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[Authors](#)
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[The Marvelous Land Of Oz](#)

[L Frank Baum](#)

This Book:
[Contents](#)
[Previous Chapter](#)
[Next Chapter](#)

Chapter 8 - Gen. Jinjur's Army of Revolt

Tip was so anxious to rejoin his man Jack and the Saw-Horse that he walked a full half the distance to the Emerald City without stopping to rest. Then he discovered that he was hungry and the crackers and cheese he had provided for the Journey had all been eaten.

While wondering what he should do in this emergency he came upon a girl sitting by the roadside. She wore a costume that struck the boy as being remarkably brilliant; her silken waist being of emerald green and her skirt of four distinct colors -- blue in front, yellow at the left side, red at the back and purple at the right side. Fastening the waist in front were four buttons -- the top one blue, the next yellow, a third red and the last purple.

The splendor of this dress was almost barbaric; so Tip was fully justified in staring at the gown for some moments before his eyes were attracted by the pretty face above it. Yes, the face was pretty enough, he decided; but it wore an expression of discontent coupled to a shade of defiance or audacity.

While the boy stared the girl looked upon him calmly. A lunch basket stood beside her, and she held a dainty sandwich in one hand and a hard-boiled egg in the other, eating with an evident appetite that aroused Tip's sympathy.

He was just about to ask a share of the luncheon when the girl stood up and brushed the crumbs from her lap.

"There!" said she; "it is time for me to go. Carry that basket for me and help yourself to its contents if you are hungry."

Tip seized the basket eagerly and began to eat, following for a time the strange girl without bothering to ask questions. She walked along before him with swift strides, and there was about her an air of decision and importance that led him to suspect she was some great personage.

Finally, when he had satisfied his hunger, he ran up beside her and tried to keep pace with her swift footsteps -- a very difficult feat, for she was much taller than he, and evidently in a hurry.

"Thank you very much for the sandwiches," said Tip, as he trotted along. "May I ask your name?"

"I am General Jinjur," was the brief reply.

"Oh!" said the boy surprised. "What sort of a General?"

"I command the Army of Revolt in this war," answered the General, with unnecessary sharpness.

"Oh!" he again exclaimed. "I didn't know there was a war."

"You were not supposed to know it," she returned, "for we have kept it a secret; and considering that our army is composed entirely of girls," she added, with some pride, "it is surely a remarkable thing that our Revolt is not yet discovered."

"It is, indeed," acknowledged Tip. "But where is your army?"

"About a mile from here," said General Jinjur. "The forces have assembled from all parts of the Land of Oz, at my express command. For this is the day we are to conquer His Majesty the Scarecrow, and wrest from him the throne. The Army of Revolt only awaits my coming to march upon the Emerald City."

"Well!" declared Tip, drawing a long breath, "this is certainly a surprising thing! May I ask why you wish to conquer His Majesty the Scarecrow?"

"Because the Emerald City has been ruled by men long enough, for one reason," said the girl.

"Moreover, the City glitters with beautiful gems, which might far better be used for rings, bracelets and necklaces; and there is enough money in the King's treasury to buy every girl in our Army a dozen new gowns. So we intend to conquer the City and run the government to suit ourselves."

Jinjur spoke these words with an eagerness and decision that proved she was in earnest.

"But war is a terrible thing," said Tip, thoughtfully.

"This war will be pleasant," replied the girl, cheerfully.

"Many of you will be slain!" continued the boy, in an awed voice.

"Oh, no", said Jinjur. "What man would oppose a girl, or dare to harm her? And there is not an ugly face in my entire Army."

Tip laughed.

"Perhaps you are right," said he. "But the Guardian of the Gate is considered a faithful Guardian, and the King's Army will not let the City be conquered without a struggle."

"The Army is old and feeble," replied General Jinjur, scornfully. "His strength has all been used to grow whiskers, and his wife has such a temper that she has already pulled more than half of them out by the roots. When the Wonderful Wizard reigned the Soldier with the Green Whiskers was a very good Royal Army, for people feared the

Wizard. But no one is afraid of the Scarecrow, so his Royal Army don't count for war."

After this conversation they proceeded some distance in silence, and before long reached a large clearing in the forest where fully four hundred young women were assembled. These were laughing and talking together as gaily as if they had gathered for a picnic instead of a war of conquest.

They were divided into four companies, and Tip noticed that all were dressed in costumes similar to that worn by General Jinjur. The only real difference was that while those girls from the Munchkin country had the blue strip in front of their skirts, those from the country of the Quadlings had the red strip in front; and those from the country of the Winkies had the yellow strip in front, and the Gillikin girls wore the purple strip in front. All had green waists, representing the Emerald City they intended to conquer, and the top button on each waist indicated by its color which country the wearer came from. The uniforms were Jaunty and becoming, and quite effective when massed together.

Tip thought this strange Army bore no weapons whatever; but in this he was wrong. For each girl had stuck through the knot of her back hair two long, glittering knitting-needles.

General Jinjur immediately mounted the stump of a tree and addressed her army.

"Friends, fellow-citizens, and girls!" she said; "we are about to begin our great Revolt against the men of Oz! We march to conquer the Emerald City -- to dethrone the Scarecrow King -- to acquire thousands of gorgeous gems -- to rifle the royal treasury -- and to obtain power over our former oppressors!"

"Hurrah!" said those who had listened; but Tip thought most of the Army was too much engaged in chattering to pay attention to the words of the General.

The command to march was now given, and the girls formed themselves into four bands, or companies, and set off with eager strides toward the Emerald City.

The boy followed after them, carrying several baskets and wraps and packages which various members of the Army of Revolt had placed in his care. It was not long before they came to the green granite walls of the City and halted before the gateway.

The Guardian of the Gate at once came out and looked at them curiously, as if a circus had come to town. He carried a bunch of keys swung round his neck by a golden chain; his hands were thrust carelessly into his pockets, and he seemed to have no idea at all that the City was threatened by rebels. Speaking pleasantly to the girls, he said:

"Good morning, my dears! What can I do for you?"

"Surrender instantly!" answered General Jinjur, standing before him and frowning as terribly as her pretty face would allow her to.

"Surrender!" echoed the man, astounded. "Why, it's impossible. It's against the law! I never heard of such a thing in my life."

"Still, you must surrender!" exclaimed the General, fiercely. "We are revolting!"

"You don't look it," said the Guardian, gazing from one to another, admiringly.

"But we are!" cried Jinjur, stamping her foot, impatiently; "and we mean to conquer the Emerald City!"

"Good gracious!" returned the surprised Guardian of the Gates; "what a nonsensical idea! Go home to your mothers, my good girls, and milk the cows and bake the bread. Don't you know it's a dangerous thing to conquer a city?"

"We are not afraid!" responded the General; and she looked so determined that it made the Guardian uneasy.

So he rang the bell for the Soldier with the Green Whiskers, and the next minute was sorry he had done so. For immediately he was surrounded by a crowd of girls who drew the knitting-needles from their hair and began jabbing them at the Guardian with the sharp points dangerously near his fat cheeks and blinking eyes.

The poor man howled loudly for mercy and made no resistance when Jinjur drew the bunch of keys from around his neck.

Followed by her Army the General now rushed

to the gateway, where she was confronted by the Royal Army of Oz -- which was the other name for the Soldier with the Green Whiskers.

"Halt!" he cried, and pointed his long gun full in the face of the leader.

Some of the girls screamed and ran back, but General Jinjur bravely stood her ground and said, reproachfully:

"Why, how now? Would you shoot a poor, defenceless girl?"

"No," replied the soldier. "for my gun isn't loaded."

"Not loaded?"

"No; for fear of accidents. And I've forgotten where I hid the powder and shot to load it with. But if you'll wait a short time I'll try to hunt them up."

"Don't trouble yourself," said Jinjur, cheerfully. Then she turned to her Army and cried:

"Girls, the gun isn't loaded!"

"Hooray," shrieked the rebels, delighted at this good news, and they proceeded to rush upon the Soldier with the Green Whiskers in such a crowd that it was a wonder they didn't stick the knitting-needles into one another.

But the Royal Army of Oz was too much afraid of women to meet the onslaught. He simply turned about and ran with all his might through the gate and toward the royal palace, while General Jinjur and her mob flocked into the unprotected City.

In this way was the Emerald City captured without a drop of blood being spilled. The Army of Revolt had become an Army of Conquerors!