrived at the gates of Tickleland. A sign above the gates read:

WARNING!

TRAVELERS THROUGH TICKLELAND

ARE WELCOME

"That's a strange sign," said Dorothy. "Warning you that you're welcome?"

"Well, when you think about it," said the Scarecrow, "travelers are food if caught and tickled. So naturally they welcome you. And they are warning you in advance, which is very nice of them. After all, if you are caught, you may be tickled to death."

"Oh, my," gasped Dorothy. "I hadn't thought of that."

"Well, we have to go on, Dorothy," said the Scarecrow.

"We'll do our best to protect you all," said the tin man.

The Lion gingerly opened the gates and peered in. "Not a soul in sight," he said. "Maybe they're all at a convention or something," he added hopefully.

As they walked, everyone felt better. Tickleland was quite pretty, really. Rolling hills of green grass and clumps of trees here and there. As they approached some trees, they noticed a well. "Would you like a drink of water, Dorothy?" asked the Tin Woodman.

"Oh yes, please," replied Dorothy. "I'm quite thirsty."

As the tin man lowered the bucket, he began to relax.

"Well," remarked the Scarecrow, "it looks as though we may walk right through Tickleland without seeing one Ticklemonster. Tickleland's not very big, you know. Look, there — the border's right there." Everyone turned in the direction he was pointing in and, sure enough, the border was about the same distance as they'd traveled so far.

"What a relief," said Dorothy as the Tin Woodman handed her a ladle of water from the well. "Mmmm, this is good," said Dorothy. "So refreshing."

"Surprise!" said a loud voice.

Everyone jumped. They turned to see about twenty Ticklemonsters who quickly surrounded them.

"Are we glad to see you," said one who appeared to be their leader. He was a little taller than the others and was the one who had greeted them so abruptly. "We welcome you to Tickleland," he continued,

bending over in a mock bow. "I might add that we are all very hungry, so we doubly welcome you. Grab those two!" he said, pointing to the Tin Woodman and Scarecrow. Six of the Ticklemonsters quickly jumped on them and held their arms and legs.

"Now," said the leader, "let's have us a feast!"

"Oh, no," said the Lion, beginning to laugh uncontrollably. "I won't be able to stand it."

The Ticklemonsters moved quickly with their eight arms as they grabbed the Lion and Dorothy and tickled and tickled.

"Oh, no! Stop, please stop!" shouted Dorothy between peals of laughter. The Lion could not even plead with them to stop. He was laughing so much that tears were rolling down his cheeks. Their pleas to stop could hardly be heard above their laughter. The Tin Woodman and Scarecrow shouted,

"Tell them to tickle you." "Then they'll stop." "Remember they do the opposite of what they're told."

Dorothy managed to gasp out, "Don't stop tickling me — tickle me some more." The two Ticklemonsters who were tickling her immediately stopped.

"We won't," they said in a huff, and folded their arms and held their hands up with a stubborn look on their faces. The Lion managed to say the same thing, and his Ticklemonsters stopped, too. With that, the Ticklemonsters abruptly turned and left, muttering to themselves, "Trying to tell us what to do. What nerve!"

After the Ticklemonsters had gone, everyone picked himself up and headed quickly for the border. When they reached it, they all heaved a sigh of relief. "Thank goodness that's over," said the Lion. "It's a good thing we knew about them not liking to be told what to do."

Chapter Fifteen:

Elfland

"Well, what next?" asked Dorothy.

"Let's look at the map," said the Tin Woodman. "Ah, of course, Elfland. That is the last country shown on the map. The rest says, *largely unexplored* Maybe the Elves can tell us something of the land beyond their border."

As they entered Elfland, Dorothy remembered the Conciencenez and wondered if the Elves were similar.

As if in answer to her question, she felt a tug on her shoelace and heard a little voice squeaking, "Excuse me, but you're standing on my foot."

"Oh, I'm terribly sorry," exclaimed Dorothy. "I didn't see you," she said, as she bent down to pick the little fellow up. He was about four-and-a-half inches tall and was clothed in a tightly fitted one-piece garment of a brownish color; he had large hands and feet, too large for the size of his body. His legs were thin and spindly, and his large ears were pointed, as was his nose. When Dorothy picked him up, he said, "I was sitting on my friend the rock. We were so deep in conversation that I didn't hear you coming."

"Excuse me," said Dorothy, "but did I hear you correctly? You were sitting on your friend the rock, having a conversation with him?"

The Elf replied, rather tartly, "You mortals are really something. You're practically deaf, dumb, and blind. In fact, a real deaf or blind mortal probably hears and sees more than a so-called normal one. Most mortals are so caught up with the gaudy sights and loud sounds around them that they do not see or hear the more subtle sights and sounds of nature. A whole world exists of which they are totally unaware."

"Are you saying that rocks are alive?" interceded Dorothy.

The little Elf shook his head in disbelief. "All of creation is alive. There is no such thing as being *not alive*. If something was dead, it couldn't exist."

"What about a dead animal?" said Dorothy. "Or fish? I had a goldfish that I loved very much and, when he died, I was very sad."

"You shouldn't have been so sad," said the Elf. "All of creation is pulsating vibrant life energy of which the outer forms are constantly undergoing change, but not one tiny atom of that living energy can be destroyed. Ask any of your scientists if this is not true."

"But my goldfish did die," insisted Dorothy. "Any scientist would testify to that."

"Of course," replied the Elf. "However, a scientist's understanding of life energy ends with the physical death of the entity under study. The outer appearance of your goldfish would indicate to him that the goldfish had died. But appearances can be deceiving. The scientist knows that the atoms of the goldfish's *dead* body are still in motion, and will gradually formulate individual chemicals, gases, and minerals as the body decays and returns to the earth. These atoms, you see, will eventually become part of some other living thing, perhaps a flower or a tree."

"Is that what you mean when you say my goldfish is not really dead?" asked Dorothy. "That the atoms of its body are still in motion and will become a part of some other living thing?"

"No," replied the Elf. "That's not what I mean, although what you say is true; the atoms of one's body will always be alive somewhere. But these atoms are not any more you than they are a flower or any other thing. They are just the building blocks...."

"Your feelings and your emotions — your capacity to love, to hate: this is all you. And this personality that is you can never die. It is not dependent on atoms for its existence. It just borrows them to make a garment so that it can function in the physical world, and while in that garment it will interact with other personalities and have the opportunity to learn and to grow through mutual experiences. The degree to which it learns and grows will, of course, depend on the inner desire. That inner desire for advancement is very strong in some — yet totally nonexistent in others. It is the responsibility of those more advanced to assist those that are lagging behind, for it is most important that each person's short excursion into the physical-mortal realm not be wasted, for these are precious opportunities indeed."

"That is most interesting," replied Dorothy, "although I'm not sure that I have understood all that you have said."

"You will in time," replied the Elf, kindly. "Now, regarding your goldfish: as I said before, he did not die. You only assumed that he did because his body was motionless. He is, in fact, quite alive."

"If he is alive, then where is he?" inquired Dorothy, looking rather puzzled.

"Ah, now, that is a good question," said the Elf. "But, before I can answer it, let me explain about the rock, and about the other living things. All of the atoms which make up the physical world have a counterpart which cannot be seen. This counterpart takes up the same position in space as the atom, but extends slightly beyond it. The name of this duplicate atom is 'ANIM.' I believe Princess Saari told you about this."

Dorothy nodded.

"Your scientists are as yet unable to observe the ANIM, for their instruments are not sensitive enough. However, they have observed the effects of the ANIM through their study of anti-matter. Anti-matter is exactly as the name implies — the opposite of matter, and is the substance of which infinite worlds are made, worlds which are normally unseen by people because of the fineness of their vibratory rate. The ultra-high frequencies of the ANIM world are simply unobservable by your scientists, although some of your people who have very sensitive natures have caught glimpses of these hidden worlds from time to time. All people on earth are merely visiting the atom world. Their normal residence is the ANIM world, but they have to enter into the dense atom world for experiences that can only be obtained in such an environment.

"Now, when the atoms of your body began to form into molecules and cells prior to your birth, the counterpart atoms called the ANIMs took their place first to form the various nuclei. These were the blueprints, so to speak. The entire process is extremely delicate and, surprisingly, usually comes out perfect. However, sometimes outside electrical influences are brought into the process, one such example is the ingestion of certain toxic chemicals by the host organism — the mother. This can result in electrical interference. Remember, the whole process is electrical to begin with, so it doesn't take too much to upset the apple-cart. You may ask what directs the atoms to the various parts of the body to form the molecules that make up the different cells that will form the heart, the liver, kidneys, ears, eyes, teeth, bones, hair, arms, legs, and so on; and what puts them all in their right places? And how did each cell of the body, as it reproduced, know that it was to be a liver cell, heart cell, et cetera? Scientists refer to this built-in intelligence as genetic and, indeed, this is true. The genes determine the physical makeup, the color of the eyes and hair, skin color, general build, et cetera. But what force controls the overall process - the way in which this genetic information is put together in the first place and then passed on from generation to generation? What is the nature of this living energy that appears to have an intelligence all its own? All forms of life are dependent on this life energy. Were it suddenly to withdraw, all life on earth would withdraw and traverse to the ANIM world. The nature of this energy is pure light — and it is what sustains life on earth. Indeed, it sustains and directs life throughout the entire universe. Another name for this universal energy is 'Love.' Yet another name is 'God.' For us, here in Oz, it is the Great Wizard."

"My goodness," said Dorothy. "I have never heard God explained in that way before."

"I'm afraid that the general understanding of the Universal Intelligence is very limited," sighed the Elf.

"The American Indians were one people who had a great understanding of this Great Spirit, for they were very close to Him through their deep awareness of the laws of nature. They were also highly evolved spiritually, that is before the white man tried to convert them to a religion which they themselves did not

practice.

"However, to continue.... The atoms of your goldfish's body returned to the earth, as you know. But, before that, the counterpart atoms were, in effect, the counterpart body of your goldfish. When it was determined by the soul of your goldfish that the physical body would no longer sustain life, it severed the silver cord. The silver cord is the connecting link between the two, and its primary function (other than to direct the vital life energy to the physical body) is to allow the ANIM body to travel away from the physical during sleep. But, once this cord is broken, the physical body is cut off from its source of life energy and dies immediately. No power in heaven or earth can reconnect this silver cord once it is severed.

"Well, all you knew, of course, was that your goldfish died and you felt a great sadness. Had you known that he was alive and well in another dimension, you would not have been quite so sad. Especially if, during sleep, you could have visited him. Remember, your ANIM body functions on the same level as his does, so, just before going to sleep at night, you could ask your soul to take you to visit him. It takes a little practice at first, especially to entrench the memory of these meetings into the memory region of the physical brain, but it can be done. You can meet with anyone you like this way. It just takes determination and practice and a conscious effort to remember the excursion upon awakening. Once you learn to do this, you will find yourself visiting with people you have never met before. Many beautiful experiences await those who become aware of this other existence during sleep. Sleep is not just all dreams and rest for the body — although both are very necessary for physical and mental health."

"Are you saying we live two lives simultaneously — one on earth during the day, and one on the ANIM level at night?"

"That is true," replied the Elf. "There is no limit to what you might be doing at night — visiting people you love; attending schools, universities, lectures, and concerts; helping people such as the sick or those on lower levels of development. Swimming, horseback riding, or playing any number of sports; as I say, anything you can think of, you can do. There is no awareness of these activities, because they occur during the very deep levels of sleep and, as one approaches the shallower levels of sleep, the activities blend into dreams. So, if anything is remembered, it is only little bits and pieces intermingled with fragments of half-remembered dreams."

"How fascinating," said Dorothy.

"Yes, but also sad," said the Elf. "Mortals are basically mesmerized by the material world. So much so that they have become about ninety-nine percent unconscious of reality. The material world is not true reality, but is a shadow world created by the collective minds of the inhabitants so they could experience a denseness and a harshness not found on the higher levels. Now earth's inhabitants are trapped into an endless cycle of physical rebirth. And, until they can generate a genuine desire for a higher spiritual existence, they are doomed to eternal pain and anguish. It is so sad."

The Elf shook his head. "Why mortals continue to endure a physical existence is beyond my comprehension. I suppose, because they have lived in the physical realm for so long, they have forgotten about the higher life completely. Even though people from higher levels have endured re-birth to remind them. People like Jesus, Buddha, and Mohammed, just to mention a few. Oh, a few people listened to their words with their hearts and changed their lives, but, for the most part, what was said fell on deaf ears; and then, through the centuries, the message brought by these masters became distorted. And now, very few people really understand what was said. They have twisted the true meaning to fit whatever

philosophies please them. Especially philosophies that do not require them to work hard in order to grow spiritually, or to sacrifice their mortal pleasure and greed, or to dedicate their lives to the service of their fellows. Yes, it is sad indeed. Some even believe that all they have to do is to believe certain things and they will be saved from their mortal sins. But then they continue in the same old way, their hearts still filled with envy, resentment, greed, and jealousy. They use the spoken word in an unkind fashion to their fellow mortals on a daily basis. They are inconsiderate. They harbor dark thoughts. Yet, because they confess their sins and believe in one person as representing God, they think they are saved. My! How they have blinded themselves to reality. Meanwhile, various members of other religions (or no religion, even) who have made a concentrated effort to improve their mortal ways have earned the right to no longer have to return to the mortal realm.

"You see, *'By your works you shall be known'* is a true statement. This means far more than is realized. Well, I'm afraid that I am getting far too serious for you, my sweet young lady," said the Elf with a smile.

"Oh, no, that's all right," replied Dorothy. "I like to listen to you."

"Then perhaps one final thought on the subject," continued the Elf. "If your fellow mortals would listen to the wisdom as given by people like the man Jesus, and if they were to follow the directives to do good; to express love and forgiveness; to be kind and gentle and understanding of one another; To serve their fellows with compassion, and to love their God (and/or Good) more than themselves, what a different place your world would be!"

The Elf fell silent for a moment as though contemplating all he had said... Suddenly, his face lit up as he focused his attention on Dorothy again. "Would you like to see your little goldfish?"

"Oh, would I!" said Dorothy excitedly.

"Well, follow me, then," the Elf said as he jumped up off the rock. He motioned everyone to be quiet as he parted some branches of a bush. He then indicated them to walk through. They found themselves in a clearing. It was a very busy scene, with lots of little Elves hurrying and scurrying to and fro" between their cute little houses nestled between an assortment of pretty trees and flowers. A beautiful fish pond occupied the center of the clearing, and a waterfall cascaded down over the rocks. Around the many beautiful lilies floating in the pond swam fish of every description, including, of course, several goldfish. The Elf motioned Dorothy to put one finger into the water. As she did so, a little goldfish swam up to her finger and nibbled gently on it.

"It's my fish! It's my fish!" exclaimed Dorothy.

"Ssh, not so loud," hushed the Elf. "You won't scare the fish, for they are not afraid here, but I don't want to attract the other Elves' attention just yet, or everything will come to a standstill around here."

So far, the other Elves had not noticed them. Everyone was so intent in his occupation.

"We don't want them to get behind with their work, you know," said the Elf. "Your little goldfish did recognized you, didn't he?"

"Oh, yes, he did," said Dorothy. "He certainly did. I will never be sad anymore over him."

"That's good," said the Elf. "You should try not to be so sad if someone you love dies, because they will feel your sadness. Of course, they feel the pain of separation too. But they know that one day you will be together again, and they don't want you to mourn, but to be happy that they've gone on to a better life."

"You see," the elf continued, "all forms of life are in a state of evolution; not only physically, but spiritually, too. Unfortunately, not all evolve as fast spiritually as they do physically. Many of your people have advanced greatly in science and knowledge, but that advancement is not balanced by spiritual knowledge. And so a great deal of unnecessary suffering exists. But, to get back to your little friend the goldfish: he is evolving, too, and no form of life can advance very much in one short lifetime, so, after that quite short, often difficult life spent on the mortal realm, everyone comes to a place like this for a long rest. Well, it's usually long, but can be short, too, depending on the need. Then they must return for another round of experiences. Finally, one day, if their lessons are learned, they earn the right to live in a place like our world forever, and no longer have to return to that harsh land of yours."

"Oh, that would be wonderful!" cried Dorothy. "May I come to Elfland when I die?"

"Of course," replied the Elf. "But you must try to live as long as you can first, and try to overcome all of the difficulties presented to you, and that overcoming will make you strong and will earn you a place in this beautiful land of ours."

"Some people, unfortunately, cannot bear the difficulties that the mortal life presents, and may, by their own hand, cut their lives short to try to escape. But there is no real escape, for eventually, except in rare instances, they will have to face that which they have sought to avoid. So why prolong the agony? Learn your lessons well — and accept gracefully all that happens. Be positive through the bad as well as the good. No more than this is expected of you. Now, not to change the subject, exactly. But would you like to look around?"

"Yes, we'd love to," replied Dorothy.

"All right," said the Elf. "But no talking to anyone until his work is done."

"When will that be?" inquired Dorothy.

"Well ... actually ... never, but they'll be having a little break soon," replied the Elf, with a grin. "As you can see, we work very hard here."

"Everyone seems so happy as they work," said Dorothy.

"It wasn't always this way," replied the Elf. "We used to be ruled by a wicked king who used us as slave labor, but we broke away from that wicked king and came here and started a new land. Now that we are free to live as we wish, we pool our labor for the benefit of all."

"Are you the leader?" asked Dorothy.

"We don't have one," answered the Elf. "We do not allow any person or any group of people absolute power over the rest of us."

"How are things decided, then?" asked the Tin Woodman, who had been listening very intently.

"Well, we are not a big country," replied the Elf, "so we don't need a full-time government."

"You do have a government, then?" said the Scarecrow.

"Oh, yes," replied the Elf. "We do, but they don't have the power over the people like other governments. Let me explain: any group of people called a government is only as good as the sum total of all the individuals who make up that group. So, if the majority of these individuals are dedicated to the good of all, then the people will have a good government. If, however, the majority of these individuals are dedicated only to the good of themselves and their own special interests, then the people are short-changed and the country is weakened. When a major decision has to be made which affects all of us, everyone's name is thrown into a hat, then twelve of those names are drawn. These twelve are then given the task of formulating the plan. All of the rest of us vote on this plan. If it passes by at least eighty percent of the vote, we assume that, since eighty or more out of a hundred Elves want it, it will probably be good for all of us. If it doesn't pass, we urge all who voted 'no' to carefully restudy the proposal; then only these people vote again. Usually it passes this time. If it doesn't, we ask those who voted 'no' again to write down their objections; then we rewrite the proposal and everyone votes again. The proposal very rarely fails this time. If any proposal fails by a very large margin, we just throw it out until a better plan is formulated. Usually everyone joins in with suggestions."

"It sounds quite simple," said Dorothy.

"It is," replied the Elf. "Our government is only in operation for one thing at a time, so they don't try to think up new ways to control the people, and they don't act like an all-knowing parent and treat the rest of us like little children and say '*You can't do this*' or '*You can't do that*' or '*You must do this*' or '*You must do that.*' Since most of us have voted 'yes' on everything, we ourselves have chosen to do this or that, so we are happy to abide by the law, for we know it is for the good of all us. We don't have that situation where the few gain special concessions at the expense of the many."

"Well, it all sounds like a very fine arrangement," said Dorothy. "But I'm afraid our society is far too complex for the same kind of arrangement."

"Only because you make it so," replied the Elf. "Too much mortal thought and not enough spiritual thought is the main problem with your system. By the way," he said, "we do not use money here. But we once did. And, when we did, we all paid ten percent of our earnings in taxes. In other words, we all paid an equal portion of our income, and no one was allowed any deductions. Of course, now we don't use money anymore, so we are required to give ten percent of our goods or services. However, nobody abides by it because we all give more voluntarily. We have no greed here, so we don't hoard vast amounts of goods and property. We just take what we need for today, for that's all anybody needs. If someone should feel he needs more — our community warehouses are full. But, since there is plenty for everyone, nobody bothers to acquire a whole lot, or, if anyone does, he soon tires of it."

"What if someone is not content with one of these little houses you have," asked Dorothy, "but wants to build a great big house on top of the hill?"

"No problem," replied the Elf. "He just makes his wishes known on the bulletin board in the town square, and everybody stops what he's doing and runs to help build the house. But most Elves like to live close together (we're very friendly). We enjoy each other's company, and are very considerate of one another."

"We don't like to isolate ourselves from our neighbors."

"Well, as I said, everyone seems so very happy," said Dorothy.

"Oh, yes," replied the Elf. "We work harder for each other than we do for ourselves. There is great joy in helping someone else. People who only live to take from others have very heavy hearts and sad lives. Well, I must get back to work," said the Elf briskly. "It's been very nice meeting you all, and I do hope you will return again to see us."

"Thank you," said Dorothy.

"You've been very kind, and we enjoyed hearing your philosophy," said the Scarecrow.

"Well, thank you," said the Elf. "We try to keep life simple; if it gets too complicated, too many problems start appearing."

"Oh, before you go," said Dorothy, "can you tell us about Thoughtformland and Americanindianland?"

"Well, we're not a traveling people," said the Elf. "But I've heard much concerning these places. They are actually more closely related to my world than to yours. There's a lot of strange things in Thoughtformland. They are created by the thoughts of mortals. You see, as a mortal idly allows a certain thought or emotion to dominate his consciousness, a change takes place in his overall vibration. After that thought or feeling is gone, his body returns to its normal vibration again; however, his normal vibration is now slightly changed to reflect that last thought, and it becomes easier to entertain that thought again. That is why, when someone begins to think of evil-doing or committing a certain crime, it's usually not too long before he actually commits the crime. His vibration is a somewhat changed vibration than before the thought. That thought, in effect, has taken form in his consciousness. Since the thinker has exercised little control over his thoughts — or, let's say, the emotion that accompanies a particular thought — it becomes easier for him to yield to that same thought again and again, and, each time he does, his changed vibration becomes more permanent, making it easier and easier for that thought to return and take hold. Before long, the thought is as much a part of him as anything else — it is now part of his personality. Carrying out the physical activity that the thought portrayed is quite a normal thing for him to do. The thought form which he has created by these constant thoughts attracts to itself similar thoughtforms created by others. These forms all influence the thinker so much that he cannot at this point resist. He is now more or less under the control of a force that he himself, with others, has created. He is no longer master of himself, but is a slave of his overall thoughts. So watch your thoughts. Keep them pure and loving; never allow them to dwell on wrong-doing. And, if one of those W.T.s does come into your head, sweep him out the door and tell him don't come back."

"What's a W.T.?" asked the Scarecrow.

"Wrong Thought, my boy, Wrong Thought," said the Elf. "And, if someone else tries to put one in your head, pay not the slightest attention, just smile to yourself knowingly and walk away."

"Well, I really must go now," said the Elf. "But, before I do, here's a little poem on the subject of being careful of your thoughts:"

BE CAREFUL

Be careful of your thoughts

For your thoughts become your words,

Be careful of your words

For your words become your actions.

Be careful of your actions

For your actions become your habits.

Be careful of your habits

For your habits become your character.

Be careful of your character

For your character becomes your destiny.

"That really sums it all up beautifully," said Dorothy. "Who wrote that?"

"I'm afraid the author is unknown," replied the Elf.

"Well, he must have been very wise, whoever he was," answered Dorothy. "And thank you so much for everything. You have helped us a great deal. Oh!" she exclaimed.

"What's the matter?" asked the Elf.

"You were going to tell us about Americanindianland?" the girl reminded him.

"Oh, yes, of course," replied the Elf. "But before I do, I should tell you a little story about pets. I think you'll like this, it encompasses some of what I have told you. The story is called *The Rainbow Bridge*."

There is a bridge connecting heaven and earth.

It is called the Rainbow Bridge because of its many colors. Just

this side of the Rainbow Bridge is a land of meadows, hills and valleys

— all of it covered with lush green grass.

When a beloved pet dies, the pet goes to this lovely land. There is

always food and water and warm spring weather. There, the old and

frail animals are young again. Those who are maimed are made whole

once again. They play all day with each other, content and comfortable.

There is only one thing missing. They are not with the special person who loved them on earth. So each day they run and play until the day comes when one suddenly stops playing and looks up! The nose twitches! The ears are up! The eyes are staring! You have been seen, and that one suddenly runs from the group!

You take him or her in your arms and embrace. Your face is kissed again and again and again. And you look once more into the eyes of your trusting pet. Then, together, you cross the Rainbow Bridge, never again to be separated.

As the story came to a close, everyone was crying. "Oh, how beautiful!" cried Dorothy. "If only all the children of the world who have lost a pet could hear this. Although their sadness would still be great because of their loss, they would know that their pet is not really dead, and that their separation is only for a little while."

"I knew you would enjoy hearing this special tale," replied the Elf. "Now let's see.... What else were we going to discuss? Oh yes, Americanindianland." He closed his eyes and smiled happily while shaking his head slowly. "I haven't been there, but I know all about it."

"Is it dangerous?" asked Dorothy, anxiously.

"Dangerous?" echoed the Elf. "My goodness, no! Just the opposite! You will be very warmly received in that land. Only good Indians live there, and most Indians were good, in spite of what the white man believed. Americanindianland is the happy hunting ground mentioned often by the Indians. The Indians, as you know, lived very close to nature. The white man believed them to be savages, but the Indian, in many ways, was far more advanced than the white man who came to show him the way. And because of the Indian's closeness to the earth and attunement with nature, he is well suited to working with and helping mortals. Many of you have unseen Indian guides who protect you and help you in many different ways. They enjoy this work, and it helps them with their own advancement. Haven't you ever lost something, then found it in a place you've already looked?"

Dorothy nodded. "Yes, that has happened to me. I just assumed that I only thought I'd looked there before, or just hadn't noticed it there."

"Well, if you're not sure if you have an Indian guide, ask when you are in a quiet state to be assigned to one, then see if you can pick up his name and tribe."

"Who assigns the Indian guides?" asked Dorothy.

"Sitting Bull is in charge of that," answered the Elf. "He works with the High teachers. This work keeps him very busy, as you can imagine. Of course, he lives in Americanindianland with all the guides. The

guides are made up from every tribe there is. They are wonderful beings and have a great sense of humor. I hope you get to meet Sitting Bull. He is a beautiful illumined soul.

"Well, I really must be going this time," said the Elf. "Good luck to you all," he said as he waved goodbye.

Dorothy said to the others, "I'm looking forward to seeing Americanindianland, but I'm not so sure about Thoughtformland." They all nodded in agreement. Suddenly, from out of nowhere, came a loud scream. As they looked up, a chill ran through them all. It was the Wicked Witch of the Deep South, swooshing down on them on her broomstick.

"So, my pretty," she screamed at Dorothy. "Are you coming to kill me, too? Who's going to do it? Your scraggly stuffed friend?" She pointed her finger at the Scarecrow, and bolts of lightning shot from her fingers to explode around him. "Or maybe your brave little pussy-cat!" she said mockingly, as she did the same thing to the Lion and made him jump. "Or what about your tin-can friend?" she whined, shooting a bolt of lightning above the Tin Woodman's head and creating a miniature cloudburst over him, making him jump clear to escape the water. "I'll be waiting for you, my little pretty," she screamed at Dorothy. "That's if you ever get through Thoughtformland. All my thoughts live there, you know. And they just can't wait for your arrival." She burst into squeals of horrible laughter as she made a final swoop over their heads and disappeared over the treetops. Everyone was shivering with fright.

"Why-why, th-th-that o-old b-b-biddy," stuttered the Tin Woodman. "Who-who does she th-think she is?"

"She called me a pussy-cat!" said the Lion angrily. "I'll show her!" he said, putting up his paw-fists in a mock-fighting stance. He pranced around, shadow-boxing, making Dorothy laugh. Her laughter eased the tension somewhat, although they were all rather apprehensive about continuing their journey toward Thoughtformland.

"If you'd rather not go on, Dorothy," the Tin Woodman said, hesitantly.

"Oh, no!" said Dorothy. "Love is stronger than hate. We will overcome. If we return now, the witch will have won. Evil will have overcome, and fear will be a part of your daily lives again. We must talk to the Wicked Witch. We must reason with her."

"T-t-talk to her?" stammered the Scarecrow.

"Reason with her!" exclaimed the Tin Woodman.

"Do you know what you're saying, Dorothy?" said the Lion. "I knew one of the Winkies who used to work for her sister, and he told me that when this one used to come and visit her, she would rant and rave and scream and yell the whole time she was visiting. Nobody could just talk to her. Of course, her sister was just as bad. They were quite a pair together. I don't see how you could talk to her."

"Not only that," interceded the Scarecrow. "This one holds Dorothy responsible for the death of her sisters."

"But it was an accident!" said Dorothy. "I had no control over where the cyclone chose to plop my house down, and when I threw the bucket of water over the other sister I was as surprised as anyone that the

water melted her away. Everyone knows I'm completely innocent"

"Everyone but her," said the Tin Woodman. "She believes that you killed her sisters on purpose. She wants revenge, there's no question about that."

"Oh, dear," said Dorothy, sitting down on a rock and cupping her head in her hands. "What are we going to do?"

"There, there. Don't be discouraged," said the Lion, putting his paw on Dorothy's shoulder. "We must have courage, and trust that somewhere within the murky depths of her being there is a spark of goodness not yet dead that can be kindled into a glowing ember."

"You're right," said Dorothy, standing up briskly. "If we give up now, we would never forgive ourselves; we must give it all we've got and forget our fears, like Daniel in the lions' den."

Chapter Sixteen:

Thoughtformland

"I'm trying to imagine what Thoughtformland is like," said the Tin Woodman as they continued their journey.

"The Wicked Witch said that all of her thoughts were here," said the Scarecrow.

"If thoughts have forms, what kind of shape must her thoughts be in?" said the Lion half to himself.

"What did you say?" said Dorothy.

"I said," repeated the Lion, "If the thoughts have forms, what kind of shape must her thoughts be in?"

"Which might apply to us all," said Dorothy.

"What?" asked the Lion. "What did you say?"

"I said," replied Dorothy, beginning to sing:

"If thoughts are things that go bump in the night,

what kind of thoughts do you think are right?

What kind of thoughts do you think to yourself?

What kind of thoughts will you think tonight?"

Everyone joined in to repeat the last line:

"What kind of thoughts will you think tonight?"

Dorothy began again:

"If thoughts are things that can give you a fright,

What kind of thoughts will you bring to sight?

What kind of thoughts do you think to yourself?

What kind of thoughts will you think tonight?"

Again everyone joined in:

Ohhh... What kind of thoughts will you think tonight?

The Lion said, "Let me make one up:

If thoughts have wings and can fly away,

what kind of thoughts are you thinking today?"

"Very good!" said Dorothy, as they all chimed in:

"What kind of thoughts are you thinking today?"

"Let me try," said the Scarecrow:

"If thoughts are things that can zip and zoom,

what kind of thoughts do you think in your room?"

They all sang at the top of their voices:

"What kind of thoughts do you think in your room?"

By now, everyone was in rare humor. "I've got a good one," said the

Tin Woodman:

"If the thoughts of witches are jagged and sharp,

what kind of thoughts do they think after dark?"

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Dorothy. "Now everyone," she shouted,

waving her arms:

"Ohhh... What kind of thoughts do they think after dark?"

"How about this for the last verse?" said the Scarecrow:

*"If you think a thought that you do not like,
the shape of that thought must be a horrible sight!*

What kind of thoughts do you think to yourself?

What kind of thoughts will you think tonight?"

Everyone sang the last line really loud:

"What kind of thoughts will you think tooo- night?"

"Well, we certainly cheered ourselves up, said Dorothy.

Just then, they came upon a clearing. In the middle of the clearing was a large sign, and beyond the sign, huge iron gates loomed. They were set within a massive stone wall. As they approached the sign, they could make out large gothic letters which read:

BEWARE ALL YE WHO ENTER THE LAND OF THOUGHTS

FOR EACH AND EVERY THOUGHT THOU THINKETH,

A THOUSAND LIKE SHALT DESCEND UPON THINE HEAD.

"Oh, my!" Dorothy said. "We'd better think the nicest thoughts we can think of."

As they approached the gate, the Lion began to chant:

"Better think nice — sugar and spice."

The others quickly joined in:

"Better think nice — sugar and spice."

Dorothy gingerly touched the big iron gate. It swung open easily. "Well, here we go," she said.

The little group chanted faster and faster:

"Better think nice — sugar and spice.

Better think nice — sugar and spice."

They looked about them as they chanted. There were flowers and trees everywhere — and, of all things, a yellow brick road. A sign said:

STAY ON THE PATH AND THINK OF

GOLDEN YELLOW DAFFODILS.

"Well, that sounds like sage advice," said Dorothy as she walked towards the path. To the right of the path were little signs which said things like:

SHARING AND CARING

ARE WAYS TO BE

DARING

KINDNESS AND LOVE

ARE THINGS FROM ABOVE

LOVE IS ETERNAL

AND NEVER INFERNAL

On the left side of the path were negative signs which read such things as:

JOY AND COMPASSION

ARE OUT OF FASHION

TAKING AND HATING

GET A HIGH RATING

Circling all around the negative signs on the left were ugly blobs of dirty reds and grays, and dull brownish greens flecked with scarlet. Some of the blobs were dirty brownish yellow with streaks of orange and black. All of the blobs had hooks around them. Some of the larger blobs descended and sat on the edges of the boards. Dorothy could almost see eyes in them glaring at her hatefully. She turned her head quickly to the positive signs on her right. Beautiful little forms were dancing and twinkling around them. The forms were made up of the prettiest, most delicate colors. Dorothy could feel a tremendous radiation of love emanating from them.

"Keep your eyes on the right," she told everyone. "And keep your thoughts pure. I have a feeling that these ugly things are just waiting for us to think a bad thought so they can attack us."

Someone started to chant again: "*Better think nice — sugar and spice.... Better think nice — sugar and spice....*"

"I hope that awful witch doesn't come here," said Dorothy. "I just hate her."

The minute Dorothy had the hateful thought, hundreds of evil blobs flew at her screaming the most terrible piercing scream she had ever heard. Their hooks extended out, trying to grab hold of her and attach themselves to her. Some hooked onto her sweater and to her hair. Dorothy squealed hysterically. Her arms were flying about, trying to get them off of her.

"Dorothy! Dorothy!" said the Tin Woodman. "Don't show fear." But it was too late. From the sky came

hordes of grayish darts, like fragments from exploding rocks. Everyone raised their arms to try to shield themselves. Following the darts came the dreaded cackles of the Wicked Witch on her broomstick. The sky was filled with her piercing screams of horrible laughter.

"Well, my pretty, what say you now, eh?" She screamed again as she flew about them. Large jagged crimson red spikes flew from her hands towards them, also ugly blobs of brownish gray with red spikes sticking out. From her eyes shot slithering snake-like pointed shapes with colored stripes of dirty green and yellow and muddy orange. They writhed about, trying to stick their sharp points into Dorothy's feet.

"Quick now," said the Tin Woodman. "Close your eyes and think nice thoughts."

Dorothy closed her eyes and thought of Aunt Em and Uncle Henry, and Toto and the little one-room farmhouse. A great love arose from within her and poured out to them. The minute this happened, a beautiful white light appeared around the little group huddled together. All of the horrible blobs flew back to their signs, while the barbs that had come from the Wicked Witch turned around and sped like bullets back towards her. Now it was her turn to scream with fright. She motioned her legs as if she were riding a bicycle and pedaled as fast as she could to try to get away. But the blobs caught up with her, hooking onto her clothes. One hooked her large nose. The snake-like shapes attached themselves to her behind with their pointed heads. She pedaled furiously off into the distance, grabbing at them, trying to pull them off. Everyone roared with laughter.

"Don't forget," the Lion said, when the laughter had subsided, "what that first sign said: *Think golden yellow daffodils.*"

So they all closed their eyes and imagined that they were surrounded by golden yellow daffodils. When they opened their eyes again, they were amazed to see miles of golden daffodils all around them.

"I have a feeling we are out of Thoughtformland," said the Tin Woodman.

Everyone heaved a sigh of relief. "Thank goodness," said Dorothy. "That was too much."

Chapter Seventeen:

Americanindianland

As they walked through the daffodils, everyone felt immensely cheerful. They were chatting away about this and that, when the Scarecrow spotted smoke signals in the distance. "Look," he said, pointing.

"It must be Americanindianland," said the Tin Woodman excitedly.

"Oh, I'm so looking forward to this," said Dorothy, as the beat of the tom-toms and the chant of the Indians' singing reached her ears. When they reached the camp, they were not surprised to see the traditional Indian scene of teepees with skins drying and dogs barking and such. The squaws and papooses and braves and chiefs were gathered around in a big circle in which a group of dancers was singing and chanting.

When Dorothy's party arrived, a beautiful majestic chief motioned them to come and sit by him while the

proceedings continued. And what a sight to behold — chiefs in full head dress from every tribe: Cherokee, Shawnee, Apache, Hopi, Navaho — every single one. Dancers representing each tribe were performing their ceremonial dances.

"Dis celebration," said the chief in a deep booming voice, and in what must have been the broken English of his time. "Dis celebration," he repeated, as he waved his hand slowly over the dancers, "in your honor. We," he said, placing his fist upon his chest, "know de work dat you do. Indian not like evil. Indian help good people."

As the celebration drew to a close, the chief motioned everyone to follow. "We have pow-wow," he said. The Indians formed a circle and passed the Peace Pipe. The low rhythm beat of a drum could be heard in the distance. "Not all Indian here in happy hunting ground," said the chief. "Not all Indian good. Same as not all white man bad to Indian.

"Many t'ousand years, Indian lived free in his land. When white man come, Indian give hand in friendship. White man look down on Indian, call him savage, take his land. Torture, murder Indian. Indian suffer great loss of self-respect — lose spiritual ways.

"Before white man come, Indian spend many hour each day with Great Spirit. Indian very close to nature, could cure much disease. White man call it work of Devil, force Indian into white man's religion. Many Indians become savages to protect land, women, children. Copy white man's ways, do bad t'ings."

Dorothy said, "I really feel bad for all this. My people; my race; they did these terrible things."

"Do not feel bad, Dorot'y," the chief said. "All t'ings in order. We do not feel revenge. Dis not way of Great Spirit. De Great One do not punish evil ones, only bring dem to greater understanding. Dey dat do evil to other, do same t'ing to self. Not know it at time, must suffer, before can learn better way. When sick of suffering, will turn face to Great One. De great sun shine on all de same. When face turn to great sun, feel warmth from great light. When man listen to heartbeat of Great Spirit, life energy from Great Spirit make heart strong. Man become strong in all t'ings, and de Great Spirit make path for moccasins to follow. But, if man turn face away from Great Spirit and not listen to heartbeat of Great One, own heart become weak — moccasins walk in circle. De Great Spirit not want man be lost or to suffer. When man fret and worry, have fears; feel hatred of peoples, his environment; dis cause much sickness of body and mind. Must learn harmony and inner peace through communication with Great One. World is great big schoolroom; all peoples equal but have different lessons to learn. Do not rebel or run away from lesson — will not learn, only make harder. Must be like de corn and bend wit' de wind. Be brave; look for lesson in all experiences. Learn lesson well; one day you graduate. Much happiness and rejoicing. You become master and teacher. No more suffering, ever.

"Now I take you to Sitting Bull. He find big chief to be your guide. My name is White Spirit."

"I feel very privileged to know you, White Spirit," said Dorothy.

"T'ank you, my child," said the chief. "But de privilege all mine."

Everyone stood. "Sitting Bull come now," White Spirit said.

Everyone turned to see a most majestic being in their midst. He seemed to come from nowhere. Sitting

Bull walked over to Dorothy. He motioned everyone to be seated again. "I'm sorry I couldn't be here to welcome you, Dorothy. But I was required to attend a rather important conference on the seventh level of the ANIM world with the master teachers." Seeing the quizzical look on Dorothy's face, the chief explained, "Where you are now is only one level of our world. There are levels both below and above the level, and within each level are many divisions — as you may already know. Each level of the ANIM world is made up by the collective minds of the inhabitants."

"You mean it's not real?" asked Dorothy with some surprise.

"On the contrary," said Sitting Bull kindly. "Don't you know that mind is all there is? One's present environment is brought into manifestation by mind. Even your dreamworld is very real and solid to you while you are dreaming: It is only when you awake from your dream that you realize it wasn't your normal reality. But while you are there, it's as real as anywhere; in fact, while you are dreaming you usually have no recollection of your normal waking life, so that dreamworld appears to be your normal existence. It is only when you awaken that it becomes a vague shadow of fragmented memories and experiences which usually don't make much sense. After your so-called normal life is over, it too will seem like some vague dream to you. Your real life is yet to be lived; your present mortal world may be likened unto a shadow. The reality of the ANIM world is unmistakable in comparison. Look around you on this present level." The chief waved his hand. "Every detail is ten times more alive than in your world."

"You're so right," said Dorothy. "Kansas is so drab and gray. "But Kansas can be very pretty, especially in the spring."

"Yes, indeed," said Sitting Bull. "It only becomes so drab and gray to you when compared to the intensity of Oz, for example. Everything is relative, you see. If you had lived in Oz all your life and, unknown to you, there was another land ten times as pretty, Oz would look just fine to you until you visited that other land."

"I see what you mean," said Dorothy.

"Now for the business at hand," said Sitting Bull. "The assignment of your guide: Let me see," he said, thumbing through a little black book. "Ah, yes. I have a fine guide for you. His name is White Feather. He is a Cherokee chief. He will join us soon. Now, young lady," continued Sitting Bull, "I want you to know that I've been aware of you for some time."

"You have?" replied Dorothy.

"Yes, indeed," said the Chief. "Do you remember studying my life at school in your history lessons?"

"Yes, I do," replied Dorothy. "I remember very well."

"Well, when you were reading about my murder at the hands of the soldiers, tears came into your eyes. The great love and compassion you felt at that moment, I felt immediately and came at once to you. I put my arms around you to comfort you, and you began to feel better. Of course, you couldn't see or hear me, but nevertheless I was there."

"I did feel something, I did," said Dorothy. "It was like an electric current around me. A sort of vibration."

"I knew you had sensed something," said Sitting Bull. "If you should experience that feeling again, you will know that someone who loves you is near. Many times your guide, White Feather, will visit you in school. He will help you with your schoolwork and will work with your teacher. You may not always sense that he is there, but always be sure to give him recognition and to ask for his help. He will help you in many ways. You are very lucky to have him, although you have earned that right through your desire to always do the right thing by your fellows, and to learn and grow and expand in consciousness. I believe that White Feather is here now."

Dorothy turned to see a beautiful Indian chief in a tall headdress of the whitest feathers she had ever seen, just tinged ever so delicately around the tips with blue. He did not look that much older than Dorothy. Sitting Bull said, "Perhaps you are wondering how a chief could be so young. Well, when White Feather came to the happy hunting ground, he was quite old. But, since we are not subject to time here as you know it, or the dying process, we may appear as young or as old as we wish. White Feather chose to appear as a child so that you may more easily identify with him." At that, White Feather put his hands on Dorothy's shoulders.

"I, your chief, will spend much time with you. Will have plenty good time together. As you grow, I grow. We will learn much together."

"Well, I believe you have a mission to accomplish, young lady," said Sitting Bull. "White Feather will be ready should you need him. I want to say it has been a great pleasure having you here with us."

"Thank you, Sitting Bull," said Dorothy. I feel so good inside, just being here with you all."

Sitting Bull smiled warmly as he shook hands with everyone. "You've been such wonderful friends to Dorothy. I'm very proud of all of you."

White Spirit shook hands with everyone, too. He hugged Dorothy and said, "If great beast in path of moccasins, do not fear. Let Great Spirit inside go before moccasins to meet Great Spirit in beast. Harm not come to you; you and great beast one spirit. Long ago, Indian make circle of fire around, before lay down to sleep. Dis give protection from beast. You do same t'ing in mind. Make circle of light around you before sleep at night, and again in morning before moccasins make path. Dis give you protection from all t'ing of inferior nature."

Dorothy hugged White Spirit. "That was beautiful," she said. "I will keep that circle of light around me always."

"Do you know what kind of country you headed into?" White Spirit then asked.

"I do not," replied Dorothy.

"Very few travelers have ventured this far," said White Spirit. "You are headed for UFOland."

"Everyone looked at each other in surprise. "UFOland," repeated the Scarecrow. "I have heard of such things as UFOs but I have never seen one."

"What does UFO mean?" asked the Lion.

"Unidentified Flying Object," said the Tin Woodman. "And I've seen one."

"You have?" said everyone in unison.

"Well, it was a flying object and I couldn't identify it. It was a hovering round object which glowed with different colors and then it zigzagged all over the sky. But I have never seen a UFO person."

"Well, you will be seeing some soon," said White Spirit. "It will be a very interesting experience for you all."

Chapter Eighteen:

UFoland

Suddenly, a strange glow came over everyone — a sort of alternating blue and orange light. A voice said, "Welcome to UFoland." The light expanded to reveal a man in a glistening white garment molded to the contour of his body. His eyes were large and luminous and seemed to reflect a great depth of understanding. He spoke again.

"Greetings in the light, my beloved friends. I am Oxal of Arcturas. UFoland is a base for our ships."

"I've heard of many sightings of UFOs" said Dorothy. "But, until now, I didn't know for sure if they were real."

"Many sightings seen by earth's inhabitants are not real," replied Oxal. "But many *are* real, and the time is approaching when we shall reveal this. Our present mission is to prepare the mortal mind to accept this truth. Otherwise, great confusion would result, and that is not our intent."

"What is your intent, sir?" asked the Tin Woodman, rather nervously.

"The answer to that, my metallic friend, is quite simple," replied Oxal. "It is to assist those of planet earth to a greater understanding of their place in the universe. In earth's galaxy alone, there are more than one hundred billion stars or suns just like earth's own sun. One out of every two of these suns have solar systems with one inhabitable planet on which intelligent life exists. And since there are hundreds of billions of other galaxies in the universe, life in its many forms has manifested in great abundance.

"Many of these are advanced civilizations. Some far more advanced than those of earth, while many are not as advanced. We here in UFoland are representatives from advanced planets of every galaxy. We have a permanent base here, from which we observe earth and discuss ways to help her people to advance.

"Many earth scientists are being helped by us. They are generally unaware that this help is being given, for we work with them during sleep or when they are in a very relaxed state. We convey many ideas to them.

"We communicate with your world leaders and offer our help, but it is often rejected. We cannot interfere with their free will, you see. We can only offer our suggestions. It has to be their choice.

"Our main purpose, Dorothy, in coming to the vicinity of earth is to make the inhabitants aware of a truth, a new understanding that goes beyond their present concept. We have not an easy task. Our teaching would not be accepted at this time — even if we manifested ourselves physically. But soon, as more people come to accept our reality, we shall manifest and reveal our purpose. We come only to do good.

"There are many schoolrooms and many classrooms throughout the universe. Earth is only a schoolroom in which you learn. All things are governed by material law."

"The great creator of the universe does not punish anyone. He does not punish mankind to bring him into line. Man creates; he is an extension of the great creator. He is a co-creator in his own right. Each thought that passes from the mind of man is a creation. So, guard these thoughts, for they are most important. They bring about results - creation. You are what you think you are. Think well on this, for it is important. Wrong thoughts bring about wrong conditions into your life — thus you bring about your own punishment. In the eyes of the great creator, there is only good. You create your own world — an illusionary world. The great creator wishes only to bring you back into the beautiful world of reality from whence you came. We are here to help mankind to correct his thinking.

"You see, my beloved friend, it has not been taught in your civilization that the great creator and His creation are one, and that you possess the same powers as your creator. The fact that mankind does not understand these laws does not alter the function of the law — the law works whether or not man understands it. So, you see, you are continually creating, although you do not realize it. You are creating situations, conditions, and many other forms of creation, because, as I have said before, you are only what you think you are.

"Earthman has instilled within his superself many concepts. These concepts, thoughts, and what many refer to as the subconscious mind are bringing about results that are not understood. This inner consciousness must be cleared out. The misconceptions must be weeded out. This done by injecting new concepts. The old must be directed to go!

"Know that you are all-powerful — continually tell yourself these things because, unless the old is replaced with the new, the old shall remain. Know that you are a creator. Know that you and this creation are one, that you are a part of the creative spirit that dwells in all things, in all beings. Therefore, you should be master of your creation. You must take charge of it. You must command it. It will respond to your command. When you command that your hand move, it does move. You are in complete command of the movement of your body. You are also in command of every organ, every nerve, every cell. You can command it to do as you wish, but you must do it with authority, as it was given you by the great creator.

"These things are difficult to accept because of your teaching, your customs, which have been handed down from generation to generation through your civilization. They are real to you, but they are only real because you see them as such.

"The negative thoughts and deeds among earth people have created a negative aura around your planet, which has caused a great deal of unhappiness and chaos. That unhappiness and chaos is very real to you, for it has become part of the consciousness of man. But each individual can rise above it, must rise above it. As more and more people do this, the picture will change. Stay clear of that which tends to pull you down. The physical structure that you now occupy, your body, is a very intricate piece of mechanism. It is affected by many things. That which you think has a great effect upon the movement of the electrons of this structure. Anger, hate, greed — any of these things tend to disrupt and unbalance the electrons, causing the

cells to become out of balance, and many things result. Learn relaxation. Be conscious of what you do, but do not be anxious. Anxiety and tension also bring about weakness in this structure. Hold your head high and declare your rightful place in the universe. The great creator of the universe does not condemn you or criticize you for your mistakes. He has only love for you. Think long and deeply about this. He has only love for you. Many truths have been taught among your religions. In our opinion, each of your religions, your sects, has some truth, but there is not one upon your planet that has a corner on truth. Truth is never ending; it moves onward before us. We can only receive the truth that we are capable of receiving at our present level of understanding. Truth is based upon law — we live by the law of the universe. These laws are universal; they apply not only to your planet, but to all other forms of life throughout the many galaxies in space. And what is the greatest law of all, my friends? Love! We must learn to love our creator. That is the first law. If we love our creator, we cannot help but love ourselves, for we are that creator. That is why we are all one. We are all part of the whole, therefore, we must love one another. Take the time to make friends with all those you come in contact — all will enrich your life. Take time for other people, feel warmth and love extending out to them, and that same warmth and love will return to you. Give of yourself and reap the rewards. For to hate another is to hate yourself. All dislikes for races, groups, and individuals must be conquered. We are making progress with the your planet. A new age is dawning for you. The masses are slowly awakening. Through our influence, we are bringing about many things. Many things are happening to spark a desire in man for knowledge, to step farther and farther into the unknown. In general, earth man has had a great fear of the unknown. This must change, and this fear must be replaced with a desire to know. For, when man desires to know, and seeks in love, he shall know the truth, and this truth shall set him free from the chains which bind him, chains forged by his own mind and the minds of those around him, and which hold him back from the full and glorious creative expression that is his natural self. Earthlings have forgotten what the great master told them. His words were these, and they have great meaning: *'Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid, for lo, I AM with you always.'* It would be well to meditate on these words occasionally and let their meaning sink deep into your consciousness, for therein lies a great Truth. Know, my friends, with all your being, that this great 'I am' is with you at all times and is your guidance and protection — your all. It is the most important part of your being, and it will carry you over the roughest path, over the wildest seas. It is yours to use and is within all. That 'I AM' within you will do the works. Man is great. He is great within himself. Man in his true reality knows no boundaries. Earth people have strayed far from this reality. So many are caught up in Self, totally unaware that they have spun a suffocating web about themselves that holds them in bondage. That web must be broken. Concern with Self must be enlarged to encompass others equally. And, as a feeling of love and understanding for others is developed, so will the greed subside and the desire to share be expanded! When sharing and caring is a way of life for all, then shall you see great changes take place. Earth will reach a new height in its climb. This civilization that you are now in will reach its greatest height. The advancements that are in the future for earth people, both scientifically and spiritually, shall bring about a change that the masses at this time cannot conceive of. The darkness is lifting. Suffering, disease, all of these things shall vanish, vanish from the face of the earth. In their place there shall be radiant health, peace of mind, well-being, a brotherhood of man that has never been known before.

"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. The time is coming rapidly, and earth men shall not know fear. In this new age, it shall vanish and be no more. Fear has been man's worst enemy. There is really nothing to fear but fear itself. The time has come when the people of earth must learn and understand universal law. Those who have not the ears to hear nor the eyes to see shall not move with this planet into the new age, but shall be sent to evolve elsewhere. Yes, Dorothy, these are times of great change for the planet earth. The great nation of the Eagle, in which you live, must take the lead in bringing

about the new age upon the planet. And great concentration, both from those of us who are working without and those of us who are working within, is being placed upon your nation to prepare for this .

"I have spoken long to you, but the matter is important. However, I do not wish to tire you."

"Not at all!" exclaimed Dorothy. "What you have said is very interesting to me. Most fascinating. Wait 'til Aunt Em and Uncle Henry hear about it!"

"Do not be disappointed if you are not believed, my child," replied Oxal. "Now, would you all like to know something of our spaceships?"

Just then, two other figures approached. "This is Odin," said Oxal, turning to the one on the right, "and this is Arcturas." The two majestic beings nodded while bowing ever so slightly. They indicated their pleasure at meeting with Dorothy and her friends by saying how pleased they were to meet such an advanced young earthling and the beautiful souls who were her friends.

Odin said to Dorothy, "I have been observing you, my dear. You have taken on a most difficult mission. The witch is wicked because that is the path she has chosen. She finds a certain pleasure in her wickedness, but it is an empty pleasure. Deep down she longs for love and companionship, but she is unable to express her feelings. She is to be pitied more than hated."

"Oh, I don't hate her," replied Dorothy. "I want to find a way to help her."

"I know," answered Odin. "You are going to be surprised how much you can do. Not only in this respect, but in all aspects of your life. Think back to the time when you first met your friends here — Mr. Scarecrow, Mr. Chopper, and Mr. Lion. Each felt inadequate in his own way, but later found that for which he searched was within himself all the time. But certain experiences were needed to reveal this to them. You must all constantly strive to raise your sights, realize your potentiality, know that within you lies the power of the universe. You see, beloved friends, it is much easier for you to doubt your abilities, your powers, than it is to try to realize the potentials that lie within you. Accept your challenges of today. Cope with them and be not concerned for the future. You can only live one moment at a time. Live that moment to the very best that is in you. Realize that there is only the now. Know, each moment of the day, that that which you are doing is the right thing for you. If you do this, each moment, each hour, each day shall fall in place. Take each task as it comes to you and be conscious of what you are doing. For, you see, no experience is beneficial unless you are conscious of it at the moment it takes place. Each of you has tasks before you that you will perform and, if you will allow yourself to flow with the tide, you shall find that these things will come to you in proper sequence. There is a constant flow of energy around your planet. The entire cosmos is energy. We, too, are energy. Swim in it! Feel yourself as a pulsating, living part of the universal energy; feel yourself to be in tune with this energy — to be flowing along with it, in harmony with it. If you become disturbed or distressed, you have stepped out of the flow. If you go against your conscience, you will go against the flow and be pushed out of it. Keep your thought harmonious. Do not allow little things to upset you. Check yourself several times a day to insure that you are still within the flow — you will know by the feeling of inner peace and tranquillity. Eventually you will not need to check; being in the flow will be the most natural thing in the world for you.

"As each one on earth learns these things, the forces of darkness will perish; they must be banished from your planet for all time. And out of this must come a new age of love, harmony, and understanding, an age where each shall live to benefit his brother and not himself — wherein all problems, the answer sought

shall not be 'What is best for me?' but rather 'What is best for all concerned?'

"How often in these times is a problem attacked in this manner? Let us visualize today, in the disputes that arise between your industries and your workers; for example, just assume that they would sit around the table, everyone concerned only with that which would benefit all. What solution could we arrive at that would be most beneficial to all concerned? What would be the results if love and harmony existed around this table, and around all your conference tables? Can you visualize how different your world would be?

"Where there is love, peace, and harmony, even the very atmosphere about you changes. All creation about you becomes harmonious; nature becomes less violent —

nature reacts directly with the vibrations sent out by its people. Dorothy, if your masses and your leaders could realize this, I wonder what their reaction would be?

"Why do you suppose nature is gradually becoming more violent around your planet? Earthquakes are becoming more prevalent, tornadoes, windstorms — all of these things are gradually becoming more violent. And, around your planet, the vibrations have become more and more negative, and nature reacts accordingly. The catastrophe that comes to your planet does not come from your creator; it is the result of the wrong thinking and the wrong doing of your people. Your creator does not judge you; you judge yourself by nature's own laws. That is why we have continually said that if enough love and light could be established among the masses of your people, that much, very much of the future disasters could be avoided. If only the teeming masses could catch a glimpse of the gloriously beautiful life that is their rightful heritage, they would not do the things they do. Why they choose to live in a state of confusion and negativity when it is within their power to create a heavenly kingdom is beyond our understanding. But that is why we are here. We come only to do good — to offer a helping hand to those who will accept and believe. To you, beloved friends, who are attempting to offer yourselves in service, your efforts are not going unnoticed. You are being given aid, more than you realize. Sharpen your awareness, that you might be better able to use the help we are sending you. Enter into that oneness and love that is being offered you; become aware of it. Use the power and wisdom that is being given to you.

"Do you realize, my friends, the power that is contained in that love that is being offered you? Do you realize the power that it will place in your hands once you are established in it? It means, beloved friends, that all things are yours. Once the true love center is opened within you, all else is yours. Think, beloved ones. Think what this means. It means a great overcoming, a whole new concept opening before you. But it all must start, and the beginning is love: for your creator, for your fellow man, in all that you do — express only love, and love returns to you. Give yourself in selfless service with that great love and desire to serve your creator and your fellow man, and infinite light and love and understanding shall engulf you. Let not your heart be angered from any cause whatsoever. Let it sing only forgiveness, joy, praise, for, in this state, you are receptive to the light that shall make all things known to you. These are the things you must develop, beloved ones. Recognize only the good, for those that persecute you know not what they do. So, pray for them, and forgive them, with malice toward none. This sounds like a big order, does it not? But it is the only way. It is His way, and so it must be yours; there is no other.

"The awakening of the people of earth will take place, but there must be a gradual process. People, concepts cannot be changed too rapidly, for it would be detrimental to them. This, each of you know by your own experiences. More and more of our craft are being sighted around the earth. Not that there are more of us now; we just had not displayed ourselves so much before. It is becoming more and more difficult for the powers that be to discount our presence. Yes, Dorothy, many more people are aware of the presence of our craft and our people in your skies than you realize. Many hesitate to talk about it, but within their hearts they know it is so.

"We who have come from other systems and other galaxies have come at the request of others in your system. This service we are happy and proud to give; we are only happy that we have the opportunity to serve. But there is much to be accomplished among your people in order that we might bring about conditions of betterment upon your planet; more and more of your people must think for themselves. If you think with the masses, believe with the masses, then you have lost your individuality. Then you become one with the masses, one with the mass consciousness.

"We wanted to communicate with your heads of government, with your world leaders, to bring great offers to them. But our offers are the offers that would improve the masses, improve your scientific achievements, allow you to live a new life — one of grandeur and beauty. But, due to your customs, your economic structure, your monetary system, they who have the power in their hands are not willing to sacrifice their power to benefit the multitudes. We turn, then, to you, the people; the future of your planet is in your hands and in the hands of those few heads of government and world leaders who are unselfishly striving to benefit the masses. By making the choice to serve in everlasting love and light and through these methods, you can bring about the conditions you desire.

"My friends, you have no idea of your own thought power. This thought power, when concentrated by the multitudes, by the masses, can bring about anything. There is much power in thought, much power. Our problems are all solved by thought; we have no need for war or violence. When we have a problem, our people attack in thought, in unison, and the problem dissolves itself. Think about this, my children. There is much here to ponder on. This is only a slight glimpse of what can be accomplished once you understand and know life as it really exists. More and more people, Dorothy, are becoming aware of the changing times on your planet. Some are awakened to action, and others find themselves rather unconcerned. To use one of your expressions, they take on a 'So what?' attitude. These, my friends, are mentally lazy individuals. They are not ambitious enough to put forth the effort that is necessary for their own

enlightenment, or they are worshipping a false master, which they are not willing to forgo for the higher learning.

"Materialism has become a god for the multitudes of earth people. It saddens our hearts to know that these people will soon lose their god, and they will have nothing to cling to. They shall find themselves in great despair, and they shall sink deep, for there will be nothing for them to hold on to. Build your foundation, my friends, on the spiritual rock, and you need have no fear for the future.

"There is such a great amount of work to be done for your planet, Dorothy. The response of the masses is very, very slow. With all the help that is being sent out at this time, if your people were only slightly receptive, a great deal could be avoided; a great deal of pollution could be cleared from the earth's area. But the response has been so very, very slow, and the efforts have been so great. We are hoping this situation will shortly change. There has been some improvement in the results of our influences among some of your leaders, or perhaps I should say there appears to be. The results are not yet evident, but our prayers are going out hourly to these people.

"But it is up to the people to demand and bring about their own salvation. 'Tis through those who, through their convictions, are willing to come forth, to come out from among the multitudes and stand forth for what is right and good. Great changes which have come about upon your planet have not been brought forth by the masses, but by individuals who have been strong in their faith and willing to stand forth regardless of the mass consciousness, for what they believe and know to be a right. One man, a few years ago, was responsible for one of the greatest changes that has taken place in your civilization. One man, beloved friends, who was not afraid to come forth from the masses. As I have said before, if you think with the masses, believe with the masses, then you have lost your individuality. Then you become one with the masses. Seek the truth and stand by it, my children. Use your intelligence. That is why your creator gave it to you.

"Place no limitation upon yourself, but realize that you are this great power and intelligence that rules the universe. Therefore, locked within you are the powers that shall manifest all that you need. You need only to unlock them through the love and understanding you are seeking.

"What, my friends, do you think is the greatest power in the universe?"

"Love is the greatest power," replied Dorothy.

"You have spoken truly, my sister: Love can accomplish anything. It is the force that permeates the universe. I say to you, Beloved, love one another, for through this love shall you rise to great heights in understanding — love one another. Once this is established, the rest shall follow easily. Understanding shall come in abundance; on the waves of love shall follow understanding. Can you see, my friends, why this is? You see, when you have a great love in your consciousness, it opens wide the door for understanding, for wisdom. Without love the door is locked. This is the power that permeates the universe. There is a great need for this upon the planet you call earth, for the lack of it has set up vibrations about your planet, encircling it. These vibrations are bringing about chaos, disturbances of nature itself, for so you think, so you are, whether it be as an individual, as a nation, or as a planet. Do you have a slight understanding of what would happen to your planet if suddenly all would start emanating positive thoughts? Can you visualize the results? Even your atmospheric conditions would change; you would not have the terrific eruptions of nature you now have. The greater portion of these things are brought about by the negative vibrations that exist around your planet. If your people could only realize

the power of this thought.

"We have for some time been photographing conditions upon your planet, recording conditions; these are being relayed back to our people and at the proper time when our plans are laid, we shall concentrate our power and thought to help you, but there must be concentrated help coming from your planet. We are also trying to establish enough people upon the planet to do this. In this manner we have to ease the situation greatly. Many of the brothers of the Confederation have volunteered to come to your planet to serve at this time. They are working among you quietly, trying to establish more love and understanding among the people of earth. Truth must grow and grow rapidly. There are millions of beings at this time who have come to your aid. We have come from other planets within your system, from other systems and other galaxies. They have all come with one purpose in mind, and that is to aid your system and especially your planet. Your people have reached a critical stage in their evolution; they have not progressed spiritually as they should have. Scientifically, they have advanced much further and therefore do not have a balance. Due to this lack of balance they are in great danger of destroying themselves. Your people have acquired the use of great powers, energies, some of which should not be used at all, and some should only be in the hands of those who are developed spiritually to the point where these powers should only be used for good.

"Such powers as your scientists are tampering with today, in the hands of the wrong people, could destroy your civilization. This has happened before upon your planet. Does this surprise you? We do not want to see this happen again. We are trying to help you avert such a disaster. Also your planet and your system are entering a new cycle. Your people as a whole, due to the lack of spiritual growth, are not yet ready to enter the new cycle, the new age. But this will take place; nothing can stop it, and those who are not ready to enter the new age will not be able to remain on this planet when you are well into the cycle. Therefore, it is doubly important that your people raise their consciousness to new heights, that they acquire new understanding, new truths that will enable them to enter the new age which is upon them.

"We love your people, Dorothy, far above your highest concept, your highest understanding. We will force no one to do anything. We will only suggest. No man can force another to do that which he does not wish to do.

"It is difficult for your people to understand the actions of the more advanced planes. But let me assure you that each of you by following your guidance, that inner urge within you, will come into your own, will fall into your path and will fulfill your destiny.

"There are many scientific things that we would like to share with people of earth. For one thing, we are controlled by Universal Law; and another, we could not, as yet, give to earth the powers that will one day be hers. Her people and especially those who are in power have not yet reached a stage where they are capable of coping with the powers, of using them to the advantage of their people rather than to the advantage of selfish interest. And to bring you an example of what I am speaking. Already the powers that control planet earth are using powers wrongly. Already, your military powers are using sacred gifts of certain individuals to gain information. They have learned that they can apply these powers to their advantage. If certain other energies and scientific knowledge were made known to them at this time, they would be used in the same manner. Your science is advancing regardless, and is discovering more and more universal powers and what you term as psychic powers. These should be used with reverence and used to the advantage of mankind. Until spiritual understanding becomes predominant among earth people, these powers are in dangerous hands. We shall do all that we can to prevent these powers from being used

as a destructive force. We are not at this moment as concerned that these energies, these powers, be known by earth man as we are with the development of mankind in trying to bring into this realization a desire for spiritual knowledge, and this can only come from within.

"All mankind has somewhere within him this desire. The problem is to spark it, to ignite the flame, so that it might burn within him and spur him onward. However, earth man has much to overcome. He has allowed himself to become attached, and many times our attachment can be a tremendous block in our path. Emotion can also bring about great blocks. These things we must recognize and deal with. Each in his own way must deal with his problem. But above all we must recognize our problems for, unless we recognize them, we have great difficulty in dealing with something we do not recognize. We must face ourselves openly and squarely.

"There is among earth mankind, generally speaking, a great question as to why man is here, as to what man might be. Some give great thought to this question, while others pass it off lightly. But man, sooner or later, must come to the realization of what he is and why he is here; the reason for life. Man must come to the realization that he is but an extension of the consciousness of the One Great Being, whom you call God. That this extension has taken on individuality and is expressing, experiencing and following a path that will take him through experience after experience and eventually return him to his source. He must realize that this path can be short, or it can be long, depending on man as the individual. When man does not face his responsibilities, the weight of them becomes heavier and heavier and sinks deeper and deeper until he comes to the realization that he must face life. Earth man is at such a point. He must face his responsibilities; he must learn to go with life. He has a responsibility to his creator and to his fellow man. He must learn that he does not live for himself alone. His brother is his responsibility. When this realization is reached by enough people, conditions will begin to change. Man's load will be lightened; he shall find within him a great peace which he has not known before. All of life shall take on a new look to him. Man does not find peace within himself until he reaches this realization and then does something about it.

"It is a pitiful sight to see how little understanding exists among the masses of planet earth. A great majority do not have the slightest idea of what was before, or what will be after the existence they are now in. Few will recognize the fact that the physical, as they know it, is only a conveyance for the experiences which they are now encountering. Life is a series of experiences, and it does not end with this one, nor does it begin with this one, for it requires thousands of lifetimes on various planes to become a well rounded being. Man learns by experience, and you, my friends, each of you, and all man, chooses his own experiences, for only he knows the experiences he needs to become this well rounded being. I know that it is difficult in this present expression for many people to conceive of the idea that they have chosen the experiences that they are now passing through. But they know when they choose to have that experience that they need it. It is needed for their development. We, who are shall we say, the opposite of life existence to yours, perhaps even that is a poor expression. You know, beloved friends, it can become quite difficult for us to convey to you in words of your language, a complete understanding of what we are attempting to convey. We do not feel we are above you. It is merely that on some things, let us say, we have a little better understanding. Therefore we are anxious to help those of you who are seeking higher understanding. This we try to do in many ways. We are limited in the help we can give you by Universal Law. We dare not and will not invade your own free will, your pattern; for each of you does have a pattern of growth that is to be followed by you, but often individuals are behind schedule, so to speak, and we attempt to help them in every way possible.

"You see, earth man is often misled by his group consciousness. He knows deep within that this or that is what he should be doing, but he does not go along with those inner feelings because he is afraid of criticism by his peers. He feels he must conform to established customs. People of earth have long been victims of customs. These have become a part of the race consciousness. Many of these customs must be broken.

"Imagine for a moment this scene in your junior high schools: It is the beginning of the school year, and all the eighth and ninth graders seem to be walking around with a slight swagger. After all, when they were in the lower grades last year the bigger boys used to bother them. Now the new seventh graders look up to them. They emulate their walk, their manner of dress, their hair styles, and their tough way of talking. Among the new seventh graders are a sprinkling of quiet — even shy boys, nicely dressed, excellent students, full of eagerness to learn and advance themselves. These children, strangely enough, are not emulated or looked up to, but are ridiculed, called names, and sometimes physically abused. Often they are not physically big children compared to some of the tougher boys, and most are not fighters. Many are so sensitive that they cannot bear the thought of hurting another person. These children are often teased and pushed and shoved around in an attempt to make them get angry and fight. Sad, isn't it.

"Unfortunately, as I look to the years ahead, hurting others, using bully tactics, both emotionally and physically, could become a way of life for a number of children. Unfortunately, when these same children grow up they will not teach their children the importance of love and understanding and gentleness, and so it will go on and on: The savage violence that will be presented as entertainment will not exactly help, and every day acts of real violence will be recorded in your newspapers. Gangs will become a problem in your big cities — the use of weapons a way of life for them. What a pitiful world they will make for yourselves; and yet they will wonder why there are wars between nations.

"Your babies must be shown love and kindness from the day they are born and taught these things every day by their parents, and later by their schools and reflected in their entertainment's. And gradually the items which reflect violence must be eliminated. Then, as these children grow up, they must come together and take their places among society. They will at some point agree to destroy all weapons of war. They must come to a new understanding of honesty and trust. A new evolved economic system must eventually be formulated where all who are physically able will want to work and contribute to the good of all. There can be no room for fraudulence or dishonesty. Free enterprise must reign, and those that are strongly ambitious and enterprising, and who use their own initiative to build a successful business honestly must not be penalized and held back by heavy tax systems, but must be encouraged to utilize their talents and initiative to expand their businesses, thereby creating many jobs for all.

"They must also be encouraged to utilize their wealth creatively for the ultimate good of all. Greed must be eliminated from your society. Evolvement of individuals depends greatly upon the determination and desires of each individual. Man must learn that the greater evolvement will come as each individual learns to use the Universal Laws. Man is first obligated to himself. There is nothing that is more important to each of us than our own individual development, for in order to serve and to benefit those about us, we must first be able to radiate the love and understanding that goes with evolvement. As each of us becomes conscious of our oneness with all creation, as each realizes he is part of this one great power, a tiny part, in essence, of this supreme intelligence. Each will come to realize that there is no limit to what can be achieved. The only thing that holds man back from this understanding is his own mortal mind. This mortal outlook greatly distorts the true picture for mankind. It limits him in every way and causes him to place obstacle after obstacle in his path. It requires a very determined mind to lift oneself out of this ignorance

into the glorious truth that has eluded one because of the determination to follow the mortal will.

"But, I must repeat: In order to rise above these levels, that first step is Love, and to try to see the perfection of creation in everything that we see. Truly, truly, beloved ones. Ye are Gods and Goddesses; it is only a matter of time.

"Let each who hears my words start right where you are, from this day forward, with what you have at hand to begin your work, and upon this let us build. Let us meet every situation with love and understanding. Let us know that nothing is by chance, that each experience that comes our way, regardless of how minute, is an experience brought to us whereby we can learn. For we learn by experience, no other way.

"There is so much for all of us to learn. We do not make any claim of having the ultimate in truth. Even my own perceptions of things may be incorrect. We must realize that truth is moving ever onward before us, and the ultimate we know not. But this I know: that every step forward I have taken has brought the greater happiness, greater understanding, and each step has been much more glorious than the last. Therefore, I shall attempt to climb ever higher on the spiral of knowledge, for I find the more I have learned of science, of nature, the more understanding I have of my creator. For you see, my friends, we do not separate one from the other. Earth man has always attempted to separate. You have your philosophies, your sciences, and what-not and each must be both or all if we are to have truth. All things that exist come from the one and only Source; no matter what it might be it is all a part of the whole, therefore we cannot separate. The sooner man of earth can realize this, the sooner he will begin to understand creation.

"Many of us, when presented with new philosophical concepts, immediately close our minds off. But the man who carries a closed mind has little chance of becoming wise. He has little chance of raising his consciousness. To have an open mind does not require you to accept anything that does not seem right to you, but there is a great difference, my friends, in accepting an idea as truth, or being able, if it does not appeal to you, to lay it aside until such time as you can filter it into your consciousness. For we find that many times an experience does not appeal to us, or something that comes to us by word of mouth or by writings, does not fit in with what we presently know as truth. But oft-times we find that these things, if laid aside, can be picked up later and put into the picture perfectly. You see, my friends, there is where a closed mind prevents us from learning. If we have rejected an idea completely, we have lost it for a great time to come. This is a mistake we should not make, for often it is costly.

"Beloved friends, you are living in times of great change; much greater than you think or realize. Each of you is here because you are seeking. You are seeking to know the truth. Therefore you can expect to know the truth. Knowing the truth shall bring great changes within you, for every step on the path to truth brings change. Therefore let us be open and receptive, that we may learn. I do not imply by this that you must accept everything as truth. But if we are to gain knowledge, wisdom, and truth, we must forever have an open mind. When one closes the mind and decides within himself that he has all truth, he is dead, so to speak. For truth moves ever onward and forward. I know not where it ends; I know not what the ultimate truth is.

"As I speak, Dorothy, please keep in mind that I am also addressing your fellow earthlings who in time may read my words. But to continue ... I have traveled great areas of space, have found life in every corner, but I have not found the ultimate. You see, we too are searching, are seeking, for higher truth. We are no different from you. We do, however, believe that we are a step or two in advance. And we are reaching back, attempting to help our brothers, as are those that are ahead of us, reaching back to help us.

For, you see, my friends, this is the way we serve. All creation moves in this manner, each attempting to serve his brother, for when I have served my brother, I too have been served. This, my friends, is a good thing to remember. In order to receive, we must give, and this law applies in everything we do, for if we have great truth and understanding, and use it only for ourselves, it shall gain us naught.

"This, my friends, is happening day by day upon planet earth, and it is things of this nature that bring the chaos that you find among your people. As those of you who are seeking to know Truth reach higher and higher, you must be ready to have brought to you many things that may be contrary to some of the things that you have known to be Truth.

"Planet earth must pass through some great changes in order to be cleansed, to be balanced when she passes into the next dimension in space. We are going to see to it that this great planet is not lost as was another a few years past. We shall not interfere in the evolution of the earth unless it is necessary. But if it becomes necessary, we shall and will, for we have at this moment four million craft standing by for emergency. So you see, my friends, we are prepared.

"And now, I should like to take a few moments to talk to you in regard to your growth, your understanding, and what it might mean to you in the time you are about to encounter. There is not one among you who has, shall we say, more than a small degree of knowledge concerning your abilities. Or should I say an understanding of who and what you really are. You see, my friends, each of you, if you could but realize the fact, are potential Gods in yourselves. As man aspires to higher knowledge, he begins to get a realization as to what he is. Is it possible, my friends, that each of us someday might reach a stage of growth where we have the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom that we think of as being held by the gods? Does this sound inconceivable to you, my friends, or can you conceive of this?

"Man can be anything that he can conceive of as being. Created within man was a desire, or rather an ability to desire. When man exercises this ability, the Law reacts. So you see, my friends, there might be two ways of looking at this. If you are to desire something, it would be wise for you to be sure that that which you desire is for your own good — will bring you good. Man does not always weigh that which he desires; he does not put in balance. This we should do if we are to have wisdom and understanding. View it from both sides, my friends, before you let your desires reach forth.

"Within the heart of man burns a desire that drives him ever onward, seeking and searching. Man does not always know or realize what this desire is, what this urge within him is seeking, and this urge is turned in many directions by various individuals. Some direct it in search of wealth, others in search of pleasure, others for knowledge, but this — direct it as you may — is the same spark that burns within each of you. It is that inner urge to know the truth, to know more of the meaning of life.

"Man does not recognize this spark that drives him onward for what it is. It is something that he must release, but he does not always direct it wisely. In order for man to grow, he must he must release these energies and use them wisely to bring him knowledge and wisdom and spiritual understanding, must have understanding and knowledge of many things. Spirituality is not denoted by one who claims to have great knowledge of a great being that rules and controls all things. A truly evolved spiritual being will have great knowledge of all things, for all things are spiritual in nature.

"The great scientist of the universe must be a spiritual man. He must have great knowledge of the universe about him. He must have an understanding of what causes Nature to function as she does. To overcome a true spiritual being requires eons of time spent in studying and searching for the true answers to Nature's

function. Earth man has become so engrossed in his own small circle of function that he does not see; he does not see the things that are taking place before his eyes.

"While earth man is endangering the population of his planet, poisoning its people, bringing to them great miseries, there lie within his reach great powers, great resources, that could eliminate all of these things and supply for man an abundance of power, of energy, to be used for the good of all mankind at a cost of almost nothing. Earth science today realizes and knows the dangers of the powers with which they are working. Still they insist that these powers must be used. They have been told that there are alternative powers, energies, that are completely safe, but they heed not. Why is this, my friends? Could it be for selfish reasons? Could it be that certain interests see their power crumbling through the introduction of certain improvements upon planet earth? Could this be, my friends? I leave this to your decision.

"If people of earth were to be told the things that have been rejected from us by the powers that be upon your planet, I wonder, would they believe? I fear they would not. We have tried to share both our scientific and spiritual knowledge, but in every case we have been rejected. You see, your profit system would not function well under the stipulations which we presented, for what we offer is for all and not for a few; it is for the benefit of all mankind.

"Earth people have been lulled into a deep sleep of contentment. They have been content to let someone else think for them, guide them, and as they believed, protect them. Only now are they beginning to slowly wake up. Our contacts are now with the people. A great change shall come about through people like yourselves. When enough of your people have established in yourselves enough love and understanding, the changes will be inevitable.

"As time passes, you shall see many changes come about. Changes in individuals; great mental changes, shall occur with many. It is necessary that each person who wishes to grow in understanding spend much time in developing his understanding. How do you do this? By being aware, becoming conscious of that higher consciousness which leads you into experiences, into paths that shall bring you understanding.

"Proper meditation is of the utmost importance, and I should like to dwell for a moment on this subject, for proper meditation is most important to your growth.

"First of all, place yourself in a position that is proper for meditation. The best meditation can be had in a sitting position. Sit the body comfortably but erect, with both feet placed firmly before you. Keep the body and head erect and straight. Place the hands open and upward in the lap. Allow those racing thoughts to race. Do not try to force them to stop, but bring yourself into a relaxed feeling. Let your mind relax; do not try to control it, and you shall find these racing thoughts in time will slow, will become slower and slower until they eventually stop. And with practice, my friends, this time shall become shorter and shorter, and in due time you shall reach that state of stillness quickly and in that state of stillness you can become one with creation, and life begins to speak to you. In this stillness you can bring yourself in attunement with whatsoever you wish. In this still, very still quietness, all things can flow to you, for your mind is open and receptive to the higher knowledge.

"In this great stillness within, you become one with your creator, and He passes to you many things that will enlarge your understanding. Now, to some of you it may seem that it is impossible for you to relax in this position, but I say to you, my friends, that it is the only true relaxation. For when the body is in positions for which it is not intended, true relaxation does not come, you cannot be receptive. Much of the Universal Energies come to you through the spine when you are in the physical and, unless the spine is

erect, they do not flow. You would be amazed when this art is mastered, at what you can do; how quickly you can attune yourself in this state to anything that you desire. It is possible to attune yourself in this state to anything in nature and to draw from that the information you seek. Any spiritual or enlightening experience that you may have during meditation, that brings you truth and understanding, should be held in great reverence. So often valuable experiences are dissipated and lost, so easily through speaking of them to any great extent. An experience that carries great impact for you should never be discussed except with one whom you feel or know has great understanding, for as you spread these pearls, they are lost, perhaps not to be regained in this lifetime. Your great master once said, *'Seek the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.'* This is stated in your book of religious histories, but there is one thing which was omitted, for he added to this, *'Seek the Truth first which is within your understanding, which you can grasp and use, for only in this way will you prepare yourself for higher Truths.'* In other words, one step at a time. Master what you have and then proceed to master more, for Truth is of no value unless you can use it in your life. Unless it benefits you, it means nothing.

"People of earth, I'm afraid, have some terrific shocks coming to them. They are going to find that a great many of the concepts which they have been taught and which they have accepted as truth, are not truth at all; this is going to come as a great shock to some ... yes, to a great many earth people, and especially to some of your religious leaders, but sooner or later man must know the truth, for only by his knowing the truth can he be freed, and earth man has been held in bondage long enough.

"Upon planet earth are many, many teachings: religions, metaphysical teachings, occult teachings, and what have you. Among each of these you find divisions. Each of your religions, your teachings, has truth. Each contains a segment of the whole, yet none that we have found has the complete truth, but each is found to be a stepping stone for those who are seeking. For as all men are at a different level of understanding, each must seek according to his understanding; to his capabilities to understand. Many people have found great help in each of them; yet, he who is a true seeker, sooner or later moves on to a higher truth. He seeks new experiences that will bring him new knowing, and thus does life move ever onward, but man must go a step further in his search for truth, he must also search and have a desire to serve. For though man gains all knowledge, and serve not, his knowledge will avail him but little, and man shall find as he seeks and serves that he shall move ever onward and upward on the spiral of understanding. Where the spiral ends, I know not. It is of such magnitude that our conception of it is only slight. Man reaches ever forward and onward, attempting to gain these experiences and, as he moves on through the process of evolution, he passes through many periods of experience. This life or existence which you are now passing through upon the planet you call earth, is a most important experience upon this path. Many have passed through many lifetimes upon this planet, expressing and experiencing. Yet in their present state they have no recollection whatsoever of what has passed, and this, beloved ones, is as it should be, for if many of the people were to look back into their lifetimes upon earth, they would shrink in horror. Yet these experiences were very necessary for the evolution of the individual, for when all these experiences are gathered together in a state of consciousness where the entity is able to evaluate them properly, he will have a great knowing. The soul growth of any person cannot be determined by their present expression upon this plane. Seek your experiences, beloved friends, where your inner consciousness guides you, for there you will find the experience that you need.

"As man travels the corridors of time and gathers unto him experiences that bring him growth and understanding, he develops a wisdom, a knowledge an understanding, but how often man must repeat his experiences over and over and over again, before he really becomes aware of his learning. Unless your awareness keeps you conscious at all times, many lessons are missed. Man only comes into the physical

existence for experiences that can be learned in no other way. But how often in the past generations has man experienced great things that should have brought him great wisdom, great understanding, but still he failed? Civilization upon civilization has risen and fallen upon your planet due to the lack of man's understanding, and many of these beings have passed through and shared the responsibility of these failures and yet have not learned.

"We are most anxious that this civilization does not fail, that it does not, through its ego, greed and hate, bring about again its destruction. This is still possible in your civilization, and unless man will come forth and exercise his rights, he shall again fail. This realization is coming to many of your people but, as yet, few of them are doing anything about it or, if they be, it is very little. The time is rapidly drawing nearer when earth must stand forth and be counted — who would stand forth with what they know to be true. Soon the lead must be broken, and we hope and pray that it shall come from this great continent upon which you live, Dorothy, for yours is the logical nation to take the lead in bringing about the Brotherhood of Man upon planet earth. We are doing all in our power to get your nation to stand forth upon the principles upon which it was founded. Your nation professes to be a Christian nation, to follow the principles of this Great Teacher, but as yet this has not occurred. We wonder why it is so difficult for a culture such as yours to lack this foresight. If these principles could be followed by your nation, could be established among its masses, it should spread and engulf the planet, for the light that it should emanate would be so bright that all would be attracted to it, and those who could not be — would fade into nothingness, for where that much light exists, darkness cannot exist.

"Earth people have been told many times to establish love, harmony and understanding between each other. Yet, they desire to make great accomplishments, to demonstrate their powers. But I say unto you, beloved ones, that these things cannot be established, cannot be demonstrated without first establishing the love and understanding among all; for without this you have no power. This is the power. In love and understanding all things are possible; without it you accomplish nothing. It is the lack of this that has brought about the conditions that exist on planet earth today. How can you establish this among your people? It can be established only through your own efforts, through becoming masters of yourselves. Be ye perfect ... How shall we become perfect? Perfection is not an easy thing to accomplish, but we must aspire to this perfection at all times. Self-discipline is very necessary, very necessary. The desires of the physical must not be allowed to master us. Emotions must be controlled. How can we establish love and understanding among us if these things are not mastered? As you progress in your understanding, you have much in store for you. Give yourself in love and understanding. It is necessary for you, each of you, to develop a clear understanding of yourself and your fellows, for only through understanding will you be able to accomplish your mission.

"How can this understanding be accomplished among your people? It can be established only through their own efforts, through becoming master of themselves. The rules they should know well. They were given to them long ago — *'Turn the other cheek, go the extra mile; give, love.'* All should see only good in all that they come in contact with. They should refuse to see anything but good. But they have been taught fear. They fear the results if they turn the other cheek, or go the extra mile. There is nothing to fear, my friends, nothing to fear. Let that love emanate from you so strongly that all negativity shall melt into nothingness before you. *'He who lives by the sword shall die by the sword.'* I quote from your Scriptures. These things are not new to the people of the earth. Your Great Teacher gave you all the rules. They are all there; you need only apply them. Why, oh why, make it difficult?

"You would be amazed at what a few of your people, a very few, could accomplish if only they could

establish between them complete love and understanding. Their accomplishments would amaze them. Each of you has within you the ability to establish this. You need only put forth the effort, to make the decision and to apply the discipline necessary. Know within yourself that you are completely dedicated to the service of your creator. This shall help you in establishing more love within you. Eliminate all self, holding only that desire to serve, for through your services administered sincerely and selflessly shall you gain new knowledge, new understanding and new growth. *Come unto me all ye who are burdened, who are heavy laden, and I shall give you peace, love, and understanding.* Live always in the now. Now is the only important time. The past is passed, and you can do nothing about it. This very moment is the only thing that counts. Live the truth, and the truth will set you free. The time is now. Now is the time. Realize at this moment your at-oneness with your creator. We do not bow our head when we worship. We look up and out. Realize that Christ-like quality within you; realize that you are God: that you are a part of that One, and that you are expressing Him; He is expressing through you; you are His expression.

"Once these realizations have come into your mind, once you know who you are, then, my friends, truth shall unveil itself to you, and all shall become clear.

"Great wisdom must be used — recognize wisdom when you hear it and see it. Do not become steeped in your beliefs, as many of them will need to be changed in order to understand and apply the Law. Much has been given to you in the past; we brothers who are working with your planet, Dorothy, for your people, have brought you much truth, but it has been brought to you in such a manner that you must put forth some effort to understand and apply it, and that is as it should be. We could give you many of these things in so many words and say to you, *'This is the way it is — you must believe this,'* but this is not our way, for you must choose; it is your choice that you shall prove yourself. I shall repeat something that has been said many times: We cannot make this choice for you, this *you* must do. Think well upon what I have just said.

"There is great work to be done among your people, Dorothy; you can be of great service, but the requirements are very stiff. In is not easy in the environment in which you have received your training, many things must be overcome — the ego must not become inflated. You must be the least among them in order to be the greatest, for I, of myself, can do nothing. It is the Father within me that doeth the works. I, of myself, am nothing, but I and the Father are all things — there is no limit to what I and the Father can do.

"The I AM; that word has been much misinterpreted in your Holy Scriptures. Your great Avatar often spoke of the I AM, but how has it been interpreted by your people? They have taken it to mean the man himself, but the I AM that he spoke of was not the man, it was the I AM that you all possess. The Father within — the higher part of you that is the Creator. He spoke not of himself as the man. You see, much of the true meaning of His teachings have been lost by misinterpretations. I say unto you again, love one another, for you are all one in this great creation. Try to understand the true meaning of love, for it reaches far, much farther than you can possibly realize in your present level of understanding. Learn together, help one another; receive from one another in love and understanding, for by so doing your growth shall be much more rapid; for all on earth have so much to give to each other. The veil needs only to be lifted ever so slightly for each to see that this is so.

"A great deal has been written in your Scriptures; there is a great deal to be interpreted. There are many keys for interpreting the writings; many of these have not been available to your people. In searching the Scriptures, your people have found many things that seemed to be contradictory. This has been pointed out by many of your people, but this is only due to lack of understanding, the lack of being able to interpret.

To go into the interpretation of many of these things would take great lengths of time. This, at this moment of your growth, is not of importance. Before understanding of all these writings shall be made completely clear, there must be brought about among all a higher consciousness of love, of understanding, between you. When these things have been established, these vibrations — your understanding shall become much clearer. Those things shall all become clearer, understandable to all.

"Your Master Teacher stated that the greatest of all the commandments was to love. If this one great commandment, Dorothy, were to be universally adopted, your planet would truly become a Heavenly body, radiating a beauty and harmony that has never been known on earth before. Social want and poverty and sickness would vanish from your planet forever.

"A Brotherhood of Man would come into being, where each would take his rightful place, where everyone would do his part for the benefit of the whole. No man is entitled to more than he earns and, in Universal Law, no man receives more than he earns. When man has understanding and love in his heart, he is willing to earn his advancement; he is willing to work for his understanding, for nothing, my friends, comes without effort.

"It is time that earthman realized his true existence. It is time that he stops living for himself and starts living for the whole. There is no other way, my friends, for any other way must go against the Laws of your Creator. Therefore man, to exist for long, must learn to love. You see, the great difficulty for earthman is that he does not understand, he thinks of love as emotion, but true love, my friends, is understanding. Therefore we must learn to understand ourselves, then we begin to understand our brothers, and when we understand Man as Man is, then we begin to love. We know man is what he is because he is man, and we realize that man is only expressing to gain experience so that he might know Truth, and when we have this understanding, we lose hate, greed, jealousy, resentment and all these things that go to make up the conditions that are found upon planet earth today. Beloved friends, we realize that this has been repeated. But what else is there to say? Because, before man can have anything of value spiritually, he must have understanding, and the first step in understanding is to know one's self. As you meditate upon this sincerely, you shall find many answers coming to you, many realizations, or revelations, as they are sometimes called by earth people.

"Now, why is man on earth? The only reason man finds himself in this physical world is that long ago, eons of time back, he chose to experience in the unknown. Much caution was given, great efforts were made by those of higher understanding and love as to the results of these experiences, but still this path was chosen. And so from higher and more pleasant planes of existence, many millions descended for an unknown experience, and that is why we find in existence today, worlds and worlds of life as you now see it. These things did not come about in moments or hours of time. Neither will man return to his original state of existence in a short time as you know it. Yet time is eternal. Time does not pass, you are merely moving through time. And so, as the descension took place, so must the ascension, and man is climbing back on the ladder of evolvement rung by rung. If this picture could be seen and understood by each, it would make quite an amazing story. Some have climbed the ladder of progress more rapidly than others, yet each in his own body is progressing step by step.

"The decisions that we make as we gradually climb back towards our goal are a determining factor in the speed of our progress. Nevertheless, each individual is climbing ever onward and upward, sometimes falling back for a time and then again proceeding. As we find ourselves attempting to make progress upon the wheel of incarnation, we must learn to face all situations honestly, fairly, and squarely. Take each

decision deep within our consciousness, and there we shall find a true answer if we are sincere and honest in our seeking.

"You see, beloved friends, when the Creator breathed us forth, He endowed us with this God-like ability to take all things into the core of our being, of our *at-oneness*, of our allness with His creation and, when this point has been reached, all things come into balance and we see clearly. And as we see clearly, our decisions are made and things begin to happen that bring us into harmony with Creation and that, dear friends, is most important. For all Creation must function in harmony if we are to have well-being, peace of mind, and harmony within ourselves.

"Man has allowed himself to become out of tune with Creation — or Nature — and when man is out of tune with Creation, he is out of balance and he does not function as he should. The precarious situation the people of planet earth find themselves in at this time exists only because they have allowed to come into their hearts greed, hate, jealousy, self-pity, ego, and so on. Man has had these things so implanted in his consciousness that they have become a part of him, so to speak. It is difficult for some of us who live in an environment of love and understanding to see how men of planet earth can be so oblivious of the things that are bringing about his downfall. Over the centuries man has had the opportunity to learn of these Laws. Master after Master has come to your planet, bringing a message of Truth and Love, telling earth man of the Universal Laws and asking him to go with their Laws. Buddha, Krishna, Jesus, Muhammad, and many others have brought this message to earth people. Great multitudes of earth people profess to follow the teachings of one or another of these Masters.

"In your hemisphere, those who call themselves Christians are more familiar to you. They profess to follow the teaching of the Great Master you call Jesus of Nazareth. Yet how few, even to a small degree, attempt to follow the teachings? How many do you know, would go the extra mile, would turn the other cheek, would do many of the things necessary in order to be a true follower of the teachings of this Great Master?

"Many of your so-called Christian churches have removed part of the teachings from the writings that have been handed down to your people. They have decided who shall be given the teachings and what part of these teachings shall be given to their people. This, my friends, follows down to the individual, who decides for himself the certain portions of these teachings he will follow; other portions which do not suit his purpose, he will ignore. This does not work. This does not blend with Universal Law, for if man is to reap the benefits of Universal Law, he must go all the way, not a quarter or a half. I cannot love the neighbor on my right and hate the neighbor on my left, for I am not fulfilling the Law if I do this. I cannot extend to one man the hand of fellowship, of love, because he is conforming to my truth or my understanding, then refuse another, because he doesn't. These are the conditions that exist among the masses on planet earth; this constitutes the race consciousness that exists. Each of you who are able to rise above this consciousness, to go all the way, to master Universal Law — these, my friends, will be the ones that will bring this race consciousness to a point where man of earth will move into a completely new consciousness. There are today upon your planet, many people who are on the verge of accomplishing this. They need only to put forth effort and determination to do so.

"I do not imply that they are in the majority, but rather in the minority. But a minority group can do a great deal in furthering the evolvment of earthman. Once this has started; and it has been started, it shall gain momentum, for the light emanated by these enlightened ones shall bring unto them many more, for all man is seeking to some degree, and any light that shines bright enough is bound to attract unto it others. So I say

unto all of you, love one another. See in each a perfection that ye know exists. Ah, how beautiful is the true you. Of all of us. Let us see this beauty. Let us see ourselves and our brothers and sisters for what they are.

"Beloved children, let the Peace of the Great One sink into your hearts. Be ever grateful to this Great One for the blessings that you have, for through this gratitude shall come great peace and great knowing, for if we are grateful for the small things in life, the greater things are inevitable. Ah yes — so shall it ever be and ever has been for all ye who are faithful in the smaller things shall also find the greater things. Let this great Peace and Love of the Infinite One fill your hearts so full that there is no room for resentment, jealousy, hatred, or anything that is negative, for where dwells this love and peace these things cannot exist. Build for yourselves, build for yourselves, not in the material for the now, but for the future, build for the future, this spiritual knowledge and enlightenment, increase your Light, that it may shine forth and lighten that dark world called earth. Great is the need in this hour. You can be of no greater service to your fellow man than to build your own Light and use it to lighten the lives of those about you. It is not necessary to preach your truth in the temple or to shout it from the rooftop — nay — not so, for he who lives the Law attracts unto him that, and those who are seeking to know. Cast not your pearls before swine, no — but let your light so shine as to fill the lives of those with whom you come in contact. These will be the temples that shall bring the truth to earth man; not the temples built by those who would bring to man that which they would have him know. Man of earth has had the truth withheld from him long enough. Now he shall have the opportunity to know the truth, and woe unto those who have falsely taught in His Name. Great temples of stone are not necessary in the eyes of the Great One. His Truth is revealed in the hearts of men.

"Many have been the Great Masters who have trod the earth. Each has brought great teachings of truth, but the darkness has hidden these truths. Therefore, let he who has eyes to see — and he who has ears, let him hear and know the truth. It shall not be found in the great temples, but in the heart of man.

"Know ye not that ye are the Temple of Creation? I give a message to those of earth: Open your hearts and receive this Great Light which is being given to you at this time. Yea, I say unto you. Man needs but to open his heart and receive the glory of the One Great Being. He need only be touched by this Light to awaken in him great revelation; to bring about a degree of understanding that will put him in a path of great magnitude, great learning, great wisdom and understanding. Beloved children of the Light, open your hearts that this River of Light might flow to you and raise you to heights far, far beyond that you can now conceive of. Your love should so radiate that those about you feel you love and light whenever they are near you. This creates more desire in those with whom you come in contact, more desire to know this Truth than anything you do. That is what is meant by the statement in your Holy works which states, '*Do not hide your Light under a bushel, but let your Light shine forth that others might see it.*' This Light radiates from you when you are able to demonstrate it in your own life, because your life is a happy and glorious one and it radiates all about you for all to see.

"Now; let me tell you a little more about ourselves and about our mission. I shall refer to our solar system as Arturas, since our sun is known to your astronomers by that name. Our craft is located outside your solar vortice. We came by request, by request of members of the Confederation within your system. We came to help your system and especially your planet at a time of crisis. We are not alone. There are many, many craft at this time surrounding your planet. These have come from planets from your system and from many many systems. We have all come to serve, to serve your system and your planet. Each has a mission to perform; each was chosen for his mission because of his particular capabilities. Our main craft, which

we call the mother craft, is one hundred twenty miles in length and thirty-six miles in diameter; it carries upward of twenty-five million and approximately fifty thousand smaller craft. It is difficult for you to conceive of a craft of this size, but we do not do things on a small scale. We serve only to our fullest capacity.

"Your people, Dorothy, through all generations of time, have had the right to choose; they have not chosen wisely, so in your time you face a great crisis. We, as have many others, have come to help you. We are awakening your people in great numbers; not to any great knowledge, but to the fact that they must make a choice, that there are two paths that they can follow. To those who make the choice to serve their humanity in every way and to follow the path of service, of love, of light and understanding we pledge our help. To all who make the choice, we shall move in with protection, with love, light and truth. We shall guide them into opportunities for service. They shall find themselves going about a new way, not knowing why they do this. We pledge our protection; no harm shall come to those that make the choice in full faith and understanding. All of this we shall do and more. The powers of my people are such that any one of them could stand upon the face of your planet and perform any of the '*miracles*' described in your religious history. We do not mean to brag of our achievements, for we are servants, servants to a Cause, and we are grateful and humble for the opportunity to serve you.

"There are many, many brothers and sisters working for your planet and your people at this time; some of those are able to come among you and are among you. They are seen daily in your skies; many of them are living among you and are serving quietly. If they were to be known, their work would be greatly hampered, so they work quietly among you, as one of you, and thereby accomplish these missions. Those brothers who are working among you were brought by craft which landed upon your planet and became absorbed into your humanity. Others voluntarily came through the normal route, and live among you as one of you, many not even aware of their true identity. But at the proper time they shall be awakened, and will go about their Father's work.

"Do you realize that these brothers and the Masters who are working on behalf of earth today have made great sacrifices; they have given up great peace and comfort. They have left their homes and their friends and are passing through what is to them great discomfort and sacrifice, but they complain not. Neither do they think of their sacrifices as sacrifices, but they are spurred on by the great love they have for mankind, for their desire to see man of earth raised up out of the stench in which he lives. Little does earthman realize the sacrifices that are being made. How many earth people would be willing to leave their comfortable homes and work in your slums, to go there and live in the filth that exists? Once you have known life on the higher planes and return to conditions that exist on planet earth, you are doing just that. These individuals come entirely by their own choice as volunteers. They are not asked to come; they are not told to come. It is their choice through their great love for mankind.

"Much more help is awaiting earth people if only they will gain understanding. When earthman has attained understanding, even to a small degree, peace will reign on planet earth, for with only a slight amount of understanding, man will see the utter futility of war, of hate and greed. So, my dear friends, take advantage of every opportunity to raise your consciousness. Encourage your friends to do likewise for, as you raise your consciousness, you have improved the mass consciousness to a degree, and this is the one thing that will eventually turn the tide. The time is now. Time has run out for your planet, Dorothy. The prophecies are being fulfilled, therefore your people have no choice. The only choice man has is whether he will go with his planet into the New Age, or leave his planet for one that is of a like vibration, where he must begin the evolutionary cycle all over again. For in the New Age, planet earth will have a new and

higher vibration, and in order to live upon it, spiritual understanding will be necessary.

"Nothing comes to you or anyone without effort. The seeking of Truth, Dorothy, requires effort, *stick-to-itiveness*, to use your terms, for in your persistence, in your search, is the thing that will bring you results. Many of your people start the search for Truth, but they find that it takes effort, patience, and above all great sincerity. Many of them fall by the wayside when they discover that Truth must be earned. They desire it provided they do not have to work for it. Many times, great sacrifices are necessary to gain the truth and the experiences that will bring a higher understanding. This is as it should be, for things gained without effort, without sacrifice, are not held dear, are not appreciated and are soon lost. It is the things we gain through hard, sincere efforts and suffering that really benefit us, that bring sound growth that is permanent.

"Works without faith are valueless. We could give you many demonstrations that would convince you of the many things of which we speak, but this would be only temporary. For only the things that you gain through your own efforts, your own searching, your own suffering, can establish the faith in you that is necessary to reach the heights to which you aspire.

"To he, or she, that sees and witnesses, it is no problem to believe. But he who sees not, and believes through faith, faith in his creator and in his fellow men, to him shall come great awakenings, great experiences. Prove these truths to yourself by demonstrating, by putting them to work for you. You are not asked to accept a truth without first trying it. To see it demonstrated by another does not qualify you. You, yourself, each as an individual, must take these results and let them manifest in your own life, building your glorious Light for all to see. We are still putting forth every possible effort to influence your leaders in their decisions, but we can only influence or attempt to influence. We cannot interfere physically; we cannot interfere with the free will of man, only to the point that is necessary to save your planet. Man must evolve upon his own as much as possible. To interfere with the evolvment of another only brings Karma upon the one who is interfering. But according to Universal Law, we shall interfere at the point of total destruction; that is our right.

"Now, what is this they called Man who was given dominion over all things by his Creator? How do you define this thing called man? In your existence of your plane of existence, we see man in a physical chemical body, so to speak. He functions through this chemical body, controlling it and its actions through what you call a brain. But on yet another plane of existence, after the death of this physical body, man continues to exist. Here he functions in what, to use your terms, you call an astral shell. In this astral body, he moves, he thinks, he carries on life much as he did when on the physical plane, yet he does not function with a chemical body, nor does he control or manipulate his astral shell through a brain as before. He finds that thought is much more effective upon this plane. He finds that he brings into being that which he desires by merely creating a thought, and promptly this thought comes into being for him. He builds his own surroundings with very little effort on his part and these surroundings and action depend entirely upon his ability to think. But he is limited in many ways, for he has been lost for so long in a physical existence, through desires that were created within him many years back in time. He finds this desire which he has, continually pushing him, so to speak, to express in the physical or the chemical, and oftentimes not realizing exactly where he is, he does not take advantage of the situation that he finds himself in, but rather tries to pull himself back into the physical, chemical plane of existence before his time. Oftentimes this becomes quite confusing to the individual — and for those with whom he may make contact, who are still in the physical realm. You see, he is neither functioning on the physical chemical plane of existence, nor on the astral plane, but in a twilight world of his own creation. He has, in effect, become

earthbound. Now, to those who have somewhat of a higher understanding; they are able to live a happy fruitful existence in what your occultists refer to as the astral planes of existence. These higher planes are very beautiful.

"As we move farther out, we find other planes of existence, other levels of life. As we pause here, we find beings of greater understanding; we find beings with greater knowledge of the universe and its functions. We find that these individuals also function in a world of thought but they have a higher knowledge of this power. They also have greater knowledge of many other powers. They have an understanding of matter to a greater degree. We find that these beings are able through their power of thought to control and manipulate this matter. They are able to change it to different forms, to bring into being that which they desire and to mold it into whatever suits their purpose at the time. They are able to transport themselves from place to place without the aid of a vehicle if they so desire. Yet if they desire a vehicle in which to travel — this can also be created by thought and the manipulation of matter. Also we find that many of them can bring themselves into your plane of existence and create for themselves a chemical body to be used temporarily as they move among you and then again to be returned to the nothingness from whence they came.

"How do we define this man? Shall we go higher? Shall we move from this realm where man lives, in a world of thought, yet he lives a life somewhat as yours in that he lives with his fellow man ... they work together, they have their homes and their families, but yet so different.

"As we move on, we find ourselves surrounded by beings of such great intelligence, of such great Light that our understanding of them is naught. We see nothing but Light. These beings have such great knowledge and control of matter, of intelligence, of consciousness, that it is beyond our understanding. They have such great knowledge of the universe; they know of its creation. They understand consciousness. They are able to divide and subdivide their consciousness, sending it out into many spheres and many planes and there expressing it, helping to raise the consciousness of these beings on other planes that they too might someday move into their plane of consciousness. These beings, I can only state, are pure consciousness.

"You ask, '*is this the ultimate in man?*' I must answer, '*I do not believe so, for I understand that man reaches even beyond this.*' So, beloved friends, how should you define man? I have no definition for man, for man, shall we say, is inconceivable. At my level of understanding, I believe I would have to state it so. But man on earth has all these potentialities and man of earth sooner or later shall return to the high states of consciousness from whence he came. We are gradually climbing step by step. As time is never ending, so is our climb to the ultimate. A man grows and moves ever outward and upward on the spiral of evolution; he will become more and more aware of his consciousness; his consciousness will widen, and will grow ever wider. It will take in more and more of this universal knowledge and wisdom, and consequently man's understanding of how to use this consciousness will become greater and greater. Man will be able to extend his consciousness over vast areas of space and encounter experiences that would otherwise be impossible. The important thing at this time, beloved friends, is to use that which you have to the greatest possible extent. Use your wisdom and knowledge today, and use it in a reverent and holy way, with ever a high motive in mind. By so doing, your consciousness shall widen, shall extend out and take in more of this universal knowledge and wisdom.

"Once man has truly taken this step in sincerity, placed it above all else, above all other things, then he will begin to move rapidly on his course. This will not be done without effort and sacrifice. Many

comforts will have to be sacrificed to gain this knowledge. The great Masters did not accomplish this without making these sacrifices, and they continue to sacrifice.

"The great Master who walked your earth two thousand years ago walks still today, unseen, but serving that struggling humanity he loves so dearly. Other great Masters walk with him. Tears fill their eyes as they observe the horrors of men, the needless suffering, the domination of mankind, and all the evil that does prevail.

"The evildoers are ignorant of the vast repercussions of their actions. They think that if they escape man-made laws they are in the clear. But they are totally unaware that each action taken of an adverse nature toward their fellow man; whether of physical violence, or destruction of freedom, or acquisition of material property through force or beguilement, must be accounted for. Any action that be hurtful in any way shape or form is a violation of Universal Law and must be accounted for, eventually.

"Each hurtful act towards another accomplishes naught but to form a chain of bondage around the one taking such action. But alas, little can be done for these people at this time, for they have for so long been victims of their own material thoughts that they are no longer in command. They are ruled entirely by their own mortal self. That mortal- devil self has been allowed to feed for so long on negative destructive thoughts, that it has become the total entity. The higher spiritual self — not having been given any expression — lies dormant deep within.

"But the forces of darkness must perish; they must be banished from your earth for all time. And out of this must come a new age of love, harmony, and understanding; an age where each shall live to benefit his brother, and not himself — here in all problems, the answers sought shall not be '*What is best for me?*' but '*What is best for all concerned?*'

"During the transition, many changes will take place upon the surface of your planet, as have taken place before in other transitions, for, you see, systems, planets, and individuals are ever evolving, onward and upward. Man does not digress; he is ever progressing. And so, we move on, ever looking outward and upward, to a new and higher understanding. Those above, ever reaching down to lend a helping hand to his brother who is coming after. For as we serve those who are struggling just behind us, we also receive help from those who are just ahead of us; it is a never-ending chain."

"We must leave you now, my friends," said Oxal. "But before we do, I am going to place upon the heads of each of you my special blessing." He stood and raised his hands. Everyone listened with closed eyes as he began to speak:

"O, Radiant One, send forth Thy Light, and surround each of us, Thy children,

that we may have enlightenment and wisdom. We relax and give ourselves

completely to the Father. We relax and give ourselves wholly and completely to

Him. We know that all is well as we relax in His arms. We give our whole selves to

the father, we want only to do His will. We relax and give ourselves wholly and completely to Him. "I am his perfect child. He guides me and directs me. He

continually surrounds me with His pure white Light; I visualize this radiant substance of purest white, until I actually feel the consciousness of the Father. His presence, His power, His Light and Love flowing through me. I relax in His presence. He is the ever-loving Father and Creator. He loves and protects me. He is the one and only Power and Intelligence... I am this perfect expression... He expresses through me... I am a doer of His will... The Father and I are one... There is but a single power and intelligence... This great power and intelligence is now a part of me... It is guiding me and protecting me at all times... I give myself completely to this great Power and Intelligence ... I am a part of it ... I live in and have my being in this, the Father. Amen."

Chapter Nineteen:

Americanpresidentland

Everyone slowly opened his eyes. Oxal, Odin, and Arcturas were gone. Dorothy shook her head in awe. "What a wonderful experience!" she said. "And what an enlightening experience! If people on the earth could have seen and heard all of this, their eyes would really be opened."

"Do you think they would accept what was said, and change their ways?" asked the Scarecrow.

The Lion and Tin Woodman shook their heads.

"But why not?" said Dorothy. "How could they help but see that their lives have great meaning — that they don't just live and die and that's the end of it?"

"Remember," said the Lion, "they did not believe Jesus Christ when He tried to tell them some of these things and, even today, many of His followers do not really follow His teachings."

"Yes, you're right," said Dorothy. "I know a cranky old lady who goes to church every Sunday, and she smiles and nods to everyone there, but we all know how mean spirited she is. She scowls at children who walk by her, as if she resents their very presence. She even tried to take my little dog away from me."

"There is a Jewish family in the village," continued Dorothy. "Their little girl and I are friends. Sometimes I go to her home to play. Her mother and father and big brother are so kind and loving. They are always giving me food to take home. They do not have an awful lot themselves, but they share what they have."

"Sometimes people forget," said the Lion, "that Jesus was of the Jewish faith. He had no intention of starting a new religion. He was only trying to uplift the thoughts and aspirations of his people. His followers called themselves Christians because they wanted to follow his teachings more than the traditional Jewish teachings. His teachings were misinterpreted by later followers and sometimes deliberately distorted or had parts removed by them in order to suit the Church's thinking at the time. It is sad that some Christians today make judgments on the other faiths. Some even go so far as to believe that non-Christian religions, are doomed unless they convert to Christianity. God loves all people. He is not concerned with their individual beliefs and religions. He wants only for His children to grow spiritually and to love one another; to express kindness and gentleness and to live in peace and understanding. That is all He wants. Each may think as he wishes religiously, as long as those thoughts are of the highest order and as long as there is a desire to know more of the nature of God and His universe. Too many are smugly satisfied with their religious beliefs and will investigate no further, believing sincerely that they have been told all that God wishes for them to know, and so will refuse to listen to any other point of view, or to study the many writings that exist, some of which are very spiritual in nature. These people deprive themselves of a great deal of knowledge, thereby inhibiting their spiritual advancement. Of course, others are spiritually advanced who do not even belong to any organized religion or philosophy."

"It's all so very interesting," said Dorothy. "I had never thought of any of this before — or at least very little."

"Most children don't think too much about it, but they do wonder about things sometimes. When you get back to Kansas, Dorothy, you really must find a way to bring this knowledge to the children," said the Tin Woodman. "Although some adults will understand it, many others are too set in their ways to change their thinking or attempt to understand it. It is up to you children to change the world, and you can do it. If you will all learn to think and act in a more spiritual manner, by the time you grow up and fill all the positions of government and industry, you will be living in a beautiful world, one of harmony and honesty and trust. Oh, there will still be problems, but nowhere near the degree there is now. And the adults, from their various levels of consciousness, will be amazed at what you have accomplished. And to think it will all be because each individual decided within himself to raise his thinking to a higher level and to serve his brother as himself."

"I just wish it could be that simple," said Dorothy. "But even if all children everywhere could be told all this; there are so many that would not listen. They would just scoff at the idea of being nice. Some children just seem to delight in being mean."

"Perhaps that is because they have not evolved very much over their lifetimes," said the Scarecrow. "And they have no desire to evolve now."

"This is true," said the Lion. "But this change is not expected to happen overnight. Every child that does accept this philosophy will teach their own children too, and if the philosophy is taught from a young age, there is so much more chance of it being accepted. Especially if it is also taught in the schools. The world could not help but improve."

"What about countries," said the Scarecrow, "whose governments don't believe in a supreme intelligence, life after death, or rebirth? What about them? Their governments like to have full control over the people. They control the factories, the newspapers, everything! They would never allow their children to be taught this."

"Never say never," said the Tin Woodman. "I believe this old hard line thinking will break down — ever so slowly, mind you. But mass thinking does not change quickly. As younger people with more inquisitive minds grow up and replace the old die-hards, things will change."

"Mortal is the word, all right," said the Scarecrow. "It is the mortal mind which causes people to be enemies. The spiritual mind would never allow this."

"Just think what could be achieved," said the Lion, "if all that money that the various governments spend on armies and sophisticated weapons could be spent on humanitarian projects ... like helping to feed all the children in the world who go to bed hungry each night."

"You would think that would be a lot more important to them than arming themselves to the teeth," said the Scarecrow. "But I guess that they're all so afraid of each other they feel they have to build their huge armies to protect themselves. I hope one day they'll all come to their senses and see how ridiculous the whole thing is."

"I'm sure it's only a matter of time," said Dorothy. "My fellow mortals can't remain in the dark ages for ever."

"Not to change the subject," said the Tin Woodman, "but where do we go from here?"

"We haven't heard much of the Wicked Witch lately," said the Scarecrow.

"Maybe she's gone into hiding," said Dorothy.

"Not her," replied the Tin Woodman. "She's not scared of anyone."

"She could be getting scared," said Dorothy, "now that we're getting closer to where she lives."

"Why should she be scared of us?" asked the Cowardly Lion. "She has all that magic. We don't have any."

"We may not have all that exotic magic," said Dorothy. "But we have more power."

"More power?" questioned everyone at once.

"Yes," said Dorothy emphatically. "Haven't you been absorbing all that we have been told? Love is the greatest power in the world — in the entire universe."

"Well, the proof will be in the pudding," said the Lion.

"What did you say would be in the pudding?" asked the Scarecrow.

"What I'm trying to say," answered Lion, patiently, "is that when we meet face to face the real test will begin."

"Oh," said the Scarecrow. "I understand."

"We must all have faith," said Dorothy, "and know that, without a doubt, we have overcome hate."

Everyone was so busy talking that none had paid too much attention to the surroundings. "Look!" said the Lion. "Look at the beautiful homes!"

They were very surprised to see several lovely houses scattered about. The landscaping was comprised of little wooden knolls surrounded by the greenest of green grass. Little winding paths of yellow brick connected all of the houses together. The homes themselves were all of different architecture and design: from a southern mansion to a very modern split-level. One house was a very pretty Tudor style home, with flowers of every variety around it. Another, a beautiful Spanish style home, had the most beautiful garden that Dorothy had ever seen; with small lakes and waterfalls and exotic plants and trees of every variety. As they got closer, they could make out the figures of three men on the porch sitting in very comfortable-looking rocking chairs. They seemed to be just enjoying the warm lazy sounds of the garden — the droning of a bee collecting pollen, birds chirping, and the soft rippling sound of water from nearby fountains.

In front of the men, on a little round table, was a pitcher of what looked to Dorothy, like ice-cold lemonade.

As if reading her thoughts, one of the men said, "Come and join us for lemonade, my dear. You look thirsty — all of you, please come and sit down."

The man brought out some more rocking chairs and said, "Welcome to Presidentland."

Dorothy looked up quickly. He had looked very familiar to her when she first saw him. Then it dawned on her. Presidentland! Of course! The man was none other than President Andrew Jackson! Dorothy gasped. She had seen President Jackson's face in an American History book. "But sir," she said. "I-I thought you were...."

"Dead?" interceded the man. Then he chuckled. "No, not at all, my dear young lady. Oh yes, my physical body died a long time ago. But no one can ever really die. That would be impossible. Each of us is part of creation; we are all part of the scheme of things. Nothing can destroy us, nothing. We can destroy the quality of our existence by our wrong thinking and behavior. In other words, that beautiful true nature of our being can be covered up until it is invisible — both to others and to ourselves. This true nature cannot be destroyed, only temporarily buried in the murk of mortality until either someone rescues us, or we rescue ourselves. Usually it is a combination of both. Now, my young friend, let me introduce you to my associates."

Dorothy turned to see the faces of none other than George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Her eyes grew wide, and her heart skipped a beat as she whispered, "I am very honored to meet you, sirs,"

"Not at all," they replied. "The honor is ours," said Mr., Lincoln. "It is a delight to meet such a fine young lady and her equally fine friends." They shook hands with everyone.

"Please be seated," President Jackson said. He poured Dorothy a large sparkling glass of lemonade and began to explain why the three of them — all ex-presidents of the United States, were together.

"We call this area Presidentland. It is not really a land and we don't all live here permanently. But we do meet here often. That is why we have homes here. We live with our families in our regular homes throughout the land. The full name of our little club here is '*Americanpresidentland*,' and it is a private club made up of United States Presidents. Of course, anyone can visit us, just as you are visiting us now. We are only private in the sense that we are generally alone in order to conduct the business that we must conduct among ourselves.

"The reason we meet so often is because of our dear love for our country and for mankind in general, we are anxious to help resolve the many problems that exist on the earth today, and especially those related directly to our beloved country. We work with many members of the government, as well as the current President. We will be holding a full meeting very shortly. You are all welcome to join us and to observe the proceedings."

"Oh, we'd love to, Mr. President," said Dorothy. "Wouldn't we, everyone?"

"Yes indeed!" said the Tin Woodman. Everyone nodded excitedly.

"This will really be a historic occasion, to say the least," said Dorothy.

"While we are waiting for the meeting to begin, if any of you have a question you would like us to answer, please do so," said President Jackson.

"I would like to ask what you think of the world today compared to your time," said Dorothy.

"That is a very good question," answered President Jackson. "We could all talk for days on that subject. Would you like to answer first, George?" he said to President Washington.

President Washington looked rather stern as he spoke: "The world has certainly changed since my day. But that is to be expected. Things cannot stay the same if progress is to be made.

"Unfortunately, nearly all of the progress being made is of a material nature. There is nothing wrong with material progress, of course. And science has certainly made some amazing advances since my time. The unfortunate part is that spiritual growth has not advanced at the same pace. As a consequence, the world is presently in a very unbalanced state. We are all quite alarmed by it. Something must be done soon to get people to change their ways — to be more considerate of one another, to show more concern — to have more love in their hearts.

"Our great United States of America must lead the way. We must be a Light unto the world. Yet presently we are much alarmed over the state of our nation. Before She can become that Beacon of Light, there are many things She must put in order. We have the best system of government in the world, but the government must be purified — the people must be purified, and this can only be done by taking the little children and teaching them strong moral principles, the importance of honesty and integrity — of love and compassion — of fairness and justice — of the value of human freedom, of God, and the nature of the universe. To instill in them a great love for all nature, for all mankind.

The adults must become examples to the children. When someone who is in a position of public trust — such as a member of the government — turns dishonest, and the public reads about it, they shrug their shoulders and say, '*Another dishonest politician.*' The children hear and see all of this. Then they grow

up with a very negative outlook towards politics. Many don't even vote, rationalizing that it doesn't matter who gets into power, for they will sell what principles they have for money.

"Politicians who do turn dishonest and lie to the American people have no idea of the damage they do to our beloved country. Needless to say, most of the people in government posts are dedicated, honest people, seeking only to serve. But it is the dishonest ones who undo whatever good the majority are able to achieve.

"Of course, a few are in politics for the power. Not to mention the lucrative lifetime pensions at the end of their service. They do not necessarily take money dishonestly, but they weaken the entire structure just the same, because their motives are selfish ones.

"People from all walks of life; doctors, lawyers, government workers, factory workers, people who work in stores — all of these people are the strength of our society — of our way of life. But if dishonest; even in the slightest; they drain this strength off and weaken our nation.

"Many people justify stealing from their employer — from the government — from the insurance company, by thinking, *'Other people do it, why shouldn't I?'* Or *'If I don't do it, others will,'* or *'They can afford it. They won't even miss it.'* But these people are just as deadly to our society as the hardened criminal who cashes bad checks or pulls a gun. For they are not really stealing from their company or from the government or from the insurance company, oh no. They are stealing from their brother and sister — from their fellow human beings. Because business must figure in these losses as part of the cost of doing business, the price of their products or services must increase accordingly to all the people who avail themselves of these goods or services.

"Thefts from government, for example, must eventually mean higher taxes. So you see, any form of stealing, whether by a hardened criminal with a gun, or by a clever employee falsifying records, serves only to weaken the entire economy. Government funding of research for projects that are of interest only to a few is also a form of stealing, unless, of course, the results of that research will ultimately benefit the many. Gross inefficiency, through lack of concern — all these things are forms of stealing. The greedy and the selfish who indulge in these activities serve themselves at the expense of their fellows. What they fail to see is that their gains are temporary — they will eventually pay the price. One cannot take from another, or hurt another in any way, without eventually taking from oneself — for all are one."

"Well now, George," said President Lincoln, "I realize that this is all very interesting and a very important topic. But we must be watching the time." He turned to Dorothy, smiling. "You must excuse George. He really gets carried away at times. He would talk all day if we let him."

President Washington placed his hands on his hips, pretending to be indignant. "Listen to who's talking," he said. He whispered loudly into Dorothy's ear so everyone else could hear: "He only wants me to stop talking so he can talk."

"Now, now boys," interceded President Jackson. "No bickering in front of our guests. Presidents are supposed to be dignified."

President Lincoln turned to Dorothy. "I'm afraid all presidents like to hear the sound of their own voices. It's a built-in trait of all politicians and actors."

"Well, I think that's part of the charm of both politicians and actors," said Dorothy. "Most seem to have very vibrant speaking voices."

"If you have any more questions," said President Jackson, "we can talk as we walk to the meeting."

"Well," said Dorothy. "I was wondering which political party is the best for our country, Republican or Democrat?"

President Jackson chuckled. "Well now, the answer to that would depend on which president you talk to. But perhaps you'd like to hear what President Lincoln has to say on that subject. I'm sure he's most anxious to answer this one."

"Thank you, Andrew," responded President Lincoln. "You're quite right, I would like to answer this question. Neither the Republican nor the Democratic party would be good all the time, Dorothy. If one or the other is in power too long, the country tends to go too far in one direction. Balance is the key word. By alternating the power every few years a balance is maintained. That is why in so many other countries the masses are unhappy. They have had one system of government for too long. That is why dictatorships are bad, or where the government is so powerful, so strong, that the people cannot vote for a change.

"You see, there are certain individuals who see themselves as a sort of God above all the people. They think they know far better what is good for the people than the people do. So they treat the people like children. And anyone who opposes them is treated like a naughty child and punished. In other words, the '*children*' are not allowed to disagree with them. That is why in many countries there is no free speech. That is, people have to be very careful what they say, or someone will tell on them and they will be punished. Even the newspapers and radio are all controlled by the government. It is hard for us to imagine — but it is true. The factories, and the railroads, the electrical power — all are under government control. Even the housing. Needless to say, people are not very well off. That is to say, most of the people. The ones in power always make sure they feather their own nests. Yet these governments are generally founded on the principle that all are equal, and will share in the national wealth. It sounds a little bit like Oz, doesn't it? But unfortunately, the results are not at all like Oz. You see, Oz doesn't have any greedy people, or people who become overwhelmed by their own power, except for the wicked witches, of course. Also, if someone in Oz decides that he'd like a bigger house, or more land, he has only to ask. But in the countries we are referring to, the government sets rules and regulations in all things. A person is not even free to travel where he wishes. And the people in power are quickly filled with a sense of their own importance. It is very dangerous for any nation to allow a small group of their citizens absolute control over them. People cannot handle having absolute power over others. When one person can do anything he wants to another person without fear that he himself will be punished, it is very difficult to keep a balance. This enormous feeling of power seems to bring out the worst of human behavior. Some of the worst atrocities mankind has ever suffered occurred under these exact conditions.

"When people in power know that there will be no repercussions for what they do, it is very few indeed who can remain dignified and just. It is under these kinds of conditions that people are thrown in jail without trial — executed, have their property confiscated, or their families abused; et cetera.

"No group can be a law unto themselves. That is why our founding fathers wrote the Constitution as they did. They knew the dangers of tyranny, for they had experienced it first-hand. So they built in safeguards. Free enterprise must flourish. Individual initiative and hard work, honesty and integrity, must be recognized and rewarded. These are the strengths of our nation. Individual effort is the key to a nation's

greatness. No laws must ever be passed — tax or otherwise — that would inhibit individual ambition and initiative. And to paraphrase one of our peers: *Ask not what others can do for you, but rather, what you can do for others.*

"And I might add, although God created all men equal; the right to enjoy that equality must be earned. One cannot be expected to shirk one's duties to self, to family, to country and still hold one's head high as an equal member of society."

As President Lincoln continued to talk, they arrived at what appeared to be a southern mansion with the traditional white pillars. As she drew closer, it became apparent to Dorothy that the building was an exact replica of the White House.

Dorothy noticed that other men were arriving too. It was as if an American History book had come to life. Their mode of dress ranged from the 1700s to the present. Many of the faces were quite familiar to her; others she recognized but could not quite place. Then it dawned on her; each of these men was, at one time, the President of the United States. Several smiled and nodded as they walked by. Some stopped to say hello to Presidents Washington, Lincoln, and Jackson; others gathered in little groups to chat, while others went directly inside.

"Shall we go in?" said President Washington.

The interior of the mansion was most luxurious. The furnishings were mostly antique. Beautiful paintings and tapestries hung on the walls. As they walked, their feet sunk into deep soft carpeting. Here and there were little bowls of colorful flowers. The whole atmosphere was warm and friendly — it gave Dorothy a most happy feeling inside.

They walked into a large room which had a long, beautifully ornate oak table in the center. Around the table were matching oak chairs with one at the far end slightly larger than the rest.

"As you can see," explained President Jackson, "one chair for each United States President — past and present."

Dorothy appeared somewhat puzzled, and was about to speak, when President Jackson continued: "As you know, most of the American presidents have left their earthly bodies and now live here. However, at any given point in time there are usually one or more ex-presidents still in their physical bodies as well as, of course, the existing or current President. A chair is required for each of these people because, although they are still on the earth, they are able, while in restitude, to depart temporarily from their physical abode — their bodies; and join us for our meetings.

"Incidentally, time is not the same here as on earth. For example, we could have a meeting here which lasts for several hours. But only minutes would have elapsed on earth. Peculiar, isn't it? You will understand why this is so at a later date.

"Now, the earth presidents will more than likely not consciously remember their visit here. In fact, it is very difficult for anyone to recall such visits upon awakening. But these visits are so very important. A great deal is impressed on the subconscious level of the mind during these excursions and much is accomplished."

President Jackson sat down and motioned Dorothy and her friends to do the same. "I think the proceedings are about to begin," he whispered.

Dorothy looked around the table. What a distinguished sight to behold, she thought. Every single president of the United States of America. And to think she, little Dorothy from Kansas, was here with them as a guest. She had noticed earlier that each chair had a beautifully designed silver nameplate attached with a president's name engraved. Two dates also appeared. One said "Birth date," the other "Transition date." She noticed that the transition dates on the chairs belonging to the current President and ex-presidents still on earth had not yet been engraved. She wondered if those dates were known in advance by those present who had already made the transition.

The presidents were seated in sequence, beginning with George Washington, and ending with the current President. The only chair not in sequence was President Andrew Jackson's, whose chair was the larger one at the end of the table.

President Jackson now stood. He spoke with a strong, vibrant voice. "Let us recite the Pledge." Everyone stood and, holding the right hand over the heart, began... *"I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."*

"Please be seated," said President Jackson.

On the wall behind President Jackson was a large sculpture of a beautiful eagle. It appeared to be made of solid gold. In each corner of the room was a large American flag.

Dorothy thought: "What if Aunt Em could see all this?"

President Jackson began to speak again. He spoke of the early days of the republic and the spirit of independence. As he spoke, Dorothy could hear ever so softly the strain of the beautiful music of the National Anthem. An unseen angelic choir began to sing the words, followed by *America the Beautiful* and *God Bless America*. Tears came into Dorothy's eyes and flowed unashamedly down her cheeks as a great love for her country welled up inside her. The entire scene was just too much for her to bear. As she dabbed her eyes she could hear President Jackson saying, "...and now, gentlemen, before we begin our meeting, allow me to introduce our very distinguished guests. This is Dorothy Gale from Kansas. And with her are her friends from Oz: Nick Chopper, the Scarecrow, and the Lion. They are all on a very important mission. They are trying to bring Light and Love to people who need it the most. Their present assignment is a lost soul who is filled with bitterness and hatred. Let us wish them well in their noble endeavor."

Everyone stood and clapped his hands vigorously. Dorothy was filled with emotion. To have all the presidents of the United States stand and applaud her and her friends was just too much for her. She shook her head slowly, as if to say, "What we are doing is nothing compared to what you gentlemen are doing."

As if reading her thoughts, President Jackson raised his hand to quiet the applause. "You know, Dorothy," he said, "you may feel that what you and your friends are attempting to do doesn't warrant much admiration. But believe me, you have the admiration of all the enlightened souls of the universe. For what you are attempting is no easy task. To reverse the attitude of one filled with such hatred and venom is not only extremely difficult, but very dangerous. It takes a great deal of courage to do this work. So many

keep to themselves and make no attempt to help those of little understanding. That is why we express our admiration for you. We love you all very much. It is you and others like you who are the hope of America, and of the rest of the world.

"To be good is not always popular, and you can be savagely persecuted for your goodness. This brings a great deal of pressure upon the young people. The ones who can maintain their goodness in spite of the social pressure to be drawn to the lower levels of expression are to be commended indeed; and all of us who are working to raise the level of consciousness of mankind will be working with these courageous children, for they are the true heroes. They are the ones that should be looked up to. They are the ones whose behavior should be emulated. And those adults who do anything to influence the minds of children in negative ways; whether it be by the spoken word, written page, or the camera — woe unto them. If they could only see what lies in store for them, they would change their ways very quickly. Unfortunately, most will have to learn the hard way. And believe me, it will be hard for them and for others who insist on staying on those low levels of consciousness. Evolution for these people could come to a screeching halt; and they may have to begin the difficult climb all over again. You see, the earth is coming into a New Age. A Golden Age. And those who are refusing to evolve spiritually will not be allowed to share in this Golden Age, for they have not earned the right. But sad to say, few will recognize the need to change their ways.

"As for the people who introduce our precious young people into alcohol or drugs, or who make such dross readily available to children: Nothing can save them except an immediate stop to this activity, and the devotion of their lives to helping those who have had their lives torn apart by this despicable material. The same can be said about those who promote hate for others, simply because they are of a different race, creed, or religion.

"Man-made laws may be escaped from, but the universal law cannot be. That in itself is a universal law.

"Imagine if you will, a criminal on the earth having all of his criminal activities automatically recorded into your court records — no matter whether he was caught or not. Well, that is how it is with universal law. No one escapes his misdeeds. All must be accounted for. But I am afraid, Dorothy, that if the people on earth were told this; they would, for the most part, merely scoff — they just would not believe it. And so they go on in ignorance, thinking that they are getting away with something. They are like children growing up who will not listen to their parents — they have to learn the hard way."

Dorothy nodded her head thoughtfully.

"Well," continued President Jackson, "we must press on with our agenda." He motioned towards President Washington. "Would you like to take over, George? I've talked long enough."

"Thank you, Andrew. I'll be glad to. But I don't think anyone could talk long enough on the subject of child abuse — and mankind's general ignorance of universal law.

"As you know, gentlemen, we have oftentimes discussed the ills that plague society. And especially the activities which hurt the United States. The question I now pose to you is: How can we solicit help from the people themselves?"

"Well," someone said, "we do bring certain ones over here while their physical body is resting."

"Yes," agreed President Washington. "And we are able to achieve much. But often commitments made here are not carried out, simply because they are not consciously remembered. Mortal influences often inhibit the best of intentions. No — what we need is help from the children."

"How can we achieve that?" asked President Jackson. President Washington thought for a moment. "The children's book our Girrephalump friend mentioned would tell of Dorothy's experiences in Oz and about all of us and what we are trying to accomplish. Such a book would not only be enjoyed by the children, it would serve to uplift them and inspire them to work together to improve the world they were born into."

"But we all know how hard it is to change public sentiment — to change people's way of thinking. And if such a book were to be written, people would not believe it. They would simply see the whole thing as a fantasy."

"Perhaps most adults would not believe," replied President Washington. "But the children will. Children know when something is true. Adults have suffered too much from learning. They don't believe in anything unless they can see it, hear it, touch it, taste it, or smell it. Our only hope is the children. If we can just get the word to them, they will listen and they will understand."

"Collectively, the children have tremendous power. If we can win most of them over, they could boycott the negative images presented by adults through so many mediums. They could stand up en masse against the creatures who would push those destructive nightmarish drugs on them."

"The children can wield a great power over the adults who wish to draw them into negativity. They have been pushed around and manipulated for too long simply because they are small and easily influenced."

"They must stand up and be counted, and say to these adults, 'You cannot make me read or hear your despicable words, or see your despicable images, or take your despicable drugs or alcohol or tobacco. We refuse to be manipulated any more. Your greed for money allows you to do things to hurt us. That greed has overwhelmed any feelings of compassion and love you might have had. You don't care if you hurt us, as long as you make your filthy money. Even you adults who own legitimate businesses who make certain *'medicines'* and other products which you know can hurt people. You are equally guilty. We will not buy your products, and as we grow up we will not give you money for all these things and we will teach our children to do the same. We children can change the world. We children will change the world. When there is no more money to be made from all these things, you adults will cease the activities forever. Then the world will be a beautiful place to live in. And we will be proud because we will have done it. We children will have turned the world around by ourselves. And all the other inhabitants of the universe will be proud of us and they will visit us and help us.'"

President Washington stood and threw out his arms. "That is what these children will say, my friends. They will show unscrupulous adults that they no longer have any power over them."

Everyone stood and clapped loudly. "Hear, hear!" they shouted as they applauded.

President Jackson turned to Dorothy. "Will you do it, Dorothy? Will you tell your story?"

"I will indeed," said Dorothy. "I certainly will."

Everyone clapped again. "Good girl," said President Jackson. "We have accomplished a great deal"

already, and our meeting has barely begun. Would you like to continue, George?"

"Thank you, Andrew," nodded President Washington. He stood and began to speak again. "Gentlemen, as you know, I fought for seven long years with my brave men to weather the tyranny of the English monarchy. When the war was over, I surrendered my authority as Commander of the American Forces to Congress, and I retired to my home at Mount Vernon. I had scarcely returned to private life when the clash of civil strife broke our newfound peace. Rumors of rebellion, talk of monarchy, and schemes for military dictatorship alarmed me. I then urged the formation of a strong government, not by the scepter or the sword, but by discussion, propositions, and ratification. To this end I accepted membership in the Constitutional Convention of 1787. I presided over its deliberations and acted as conciliator behind the scenes. My friends pressed me to lend the weight of my name to the Federal experiment agreed upon. So I accepted the presidency, and for eight years devoted my energies to the new civil administration. I took great care to install as members of my cabinet men loyal to the new order. Under my administration the federal judicial system was created. We arranged to pay our revolutionary debts, a protective tariff was enacted, the first United States bank was established, and encouragement was given to commerce. We were on our way."

President Adams spoke up: "There was much turmoil in those days. I was, as you know, vice-president during George's two terms. Thomas, here, returned from France to serve as Secretary of State. He later assumed the position of vice-president with me, and four years later replaced me as chief executive. We did not always see eye to eye then, but we did later become good friends. And curiously, we both died on the same day, July fourth, 1826."

"Oh yes, I remember it well," smiled President Jefferson.

"Do you remember when you first drafted the Constitution of the United States?" said President Washington.

"Yes. That was an exciting time for me," replied President Jefferson. "Which brings us to the next point. It's quite interesting to hear the discussions revolving around various interpretations of the Constitution."

"People seem to read into it what they wish to believe. It would be nice to be able to go back and explain some of the fine points. I don't think the wording of the Constitution leaves any room for doubt," said President Washington. "If people would only read it objectively, without bringing their own emotions and self interest into their interpretation."

"So true," sighed President Jefferson, shaking his head slowly. "But isn't it human nature to see things as we want to see them?"

"Indeed," said President Jackson. "Legislators have much to learn in this regard. It is ironic that once elected to power, the voters who brought about the election are often forgotten. The will of the legislature is quickly substituted for the will of the people. Any law of the land which is unpopular with the majority of the people should be seriously reviewed, and repeal strongly considered. The government is, after all, the servant of the people. Unfortunately, many government members see themselves as rulers of the people, and feel that they must think for the people. The intelligence of the masses is often underestimated. Government tends to think of itself as a superior body."

"Yes," replied President Jefferson. "I cannot disagree with you. But remember, also, that the bills which

are passed are not the same bills as were originally drafted. They have been revised to satisfy various special interest groups, and have special interest clauses tacked on the end just before being voted on. The people often get the short end of the stick; and the bottom line is that the taxpayer pays the bill. The taxpayer should have more control on how his money is spent."

"But that is the reason for the elected officials," said President Adams. "It would be too cumbersome for the taxpayer to study every issue and vote intelligently on them. That is why he elects representatives to study these things in depth; and to think and speak for him, and to vote on his behalf."

"What it all boils down to," said President Washington, "is how devoted and dedicated your elected representative is, and how much time and energy he puts into doing the job you elected him to do as opposed to how much time is put into politicking or serving those special interest groups."

"Exactly!" exclaimed President Jackson. "Which brings us right back to where we started. As was told to Dorothy in Elfland, any government — no matter what name is given to it — is only as good as the sum total of the individuals who make it up. If all of these individuals are honest and devoted, dedicated servants of the people, the people will have a fine government.

"I think we all agree on that. And although not all individuals who make up the present United States government are of the highest integrity, our basic system is still the best in the world. It remains only for us to continue to help and guide these dedicated individuals, and to work with those who are not quite as dedicated or as honest as they should be, in order that we might uplift their level of consciousness."

Everyone applauded vigorously.

President Washington next addressed President Lincoln with a comment that he hadn't been saying much, and he thought there should be some discussion on the merits of elected as opposed to appointed officials.

President Lincoln stood. He smiled kindly at President Washington. "Sometimes silence is stronger than the spoken word. I concurred in what was being said, and I didn't feel I could add to it. Why clutter up the proceedings with a lot of unnecessary rhetoric? As for the elected/appointed question, I think we should save that for our next meeting. I've a feeling it will be a very long discussion."

"Well said," acknowledged President Washington. "Too many of us politicians talk too much. But of course that fact is not entirely unknown to the general public."

Everyone laughed.

At this point President Madison interceded: "Forgive me for interrupting, Mr. President, but I think we need to address the problem of elected officials as a whole. How can we be sure of electing only those who have the best interests of our beloved country at heart?"

"I think herein lies the problem," said President Adams. "Everyone has his own opinion as to whether or not a given policy is within our country's best interests. Who is to be the supreme authority on the matter?"

"If there were only two people left on earth, there would be a difference of opinion," said President Lincoln. "Therein lies the uniqueness of mankind."

"How can we be sure," said President Adams, "that this difference of opinion will never become so great

that it would again divide our beloved country into warring factions?"

"We can never be sure of that," said President Lincoln. "There are those that would try to divide us in order to conquer us — that they may force their system of government upon us. A system of government where, unfortunately, freedom of the people is not the highest priority."

"Gentlemen!" said President Madison. "Doesn't it all boil down to what we said earlier? That it all begins with the children. If they were taught from a very young age the importance of high moral principles, they would grow up with these high ideals inside of them, and those elected to office would be there to serve all the people in a fair and equitable manner that would not, for example, bend to pressure, or the offer of monetary gain from the special interest groups." Everyone nodded in agreement. President Madison went on: "As you know, I served for two terms of office. Prior to that I served Tom here as his Secretary of State. They were troubled times then, and I could foresee that our country would face many problems in the future. Many social problems. I felt then, as I do now, that America's hope — the hope of the world — lies along the path of honesty, integrity, and justice. It is the only way. And those who would follow another path are traitors, not only to their countrymen, but to all mankind." Everyone applauded loudly as several voices interjected with, "Hear, hear," "Well said," "So true," et cetera.

"You know," said President Monroe, "if all people of the United States could see us now, to see that we are all still alive, and how very concerned we are about our beloved country and the rest of the world, I wonder if many of them would change their thinking. Especially if they knew that they, too, would not really die."

"I think they will change," said President Adams. "When they see that the short life given to them on earth is not given to see how much property and money they can amass, but is given to allow them the opportunity for spiritual growth, and in order that they might leave that earthly world a better place for those that come after them. Of course, if a fortune happens to be made while making the earth a better place and making life better for their fellow men, all well and good."

"But so many put the making of a fortune their first and foremost objective. It is such an obsession for many that they don't care who is hurt or that the world will be worse off for them having lived there. These people often are miserable and lonely, Their vast fortunes of little comfort to them. They come into this realm with no money physically, of course — and paupers spiritually. They are a sorry sight to behold, indeed. As you know, after we arrive here, we reflect upon our life in great detail. So, when these people contemplate all they have done with their lives and compare that with all that they could have done, they practically cry out for the chance to do it over, for the chance to make amends. But it is too late. They must live with their memories. As we all know, they will eventually be given the chance to make amends. However, all of what they did could have been avoided if they could have known in advance what the results would be."

"Oh, they knew all right," said President Lincoln. "We all knew prior to our birth on earth, but our desire for mortal expression is so strong that our higher self is delegated to a place deep in our unconscious so that it won't interfere with what we wish to do mortally. We cannot blame our actions on a lack of knowledge. No, any action we take on earth is of our own volition. We must accept total responsibility. And, as we all know, Universal or Karmic Law will eventually balance the scale.... How soon we choose to learn our lessons, or how long we wish to prolong the agony is entirely up to us."

"When Dorothy returns to Kansas and tells her story; and when her book is published, many people will

be reminded," said President Anderson.

"But they have been reminded before," said President Adams. "How many great teachers have come and gone? Yet the world goes on with its foolishness and its wickedness."

"Can you imagine how much worse conditions would be in the world had these masters not lived?" replied President Anderson. "Many people did listen to the wisdom of the masters, and changed their lives accordingly. Even today, their great works are studied, and the way of life advocated by them is practiced by thousands of good people all over the world."

"That is indeed true," replied President Adams. "But while the religious writings of today contain many pearls of wisdom and are most helpful in keeping one on the spiritual path; the governing body of the clergy of the various ages held back from the people the inner knowledge in order to maintain the power of the church: thus assuring their own, and the church's financial integrity and security.

"Much of what the great spiritual masters actually said has become distorted over the years and key parts of their doctrine deliberately withheld. The ministers of today have no written record of those lost teachings and so do not believe that they ever existed.

"If people were to realize their true relationship to the Source of all knowledge and all power and that they themselves were an integral part of that source, they would be amazed. They have no idea that they are divine beings in their own right, with no need for an intermediary.

"It is not in the best interests of the established church to teach this, even if the ministers and priests believed it themselves. For the church would lose its hold over the masses and therefore lose much of its power. Far better to keep the people in ignorance, and make the path to salvation a very narrow one.

"Reincarnation, as we all know, hasn't been taught by the church for centuries. Wasn't it in Constantinople in the sixth century that the church fathers decided that it would not be wise to retain the doctrine of reincarnation in the Holy Scriptures for fear that the people would not see the need to go to church if they knew they had many opportunities many lives in which to make amends? But the church thought it far better to teach that man only had one life. Only one chance to repent.

"The church had nothing to fear if they had only realized it. But they were afraid that if the people were to know that they did not only have one chance to repent their wicked ways they would say, 'Why should I change? I will live forever regardless.'

"But it would have been better for the church to teach men the truth. And to teach that as long as the children of God refuse to change they will simply be prolonging their agony through many lifetimes, and keeping what could be a delightful planet in a permanent state of agitation and misery.

"It takes many lifetimes for a soul to work its way out of the mortal environment once entrapped there. For one's own mortal mind is the biggest obstacle to overcome."

"I cannot disagree with anything you've said," President Lincoln intercepted. "I had trouble accepting the orthodox teaching myself. I had to modify my thoughts on the matter because of my position at the time.

"But I must point out one thing. The traditional orthodox teachings cannot suddenly be changed. People

need the stability of the traditional church service. Besides, these services are not all fire and brimstone, many are deeply spiritual in nature. To suddenly take that away would be confusing to many, and perhaps some would be lost completely. Instead, the church fathers should develop open minds and study not only the esoteric teachings, but review in depth church history and especially the content of the texts of meetings in which official policy was established regarding what would be taught or not taught to the people. Then, once they have developed a thorough understanding of the human motivation behind the teachings of certain doctrines, they should be in a position to gradually introduce to their congregations a more universal understanding of the nature of creation and man's true place as a co-creator with his God. Before any of this can take place, the church fathers must lose their self-image as all-knowing teachers and see themselves as fellow students learning along with everyone else. Men can become very pompous and pious over their positions in religious orders and can be most reluctant to release their illusions of self-importance and their hold over the ignorant. However, the writing is on the wall. Even now, subtle changes are taking place within organized religion. People are at last awakening, asking questions; no longer satisfied by the smug answers of the past. I foresee the dissolution of the many doctrines and creeds and the formulation of a new universal understanding. I see Temples of Wisdom upon the earth where people are taught the ancient philosophy, and where one can meditate and really communicate on a one-to-one basis with that supreme intelligence which in reality is their own higher self. This coming era will be that long-promised Golden Age on earth when the wicked and all those of a lower order of vibration will no longer be able to dwell upon the earth, but will through that transition called death be delegated to a distant planet to begin the whole cycle of evolution all over again. I would emphasize again however, that to many people the established church is of critical importance — they really need that structure in their lives, they find great spiritual solace in the traditional services. To suddenly take that away from them would be highly irresponsible."

President Jackson stood up. "Gentlemen," he said, "let us take a recess." He turned to Dorothy and company. "Would you care to walk in the garden?" The back door of the hall was opened, and everyone streamed outside. The scents of various flowers and blossoms filled the air.

"You know, my dear," President Jackson said to Dorothy as they walked. "You are more than welcome to stay as long as you like. But as you can see, in spite of our pledge to reduce our rhetoric, we politicians are notoriously long-winded. I expect that this meeting will last for weeks, as all the other presidents have yet to speak."

"Well," said Dorothy. "I do enjoy listening to all that is said, but we have a great deal yet to accomplish. Perhaps we should be continuing our journey. I shall be sorry to miss hearing all the presidents speak."

"You are welcome to visit us any time," said President Jackson. "After you return to Kansas, just focus your thoughts on us upon retiring for the night, and visualize yourself with us. When you fall asleep, you will be there."

"Thank you, everyone," said Dorothy. "This has been a delightful experience and a wonderful privilege."

"The privilege is all ours," said President Jackson. "Goodbye my dears,
and God-speed."

Many of the presidents came over to shake hands again. All of them waved goodbye.

Chapter Twenty:

Captured

Dorothy's little band walked back the same way they came. As they walked past the presidents' homes, the Scarecrow remarked that it was a most interesting experience. Everyone nodded in agreement.

"I'm just afraid," said Dorothy, "that Aunt Em and Uncle Henry just won't believe a bit of this. The more I tell them about Oz, the less they believe!"

"Perhaps you shouldn't tell them all at once," said the Tin Woodman.

"Perhaps you shouldn't tell them at all," said the Lion.

"Perhaps you're right," sighed Dorothy. "It is too incredible for anyone to believe."

"Not anyone," said the Tin Woodman. "Remember what President Washington told you? That you are to tell that writer of your experiences and that he will write them down and that many children and even some adults will read it and although not everyone will believe it — a great many will be helped. So your experiences will not have been in vain."

"Yes, I suppose you're right," said Dorothy. "But I do wish Aunt Em and Uncle Henry would believe me."

"Hey!" said the Tin Woodman excitedly. "I have a wonderful idea. Why don't we transport your Aunt Em and Uncle Henry to Oz? Then they'd have to believe."

"That is a wonderful idea," said Dorothy. "Can we do it now?"

"Well, it's going to take a great deal of arranging, I'm sure," said the Scarecrow. "We'll have to talk to Glinda about it. Or maybe the Good Witch of the North. I'm sure we'll be able to do it somehow."

"I'll bet if they came here they wouldn't want to go back to Kansas," said Dorothy, excitedly. "In fact, if Uncle Henry and Aunt Em were here, I wouldn't want to go back!"

"Dorothy," said the Tin Woodman very solemnly. "I'm sure it's very necessary that you return to Kansas. In fact, as you know full well, you have a very important part to play — a very important part. But one day, when your work is done there, you will come to live in Oz with us for ever."

"Oh, it will be so marvelous, won't it?" said Dorothy.

"Indeed it will," replied the Tin Woodman.

Everyone nodded vigorously.

"Also," added the Lion, "perhaps many of the boys and girls who read your stories will come and visit us."

"That would really be nice," said Dorothy. "Of course, they would probably want to go and see the wicked witch, even though it would be kind of scary for them."

"Speaking of which, have you been noticing our surroundings? Things are beginning to look very spooky."

Sure enough, as they had been walking, everyone was too busy with the conversation to notice the changing landscape. They seemed to be in a thick dark forest, with strange grotesque shapes peering at them through the shadows. Shrill sounds of forest animals and birds could be heard in the distance. And the darkness was falling quickly. The Lion walked a little closer to Dorothy and held her hand. "As you know," he said, "I now have courage and I'm not afraid. But I think I should hold your hand so that you won't be

afraid." Dorothy smiled to herself and said, "Thank you, Lion; it is a little scary."

Just then, a piercing scream rang out. Everyone jumped with fright. All the shadows in the trees seemed to come alive and slowly weave towards them. The branches and vines from the trees caught at Dorothy's hair and dress.

As the little group's pace quickened, a vine from a grotesque-looking tree caught around the Lion's throat and appeared to be trying to choke him. The Tin Woodman jumped into action and hacked it off with his ax. A loud squeal seemed to come from the tree as the ax cut the vine.

"Quickly, everyone! Run!" shouted the Tin Woodman.

They all ran like the wind, weaving in and out of the trees, with the vines swirling and clutching at their arms and legs. Now and then, someone would become entangled, and the Tin Woodman would stop and run back to hack off the vines. Each time he did so, a loud, human-sounding scream would ring out from the tree. The sounds of those screams chilled Dorothy to her bones. As she ran, she could feel herself getting weaker. She was becoming exhausted.

The vines seemed to be everywhere, clutching and clawing at her. Suddenly, the dense foliage came to an end as they all found themselves in an open clearing. Dorothy dropped to her knees, completely exhausted. "Thank Heaven!" she panted. "Thank Heaven we're out of that awful place." She got up and embraced the Tin Woodman. "What would we have done without you?" she panted breathlessly.

The Tin Woodman looked a bit sheepish. "I am a woodman, you know, and I know my work. Though I must admit my work has never attacked me before."

Everyone laughed. "Well, thank goodness we're out of that mess," said Dorothy. "It was horrifying."

Unfortunately, the feeling of relief they all felt was to be short-lived. Dorothy had barely finished speaking when the Lion said, "You are all growing taller." Everyone laughed in surprise, for it was he who was getting smaller — or so it seemed. In actual fact, he was sinking slowly into the soft ground. They all ran at once to pull him up, but, the more they pulled, the more he sank. It was as if a strong force was sucking him in.

"Ahhh!" yelled the Tin Woodman. "It's got me, too!" He was already in the ground up to his knees when Dorothy reached him. "It's no good," he said. "I'm sinking too fast."

While Dorothy was trying to pull the Tin Woodman out, the Scarecrow yelled, "Now it's got me!" He was flailing his arms about and grabbing at the tufts of grass in a desperate attempt to escape the dreadful

suction. But it was no use. By the time Dorothy reached him, he was actually up to his waist. Dorothy was afraid to pull on him too hard, for fear he would tear and all the straw would come out. She looked around her in desperation. By now, the Lion was up to his neck; she ran to him and grabbed his big ears. "Ouch!" the Lion yelled. "You're going to pull my ears off!"

Dorothy let go and started to sob. "I'm losing you," she cried. "I'm losing all of you!"

Just then, the Lion yelled out, "Hey! I'm not sinking any more!"

"Oh thank goodness!" shouted Dorothy, greatly relieved.

The Tin Woodman and Scarecrow — who were by now also up to their necks - shouted out in unison, "I've stopped, too!"

"Well, thank Heaven!" said Dorothy, now crying with happiness. "I'll go and try to get help."

She had barely said the word 'help' when a piercing cackle filled the air. It was a sound they all knew so well and dreaded so much.

Swoosh! The Wicked Witch's broomstick flew past the Scarecrow's left ear. Then swoosh again. This time past the Lion's right ear. She headed for the Tin Woodman, screaming as she flew: "Got you now, my beauties! Ha ha haha!"

Dorothy stood spellbound as she watched the witch perform her acrobatics. Suddenly, the witch zoomed upwards, high into the air, as if leaving. But she turned quickly and pointed the broomstick directly at Dorothy and zoomed towards her like a rocket. The broomstick was about three feet from Dorothy's face when she turned it up slightly, barely missing Dorothy's head. As she swooshed by, she cackled loudly, her screaming laughter filling the air. She did this several times, scaring Dorothy half to death. Dorothy had to move from side to side each time the witch attacked her, or she would have been hit.

Chapter Twenty-one:

A Surprising Reversal

At last the witch seemed to tire of her terrorizing. She made one final swoop at Dorothy — screaming in her ear, "Well, my little pretty, what say you now? I'll be back presently with my soldiers to take you all to my castle. No use looking for help. There's no one here in Witch Forest except my friends, the trees, and they're certainly not going to help you."

She made one final sweep towards the Scarecrow, Lion, and Tin Woodman, screaming with her maniacal laughter. "Well, how's the bag of straw and the tin can?" she cackled. "Not to forget the King of the jungle! A-a-a-a HA HA HA HEE HEE HEEEEEEEEEEEEEE."

While she was screaming, the Tin Woodman managed to pull one arm free. As she flew over his head, he grabbed the tail end of her broomstick. It stopped — but she didn't. She flew head over heels through the air. Over and over she went, landing upside down, her head stuck in the mud. Dorothy ran over to her. By the time she got there, she was already up to her waist, her legs sticking out and flailing around frantically. She obviously could not breathe.

Dorothy grabbed her legs and heaved, but she couldn't budge her.

"She'll die for sure. Run!" said the Scarecrow to Dorothy.

Dorothy hesitated. As much as she had been abused by the witch, she could not bear to leave her to die.

"Look!" said the Tin Woodman. One of the witch's legs was waving back and forth, with her long, pointed shoe vigorously jabbing towards a tree stump.

"Looks like she's trying to tell us something," shouted the Scarecrow.

Dorothy ran over to the tree stump. "I can't see anything unusual about it," she said. Meanwhile, the witch's kicking got weaker and weaker until she was not moving at all.

"She's dead," said the Lion. "The wicked witch is dead. She must have suffocated to death."

"Well, that's that," said the Scarecrow. "She'll never scare or harm anyone again."

"Why aren't we all shouting and dancing for joy?" said the Tin Woodman.

"We couldn't very well dance anyhow," said the Lion. "And I don't think anyone feels like singing."

"I was hoping that we could change her," said Dorothy. "There'd be so much more satisfaction in that, than seeing her dead. Now, wherever she is, she's the same old wicked person."

"What do you mean, wherever she is?" said the Lion. "She's right there! Look at her legs sticking out of the ground."

"No. I mean wherever her spirit is. You know that no one can really die."

"Oh, I see," said the Lion. "You mean, whichever level of spiritland she's now in, it's probably not a happy one."

"Yes," said Dorothy. "She's had a chance to learn here. But she has refused to learn. Now she'll be on a very low level with others of her kind. There's very little likelihood of her advancing much unless someone of a higher level is able to break through the barriers of her negativity."

Dorothy sat dejectedly on the tree stump. "Now we've got to find a way to get you all out of here," she said, cupping her face in hands.

Suddenly, the stump began to sink. "Oh, my!" cried Dorothy, jumping up. As she did so, there were several loud popping sounds. The mechanism that had sucked her friends into the ground had now reversed itself. One by one, they all popped out like corks from a bottle.

The last one to pop out was the witch. However, unlike the others, her body lay lifeless upon the ground.

"You must have released the suction by sitting on the tree stump," said the Scarecrow.

"Yes," Dorothy replied. "Now we know what the witch was trying to tell us."

"Too late for her," said the Tin Woodman, looking at her lifeless form. "She's deader than a door-nail."

They all walked over to where the witch lay. "It would be a beautiful world if all the bad people in it were dead," said the Lion.

"I wonder why God lets bad people live," said the Scarecrow. "Sometimes a good person dies young, while a bad person may live a long life."

"Why does God even allow bad people to be born in the first place?" asked the Tin Woodman. "He must know they're going to grow up bad. Doesn't He know the state of their soul before they're born?"

"God knows what is in everyone's heart," said Dorothy. "And He knows the chances are great that certain souls will give way to evil. But, since He loves all souls equally, He must allow each the opportunity to evolve to a higher understanding."

"But," said the Scarecrow, "what about the really bad ones? Who, no matter what they go through, continue to be as evil as ever? It's not fair to the good people to have these people on earth with them, hurting them and doing all the terrible things they do. God must know that no matter what, these people are going to lead their entire lives in an evil way."

"That's true, I'm sure," said Dorothy. "But, you see, all people on earth are on that particular planet for a reason. Each soul has certain experiences to go through. Very little is really accidental. Some souls make a great deal of progress through these many experiences, others very little. But the experiences are necessary. Everyone must be allowed the opportunity for growth."

Dorothy was quite aware that the words of explanation coming out of her mouth were originating from a much deeper level of consciousness, just as she'd been told.

"Any experience that is gone through with others is quite possibly the result of past experiences with the people involved. Something that has happened, perhaps eons of times past, has brought these souls together again. Sometimes again and again, for they fail to learn each time. It could also be that other people whose lives are touched by this experience — perhaps family members, have something to learn. However, all adverse experiences could be avoided or at least reduced in severity if the same lesson could be learned in any other way.

"For example: if the bad person were to say to himself, prior to performing an act of violence, *What am I doing? This violent life I am leading is getting me nowhere. I am not only hurting this person, but I am hurting myself — my family — my victim's family. What kind of a life is this? I will stop this life here and now. I will replace this black ball of hatred inside me with a brilliant ball of light — of love. Of love for my fellow humans and for myself.*"

"If this was said and acted upon, the angels in Heaven would rejoice. For it would mean that another lost soul had returned to the Father.

"It is not always necessary to go through a harsh experience to learn a lesson. Prayerful contemplation can bring about the desired change of heart much easier. But it seems mankind is determined to take the painful way to spiritual growth.

"Some people think that bad experiences are punishment by God. Of course, this is not true. If it is punishment, it is ourselves punishing ourselves. The experiences are the result of our own wrong thoughts and actions, the result of our listening more to our own mortal mind, rather than our higher self. The resulting pain from our having to live in our self-created environment prods us on to improve.

"Of course, self-improvement can be quite slow, and it may take quite a bit of this self-inflicted pain before the truth finally dawns on us. We are where we are because of the actions of the past. If we want to improve our lot in life, we'd better start improving ourselves.

"Criminals, for example, think that they can take a short-cut to happiness by robbing and stealing. They think that, if they have a lot of money they'll be happy. But by taking that money dishonestly, the farther from true happiness they'll be.

"True happiness is of a spiritual quality, and must come from within. If these people had instead chosen the spiritual path, the substance they were seeking would come to them naturally.

"Our Scriptures talk about the importance of seeking first the Kingdom of God, and that the rest would be added to us. These ancient writers knew what they were talking about. But how many people of today pay any attention to this kind of advice? They think they know better.

"People on the mortal realms can be so foolish. Riches galore are all around them, but they cannot see these spiritual riches because of the need they feel for material things.

"They misinterpret a deep longing inside them, trying desperately to fulfill themselves. But their task is a hopeless one, for no material possession, of itself, can fill the void. "Most interesting," said the Scarecrow.

"Certainly makes you think," the Tin Woodman said.

"I didn't know I knew these things," said the girl. "Although I have the feeling that all I have said, I have known all along."

"I suspect that everyone, deep inside, knows these things," said the Lion. "It just takes a desire for spiritual advancement to release that inner knowledge into the conscious mind."

"Well, I really wasn't all that conscious of what I was saying," said Dorothy. "I suppose that's because the conscious mind has to do with the world around us, whereas the inner knowing is something we all have but rarely listen to. We are all just too busy with the outer goings-on."

"Besides," interceded the Lion, "those that are on the spiritual path are being taught these things during sleep. Remember that was told to us? And, although that teaching is not consciously remembered, it is slowly transforming our character and will gradually affect world consciousness. Especially as each of us begins to listen more to our inner self and less to the outer self."

"Look!" said the Scarecrow. "The witch! She moved!"

Everyone ran over to her. But she was as still as ever. "I'm sure I saw her leg move," said the Scarecrow.

"Maybe she's not quite dead," the Lion said.

"Quick! Take my hat!" shouted the Tin Woodman to the Scarecrow. "Get some water."

"But it's got a hole in it," said the Scarecrow.

"Well, put your finger over it," said the Lion.

"I don't think my finger will hold water," replied the Scarecrow. "It's filled with straw."

"I'd better go," said Dorothy. "In the meantime, slap her face."

"I'll be glad to!" said the Scarecrow. Dorothy ran over to a little stream and filled the Tin Woodman's funnel-hat with water. She walked back as quickly as she could and threw the water in the witch's face.

The witch moved ever so slightly, but did not awaken.

"Well, she's still alive, all right," said Dorothy.

"That's amazing," said the Lion. "But what is even more amazing is that the water didn't melt her away like it did her sister. We must have all temporarily forgotten about that in our excitement."

"She must be made of a different material," said the Tin Woodman.

"I wonder why we're trying to save her," the Lion said. "If she recovers, she'll just attack us again."

Dorothy, ignoring the Lion's remarks but bracing herself, began mouth to mouth resuscitation. Sure enough, the witch began to stir.

"She's coming to," said the Lion, stepping back slightly.

The witch's eyes opened and looked evilly from side to side. She looked around her, but could see only a few blurry shadows.

Gradually, her eyes focused on Dorothy's pretty features. Hatred began to well up inside her. She stood up shakily, then collapsed in a faint. "Quickly!" said Dorothy. "More water."

The Lion ran to the stream and filled the Tin Woodman's hat to the brim. He carried the funnel in his mouth as he ran back to Dorothy, spilling most of it on the way.

Dorothy sat the witch up and pressed the rim of the funnel to her lips. "Drink," she said as she tilted it. The witch took a sip, then collapsed again.

"I don't think she's going to make it," said the Tin Woodman.

"We must try to save her," said Dorothy, as she sprinkled the few remaining drops of water on the witch's face.

The witch opened her eyes again, then sat up by herself. She looked incredulously at Dorothy, and, shaking her head in disbelief, said, "You are trying to save me?" Her voice was little more than a whisper.

"You must get some rest now," said Dorothy. "We'll talk later."

The witch closed her eyes and seemed to go into a peaceful sleep.

"Well, what shall we do now?" said the Lion.

"At least she didn't get mad at us," said the Scarecrow.

"We'll let her rest," Dorothy said. "Then we'll see what she has to say."

The girl lay back and closed her eyes. Presently, she drifted into sleep. She began to dream of her adventures in Oz: of meeting her friends for the first time, and of meeting the Wicked Witch of the West in her terrible anger after Dorothy's house fell on the Wicked Witch of the East.

She dreamed of returning to Oz for the second time and meeting the Wicked Witch of the Deep South. Then she dreamed that all three witches were attacking her at once. The Wicked Witch of the West screamed at her: "So, you thought you'd get away from me, eh? Well, I've got you now, my little pretty!" She screamed again with that horrible cackle that all witches seem to have. As her scream tapered off, the Wicked Witch of the West's ugly, one-eyed face loomed up right next to Dorothy's face.

She glared at Dorothy and screamed, "You thought you'd liquidated me, didn't you, my pretty? Well, I'm

right here! And two of my sisters are here, too. And we have a nice little surprise for you." At that, the Wicked Witch of the Deep South cackled loudly behind Dorothy. As Dorothy spun around, the witch threw a rope around her and tied her arms tightly to her side. They all grabbed the little girl and pushed her roughly into a chair. Then they tied her wrists to the arms of the chair.

Directly above the chair was a big black pot, bubbling and steaming. It was suspended by two chains on pulleys. A rope was tied to an iron ring at the base of the pot and looped through another iron ring on a big wooden beam. The end of the rope lay coiled on the floor.

The Wicked Witch of the West picked up the rope and began to tug on it gently. The black pot tilted slightly. Seeing the alarm on Dorothy's face, the witches cackled in sadistic delight.

"Now, we'll see how you like this, Deary," screamed the Wicked Witch of the West with heinous laughter. "We'll teach you to interfere with us." With that, she gave a big tug on the rope.

Dorothy screamed as the thick black steaming liquid hit her face. But, instead of being scalding hot, it was icy cold. She awoke with a start to find that the Scarecrow was splashing cold water in her face. "What happened, Dorothy?" said the Tin Woodman. "Are you all right? You were crying out in your sleep."

"Oh," said Dorothy in relief as she recognized everyone. "Thank goodness it was only a bad dream. The witches were about to scald me to death."

"We couldn't wake you," said the Lion. "That's why we sprinkled the water on her face."

"Oh, what a terrible nightmare it was," said Dorothy. "Thank you for waking me when you did."

Just then, the Wicked Witch of the Deep South opened her eyes and sat up. She looked around, slowly. Dorothy stiffened, expecting to hear the usual barrage of abuse. Instead, the Witch spoke quite softly. "So, my little one," she sneered, "you decided to help me, eh? Well, it won't do you any good."

"You would have died, if it hadn't been for Dorothy," said the Scarecrow.

"Really now?" said the Witch. "Is that true, Dorothy dear?"

"Yes, it is," replied Dorothy quietly.

"Why would you want to save me?" said the Witch in the same mocking tone.

"Because all life is precious," said Dorothy. "Even yours."

"Precious to whom, might I ask?"

"Well, isn't it precious to you?" replied Dorothy.

The Witch didn't answer. Instead, she stared straight ahead, as if mesmerized. "Well, isn't it?" asked Dorothy again.

"No," said the Witch, her voice shaking as if she were about to cry.

Dorothy was quite surprised by the turn in events. She had never seen the Witch so docile, so dejected. Her voice softened. "Is there any way we can help you?" she asked kindly.

The Witch stared at Dorothy. Suddenly, tears began to roll down her cheeks. "No one has ever been kind to me before," she said. "Why are you?"

"Because we love you," answered the little girl. "We couldn't show our love to you before because you expressed so much hatred towards us that it made us fearful of you."

"But how can you love someone who hates you?"

"Do you still hate us?" asked Dorothy.

"I don't know," replied the Witch, uncertainly. "I've never known anything but Hate."

"Well," said Dorothy, "we've never known anything but Love. You see, when people are unkind towards us, we try to respond with understanding and sympathy. And although their attitude can be quite disturbing to us, we know that to return hatred back towards them would only intensify the situation. To return Hate with Hate wouldn't help the hateful person in the least. And it most certainly would not help us."

The Witch thought for a moment..."You know, I have never talked quietly like this before. Not even to my sisters. It gives me a good feeling inside. Now I am beginning to experience a strange feeling I've never felt before. I think it's a feeling of compassion, almost of love.

"This is very difficult for me to say, Dorothy. But I am very sorry for all the anguish I have caused you and your friends."

Dorothy put her arms around the witch and hugged her. "It was worth going through it all to see you making this transition," said the girl warmly.

Tears now rolled freely from the Witch's eyes. Dorothy began to cry, too. "My heart is very happy for you," she said. "You have entered the door which leads to Heaven. For many, that door is never opened. Yet all have the key."

"I think I know what you mean," replied the Witch. "That key is Love, isn't it?"

Dorothy nodded silently and hugged the Witch tightly. "We are all going to be very good friends," she said.

Suddenly the Witch looked very sad.

"What's the matter?" asked Dorothy.

"I'm so ugly," said the Witch. "I think that's one of the reasons I became so hateful in the first place."

"Hatefulness will make anyone look ugly," said Dorothy. "True beauty is within. An overwhelming feeling of love and kindness could never be ugly."

The Witch brightened up. "Do you think I can become attractive?" she inquired hopefully.

"Of course," replied Dorothy. "You are already becoming so."

Sure enough, the Witch's features were changing. The harshness and the cruel lines around her mouth were dissolving. The greenish tinge to her face was changing to a soft pink glow.

The transformation was amazing. Except for the black cloak and pointed hat, one would never know she was the dreadful Wicked Witch. Her face was actually beautiful now. Her long jagged nose had shortened considerably, giving her quite a sophisticated look.

The Witch was wondering why everyone was staring at her so intently. "What's the matter?" she asked, rather alarmed.

"Look at your reflection in the water," said Dorothy.

The Witch ran over to the pond. She couldn't believe her eyes when she saw her reflection. "This is unbelievable!" she said excitedly.

Dorothy walked over to her. "When we get back to Oz, where our friend the Scarecrow is Emperor, we must find you some new clothes. You will accompany us on our journey, won't you?"

"Oh, yes," replied the Witch. "Thank you. I can't stay in this place now. I will never return here. Oh, this is so exciting! I'm so looking forward to visiting the Emerald City! It will be a pleasure to accompany you. I feel as if a great weight had been lifted off my shoulders. I have lived in a lonely, cold, isolated world all my life. Now I am looking forward to meeting people and enjoying life. Who knows, perhaps I may meet a handsome prince."

Dorothy put her arm around the Witch. "This is indeed a wonderful moment for all of us."

Well," the Witch said, looking around at all her friends, "are we all ready?"

Everyone nodded vigorously.

"Then off we go!"

They all joined together, arm-in-arm, and began to sing as they danced along.

"We're the best of friends together, so happy, so jolly.

We're the best of friends together, as happy as can be.

We're the best of friends together, and nobody — ever,

can part our compa-nee....

Not n-o-o-o-body — ever — can part our compa-nee,

— part our compa-nee — part our compa- nee

When the song came to an end, the Witch said, "I'm so happy, Dorothy, to have such kind and loving

friends. Oh, what a fool I've been all these years. I took great pleasure in hurting people and making them fear me. But it was a pleasure that didn't come from deep within me. Not the kind of pleasure that makes you tingle with joy, the way I feel now. No, it was a selfish, sadistic pleasure derived from the feeling of power over others. What a difference between the two. There is no comparison. But, you see, I had to experience the kind of feeling I have now to know the difference. And it was your being kind to me in spite of this cruelty to you which brought me into this wonderful new understanding. I feel as if I have been rescued from a deep, dark, cold dungeon in which I have spent all my life; as if I've been brought out of perpetual darkness into bright sunshine. It is truly wonderful."

"It has made us all very happy, too, to see you so happy," said Dorothy. "It is difficult to love someone who obviously hates you, but we know that hatefulness and resentment are not natural expressions of humanity, but are caused by a lack of understanding and knowledge of universal laws. Once people become locked up into this self-created prison, it is almost impossible to break them out of it. But, if we don't try, there can never be any hope for any of us."

"Well, I'm certainly glad you tried with me," said the Witch, "or I'd still be there, and totally unaware that in reality I was locked up in my own prison and had thrown away the key."

"Well, you are free now," said Dorothy. "And, with that experience behind you, you will have the understanding to be able to help others in similar situations. That is why we must always show compassion for those who express hatred and resentment, for they are extremely unhappy people, crying out for help. We must mentally surround them with love. For to do otherwise means we are caught up in the same trap they are."

"Well, look how far we've walked." Dorothy gestured towards the houses they had passed when they first entered Americanpresidentland. The houses were quiet, with no signs of life anywhere. "The meeting must be over," said the Lion. Just as he spoke, a shape jumped out of the bushes at him. The Lion jumped with surprise. The shape growled, but, upon seeing the Lion, the growls subsided and changed into a sort of purring sound. The shape was none other than another lion. And what a pretty lion. She had long curling eyelashes and beautiful big brown eyes. The Cowardly Lion was absolutely spellbound. His heart pounded furiously. He tried to speak but couldn't. Eventually, he managed a weak whisper. "Hello."

"Hello," replied the other lion, rather coyly. "Where do you live?"

"Quite a long way from here," said he, somewhat embarrassed by everyone looking at them.

Dorothy said, "Why don't we leave these two alone for a while to get acquainted? We'll walk slowly, Lion," she said, "so you can catch up. Miss Lion is welcome to join us if she wishes."

"Thank you, Dorothy," said the Lion. The female lion looked quite pleased by the invitation. "Well, I'm very happy for you both," replied Dorothy. "Now you each have someone to share your life with."

"She is a very lovely soul," said the Lion, looking into his companion's eyes. "It seems as if we were just made for each other."

"I'm sure you were," replied Dorothy. "I'm sure you were."

Chapter Twenty-two:

A Political Discussion

The journey back to Oz was quite uneventful. Everyone just enjoyed each other's company as they talked of many things.

"You know," said the Tin Woodman at one point, "one of the most pleasant aspects of life is having good friends: someone you can talk to who understands you, and with whom you can share your hopes and dreams and innermost thoughts."

"Yes, friendship is a wonderful thing," said Dorothy. "I was quite a lonely little girl on the farm until I met all of you. Now I have the most wonderful friends in the world."

"Thank you, Dorothy," said the Scarecrow. "We all feel very fortunate to have you as a friend, too. You have taught us many things."

"Well, thank you," said Dorothy. "I know I have learned an awful lot from all of you. And we have all learned tremendously from the friends we have met on our journey."

"I know I have learned a great deal lately," said the Witch. "Thanks to all of you."

"Thank you," said Dorothy. "I think all people everywhere learn from each other. That is part of the joy of life. If there could be no friendly exchange of thoughts and ideas with others, life would not be too meaningful."

"It would be terrible to live one of those countries where people can only read news that the government allows them to read," said the Tin Woodman. "Or where they cannot voice criticism of government programs and policies."

"The government in those countries must be terribly insecure and fearful," said the Scarecrow.

"I would say that would have to be true," answered Dorothy.

"Hmm," said the Witch. "Much like my own kingdom was. A rule of fear instead of a rule of love."

"When people are afraid to say anything against their system of government or their leader, then that is a rule of fear, yes," said Dorothy.

"Why could I not see that at the time?" said the Witch.

"Because," replied Dorothy, "your love for yourself, or at least your love of power, was stronger than your love for others."

"I had no love for others," said the Witch. "Only contempt."

"Exactly," said Dorothy.

"Thank Heaven you saved me from myself," answered the Witch. "Now I am loved for myself. The power

I care for no longer."

"Don't you see," replied Dorothy, "once you have given up the power, you receive it. You have more power now than you ever have had."

The Witch raised her eyebrows questioningly. "I do?" she said.

"Of course," replied Dorothy. "You now have power over yourself. That is harder to accomplish than obtaining power over ten million people. And because you have power over yourself, you have obtained the respect of all who come into contact with you. So now you have power over everyone. But this is the power of love, the strongest power in the universe. These little dictators and government officials who think they have so much power are pitiful sights to behold. They have no power at all compared to you, now."

"Well, isn't that something?" replied the Witch incredulously, shaking her head. "Isn't that just something?"

Chapter Twenty-three:

Up, Up, and Away

By this time, the little group had walked all the way back to the river. They had passed very few people on the way. They had not even seen any Octapong when they walked through Octapongland. Once in a while they caught a glimpse of someone, but it seemed to Dorothy as if people were deliberately avoiding them.

"It's me," said the Witch suddenly.

"What?" said Dorothy.

"It's me," repeated the Witch. "I'm the reason."

"You're the reason for what?" asked Dorothy.

"I'm the reason people are avoiding us. They don't know I've changed."

"Oh," said Dorothy, "of course! I should have realized. Oh, well, we'll soon be in the Emerald City. Then we'll get rid of these distinguishing clothes."

"How are we going to get back, Dorothy?" asked the Scarecrow.

"That's a good question," replied Dorothy. "It's just too far to walk."

"I have an idea," offered the Witch. "If the Tin Woodman could cut me some long straight sticks and some rushes, I will make broomsticks for all of us."

"Will they fly?" asked the Lion, nervously, looking at his new companion.

"Of course they will fly," replied the Witch. "Just because I am a reformed witch doesn't mean I have forgotten my craft. The only difference is I'll be using my magic for good instead of evil."

"Wonderful," said the Tin Woodman. "I'll get right to work."

"Oh, this is exciting," said Dorothy. "Imagine! Flying on a broomstick. Now, what would Aunt Em think if she could see me? She'd probably faint."

The Tin Woodman returned with an armful of sticks. The Scarecrow and Lions followed behind him, carrying rushes.

The Witch quickly got to work. She bound the rushes to the sticks with vines that she had gathered from the trees.

"There!" she said proudly. "Now we're ready to fly."

Everyone stooped to pick up a broom. "Looks like just an ordinary broom to me," said the Scarecrow. "Will it really fly?"

"Not yet," said the Witch. "I have to say the magic words."

She held her arms over the brooms and began to chant:

"GENA-MENA-WENA-BENA-CHICKAMA- LONKA-STU

RINKY-DINKY-ZINKY-WINKY-KIKALA- PLONKA-KLU

LITTLE BROOMSTICKS, THERE YOU LIE ...

MAKE READY TO FLY INTO THE SKY."

Suddenly, there was a blinding flash of light, followed by a huge puff of smoke and a very loud peal of thunder. "It is done," said the Witch.

Everyone rushed over to the broomsticks.

"They don't look any different," said the Lion.

"Pick one up," said the Witch, "and sit on it, like this." The Witch picked one of the broomsticks up herself and sat astride it with the broomstick pointed upwards. "All of you do the same," she said. "Now, we'd better have a little flying lesson before we begin. Everyone ready? Handles pointed up. And away we go...."

What an amazing sight it was! The Tin Woodman narrowly missed crashing into the Scarecrow. The Lion barely missed the Witch's head with his dangling feet, but slightly brushed his lady friend who didn't mind a bit. However, the Scarecrow's broomhandle somehow got pointed downwards, and he headed very fast for the ground.

"Up! Up!" shouted the Witch. He managed to turn upwards just in time.

Soon everyone was doing beautifully, swooping down on each other and veering away just in time to avoid a collision.

"Wheee!" squealed the Lioness. "This is fun!"

Everyone was having such a good time that they forgot about continuing their journey.

"All right, everyone," said the Witch. "I can see you are all accomplished flyers now. I believe we should be on our way."

"Absolutely," said Dorothy, who was enjoying herself as much as anyone.

"All right. Here we go." Up, up, and away they went, high into the sky.

"Look down," shouted the Witch to Dorothy.

"Oh, how breathtaking!" gasped Dorothy.

The Land of Oz stretched out beneath them in a panorama of colors and shapes. The red country of the Quadlings was in the south. The blue territory of the Munchkins lay to the east. The western country of the Winkies was its proper yellow, while the purple Gillikin land was at the north. The sparkling green Emerald City, of course, was in the center. As they flew back downward, they could make out more details.

"Look!" said Dorothy. "There's Octapongland directly below us!"

They could make out groups of Octapong scattered about, looking at them.

"Let's take a closer look!" shouted Dorothy.

Down they zoomed, over the heads of the Octapong. The Octapong stampeded like cattle, their eight legs running like the wind, with that one shoe going clippity- clop.

Dorothy shouted for the Octapong to stop, but to no avail. Pretty soon the Octapong had outpaced them, for they could run extremely fast. Up again they flew, as they were all anxious to reach the Emerald City.

Chapter Twenty-four:

At Last, The Emerald City

"Approaching Emerald City!" shouted the Lion.

"Point your broomsticks down," said the Witch. "We're coming in to land."

As they zoomed down, people strolling about the streets looked up.

"Run!" they heard someone shout. "Run for your life! It's the Wicked Witch!"

"Oh, dear," said the Witch. "It's these clothes again. They never fail to put a scare into people. My pointed

hat especially scares them."

"Then take it off," shouted Dorothy above the wind. "It won't be long before you'll be rid of the witch-clothes, too. I don't think, though, that the people are as frightened of those as they are of the broomsticks. I should have thought of that before."

Everyone landed without mishap. Of course, the streets were now deserted. They walked across the street to the Scarecrow's palace. Oddly, the entrance was barred.

"I'm locked out of my own castle?" said the Scarecrow, as he rang the bell.

A little door in the big door opened, and the Guardian of the Gates peered out at them. "Who are you?" he said, rather sharply.

"I am your king, as appointed by the Wonderful Wizard of Oz himself. This is Dorothy, and we are her friends."

"What about her?" said the guard, staring at the Witch suspiciously.

"She's our friend, too," said the Tin Woodman.

"I don't believe you," said the guardian, and he slammed the little door shut.

The Tin Woodman banged on the door with his fist.

"Go away!" shouted the guardian.

The Tin Woodman banged on the door again, this time using his ax handle.

"I said, GO AWAY!" The guardian was obviously getting quite perturbed.

"What shall we do now?" asked the Tin Woodman.

"Let me try a different tactic," said Dorothy. She knocked on the door lightly and said, "Please open the door. We can explain."

The little door opened slowly. "I'll say you need to explain," said the guardian. "Nobody has a Wicked Witch for a friend — except another Wicked Witch."

"Well, I'm not a Wicked Witch," said Dorothy. "I'm a friend of the Scarecrow's."

"She's not," said the guardian. "And she's not a friend of the Scarecrow's. And if she's your friend, your scarecrow must be an impostor!" With that, the door slammed shut again.

"Now what?" said the Scarecrow. "He doesn't even believe I'm really me!"

"I have an idea," said Dorothy. "Knock on the door again."

The Tin Woodman knocked loudly.

"What is it this time?" said the guardian impatiently, while opening the little door slightly.

"You don't understand," said Dorothy. "She's our prisoner."

"I thought you said she's your *friend*," retorted the guardian, mockingly.

"Well...." Dorothy hesitated.

"Well, what? I'm waiting," replied the man.

"Well, she's sort of our friend, too. You see, since we captured her, she has turned out to be quite nice."

"It's probably a trick," said the guardian, suspiciously.

"You can't really blame him for being suspicious," said the Witch. "I've been hated for many, many years. It's going to take a while for people to get used to my new image."

"I suppose so," said Dorothy.

A few moments later, the little door opened again. But this time it was not the guardian. Instead, it was Princess Gayelette, the reclusive but highly respected sorceress from the north. She and her husband, Quelala, had come to ask for an audience with his Majesty the Scarecrow. Upon finding him away, they had remained to look after the palace until his return. Quelala, although not a magician, was widely known for his wisdom and understanding. Gayelette was known for her powerful magic, which she used only for the good of the people. She was never known to harm anyone, and her concern for people and other sentient beings made her a favorite all over the country. As she stood in the doorway, her gaze fell upon the Scarecrow and his friends.

"It is you," she exclaimed. "I was rather doubtful, from what the little guardian told me. He said something about a Witch. But, of course, our Scarecrow would not be associating with a Wicked Witch. Even with my own magical charms, I try to avoid such individuals."

"Oh, my!" she said as her eyes met those of the Witch. "Then, is it true?" The princess was visibly shaken. The Witch smiled nervously at Princess Gayelette and curtsied. "I am very pleased to meet you, Your Highness," she said. "And I feel most honored and privileged to be in your company."

Princess Gayelette smiled rather weakly and shook the Witch's hand. "Let us retire to the meeting hall," she said. "I have a feeling you have a long story to tell."

When they reached the meeting hall, the Scarecrow excused himself for a moment to arrange for some refreshments. "Make yourselves comfortable," he said. "I'll be back in a moment."

Later, when the straw man returned, everyone was very relaxed, sitting in large, comfortable reclining chairs that the palace staff had made available.

"I'm being very inconsiderate, Dorothy," said Gayelette. "I'm sure you must be tired and weary from your long journey and all your adventures. Please enjoy your refreshments. We can meet and hear the whole story a little later. One of the maids will show you to the gardens after you've rested. We can meet there. In the meantime, I wish to have a talk with our ruler. We have some serious thinking to do, and only his

hand- manufactured brains will suffice."

After everyone had eaten (except the Tin Woodman and the Scarecrow who were manufactured beings and had no need of food and drink), a youthful maid led the others upstairs. The apartments were very spacious and beautifully furnished. The Witch immediately indulged herself in a long, relaxing perfumed bath. She had never felt so wonderful in her life. After her bath, she put on a silk robe that had been laid out for her. She sighed with contentment as she lay down on the bed and closed her eyes. Soon she fell into a deep, peaceful sleep.

When the Witch awoke she felt wonderfully refreshed. She got up and walked over to the open window and looked out. The view of the royal garden was very beautiful: trees and flowers of every variety; thick, lush green grass with little benches here and there to sit on; a little stream cascading over beautiful ornamental rocks, creating miniature waterfalls. There was also a large lake on which white swans swam lazily through the water. What a contented scene it was.

The Witch walked back into the room. The perfumed aroma of the garden permeated the apartment. "How delightful the Scarecrow's palace is," said the Witch out loud. "So peaceful. Oh, how I'd love to live here. "Well, I'd better get dressed. I'm sure everyone will be meeting soon."

When she opened the closet door, she caught her breath. The closet was a large one and completely filled with the most beautiful of clothes. She chose a gorgeous Eastern-looking gown. The material was most exotic. It seemed to be pure silk, yet it had a sheen so reflective that it appeared to be woven with a thread of pure emerald. Attached to the gown were shimmering emerald earrings and a necklace. There was also a bracelet made of emeralds, rubies, and diamonds.

Just then, there was a knock on the door. It was a young girl about Dorothy's age.

"My name is Jellia," the girl said. "Jellia Jamb. The Scarecrow asked me to assist you. I am quite good at styling hair. May I?" she said, steering the Witch into a chair.

The Witch's hair was long and straggling. Jellia Jamb set about coifing it. And what beautiful job she did. She then cut the Witch's long, pointed, curling nails and delicately manicured them.

Jellia stepped back to observe the Witch. She gasped with amazement.

"Why, you look exactly like that Princess who has been visiting! Look — look in the mirror."

The Witch turned to look in the full-length mirror. "Oh, my," she said, holding her hand to mouth. "I can't believe it." For standing in the mirror appeared to be Princess Gayelette herself. She was stunningly beautiful.

The Witch was visibly shocked. "I can't believe it," she kept saying. "I've come from being an ugly old hag to a beautiful princess." She shook her head in amazement. "I could very easily be mistaken for Gayelette herself."

"Come," said the little girl. "Let us join the others in the garden. I can't wait to see their faces."

A few moments later, they arrived at the Gazebo. "I think we are a little early," said Jellia. "No one is here yet. Come." She took the Witch's hand. "Let us sit down and chat."

A few minutes later, Dorothy arrived. "Oh," she said, as she saw Jellia and the Witch. "Princess Gayelette. What a beautiful gown!"

"And allow me to introduce Jellia Jamb, one of the children of the Emerald City. She and I are old friends," the Witch said, with a wink at Jellia.

"I'm very pleased to meet you, Dorothy," said Jellia. "I've heard so much about you. Our Ruler, the Scarecrow, talks about you all the time. And you are even mentioned in our history books at school."

"Really? I'm most honored," said Dorothy. "Perhaps we could get together after the meeting," said Dorothy. "I would like to find out more about your schools here in Oz."

"I'd like that," said Jellia Jamb. "Oh, here's Princess Gayelette now."

"I beg your pardon," said Dorothy. "I thought this was...?" Her voice trailed away as Gayelette approached. "But, but ... then ... who is ... Oh!" It suddenly dawned on Dorothy. "Then this must be...."

"The Witch," said the Witch. "Yes, indeed, it is I. We could not resist playing a little trick on you, Dorothy. I hope you didn't mind."

"Not at all," replied Dorothy. "I'm just amazed."

Princess Gayelette and Quelala were no less amazed. Gayelette just kept shaking her head as she stared at the Witch. As the others arrived, they did double-takes when they saw the Witch and Princess Gayelette together. "Please sit down, everyone," motioned Gayelette. "This is no less amazing to me than it is to all of you. As you can see, we could be twin sisters. But the pieces of the puzzle are all falling into place. I'd like to tell you a little story which may help to explain the remarkable resemblance.

"The story begins in a tiny village in Oz. At that time, it was known as Ozcott. My father had a country home there.

"One day, the Wicked Witch Mombi captured me. She was afraid that my magic would become more powerful than her own, and planned to nip that in the bud so that she could become the most powerful person in Oz. However, unknown to Mombi, my baby sister was about to arrive. When Mombi found out, she was furious. She went to our house in the dead of night and stole Ozetta from her crib. She then contacted *her* sister, the Witch who ruled the Deep South, and asked her to take Ozetta. The sister was very happy to take the little baby, as she was quite old and wanted to pass on all her Witch's secrets.

"I managed to escape, but my dear baby sister was never seen again. We'd all thought she'd died. However, unknown to us, she'd been raised by that wicked old witch and later took her place, so no one ever knew the difference. So this lady, dear friends," said Gayelette, with tears in her eyes, "is, I believe, my long-lost sister, Ozetta."

With that, Ozetta and Gayelette ran to each other and hugged one another tightly. Tears were rolling down their cheeks as they hugged and kissed. "The fact that we look so much alike leaves no room for doubt," said Gayelette to Dorothy. "And, to mark this joyous occasion, I declare this day a national holiday."

A little Gillikin, who was standing by, scurried off to spread the good news.

"Well," said Gayelette, with her arms around her sister's shoulders, "this is a very beautiful day for all of us. I'm so very grateful to you, Dorothy, and to all of you, for the part you played in releasing my sister from her bondage, and bringing her back to me."

"I would like to thank all of you, too," said Ozetta, "for all you have done for me, and especially for this present moment. I have never experienced such joy, such happiness. I didn't know such feelings of ecstasy could exist. I grew up feeling only the emotion of hate. The person I called my mother was not good to me. She screamed at me all the time — her eyes constantly filled with hate. She verbally abused me. She even hit me when she was just in a bad mood — which was most of the time. She acted as if she felt ashamed of me. When she taught me Black Magic, I directed the hate I felt for her to others, weaving it into the magic spells I cast on them. Now I see that the hatred and resentment I wove into those spells only came right back to me. I reaped exactly what I sowed. I could say I didn't know any better, but I did. I just refused to listen to that inner voice — my conscience. As far as I was concerned, I had no conscience, felt no remorse for what I was doing. My conscience was buried, with no chance of seeing the light of day. Yet, I knew something was wrong, for I was not a happy person. How could I be? But I would not allow myself to think about such things — to try to analyze why I was not happy. That is, until you came along, Dorothy. It took you, with your deep understanding, to bring me to a new realization — a new beginning. I was a lonely, ugly old witch, and now I am a beautiful princess with a beautiful sister and lots of wonderful friends. I will be eternally grateful to you, Dorothy. All of you."

Ozetta then hugged them all in turn. "I know you miss your family, Dorothy," she said. "And that you must return to Kansas. But I want you to know I will visit you often. And I know you will visit us here."

"Thank you, Ozetta," said Dorothy. "I beg your pardon, your Highness. For you are really a princess now, and should be addressed as such. It gives me great pleasure, your Majesty, to see you so happy, and to know that you and Princess Gayelette have found each other. I look forward to seeing you again very soon. I have a feeling that there are other missions planned for me in Oz, and I suspect that I shall be needing some help when that time comes."

"Me! A princess! I know now it's true, but I can't believe it. Yesterday I was a mean ugly old witch, and today a young and beautiful princess. I'm sure it's all a dream, and I shall wake up to reality at any moment. But I will be waiting with great anticipation for your return, Dorothy. And I'll practice my magic every day."

"And I'll keep my ax razor-sharp," said the Tin Woodman. "And I'll find ways to use my heart. I'll help people whenever I can."

"And I'll read a lot of different books," said the Scarecrow, "to keep my brain nice and sharp."

"I'll find ways to test my courage," said the Lion, "so I'll be brave enough to tackle any situation we may encounter."

Everyone crowded around Dorothy to bid her goodbye. There were tears and laughter as they all hugged and kissed her.

The Scarecrow then took Dorothy by the hand. "Come," he said. "I have been asked to bring you to see someone prior to your return to Kansas. This someone is a very special person. After your discussion, he will escort you home."

Dorothy turned to wave a final goodbye to the others. There were tears in her eyes.

"We'll all see you in our dreams," said the Tin Woodman, "so be sure to think about us before you go to sleep at night."

"Oh, I'll always be thinking about you," said Dorothy. "But especially I'll be thinking about you when I'm falling asleep."

"Good," said the Lion. "And don't be too surprised if you hear a couple of lions roar just as you fall asleep. "

"Oh my goodness, that might wake up Aunt Em," smiled Dorothy.

"Won't that be a surprise for her?" said the lady Lion, mischievously. Everyone laughed.

Princess Ozetta blew her a kiss. "Call on me, now, if you ever have a problem."

"I will," said Dorothy, her voice beginning to break. "I will. Oh, I will. Thank you again, all of you.... I'll see you soon."

"Now you take good care of yourself!" said the Gayelette. Dorothy nodded, afraid to speak lest she break down.

Chapter Twenty-five:

A Mystical Encounter

"Where does this mysterious stranger live?" Dorothy asked the straw man, as they entered the house.

"Well, he doesn't exactly live in Oz," replied the Scarecrow. "As a matter of fact, he resides in a different dimension altogether."

"How can I meet him, then?" asked Dorothy.

"Well, since he is on a different dimension than us, he has to change his vibration to enter our dimension. You see, his dimension operates on a higher frequency than ours. We will have to become very quiet and still so that we can tune into his vibration. Then he will become visible to us. He will be lowering his vibration slightly while we are raising ours. We will do this in my meditation room, where we will not be disturbed."

He took Dorothy's hand as they went upstairs to his quarters. They entered his study. Before closing the door, he turned over a card which has hanging on the doorknob. It read, DO NOT DISTURB — IN MEDITATION.

The meditation room itself was not large. Purple drapes covered the walls. The window opened to a little balcony overlooking the garden.

"I enjoy sitting here in meditation," said the Scarecrow. "It is wonderful to feel the early morning sun on my face and to smell the scent of the garden while the birds sing their morning song.

"I read something once that I've never forgotten. It's very meaningful to me. It goes like this:

The Secret

I met God in the morning,

When my day was at its best.

And His presence came like sunrise

Like a glory in my breast.

All day long His presence lingered

All day long He stayed with me.

And we sailed in perfect calmness

O'er a very troubled sea.

So I think I know the secret

Learned from many a troubled way:

You must seek Him in the morning

If you want Him through the day.

"This was written by a man named Ralph Cushman."

"That is just beautiful," said Dorothy.

"Yes," replied the Scarecrow, "and so true. Well, would you like to begin?"

"Oh, yes," said Dorothy. "I can't wait to meet your mysterious friend."

The Scarecrow smiled knowingly as he placed three chairs in the middle of the room. "Please be seated, Dorothy," he motioned, as he sat down himself, "You should sit upright with your back straight; feet flat on the floor with your knees together. Rest your hands on your knees with your palms up. Now, close your eyes and relax completely.

"With your eyes closed look straight ahead but concentrate your mind in the center of your forehead.

"Just relax. Don't worry about trying to control your thoughts. They will gradually subside.

"You may become aware of a light. perhaps several colors.

The Scarecrow fell silent for a while.

"Are you aware of the light?" he asked.

"Yes," said Dorothy. "Now it's changing. Oh, how beautiful. I see all the colors of the rainbow. Mmm, I feel so relaxed and peaceful."

"Now," said the Scarecrow, "open your mind to the greater power; feel within you the urge to know the Highest! Seek to understand all humanity without condemnation.

"One by one, the teachers from the highest realms are arriving to assist us in our quest for higher knowledge and understanding.

"The one we discussed has joined us. You may open your eyes now, Dorothy. He is fully manifested and sits with us."

As Dorothy opened her eyes, she could feel a tremendously strong vibration emanating from what had been the empty chair. Sitting in the chair was a man. There appeared to be a glow around him which gradually subsided, although little flecks of light appeared from time to time around him. He was dressed in a long robe of the purest white. His beautiful golden hair, which was shoulder-length, had a very slight reddish tint to it. Around his neck he wore a medallion with three pyramids on it, and an inscription in strange hieroglyphics.

The stranger smiled at Dorothy; his beautiful, yet intense, blue eyes twinkling.

Touching the medallion, he said in a most gentle voice, "I see you are curious regarding this inscription."

Dorothy nodded slightly.

"Translated into English, it reads: MENTAL-PHYSICAL-SPIRITUAL.

"If all mortals were to maintain a balance between these three, Heaven on earth would indeed be established.

"My sandals trod the dust of the Holy Lands nearly two thousand years ago. My mission; to instill into the minds of the people that the meaning of life was not as complicated as they were led to believe. I traveled about the lands seeking to inspire the people and momentarily they were inspired; but unfortunately, they became entangled with material conditions and lost sight of the finer things that were being given unto them. So, I had to step aside and allow them to follow the path of their choosing. Following my brief stay, other teachers would go into the various lands to try to reach the masses of struggling humanity. But the same conditions were encountered, generation after generation. We all tried to touch those who we felt were sufficiently sensitive to become teachers, to become messengers of light unto the people. Now, almost two thousand years later, I bring my Word to the people in the hope it will be understood. Much of what I said in the past has been misinterpreted. I had come to serve humanity, like so many others before me. Many of these same teachers suffered as I did. Yes, tears of compassion flowed often, as they observed the domination of mankind and all the manifestation of evil which prevailed. I often found the same conditions and as a mortal I sought to instill the simple truths unto them. I felt that if I could explain to them these truths in the simple manner in which I received them there would be no danger of

misinterpretation down through the ages. But unfortunately I was wrong.

"At one time, the main topic of my conversation with people was that they must be born again, and again and again; that the lessons to be learned could not possibly be learned in one lifetime. Even this basic fact was misinterpreted. And even today, although great emphasis is placed on the idea of a spiritual rebirth — or being born again in a spiritual way — the teaching ends there: my original meaning long forgotten and, I fear, deliberately distorted by the many whom I encountered. And I feel, as I speak today, that much of what I say will not be accepted. Why the stubbornness? Why the refusal to accept? Certain beliefs can be so ingrained in human thought that, when an honest attempt is made to correct the situation, great anger arises within the heart of those who are being given the opportunity to learn the truth. And so they must remain ignorant of the great majestic truths of creation and the grand plan for mankind.

"Let me recite to you a little story, which, although well known, it will be seen that the true version is quite different from the story handed down through the ages. This concerns my last moments on earth.

"I said unto those who were persecuting me and who had persecuted me in the past, *'All who have come to me to cast their stone, in time shall become wise and be set free upon the earth.'*

"There were others near me who were to perish in the same manner as myself, because they had been found associating with one who was supposed to be so wise. I said unto them, 'Be at peace with thyself. You will soon be in a heavenly state. Be not faithless. Know that you shall live again, that you shall arise, and that you shall be born again. And in the other lives that you shall live, you shall have another opportunity to live the life that you are being deprived of at the present time.'

"Yes, there are many stories that I could tell that would be no less than amazing to those who think they know all about my life. And here today, Dorothy, I should like to tell you a little more about my life.

"Before I begin, I must tell you this. As you know, I was born of the Jewish faith, and I love my people dearly. It saddens me to know that many of those who became followers of my teaching, decided that all who did not confess me as the only begotten son of God were excluded from God's grace and were denied eternal life. Sad to say, that belief is alive and well today. Not among Jews, of course, but as an integral part of what became known as Christianity. They have decided amongst themselves that God has somehow excluded all but Christians. Perhaps even more saddening to me is that certain Jews look down on other Jews who do not worship as they do. They don't accept them as fellow Jews because they have chosen, let's say, a less orthodox path to God.... Do you think God cares a jot how people worship Him, as long as in their daily dealings they treat one another with dignity respect and , and live their lives as closely to the divine teachings as possible?

"You see, I am an individual like you. One who came and served and then went on, never having to return or be born again in the physical world. In my last life on earth I came to teach what I knew of God's laws. I represented the masters who came before me and the masters who came after me. We work together now, to continue to try to bring light to a darkened world. Perhaps you would like to hear a little about my early life on earth. How I thought and felt about things as a boy."

"Oh, yes," replied Dorothy. "That would be very interesting to me."

"Now, when you return to Kansas, Dorothy, it might not be wise to say too much of what I tell you to adults, unless they show a depth of understanding, and a certain gentleness of spirituality in their nature.

You see, many adults have their beliefs locked up tight within themselves, and will not part with them no matter what is presented to them. They can become very angry if they are told that things are not exactly as they believe. Even though — if they were to stop and think about it objectively — that which is being told them might make very good sense and be quite logical. Unfortunately, those people are convinced beyond a shadow of doubt, that every word in the sacred scriptures came directly from God, and that not only could one word not be wrong; but that nothing is missing from the writings.

"So be careful; share this only with other children who have not yet had their minds closed up and sealed, and only with those adults who are ready. As for the others, they do have a right to their own individual beliefs, of course. And it is really wrong to try to force other beliefs upon them. But unfortunately, their rigidity of thought and lack of flexibility forbids any possibility of real growth of understanding. However, everything is in order. Their short terms on earth are not wasted. They too have to serve and to learn certain lessons which must be learned before they can go forward.

"And now; for the story of my early years:

"Prior to my last expression on earth, I lived during the great peace period in what is now known as Egypt.

"I had come back to earth to bring forth light and to enjoy life. I knew at that time that I would have to return again to the earth to finish my work.

"During the very early years of my last life I was not aware of having had previous lives. There were certain lessons to learn and pinnacles to reach before I would be ready for this to be revealed to me. It is very much the same for the initiates of earth today. Certain things cannot be revealed until the chela, or pupil, is ready. For it to be otherwise would be most confusing.

"A great deal of mystery surrounds my birth. My birth was always a mystery to me until a certain period in my life. Things were held back from me by my soul. The soul will not reveal anything unto you until you are ready.

"I was not born into this life in the manner that has been told. I realize that many people will cling to their perception of my birth so much that they will not want to let go of this illusion. But nevertheless, there must come a time when the truth must be told. The crutch must be taken away. The people must stand on their own two feet. For too long I have been worshipped as a God, whereas I am the same as you worshippers, conceived exactly as they.

"I do not wish to be worshipped. I wish only for the people to worship the principles; the teaching that was brought to them through my instrumentality, and the instrumentality of others who came before me and after me.

For too long these teachings have been ignored. Why? Because it takes a great deal of personal sacrifice to follow the teaching of giving up habits of thought and activity which are held dear. It is much easier to assume that the Blood of the Lamb was shed for all one's sins and as long as one believes this one shall be saved and have eternal life.

"We have told you, Dorothy, that all have eternal life. This is a true statement. But the quality of that life is dependent solely on the individual — no one else! *As ye sow, so shall ye reap.*

"One cannot expect to sow inequality — to inflict a low quality of life upon others; then to reap a high quality of life for oneself. If any measure of quality is reaped in this way it is highly temporal: for death patiently awaits all. And those who bring impoverishment to others — that their own lives might become enriched — now find that they are the impoverished ones. *By thy works thou shalt be known* is indeed a true axiom. Whether the works be good or bad is immaterial as far as the Universal Law is concerned; for the rewards meted out by the Law are in direct proportion to the works performed. So the quality of life after death is directly related to the kind of life led before death.

"It does not make much sense to spend one's life in violation of man-made laws or of God's laws, unless, that is, one wishes to exist in misery after death.

"If those that violate the law could see the beauty and glory of God's infinite kingdom they would not waste one second in this sort of selfish pursuit. Real happiness for them will never be found until they return to God, the Father.

"Why do they prolong the agony? Because they wish to cling to suffering? No, because long ago they wandered far from the harmonious happy state they resided in, and are now subconsciously trying to return. So they seek this or that, thinking that the possession of these things, or that person, or the taking of drugs or alcohol will give them the fulfillment they desire. But, of course, nothing does. Yet, they search blindly on, never realizing that that which they seek is within themselves.

"If only they would take the time to become ever so still, so that a beautiful communication could be established. The outer action would change accordingly, thus leading them to a life of harmony and beauty — one which would take them in many creative directions: True fulfillment would then be achieved.

"Alas, Dorothy, it is not to be so for the majority. They will not heed my words any more now than they did before. But the time is not too far distant when life on planet earth — as they know it — will be no more. Evolution will begin all over again for them. They will have to endure endless physical lives — many in deep misery. All because of their stubborn refusal to rejoin their creator. It is difficult to believe this; yet it is true.

"If told the things that I am relating to you now, they would merely laugh and scorn. They strongly doubt even the existence of a life after death.

"Well, Dorothy, I'm afraid I have deviated very far from my story. But my heart is heavy when I think of all the wrongdoing on earth. And all the greed that exists.

"The Father's treasures are available for the asking, and they are of a permanent nature. Yet they are totally ignored in favor of empty material gains which are — to say the least — very temporary.

"I'm afraid, Dorothy, that I and the other masters are relying very heavily on you to bring some measure of what you have seen and heard here back to the children of earth. Remember to keep it all a secret from adults, except in the rarest of cases. We are working in various ways with others of earth to reach each adult on his own particular level of development. Few are ready for as much of the truth as can be given here. The spacebrothers, too, are working in their unique way.

"The children of the earth shall be led into a Golden Age along with those adults who are ready to share in the glorious beginning. My mission was, and still is, to establish a universal consciousness of God

upon the earth. A oneness of all mankind. God's kingdom will come, and His Will be done on earth — as it is in Heaven.

"Well, Dorothy, I would like to have told you more of my childhood, but our meeting must come to an end for the moment. Your Aunt Em and Uncle Henry are growing very concerned for you. You must return to Kansas at once. I will visit you again and tell you more of my life. I will visit you very soon.

"Now, take my hands, and close your eyes."

"Goodbye, Dorothy," said the Scarecrow. "God bless you."

"Oh, I shall miss you all so much," said Dorothy. "But I am very excited about going home."

As Dorothy said the words "going home," she opened her eyes to look at her friend. But instead of being in a meditation room in Oz, she found herself in her own room laying on her bed. She looked around to see Aunt Em and Uncle Henry.

Dorothy started to sit up. "Oh, Auntie Em; Uncle Henry!" she said excitedly, "I've got so much to tell you. I've been on an exciting adventure. I've been back to Oz. And you'll never believe who I met there."

"You mean the place you've been telling us about?" said Uncle Henry.

"Yes," said Dorothy. "And I've been to see all my wonderful friends again. And, oh, wait 'til I tell you about the Wicked Witch and how she — "

"Now hold on a minute, Dorothy," interrupted Aunt Em. "You've got to slow down. You're getting yourself too excited."

"Oh, there's nothing wrong with me, really," said Dorothy.

"We'll be the judge of that," said Aunt Em. "I want you to rest now, young lady. I'll bring you some chicken soup."

"Well, we're real glad to have you back, Dorothy," said Uncle Henry with a grin. With that, he followed his wife out of the room.

Toto came bounding in through the open door and jumped up to Dorothy's bed, licking her face all over.

"Oh, Toto!" said Dorothy tearfully. "They're not going to believe me again. I know it. "But we believe Dorothy, don't we?"

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