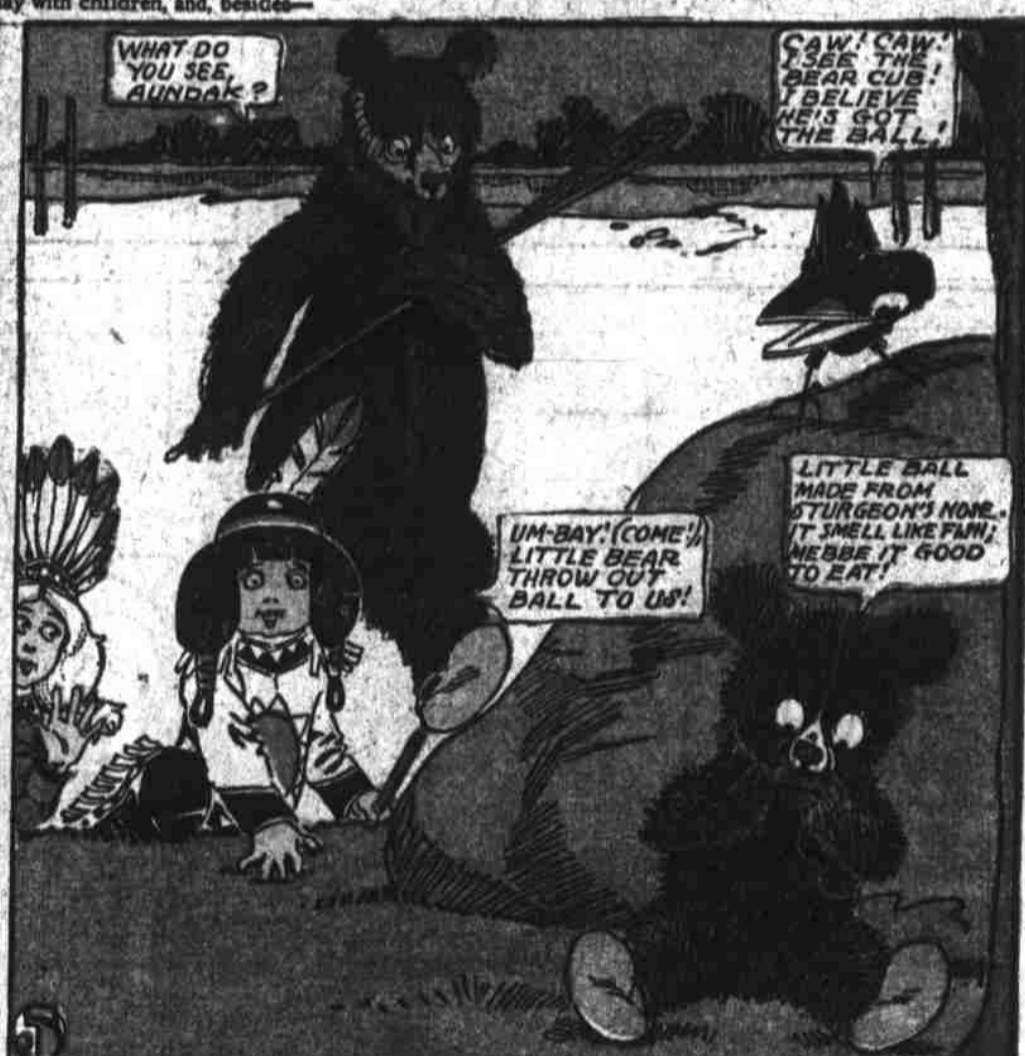


# LITTLE GROWLING BIRD IN WINDEGO LAND



One day Nokomis and Big Bear left the Summer Camp by the shore and went back to the Home Wigwam in the woods. Nokomis told the children to stay close to the Camp and, when she and Big Bear returned, they would bring them some things with which they could play a new game. Of course, they wondered what the new playthings would be, but when the "big folks" returned, the children were told to wait until morning, when the game would be explained to them. After breakfast was over, Big Bear went behind the Smoke Lodge and brought forth some queer-looking sticks with ends bent in a kind of loop which was criss-crossed by a net of deer sinews. He told them how Nokomis and he had steamed and bent the sticks, and used the webs of some old snowshoes to make these "racquets," which they would use in playing Bah-gaw-ud-oway, the REAL Indian Game of Ball!

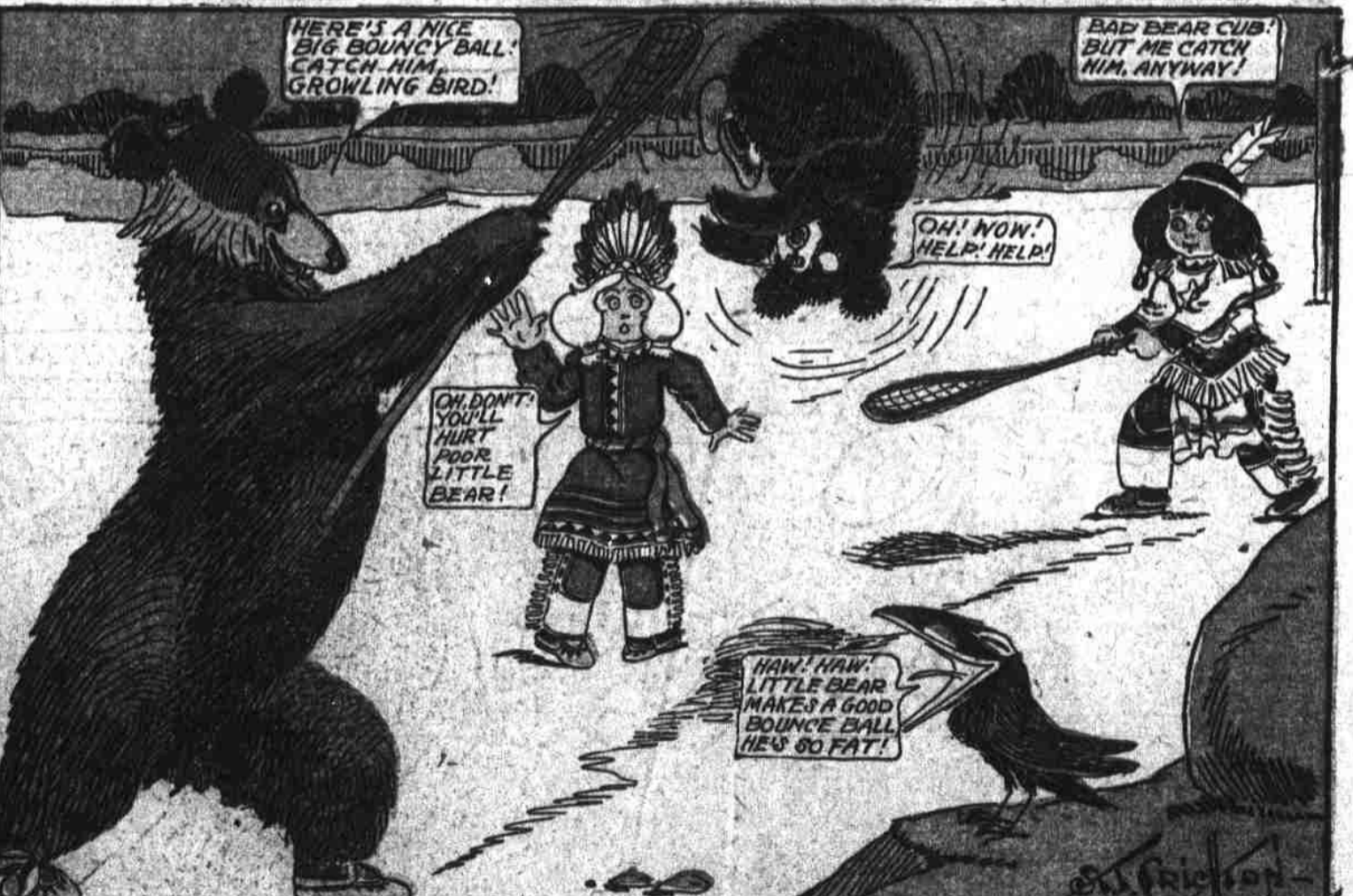
Aundak, the Crow, hunted around until he found the ball they had used when playing the "One Hunk" ball game, some time before, and brought it to them in his beak. Big Bear set up two poles, about six feet apart, at both ends of the ball ground, to be used as goals. He explained that the object of the game was to catch up the ball in the netted end of the stick and try to throw or carry it between the goal-posts of the opposing side, but that they must not touch the ball with their hands unless it fell into a small hole where the racquet could not reach it. There are usually twelve players on each side in this game, but, of course, they had to get along with less. So Big Bear offered to play alone against both children and Little Bear, too. But the Bear Cub said he didn't want to play AT ALL! He said he was too strong to play with children, and, besides—



Little Bear remembered the severe whipping Big Bear gave him for "rough play" in the other game of ball. He just shuffled off toward the edge of the woods, saying that he was going to take a little nap, so they had to begin the game without him. Big Bear made the first throw and, because he didn't aim quite right, the ball went wide and flew whizzing through the air in the direction of the Big Rock behind which the Cub had gone to take his little nap. Both the children and Aundak watched its flight and raced after it, each trying to reach the ball first and throw it toward Big Bear's goal.

The ball struck the trunk of a tree just behind the Big Rock and, glancing downward, hit the ground right in front of Little Bear's nose. The Cub was peacefully snoring away and dreaming of a whole wigwam filled with things he liked to eat, when the thump of the ball on the ground woke him up. When he saw the play ball bouncing up and down the thought came to him that it would be a great joke on the children to hide the ball so they could not go on with their game. So he reached out quickly and grabbed it before it could roll away.

meanwhile, the children and Aundak looked everywhere for the ball, but in vain. Then Big Bear came up and suggested that it might have fallen on top of the bank, and to look behind the Big Rock. Aundak flew to the top and saw the Cub holding something in his paws and chewing it. It looked like the lost ball! Now this ball was the one made from the gristle taken from the nose of Nah-may, the Great Sturgeon, which Growing Bird had wrapped all around with string; and Little Bear, of course, had to sniff at it before hiding it away. It smelled fishy, so he thought he'd just hide it INSIDE himself!



As the Cub began to chew the ball he saw that the string wrapping was loose, but, before he could unwind it all, Aundak had "hold on him," and Growing Bird began to climb the bank to take it away from him. He knew he'd be caught, so he just belted it right down, swallowing it, string and all, at ONE GULP! He tried to look very innocent when the little boy appeared, but there was a yard of string hanging out of his mouth and that convicted him. Growing Bird tried to pull the ball out, but the string broke—and that was the last any one saw of the Sturgeon-Nose Ball!!! Little Bear then pretended that he didn't KNOW it was their play ball. He said he thought it was a FISH-BALL (from the smell), else he never would have eaten it—OH, NO INDEED! But no one believed a word of it—not even sneaky Little Yellow Hair!

Big Bear was just about to beat him when he thought of a more fitting punishment. "We'll just use HIM for the ball!" he said. He soon dragged the squealing Cub back to the ball ground and, putting his racquet under him, heaved him up in the air like a big, black football! Growing Bird tried to catch him in the net of his stick (to break his fall), but the Cub was too fat and heavy. He got an awful bump when he struck the ground; but, before Big Bear could reach him to give him another toe, he scrambled to his feet and ran to the Camp, where he hid the rest of the day! That is what happened when Big Bear tried to teach the children to play Bah-gaw-ud-oway, the Indian Game of Ball! The Palefaces play it now, but they call it "Lacrosse," and, of course, THEY have never seen a fat Bear Cub used as the ball! That could happen only in WINDEGO LAND, you know!