

## Four Days of Short Stories I Story 3

~Lowell O'well, the Flying Mechanical Whale~

by Thaddeus Coleman

High above this endless world, among the clouds, soars a great mighty whale, Lowell O'well. A mechanical orphanage created by a man who long lost his name. He is its pilot and all know him as the Engineer. The story goes that in a far off land with a name ever forgotten from the bellows of history, the Engineer made a great many inventions for his country. He was respected and revered by his countrymen; that was until the explosion. Many good men were lost because of one his inventions. Before this he has a string of successfully machines, but up until then they simply failed to work. After explosion, though, he was ordered to stop working. He feared exile or worst. More than that, he was angry. His pride hurt. To prove to them he was could still create amazing contraptions and to leave on his accord he resurrected one of his old invention—A flying machine he spent a lifetime working on. He worked continually, night and day, driven by fear and hubris and with a grand roar the beast took flight. Never did the Engineer or then nameless mechanized monster look back.

Lowell, as previously mentioned, was without name and the Engineer was without aim. The two simply drifted in the sky to destinations unknown. This was the case until his travels led him to meet a nun who asked him for his help. She wanted to create a place where children of all age could to prosper and learn skill, something grander than a simple orphanage. The Engineer agreed, wanting to replace the fear and pride and anger with something pure and noble. Nun, who would go by Old Sister, who give name to the mechanical whale: Lowell O'well! A beast no more.

The Engineer and Old Sister created a set of guidelines for those who will live on Lowell:

1. Children can stay as Lowell O'well as long or as short as they want, even into adulthood, as they continue to work.
2. All denizens of Lowell must work a job.
3. No one is allowed is allowed to hurt another.
4. Everyone is given to right to vote on decision made on Lowell. If you choose not to exercise this right, you must wait a year before you can exercise it.
5. We are all equal here...
6. But the Engineer is Captain

Soon Lowell started to grow in population. The first to become a part Lowell O'well's crew were three teenagers who would be the ships' chefs. Roland, 17, was the defacto leader of the three and a great chef. He more or less teaches and supervises the other two when cooking. Zack, 16, is the youngest and has vowed on several occasion he will surpass Roland's skills and becoming one of the world's greatest chef, by the time he leave Lowell. The last of the chefs is Nina, 18. She been watching over two since before coming aboard Lowell and while she too has

dreams of being a good chef; she also has stronger dreams as well. After the chefs came Smith&West. Smith&West while not a child, being of advanced age, he is an amazing mechanic and a very beloved member of the crew. He is, of course a part of the maintenance crew. Laurie was next. A little girl alone in the world, found when Lowell made a stop in frozen country. She is a part of the clean-up crew. After her Lowell took on lot more children left abandon by the world. Lulu, Shawn, Kyle, Felix, Olivia, and Matilde made up the rest of the clean-up. Cheryl and twins Paul and Penelope make up the Inventory/Ordering crew. They are in need of assistance. Jackie, a rough never-do-well, brought on by Old Sister, who sees great potential is a part of the maintenance crew. Jackie has been quite the handful. Also, on the maintenance crew are Manon and Otis.

They last two children who decided live on Lowell O'well are the brother Etori: Luc, age 10 and older brother Lyle, age 14. Luc is the finally member of the maintenance crew, while Lyle helps Old Sister with navigation. Luc is very fond of his brother and when not on duty is usually found by his side. Lyle is a very bold young man and diligent worker; however he has a tendency to make poor decisions, usually when alongside Jackie and Zack.

Everyone pulls their weight on the ship and because of this Lowell seems to have self sustaining economy, however this is not the case. To keep this dream alive the Engineer and Old Sister take on odd jobs for money. Some are very simple, yet others are very dangerous. The two put the safety and welfare of the children above all else, but there are times when danger cannot be avoided. And even rarely are times when less lucrative jobs are giving to them—or forced upon them. Lowell O'well as a ship may have a childish appearance, being in the shape of a giant flying whale, but it is in fact outfitted with many cannons. For defense. There have been time when Lowell has needed to battle and has been in many dire situations, but so far it has always completed every job given, won every battle, and has never seen a casualty.

Lowell O'well and its denizens fly through the endless sky with no destination in sight, but future ahead. Here, everyone has a place. The children can see their dreams come true, Old Sister pleased in knowing her own dream was a success, and the Engineer knowing no longer felt was fear or anger—happy to be family and useful to all here. Lowell O'well gives off a might roar as flies onward to a beautiful tomorrow.