

# DOROTHY AND THE WIZARD IN OZ

## To My Readers

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It's no use; no use at all. The children won't let me stop telling tales of the Land of Oz. I know lots of other stories, and I hope to tell them, some time or another; but just now my loving tyrants won't allow me. They cry: "Oz—Oz! more about Oz, Mr. Baum!" and what can I do but obey their commands?

This is Our Book—mine and the children's. For they have flooded me with thousands of suggestions in regard to it, and I have honestly tried to adopt as many of these suggestions as could be fitted into one story.

After the wonderful success of "Ozma of Oz" it is evident that Dorothy has become a firm fixture in these Oz stories. The little ones all love Dorothy, and as one of my small friends aptly states: "It isn't a real Oz story without her." So here she is again, as sweet and gentle and innocent as ever, I hope, and the heroine of another strange adventure.

There were many requests from my little correspondents for "more about the Wizard." It seems the jolly old fellow made hosts of friends in the first Oz book, in spite of the fact that he frankly acknowledged himself "a humbug." The children had heard how he mounted into the sky in a balloon and they were all waiting for him to come down again. So what could I do but tell "what happened to the Wizard afterward"? You will find him in these pages, just the same humbug Wizard as before.

There was one thing the children demanded which I found it impossible to do in this present book: they bade me introduce Toto, Dorothy's little black dog, who has many friends among my readers. But you will see, when you begin to read the story, that Toto was in Kansas while Dorothy was in California, and so she had to start on her adventure without him. In this book Dorothy had to take her kitten with her instead of her dog; but in the next Oz book, if I am permitted to write one, I intend to tell a good deal about Toto's further history.

Princess Ozma, whom I love as much as my readers do, is again introduced in this story, and so are several of our old friends of Oz. You will also become acquainted with Jim the Cab-Horse, the Nine Tiny Piglets, and Eureka, the Kitten. I am sorry the kitten was not as well behaved as she ought to have been; but perhaps she wasn't brought up properly. Dorothy found her, you see, and who her parents were nobody knows.

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I believe, my dears, that I am the proudest storyteller that ever lived. Many a time tears of pride and joy have stood in my eyes while I read the tender, loving, appealing letters that came to me in almost every mail from my little readers. To have pleased you, to have interested you, to have won your friendship, and perhaps your love, through my stories, is to my mind as great an achievement as to become President of the United States. Indeed, I would much rather be your storyteller, under these conditions, than to be the President. So you have helped me to fulfill my life's ambition, and I am more grateful to you, my dears, than I can express in words.

I try to answer every letter of my young correspondents; yet sometimes there are so many letters that a little time must pass before you get your answer. But be patient, friends, for the answer will surely come, and by writing to me you more than repay me for the pleasant task of preparing these books. Besides, I am proud to acknowledge that the books are partly yours, for your suggestions often guide me in telling the stories, and I am sure they would not be half so good without your clever and thoughtful assistance.

L. FRANK BAUM

Coronado, 1908.