

NEW MCGRAW OZ BOOK THRILLS WORLD!!!

Ozzociated Press
By Eloise McGraw

In the Emerald City, in one of the charming little gardens of the royal palace, Princess Ozma, the fairy ruler of the Land of Oz, was having tea with two of her ladies in waiting. In the course of a year she invited each of the ten, two by two, being careful not to favor any one over the others. Today it was the turn of Lady Pernilda & Countess Magriata—an ill-matched pair, for Lady Pernilda was elderly, pudding-faced, fond of elaborate hats, and inclined to stare down her not-very-impressive nose at the liveliness of the younger generation, whereas the Countess was not only lively and young, but quite impossible to squelch. Ozma, who privately preferred the com-pany of Countess Magriata, made a point of being especially gracious to Lady Pernilda, inquiring with every appearance of interest after her elderly husband, her elderly and crotchety dog, and the distant cousins she heard from occasionally and never failed to bring into the conversation. Ozma had gathered from previous allusions that the cousins were very important people indeed in their own part of the country.

"Yes, your Royal Highness," said Lady Pernilda now, with a nostalgic sigh. Today's hat was a turban as tall as a water pitcher, trimmed with a great many emerald-green roses. "I miss them still, after all these years in the Emerald City. Sir Nevilard WOULD come—well, his future was here, of course—I do not blame my husband. But he has no relatives. I come of a very old Gillikin family, you know."

Ozma made haste to pour more tea, and ask how recently



Lady Pernilda had heard from her distinguished cousins.

"It has been . . . some years," replied the old lady reluctantly. "Indeed, I have wondered . . ." She seemed to change her mind about what she had intended to say. "But there! You will not want to hear more about my affairs! Your Royal Highness is too kind."

"How often I have said the same!" Countess Magriata exclaimed with a smile like the sun coming out. "Please, Princess Ozma—may I tell you about MY affairs? My father has given me a beautiful little bay mare for my birthday, and a jeweled saddle and bridle . . ."

She prattled on for some moments about the mare, and her older sister, and the older sister's toddler who was always doing amusing things, and presently Princess Dorothy came out to the garden to join them, and the conversation became general until it was time for the guests to leave. But Ozma, whose kindness was real and went far deeper than

a tea party required, detained Lady Pernilda as Dorothy was strolling ahead with the younger lady in waiting.

"Please tell me, my friend. Are you in any way disturbed because your cousins have not written you? You sounded—well, a little worried."

"Oh, no, your Royal Highness! Please don't be concerned. I am sure Mal will send word sooner or later. He was always a dilatory correspondent."

"Very well. But don't hesitate to come to me if you become uneasy. We can always look in the Magic Picture, you know."

Lady Pernilda's pudding-face relaxed into a smile that made Ozma realize she must have been quite pretty—though perhaps still pudding-faced—as a younger woman. "Thank you, your Royal Highness. I will remember that," she said, swept a creditable curtsy despite her pudgy shape, and took her leave.

You can read all about this mystery in *The Rundelstone of Oz in Oz-story 6.*

OMBY AMBY GOES GRAY!

Emerald City Daily News—

Omby Amby looked into the mirror again. He still couldn't believe what he saw there. Sticking out from among the impressive bush of green whiskers which had become Omby's trademark during his ser-vice in the Emerald City, there stood one, incredibly white, renegade hair. It curled its way out of the lower left portion of Omby's mustache, emerging impudently but defiantly from amidst its green comrades. No manner of squinting, hairbrushing, or shouting had made it disappear. There it stood, inconceivable, yet undeniable.



Omby searched for a tweezer, ready at first to pluck the offending follicle out by its roots. His apartments were richly provided with all manner of equipment, but most of it was related to his position of Captain General in the Royal Army of Oz. No provision had been made for this sort of unprecedented emergency. Failing to find the necessary tool, he was forced to grab the hair between his thumb and forefinger so as to remove it manually.

On the verge of dispensing with the problem, Omby hesitated. Next to the first hair, he could see its twin budding. One white hair he was able to view as an oddity, but two came close to being an epidemic. He let go of the first hair, thinking better of disturbing the enchantment that had seemingly been cast upon him. Instead, he grabbed a large fan, and, holding it in

front of his face so that the blemish would pass unnoticed, he headed towards the Throne Room.

Ozma was holding court, as was her practice at this time of day. Today, however, the court was so full that Omby Amby was unable to enter. A line extended from the main room and snaked its way through the corridors for as far as Omby could see. Omby considered trying to make his way through the crowd to discover the cause of the commotion, but then he realized that nobody would recognize his face behind the fan. So he walked to the back of the line and waited. Finally, it became Omby's turn to speak with Ozma.

"Your Highness," he whispered.

"Omby Amby?" asked Dorothy. "What are you doing behind that ridiculous fan?"

"How did you know it was me?" Omby asked in surprise.

"Who else in Oz is seven feet tall and has a beard that reaches down to his feet?" the Scarecrow asked, his painted

mouth turned upwards in amusement.

"Nobody else recognized me," Omby protested.

"That's because it is clear that you did not wish to be recognized. I'm afraid it's hard to remain anonymous, however, with whiskers like yours," the Scarecrow sagely explained. Despite being stuffed with straw, the Scarecrow was considered one of the wisest creatures in Oz.

"But why should you wish to hide?" asked Ozma. "Everybody loves you so."

"It's my whiskers," said Omby, blushing with embarrassment. "One of them's turned white."

The Wizard nodded gravely. "It's as I thought, Your Highness," he said. "Omby's aging as well."

"I've never seen anything like this, since I began my reign," said Ozma.

"That's because soon after you began your reign, people stopped aging. Now they've started again."

"But how can that be?" asked Ozma. "You're not getting older."

"I probably am," said the Wizard. "It's just imperceptible. Age usually creeps up on you when you're not looking. You don't notice it at first. You haven't had much experience with it, Your Highness, but, judging from my own, I would guess that the people of Oz are beginning to get older."

"That's true enough, what you say," said Uncle Henry. "That's the way it was back in Kansas. Folks would be strong as an ox one day, and before they knew what hit them, they'd find themselves with a room full of grandchildren, telling tales about their far gone youth. But I thought nobody ever got older in the Land of Oz."

"They used to," said the Wizard. "When I came to Oz, I was a young man. People in those days aged, just like they did in Kansas. But when I returned, I soon noticed that nobody was aging anymore. My guess is that an enchantment was cast to stop aging, while I was away."

"I think you're right," Ozma agreed. "I remember that when I lived with Mombi, it seemed

that people aged a great deal."

Ozma, herself, had never aged beyond childhood. Ozma was a fairy, and fairies are forever young, wherever they are, enchantment or no.

"Then what happened?" asked Dorothy. "If there was an enchantment, when was it cast?"

"It happened soon after Ozma took the throne," the Scarecrow remembered. "I was unaffected by it, of course, since I am not made of flesh, but many of my friends were. I assumed it was because we finally had our rightful ruler."

"I had nothing to do with it," protested Ozma.

"Then what could possibly have been the cause of the enchantment?" asked Dorothy.

"I don't know," said Ozma. "We must go to Glinda and find out," declared Dorothy, "if we are to have any hope of restoring it."

"You're absolutely right," said Ozma, smiling at her friend. "I'm sure she will be able to look up the information in her Great Book of Records."

You can read the startling conclusion in Paradox in Oz.

TROT AND CAP'N BILL DISAPPEAR IN LAKE QUAD!!!

Lake Quad Mirror—
By Ingersoll & Shanower

Cap'n Bill pulled gently on one of the oars and the boat spun slowly around. "Can't even see the far bank of this lake, let alone the Emerald City," he commented.

Trot nodded. Lake Quad was their favorite place in Oz outside the Emerald City. They had both grown up near the ocean so they both enjoyed taking several trips a year to Lake Quad. Trot had known Cap'n Bill all her life, long before they had come to Oz, so she had come to love the sea as much as he.

As Trot was reaching for their lunch basket the boat began to rock. Trot sat up in surprise. Big waves rolled against the small rowboat. Lake Quad was seldom rough, so Trot was more than a little surprised as the waves grew larger and the little boat danced back and forth.

"What do you s'pose it is?" asked Trot, clinging to the tiller.

"I don't know," said Cap'n Bill, shaking his head perplexedly. "I think we'd best head fer

shore. This boat ain't made fer these kinda waves." He grasped the oars and pulled vigorously. The boat reluctantly started for land. Cap'n Bill pulled at the oars, sending the boat over another wave. The boat scudded down into the little valley between the rollers.

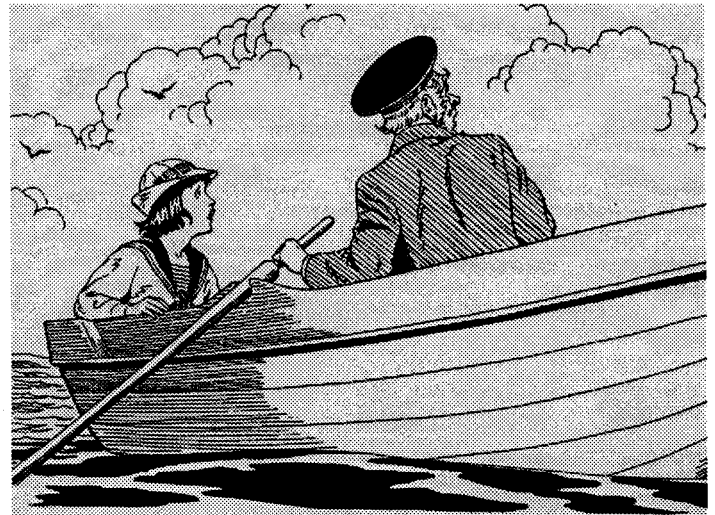
KRA-THUDD. Cap'n Bill fell over onto his back as the boat ground to a halt with no land in sight.

"I think we've run into a su'merged rock," he said, sitting up and rubbing his head where it had knocked against the boards. "Hope we haven't punctured a hole in the boat."

Trot let free the tiller and leaned over the side of the boat beside Cap'n Bill. What they saw startled them both. Gazing interestedly from the water were two large eyes, spaced widely apart like those of a frog. They blinked.

"What is it?" whispered Trot, nudging Cap'n Bill.

Before he could reply the two eyes were followed out of the water by a huge, green scaled head. The thing looked a bit like an alligator, but its snout was too short and the teeth it displayed in what was supposed to be an engaging smile (but looked more like a grimace) were thick and blunt. The monster's head was perched upon a thick neck, the end of



which disappeared into the water.

"I thought you were an amblopotamus," said the creature. "But you don't look like an amblopotamus. Are you champions? I know some people who are desperately in need of champions to save them from something. What are your names? What year is this? Are two and two still four or has that changed, too? I'm so unsure of things now. Nothing quite seems the same. Where are the flangosaurs and humpdoodles? I haven't seen a single humpdoodle all day." The creature squinted up at the sky, but no humpdoodles were to be seen, so

he looked back at Trot and Cap'n Bill. "Well?"

"Well, my name is Trot. And this is Cap'n Bill," said the girl. The sailor bobbed his head. "What's your name?"

"My name? Oh, sky above!" The monster rolled its eyes. "I couldn't have forgotten my own name! Lying under tons and tons of rocks and mud for a zillion years is quite addling. "What was it you wanted to know? My name, wasn't it? Quaddle. My name's Quaddle."

You can read all about these exciting adventures by Glenn Ingersoll and Eric Shanower in TROT OF OZ available only in Oz-story 6.