

By: Melaney Burt. Based on The Wizard of Oz by L. Frank Baum

A Wizard's Beginning

Grandma Dia was lying on her deathbed, her hand around a boy's hand. He was sniffing, trying to keep his tears at bay, but they came anyway. "Oscar," she said faintly. "Oscar you must find it."

"Find what, Grandma Dia? I don't understand, Grandma Dia, don't leave me! Don't end our time together, I can't bear the end!"

"I must child, so listen carefully to what I have to say. In the attic you'll find a letter. It contains a map which leads to a land of fantasy and wonder! I'm sorry I must leave you so soon, but know that I leave you with my love. And with that she closed her eyes to explore a land unknown. But he thought he heard one more thing, "Follow the yellow brick road..."

After the funeral, Oscar slipped away to run up to the attic, shutting the door behind him. He searched for an hour. No letter. Then two, his hope fading. Finally, in the dregs of the third hour, he found it. The letter contained a map and a story of a land so fanciful it simply couldn't be true. And yet it was. There, in the envelope, sat enough money for food and water. So, three days later, he left his home behind him and set out for Oz on the yellow brick road.

The land was strange, full of careful beauty. He looked all around him, taking in the blue dirt and candy floss pink trees. Then he saw a terrible sight. Small creatures, no taller than himself were laboring away in the sun. They were watched by cruel looking guards who held menacing black whips. As Oscar watched, two creatures slipped away from the group.

"Run!," one said. "Save yourself!"

"For the Wicked Witch will show no mercy!" continued the other. "She'll put stripes upon your back!"

"No!" said Oscar. "I must help! This simply is not right!"

"Then come with us! If you won't leave, we'll hide you from her sight!"

Oscar walked into a small hole in the side of a hill, and the Munchkins began talking to him. "We munchkins must be free at last, we must enjoy the earth," one said. "And if we don't... we'll wither away... so free us from this curse!" continued the other. Oscar agreed. "But young hero, you must take heed, beware those who are taken by greed, for they will stop at nothing to poison the earth. Please, young hero, free us from this curse."

"But how?" cried Oscar, greatly distressed, "What should I do? Do I have what it takes? I will need help of course, for I will make mistakes."

"We know," they said kindly, "For all of us do. We will find some companions suitable for you."
He set out for the castle accompanied by two Munchkins, who were brave enough to take up the dangerous task. The horrible queen must fall, they knew, they just needed to figure out just what to do. They approached the dangerous castle, which had a rather greenish hue, but were blocked by two guards, who would let no one through. It seemed as though all was lost, but out of the blue, the two munchkins claimed they knew just what to do!

"Young sir!" they implored. "Please, let us through, we will throw a large rock," they said grimly. "It is all up to you." so the munchkins ran away, and the guard gave chase, leaving Oscar alone, in that horrible place. Oscar mustered his courage, what little he had, and began sneaking to the throne room, trying not to feel sad.

Hidden in the shadows, he approached the horrible witch, and with both hands on his sword, he lunged out of the darkness, no longer ignored. He screamed defiantly and slashed at the witch, but instead of screaming she laughed,

"You couldn't kill me if you wished!"

"I know," said Oscar, surprising himself, "Only love," he concluded, "would do the job well." So he thought of his grandma, his Mom, and his dad. And at once he heard a horrible scream, the witch was dead. "You've done it!" the munchkins cried, "The wicked witch of the North is dead at last, it's like he's a wizard! We'll make you our king!" And as the Munchkins rushed in and enveloped the boy, "Finally," he whispered, "All is well at last."