

Where Troubles Melt Like Lemon Drops

by ofankoma

Hermione and Crookshanks are swept away to a land beyond the rainbow.

Away Above the Chimney Tops

Chapter 1 of 1

Hermione and Crookshanks are swept away to a land beyond the rainbow.

A/N: Set in the gang's fifth year. Keep your eyes peeled for the usual suspects. Other than the Wicked Witch of the East, who Hermione and Crookshanks crush at the outset of our tale, every character is someone we know. All illustrations are by W. W. Denslow, from the first edition of *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* by L. Frank Baum.



There once was a girl named Hermione. She lived in a magical castle with her friends Harry, Ron, and Neville, as well as her faithful cat. She wanted for nothing, and all

was well.

One day, a professor sent her into the Forbidden Forest as punishment, angry that Hermione had questioned her authority. While there, a wind like a bugle swept through the trees. She and her cat ran to a hut for cover, where they fell fast asleep.



When she awoke, Hermione stumbled outside to discover two slipper-clad feet sticking out. She gave a frightened cry, but was stopped by three clothed house-elves and a stern-looking witch with a brogue.



"I," she announced, "am the Good Witch of the North."

"I'm Hermione," she replied, "and I'm lost."

The house-elves thanked her for freeing them from the Wicked Witch who had imprisoned them. The Good Witch gave her those shoes for protection and directed her to find the Great and Powerful Wizard, the only one who could return her safely home.

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Along the way, Hermione met the Scarecrow with a jagged lightning bolt stitched across his forehead, the Tin Man with speckled cheeks and a red cap, and the round-faced Cowardly Lion chasing toads nearby.

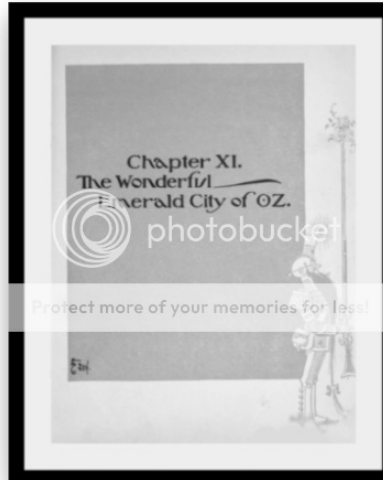


"I need some brains," said the Scarecrow.

"A heart," exclaimed the Tin Man.

"Courage," added the Lion.

She invited them all to join her on her adventure to see the Wizard. Surely he was powerful enough to grant her new friends' requests.



After crossing poppy fields, snowy forests, and rivers, they came to Emerald City. There, the Wizard with twinkling eyes met them at the gate.

"What do you desire?" he asked the travelers. "Lemon drops?"

"My home."

"Some brains."

"A heart."

"Courage."

"Destroy the Wicked Witch of the West," he demanded, "and I will grant your wishes."



One pail of water and three days later, they returned with the Wicked Witch's broomstick and melted pink cardigan as proof.

"Alas," said the Wizard, "I can give you nothing."

They gasped, disappointed.

"I cannot give what you already possess," he stated. "Your brains, heart, and courage defeated the Witch. Moreover, they will defeat He-Who-Is-Yet-To-Come – the Dark Lord."

"Not I," he said, stepping into his hot-air balloon, "but you will vanquish the Dark Lord."

Sobbing, Hermione clung to her cat while watching her hopes sail off through the skies.



"Dearest, what's wrong?" asked the Good Witch.

"My friends will accomplish great things without me," she replied, "and I still cannot go home."

"Fiddlesticks!" the witch exclaimed. "Your friends will do these things *because* you – and others – will be with them."

"But how?"

"You will return home, Hermione. It is *there*, not here, where these events await you."

"Yes?"

"Click your heels together three times and repeat after me..."





When she awoke in the infirmary, a furry lump purring on her lap, she smiled at three familiar faces perched around her bedside.

"There's no place like home."

"Hermione!" they all proclaimed.

"I had the strangest dream..."



Prompt: Wicked weather lands two travelers in an extremely awkward situation.

Thanks to the best beta around, kittylefish! I lay oodles of thanks at your feet.