

Chapter 8

Jack Sprout's House Raising

“Cheers mate,” said the parrot. “The carrier pigeon, Kenneth, told me about your house-raising party. My name is Parrot Jagers. My friends call me P Jagers. I've come from my home in the desert canyons to help.”

I said hello and welcomed him to our party.

“I didn't even know anyone lived in the desert,” I said. “Why do you live where it's so very hot and dry?”

“Well, it's kind of a long story. I used to be a pirate's parrot. Our ship sank in the ocean during a wild, windy storm just off the coast. I was caught up in a jet stream and blown all the way to the desert, just south of Beaver Creek Meadow.”

“I've learned to love living out in the wild. The desert is really a fun and busy place, especially when we all come out at night. My job is to take care of the desert plants. We get a lot of our medicine from those thorny, dried- up, crazy looking plants. My home is in a long winding, rocky canyon at the top of a giant Fan Palm tree. The canyon has a cool running stream and even cool breezes too. You must come see it sometime.”

“That sounds like fun,” I said. “I'll be sure to come see you. I want to learn about the desert.”

P Jagers joined us as we all got back to work so we could finish before dark.

The gophers, moles and prairie dogs dug a deep well and a trench to the creek. The tall wooden windmill, built by Fred and Sawdust, was lifted into place by Whoopee, Stretch and a large crew of Longneck Shorebirds.

Barley and Iris Miller set up my kitchen for baking with a big table under a sky light. Iris brought me a fancy birdcage with a big front door for a house warming gift.

“Thanks, Iris,” I said, “but I don't have a bird.”

“You just leave the door open, Jack Sprout; you never know what'll happen.”