

SKY ISLAND

An adaptation of L. Frank Baum's novel

By Cory Barnett

FADE IN:

EXT. SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN - 1920S - DAY

TROT, a tomboyish 11-year-old girl, daydreams as she walks from the town to her house just outside of town. She carries a small sack and sings to herself.

She doesn't notice BUTTON-BRIGHT, an 11-year-old boy, until she nearly bumps into him. He's smartly dressed and carries a ratty umbrella even though the sky is clear.

TROT

You should watch where you're going.

BUTTON

I wasn't going anywhere.

TROT

You had to be going somewhere.

BUTTON

Really, I was just going to see the ocean. I've never seen it before.

TROT

Where's your family?

Button looks back over his shoulder and shrugs.

BUTTON

Chicago, I guess.

TROT

How'd you get here?

BUTTON

You wouldn't believe me.

TROT

I don't see an automobile, and the only boats are down at the docks. That's a might far walk for a boy looks as hungry as you. Train doesn't stop over here.

She smiles.

TROT (CONT'D)

You must've flew. But how'd you do it?

Button's shocked at her deduction, but isn't quite ready to let go of his secret.

TROT (CONT'D)

Nah, that's alright. You don't have to tell. Let's fill you up anyway. I think mom's making stew.

INT. TROT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Trot's mother serves Trot and Button dinner.

MOTHER

I'm not sure I like the idea of a boy your age being out so late without permission. I should call your mother, at least let her know you're okay.

BUTTON

Please don't. I'm in enough trouble. She'd just get even madder if she knew I was so far away.

MOTHER

So, how did you make it so far away?

TROT

He flew, but he's not tellin' how. I already asked.

MOTHER

Trot, that's enough. Button did not fly here. Did you Button?

BUTTON

Yes ma'am, I did. But I didn't mean to. Well, I meant to come here, it's just the flying that was an accident. Well, at first anyway.

TROT

Told you.

INT. BUTTON'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK - DAY

Button wanders around a big house, pristine and empty save the servants busying around, preparing for a party.

BUTTON (V.O.)  
 See, my folks were having this big  
 to do, and I wasn't allowed  
 anywhere near it.

Lightning flashes outside the window, followed swiftly by  
 thunder.

BUTTON (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 I asked, Nana, that's what I call  
 the maid, I asked her if I could go  
 to my uncle's. He had said I could  
 stay there for the party, but I had  
 to have permission.

INT. BUTTON'S HOUSE - ATTIC - DAY

Button plays at being a pirate.

BUTTON (V.O.)  
 She said "no," because it was  
 raining so hard and all the  
 umbrellas were out and she didn't  
 want I should catch a cold, even  
 though I promised I wouldn't. But  
 no means no, and since I didn't  
 have an umbrella, I couldn't go.

He accidentally trips over something sticking out from under  
 a tarp. He pulls it out, it's the UMBRELLA.

BUTTON (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 But then I found one.

INT. BUTTON'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Button grabs his coat as he rushes out the door. His maid  
 chases after him, but then lets him go.

EXT. BUTTON'S HOUSE - DAY

Button gets splashed as people, carts, and automobiles pass  
 him in the rain.

He clings to his shabby umbrella and looks up at the sky.

BUTTON (V.O.)  
 It was a long way to go in the  
 rain.

BUTTON (CONT'D)  
 I wish I was already at Uncle  
 Andrew's.

The umbrella rises, taking Button with it.

EXT. UNCLE ANDREW'S HOUSE - DAY

The umbrella carefully sets Button down on the front porch. UNCLE ANDREW answers the door when Button rings the bell.

UNCLE ANDREW

Hey, Button! I didn't think they'd let you out on a day like this.

BUTTON

You won't believe what just happened!

Uncle Andrew looks closely at Button's umbrella.

UNCLE ANDREW

Where'd you get that?

BUTTON

I found it.

UNCLE ANDREW

You don't have permission? Button, you have to take that back home right now. Put it back where you found it.

BUTTON

But, I was going to stay with you.

UNCLE ANDREW

Take it back. That's the family luck. Your great great grandfather got it from the Arabs. We've been lucky ever since.

Button looks at the umbrella with renewed awe.

BUTTON

Wow! And it flies!

UNCLE ANDREW

Take it back, Button.

Uncle Andrew closes the door on the boy.

EXT. BUTTON'S HOUSE - DAY

Button lands next to the front window. Inside all sorts of people in fancy dress enjoy themselves.

BUTTON (V.O.)  
 I couldn't go in then. And since I  
 was already in trouble, I thought  
 I'd see where else it would take  
 me.

Button lifts off with his umbrella.

BUTTON (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
 I tried Boston, Denver, and  
 Houston. I was going to go back  
 then, but then I remembered I'd  
 never seen the sea.

END FLASHBACK

INT. TROT'S HOUSE - DAY

Trot listens with rapt attention to Button's story.

BUTTON  
 So, here I am. That's how I got  
 here.

Button punctuates his statement by taking a bite of stew.

TROT  
 I knew it! I knew you had fairy  
 magic on you.

MOTHER  
 Trot.

TROT  
 See? He knows, too.  
 (turning to Button)  
 Tell mom what you know about the  
 fairies. She never believes me.

BUTTON  
 I don't know anything about fairy  
 magic.

TROT  
 You've got a magic umbrella.

BUTTON  
 That doesn't mean it's fairies.

Trot again stares at Button, now in awe of how dense he could  
 be.

BUTTON (cont'd)  
It doesn't.

MOTHER  
Trot, please clear the table.

Trot picks up dishes in a huff.

TROT  
It flies!

MOTHER  
Button, why don't you go into  
Trot's room and settle in for the  
night. I'll ring your mother and  
tell her I'll send you on the first  
automobile I can find to the  
trains.

BUTTON  
I'll just use the umbrella.

MOTHER  
That's enough, Button. Go get  
cleaned up for bed.

Button takes his umbrella with him as he goes in the other  
room.

MOTHER (cont'd)  
Trot, I know you meant well by  
bringing him home, but you can't go  
around picking up strange boys.

TROT  
He was hungry.

MOTHER  
He's not the sort of boy you should  
associate your self with.

Trot groans.

TROT  
Big words.

MOTHER  
There's nothing wrong with big  
words, Trot.

TROT  
You're just trying to be fancy.

MOTHER

You're changing the subject. I don't want you hanging around with boys of that sort. He's obviously troubled.

TROT

He's got fairy magic.

MOTHER

Enough about the fairies. We're going to have to go see the pastor on Sunday if you keep on with these tales.

TROT

But they're not tales. It's real.

MOTHER

That'll do, Trot. Wash up the dishes. I'll fix you a spot on the couch.

Trot washes the dishes as her mother leaves.

TROT

In fairy land they'd believe me.

MOTHER

Trot.

TROT

In fairy land I'd never have to do chores.

MOTHER

Enough.

TROT

Or go to school.

MOTHER

Or go to the pastor. I know. Please, Trot. I'm sure even fairy magic has a bad side.

Trot looks like she's in full-on pout.

MOTHER (cont'd)

Finish up so you'll be rested in the morning. You have to go back into town. The yarn you got is the wrong color.

EXT. TROT'S HOUSE - DAY

Button closes the front door behind him. Trot swings on the swing tied to the tree in the front yard.

TROT  
You goin' home?

BUTTON  
I think I better.

TROT  
How much trouble you going to be in?

BUTTON  
I don't know.

TROT  
Heaps, probably.

BUTTON  
Yeah.

TROT  
You think that thing could hold more than one person?

BUTTON  
I don't know, maybe. You want to come home with me? You could stay in the play room. I hardly ever use it.

TROT  
You have a whole room just for play?

BUTTON  
Of course.

TROT  
What about fairy magic? You have any of that out there?

BUTTON  
No.

TROT  
Other than the umbrella.

BUTTON  
It's from the Arabs, not fairies.

TROT

Then where'd they get it? You don't see Arabs just flying around. I bet they have lots of fairies over there, though.

Button shrugs.

TROT (cont'd)

Maybe we could just go to the town. It's not that far. That way, if your umbrella can't handle it, we won't have far to fall.

BUTTON

You sure?

TROT

'Course I'm sure.

Trot grabs onto Button's waist.

BUTTON

We want to go to Trot's yarn shop.

The umbrella lifts the children into the air.

EXT. SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN - YARN SHOP - DAY

The umbrella sets them down in front of the store.

TROT

How'd it know what store we wanted?

BUTTON

It just does I guess.

TROT

Does it ever make a mistake?

BUTTON

No, but it won't let you change your mind either. Yesterday when I was flying to the ocean, I saw a fair and I wanted to stop. No matter what I said or did, we just kept going. Me and the umbrella floating out to the sea.

TROT

I bet you looked pretty funny.

She goes inside, leaving him standing on the street.

EXT. SMALL NEW ENGLAND TOWN - YARN SHOP -1920S - DAY

Trot exits the yarn store to find a huge crowd gathered around Button and his umbrella. She smiles as she grabs on to his waist.

TROT

You'd think they never saw a flying umbrella before. Let's get back home.

BUTTON

We want to go to Trot's house.

Up they go again.

INT. TROT'S HOUSE - DAY

Trot runs inside and puts the yarn on the table. There's a note from her mother.

INSERT NOTE: Trot, I went to Ms. Steadman's. I'll be back before dinner.

Trot has to sound out the words.

EXT. TROT'S HOUSE - DAY

Trot rushes out. Button looks out over the ocean.

TROT

You want to stay for lunch? Mom won't be home 'til later.

BUTTON

It sure is pretty.

TROT

What? The ocean? It's even prettier underneath.