

Little Green Men

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GREEN BOY FROM "HARRAH"

Sandy's Visit to Topsy Turvy Land—A Fantastic Story of a Visitor from a Planet Where Boys Eat the Multiplication Table Like Candy and Read Lemon Pie and Roast Beef Out of Books.

By CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS.

Oh, how it rained! And how the wind blew! Sandy McMichael stood at the window of his bedroom, wondering whether there would be another flood, and rather hoping that there would be because he would like to see the animals going in two by two. It had rained for three days. He had read until he was tired, he had played with his lead soldiers until he had fought three Spanish wars and had never lost an American, and now he was ripe for the fellowship of any kind of boy.

He peered up into the sky at the large drops that grew larger as they descended, and wished that he might be a drop of rain to have such a lovely long jump from the clouds to the earth. It would be better than jumping off of the rafters of the barn. Hullo! there was a drop way up that must be the great grandfather of the rest. How high it was and how it was growing. Sandy opened the window to watch it better and the next minute a funny looking little boy with a

me hate it," answered Sandy promptly. He was just taking up Greek history and lost all the good marks that American history had earned for him just because he wasn't interested in what a lot of dead Greeks had done.

"How funny," said the green boy. "But I suppose that things would be different up here."

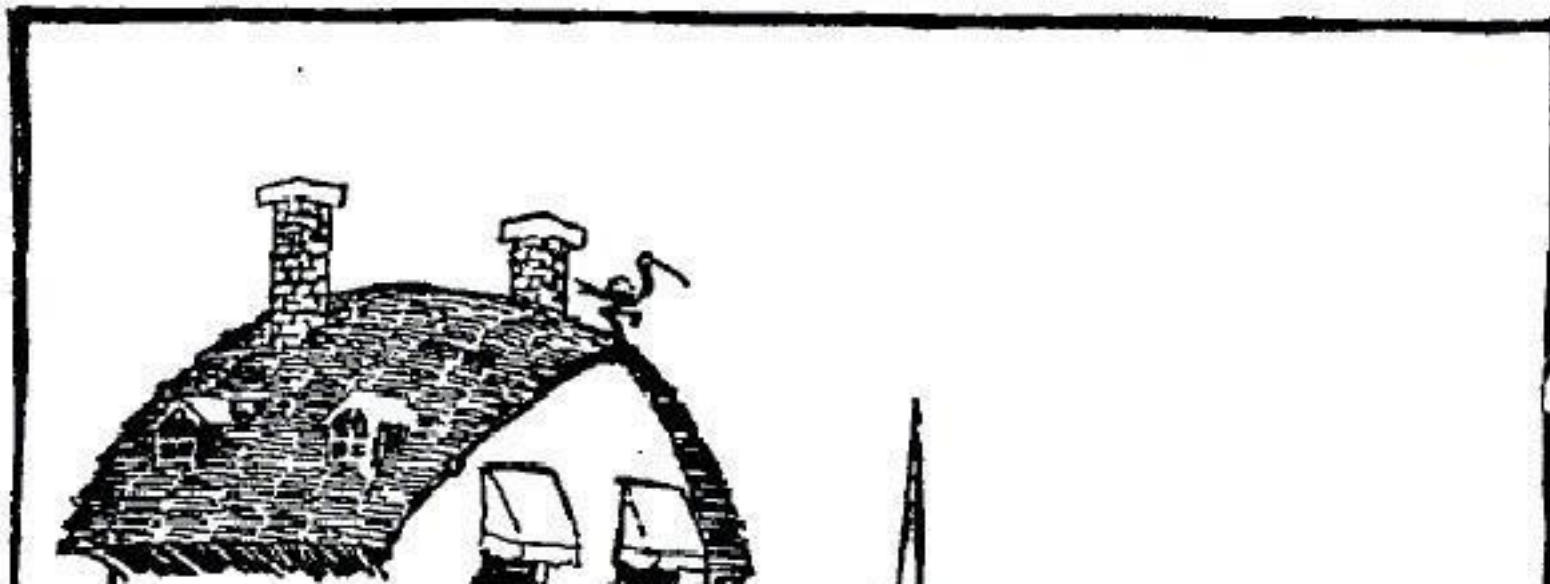
"You mean down here," said Sandy.

"No, I don't," said the green boy, suddenly leaping up three feet and sitting in mid air, as easily as if he were on a seat. "I came up here from down there," pointing to the sky, "and we learn things down there by eating them. We have a speller that is in ten cakes and a bite is a lesson. There are about a hundred bites to a cake, and when you've eaten all the cakes you know how to spell."

"Oh, don't I wish that I could learn my lessons that way. Say, what is your name?"

"Jorroel," said the green boy.

"Mine is Sandy. Say, Jorroel, how do you sit that way—on nothing?"





The Queer Appearance of Things in "Harrah."

skin as **green** as a maple leaf in midsummer and wearing a silken cloak of the color of old gold landed on his feet upon the carpet beside Sandy.

"I've done it at last," said he in a piping voice that, while not unmusical, was different from any that Sandy had ever heard.

"Where'd you come from?" asked the little chap.

"From Harrah," was the reply. He was just about Sandy's size, but much slenderer, and his head was nearly twice as big. His eyes were yellow and shone like electric lights. His hair was a lighter shade of green than his body and his lips were straw colored, uncanny looking, and yet not unhandsome, and decidedly friendly, for he rubbed Sandy's cheeks with his long, slender hands and made a cooing noise that evidently meant, "I like you."

"Where's Harrah?" asked Sandy, but beyond pointing to the sky the green boy did not explain. Probably he had come from a star and Harrah was what he called it. It is unlikely that the people who live in the stars know what we call them and if a man came from Mars and was asked: "Well, how did you leave the folks at Mars?" he wouldn't understand, and indeed might answer: "All well, including ma."

Sandy, who always took things as they came, said: "Let's play checkers."

"All right," said the green boy, who certainly spoke good every-day English, although he had what was evidently a Harrahian accent.

"Oh, dear," said the little visitor sud-

"Why, I make up my mind to do it, and then it comes easy. Down in Harrah we can do whatever we make up our minds to do."

"But, say," said Sandy. "Do you like to eat those cakes?"

"Of course. Our parents think that it is best for us to learn all we can about spelling and reading and typewriting and arithmetic and this far distant planet that lights our night, and so they make the cakes as nice as they can be so that we'll like to learn things. I think that history cake is the best of the lot, because it's so nice and sour; but grammar cake I don't much like, because it's sweet, and boys don't like sweet things."

"Oh, don't they, though? We earthly boys do. But, say, can't you take me up or down to Harrah and bring me back before bedtime?"

"Why, I can if you don't weigh more than fifty pounds. I can make up my mind to go back to Harrah and take you on my back if you're under fifty in weight. If you weigh more than that I can't budge you."

"I weigh forty-seven," said Sandy.

"Then get on my back," said Jorroel, jumping down from his invisible perch. Sandy did so, and then Jorroel climbed up on the window ledge and made up his mind as hard as he could to go back to Harrah.

The next minute they were rushing through the air at a speed that would have made the Empire State express turn as green through envy as Jorroel was. It may have been five minutes, but it didn't seem more than that many seconds before

denly. I forgot to eat my history lesson before I came down and if I don't know it tomorrow my teacher will make me eat more geography than is good for me just to punish me. Have you a history cake anywhere around?"

"A wh-a-at?" asked Sandy in amazement.

"A history cake." What do you call them? How would you learn your history lesson?"

"By studying so hard it would make

them more than that many seconds before they had landed at Harrah in the midst of an undulating meadow of lovely pink grass. Beautiful butterflies that flamed like different colored lights and that sang more sweetly than nightingales, flew round and round in circles until Sandy felt dizzy, and said so. Then they turned and flew the other way. He soon found out that this thoughtfulness of others' feelings characterized every living thing in Harrah, which he imagined to be Mars,

although he had no means of knowing.

All around them globular dwellings full of windows floated in the air, and Jorroel told him that this was his native town, and was called Jarqiol. "Want to see where you came from?" he asked Sandy.

"Sure," said Sandy. "I am sorry to say that he had several slang phrases that he would be glad to drop when he grew older and found how burr-like they were and as useless as burrs, too.

"You can wait until night and look at it through a faralan. It's as yellow as my lips. Say, you must be hungry after your long ride. Come up to our house and read some dinner."

"Read it!" said Sandy. "You mean eat it."

Jorroel burst into a shrill laugh that sounded like the noise of a katydid. "We eat what we want to learn," said he, "but we read to keep ourselves from starving. What'll you read?"

"Some candy and pie," said Sandy at a venture.

"That's a good choice, I think. Come up and we'll get them."

A few feet above where they were standing was a round house, not unlike a bubble, and like a bubble it floated hither and thither, not being fastened to the ground and yet not going very far in any direction. Jorroel explained that the ground was so fertile that they did not like to waste it by using it to set houses upon, so their houses were all built in the air.

Sandy found that he could walk up on the air to it as easily as he could tread solid ground on earth, and he accompanied his friend to it. A pretty green woman, not much bigger than Jorroel, and wearing a cloak made of a crimson, cob-webby stuff, sat at a table reading a book.

"Mamma, I been to Sush at last. I knew I could do it if I made up my mind hard enough. And I've brought back a little boy from there and he's hungry and wants to read some dinner."

Jorroel's mother came over and rubbed Sandy's cheeks, which seemed to be the Harrahian way of saluting one. Then she said, without being surprised that he had gone so far: "You must be hungry. Read whatever you want. You'll find the books on the shelf there."

Sandy stepped over to a bookcase and saw a number of books in English. One said roast beef, another said lemon pie, another was marked potatoes, and still

others bore names that he had never heard of before and were probably foods that were peculiar to Harrah. It told how lemon pie was made, who invented it, and so on, and by the time Sandy had finished the article he felt just the same as if he had eaten a pie, but with this important difference—he hadn't had the fun of eating it.

After lemon pie one doesn't care much about roast beef, so Sandy didn't read any of that.

It was growing dark. Sandy glanced out of the window and saw the earth just rising and flooding Harrah with lovely earth light.

"That's where I came from," isn't it?" he asked.

"Yes," answered Jorroel, going to a closet and getting out a faralan.

"We call it the earth," said Sandy, "but I suppose it's your moon?"

"Yes," said Jorroel's mother, "but we call your earth Sush."

Jorroel handed him the faralan, which was much like a telescope, and he found that he could see New York through it.

"Now, if you want to learn something," said Jorroel's mother, "you might eat some arithmetic—that always comes in handy in any planet. Jorroel, get him the multiplication table up to five. I don't believe he knows it very well—if he's anything like you."

Jorroel went to the closet and returned in a moment with four sticks of what looked like candy to Sandy's earthly eyes. He found that they were scur, yet not unpleasant, but not a bit like candy. When he had eaten the last one he knew his tables up to five.

"I really think I must be going. Mamma will worry," said he.

"I guess you can find your way back alone," said Jorroel. "Go just as you came, by the milky way. And come and see us often. I'll show you lots of things you never saw before and I'd like you to pay us a long visit if your mother doesn't object."

"Yes," said the mother, kindly, and then she rubbed his cheeks again and he followed Jorroel outdoors, or rather out windows, because they don't have doors in Harrah. Jorroel took Sandy by the ankles and hurled him by main strength toward the rising earth, and a few moments of rushing space brought the boy to his window sill just as his dinner bell was ringing. He was so hungry after his trip that he was very glad to think that he would eat and not read dinner. On the way downstairs he asked himself how much four times four were, but he couldn't remember, and by the time he had been helped to everything eatable on the table his trip to Harrah was so hazy and dreamlike that he said nothing to his parents about it. But he hoped that if it was a dream he would dream some more about it.

This is the earliest known story about a short, green-skinned alien humanoid (probably a Martian). Chris Aubeck

Atlanta Constitution (Atlanta, Georgia), October 8th 1899

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