

Just then, they heard a deep voice that seemed to come from the treetops. The voice said: "Going someplace?"

Anna and Otto looked up, but only saw the dark leaves blowing in the breeze. Then they heard the leaves rustling, and in a moment saw a little man walking down the branches as if they were steps.

When he reached the ground, the little man removed his top hat and bowed. As he did so, Anna and Otto looked the man up and down.

He was no more than three feet tall and was dressed in a tuxedo – the kind called "tails," because of the long flaps that hang from the back of the jacket. The man held a black baton with white tips at either end.

When he finished bowing, the little man put on his hat, tapped his baton on the ground three times, and asked: "Going someplace?"

"Yes," said the girl.

"I thought so," said the man.

"Do you know the way?" asked the dog.

"Well," the man said, "that depends on where you're going."

"We are going away from here to somewhere else," Anna said.

"Well, in that case, you have many options."

"Can you tell us one?" asked the dog.

"I could, if I wanted to," the man said. "Allow me to introduce myself."

### **MAX KATZ**

#### ***Purveyor of Magical Amusements***

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"And what do you charge?" Otto asked.

"Whatever the traffic will bear," Max Katz replied.

"Sounds expensive," said Anna.

"Well, I figured you for a rich girl," Max Katz said. "You wear socks that must be dry-cleaned."

"I assure you I'm not rich," she said. "In fact, I have no money at all."

"Are you sure?" asked Max Katz.