

**THE MAGIC SPEECH
FLOWER, OR, LITTLE LUKE
AND HIS ANIMAL FRIENDS**

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The Magic Speech Flower, or, Little Luke and His Animal Friends by Melvin Hix

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OR LITTLE LUKE AND HIS
ANIMAL FRIENDS

BY

MELVIN HIX

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THE MAGIC SPEECH FLOWER

I. THE FINDING OF THE MAGIC FLOWER

It was June and it was morning. The sky was clear and the sun shone bright and warm. The still air was filled with the sweet odor of blossoming flowers. To little Luke, sitting on the doorstep of the farmhouse and looking out over the fresh fields and green meadows, the whole earth seemed brimful of happiness and joy.

From the bough of an apple tree on the lawn O-pee-chee the Robin chanted his morning song. "Te rill, te roo, the sky is blue," sang he.

From the lilac bush Kil-loo the Song Sparrow trilled, "Sweet, sweet, sweet, sweet, the air is sweet."

Over in the meadows Zeet the Lark fluttered down upon a low bush and sang, "Come with me, come and see," over and over. Then he dropped down into the grass and ran off to the nest where his mate was sitting on five speckled eggs.

Bob-o'-Lincoln went quite out of his wits with the joy of life. He flew high up into the air, and then came fluttering and falling, falling and quivering, down among the buttercups and daisies. He was very proud of himself and wanted everybody to know just who he was. So he sang his own name over and over. With his name-song he mixed up a lot of runs and trills and thrills that did not mean anything to anybody but himself and his little mate nestling below him in the grass. To her they meant, "Life is love, and love is joy."

Old Ka-ka-go the Crow, sitting on the top of the tall maple, felt that on such a morning as this he, too, must sing. So he opened his beak and croaked, "Caw, caw, caw, caw." What he meant to say was, "Corn, corn, corn, corn." Sam, the hired man, heard him and came out of the barn door with his gun. Old Ka-ka-go spread his black wings and flapped off to the woods on the side of the mountain.

Far up in the blue sky Kee-you the Red-shouldered Hawk wheeled slowly about in great circles. When he saw Sam with his gun, he

screamed, "Kee-you, kee-you, kee-you," over and over.

That was a poor song, but a good war cry. It sent every singer plunging to cover. O-pee-chee the Robin hid himself among the thick branches of the apple tree. Kil-loo the Song Sparrow hopped into the thickest part of the lilac bush. Zeet the Lark and Bob Lincoln squatted in the thick grass. Not a bird note was to be heard.

But Ka-be-yun the West Wind was not afraid of the warrior hawk. He breathed softly among the branches of the trees and set every little leaf quivering and whispering. Then he ran across the meadows and the wheat fields. As he sped along, great waves like those of the sea rolled in wide sweeps across the meadow and through the tall wheat.

To little Luke it seemed as if the leaves and grass and wheat all whispered, "Come away. Come and play." Just then a great bumblebee flew by and now the call was clear. "Come away, come away! Follow, follow, follow me!"

The boy jumped up and ran down the path into the garden. There he met Old Klaws the House