

OUT OF THE PICTURE

BY RALPH WATSON

Ma, sitting at the front window in the gathering dusk, peered out in amazement at the antics of her lifetime trouble who was ambling up the walk, his face expanded in a wide-mouthed grin, while loud guffaws smote the silent twilight.

"Haw!" he chorused, as he tumbled into the room. "Haw!" he repeated, as he cast his hat toward the hatrack in the corner. "Haw!" he gurgled, as he slumped into the first convenient chair and rocked back and forth with his hands clasped across his stomach.

"What on earth's the matter?" Ma demanded in much concern. "Are you choking on something?"

"Haw!" T. Paer exploded, tears in his eyes. "I'm chokin' to laugh. Oh, goah, my sides ache!"

"Have you got the hysterics?" Ma asked, ironically, "or is it a laughing jag?"

"I ain't got 'em," T. Paer groaned, "but George has. Golly, Moses, but he's mad!"

"Well, I must say," Ma retorted; "what's so funny about that?"

"George's busted his record," T. Paer chuckled. "He got pinched out'n the picture 'nd the parade."

"What picture 'nd what parade?" Ma demanded. "Stop your foolishness 'nd talk sense."

"Polly was tellin' me about it just now," T. Paer explained. "She's about as mad as George is, 'nd I don't think they'll ever recover."

"I don't get it," Ma told him. "What's all the fuss about?"

"I'm tellin' you," T. Paer answered. "You know George was supposed to ride up to the head of the parade with Marshal Foch 'nd Gen. O'Leary 'nd General White the other day when they had the big doin's."

"Yes," Ma said, uncertainly; "but what of that?"

"Well, he didn't," T. Paer chortled. "He went down to the depot 'nd got up close to Marshal Foch's private car, 'nd got his speech all ready, 'nd all posed, 'nd everything 'nd then Foch come through a side gate 'nd nobody told George anything about it."

"Why, that's too bad," Ma said sympathetically. "What'd George do then?"

"Well," T. Paer chuckled, "when George heard the band playin' out in front 'nd the people all hollerin' he climbed over a blind baggage 'nd beat it out there."

"He must have looked funny shinin' over the car," Ma smiled. "That wasn't very dignified for a mayor to do."

"It was up to him or get left," T. Paer responded, "but that wasn't all of it."

BRINGING UP FATHER

KRAZY KAT

ABIE THE AGENT

BURGESS' BEDTIME STORIES

The Craft of Buster Bear

When there is something you can't do, let those who can do it for you.

—Buster Bear.

A WISE head has Buster Bear on his big shoulders. He knows full well what he can do and what he cannot do, and it is seldom that he wastes time trying to do a thing that it is at all doubtful that he can do.

When Buster discovered those sleeping Geese in the pond of Paddy the Beaver, he understood at once what had brought Yowler the Bob Cat over there that night. He knew all about Yowler and his ways. He knew that Yowler had far more patience than he had. He knew that Yowler would watch hours at a time to catch a good dinner.

The scent of those Geese made Buster's mouth water just as it had the mouths of Yowler and Old Man Coyote and Reddy and Mrs. Fox and old Granby Fox. He wanted one of them. He wanted one of them very much indeed. But he knew that his chances of catching one were not nearly as good as the chances of Yowler the Bob Cat. Buster can move quickly when he wants to, but Yowler can move much more quickly.

Buster's small eyes twinkled shrewdly as he stood up to look over the pond, and in the moonlight saw those big birds sleeping. "They are safe enough where they are now," thought he. "There will be no chance to catch one unless they drift in close to shore. Even then it will take some one who can spring swiftly. Yowler can do just that. He is the one to catch one of those Geese. I'll leave it for him to do. I'll pretend to go off and then he'll come down from that tree and watch those Geese. If he catches one I'll have a good dinner with no trouble at all; I'll simply take that Goose away from Yowler."

Buster chuckled to himself, sniffed once or twice, then dropped down to all four and shuffled away through the woods. He didn't take any pains not to make a noise. Honker the Goose heard him, for Honker is a light sleeper. He awoke and listened for a few minutes. He knew by the sound that whoever had been there was going away. He looked his flock over and saw that all were there. Then he went to sleep again, satisfied that no harm could reach any of them out there in the water.

Yowler the Bob Cat heard Buster leave. He listened sharply as the sound of Buster's shuffling feet grew fainter and fainter and finally ceased. Then Yowler came down from the tree he had climbed at Buster's approach. He snarled under his breath as he glanced in the direction in which Buster had disappeared. Then he turned his attention to those Geese and in a few minutes had forgotten Buster Bear and everything else. You see, it seemed to him that the nearest Goose was drifting in a little. Yowler crouched flat and prepared for a long, patient wait.

Meanwhile Buster Bear had gone off about other business. "It will be a long time before any of those Geese come in near enough to be caught," he muttered. "Yes, sir, it will be a long time. I'll have plenty of time to get a lunch of acorns."

So Buster hunted up some acorns and had a very good lunch. After this he silently stole back toward the pond of Paddy the Beaver. You know, he can move very quickly indeed when he wants to. Some little distance back from the pond Buster stopped. He didn't want Yowler to suspect he was about. He knew that if Yowler should catch one of those Geese he could not carry such a great, heavy bird far or fast and there would be no trouble in catching up with Yowler and taking that Goose from him.

A crafty old fellow is Buster Bear. (Copyright, 1931, by T. W. Burgess.)

The next story: "The Watchman's Alarm."

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Gritty Woman Kills Bandit Who Demands Money and Jewelry

Los Angeles, Cal., Dec. 6.—(U. P.)—Whipping out two revolvers when an alleged black hand agent demanded of her \$500 and all her jewelry, Mrs. Esther Albano, 42, of 544 East Thirty-sixth street, emptied the revolvers in the man's body and killed him.

The dead man is said to have been Frank Humphrey, formerly a partner of her husband, Angelo Albano. Albano disappeared November 27.