● SERIAL STORY

FRANTIC FESTIVAL

BY EDMUND FANCOTT

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CHAPTER IX

MYRA returned to the kitchen, where she had been distracting Beano with freshly baked mince pies for which she had discovered he had a weakness and a great capacity.

"Funny," she said. "People phoning from Montreal all this way for nothing"

"Yeah," replied Beano with a pie in each hand.

"There's a cup of coffee on the stove to wash it down," said Myra.

"A guy gets hungry up in this snow," said Beano.

"Lots of ice here later on," said Myra.

"I'll bet," said Beano.

"Cold stuff, ice," said Myra.

"Yeah."

"Funny how you read about hot ice."

"Yeah, in books."

"Sure, in books," echoed Myra. "You read books?"

"Not with hot ice in 'em." Then Beano laughed at what he thought was his own private joke. He did not realize Myra was sharing it.

"Funny how wrong calls come through. That was from a man called Ridley. Ever hear of him?"

Beano shook his head. It obviously didn't register.

"Said he was from the National Insurance Company."

Beano dropped the mince pie straight in his coffee, then picked it out as it disintegrated in his fingers.

"What was that," he asked hoarsely.

"National Insurance Company. That's the limit, trying to sell insurance on Christmas Eve."

"Selling insurance. You sure of that?"

"Maybe he wanted to buy some ice." She said it casually, pretending not to look at Beano, but she saw from the corners of her eyes that his face took on an expression of a deflated balloon.

"You said ice. Did he say that?"

"Sure, he didn't. I was kidding. Let's join the others." She left him, but Beano stayed. She was sure now, and she was also sure she held more strings of the developing climax than even Benny or Beano.

Beano stayed behind in the kitchen, suddenly smitten with a sense of great tragedy. Here he was at the peak of his life, with wealth and, what is more, the love of a good woman and he could feel the pursuit at his heels. He was torn with anguish. Just as he was about to go straight for the rest of his life with the most beautiful girl in the world as his own, he was about to be trapped.

Beano McCluskey had to get rid of that ice quickly. After all, if he didn't have it they couldn't pin anything on him. So Beano reasoned, and he figured that if Leona had half of it she might as well have the other half.

He could leave it in her room when nobody was looking, in some of that fancy paper they were wrapping the kids' presents in, a little something from you know who and don't let anyone know you've got it, it's hot.

On second thought it would be better not to let her know it was hot.

At that moment Benny slipped into the kitchen with a swift look behind him to see no one else was following.

"Hya Beano, studying housekeeping?"

"Just looking around."

"Around what?"

"Around the kitchen," said Beano. "Nice kitchen."

"Yeah, clean. Nice mince pies, have one?"

"No thanks, Benny."

"Don't thank me. What are these? Huh-huh, sausage rolls, what do you think of that? Nice too, have one?"

"No thanks, Benny."

"Don't thank me, pass me that plate of cookies, have one, no?"

"No thanks, Benny."

"No thanks. Someone been teaching you manners? Wouldn't be Leona, would it?"

"Them's natural."

"I see you been teaching her a few things."

"Gee, she learns quick." There was a touch of reverence in Beano's voice.

"Them kind do. What you teaching her?"

"Same as I'm learning, anatomy."

"She's got enough already. You wouldn't be teaching her anything else, would you? Nothing to do with ice?"

"Ice?" said Beano trying to think quickly but without much success.

"Yeah, ice?"

"Didn't you say you didn't want nothing to do wid dat ice?"

"Sure I said it, but I'd kind of like to keep track of it, just to see it didn't get you into trouble. Not that I'd touch it."

"I knew you wouldn't Benny," Beano looked round like a trapped animal looking for some way of escape from a trap.

"I've been thinking it over after what you said, Benny, the other day, and I figured out you was right."

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"WHAT do you mean, I was right?"

"You and me have always been straight and that ice ain't for us, not even if it costs us five grand."

"Say, you ain't losing your grip are you?"

"No, Benny. But I was thinking, being up here and New Year's coming soon we ought to turn over a new leaf."

"Go on," said Benny dangerously.

"Well, so I figured I ought to get rid of it, give it to someone who could use it and not know it was hot."

"Leona?" said Benny, letting each syllable fall with a slow motion.

"That's it," said Beano. "She's a good girl, she is. She can take care of it until they stop chasing me and then maybe we can come and see you when we're married and maybe if you've got a show . . ."

The pin points of Benny's eyes held him transfixed. Beano ran his finger round the band of his collar nervously.

"You see, Benny, there's some dick's coming after us."

"What?" Benny swallowed a mouthful of cookies and held his throat for a moment with the pain of swallowing too much at once. The delay gave Beano a moment to realize that for once he had Benny on the run.

"Sure, you heard that telephone just now. It was the dicks from the National Insurance Company."

Benny's face went white. Then gradually the color came back. He took another mince pie and became normal once more.

"Well, I told you so. I told you I'd have nothing to do with it and now look what you've got yourself into. If I was you I'd beat it, take the car and beat it right now, take her with you for all I care, and if you get twenty years in the pen don't tell 'em you know me and I'll have something nice lined up for you when you get out, and Leona too. That's more than the Maxos would do for you."

"Thanks, Benny, you mean get out now?"

"Sure, beat it, go north. If you go straight up north from here you get to the North Pole and they'd never think of looking for you there."

"I ain't going!" A stubborn sullen tone in Beano's voice jerked Benny with surprise.

(To Be Continued)

HOLD EVERYTHING!

"Hey, you, cut out whistling at all the WAVES!"

Pennsylvania man left a large share of his estate to his lawyer. Maybe he figured to save his relatives a lot of trouble.

Now, more than ever, road hogs who run wild ought to be hog-tied!

The only place it is patriotic to exceed the speed limit is on the road to success—at your work!

Champ boxer of an Illinois town was blackjacked by a robber. No chance to defend his crown.

If it's a "frozen" article you need, advertise for a used one in the classified

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

ANSWER: New Zealand.

TURKISH STATESMAN

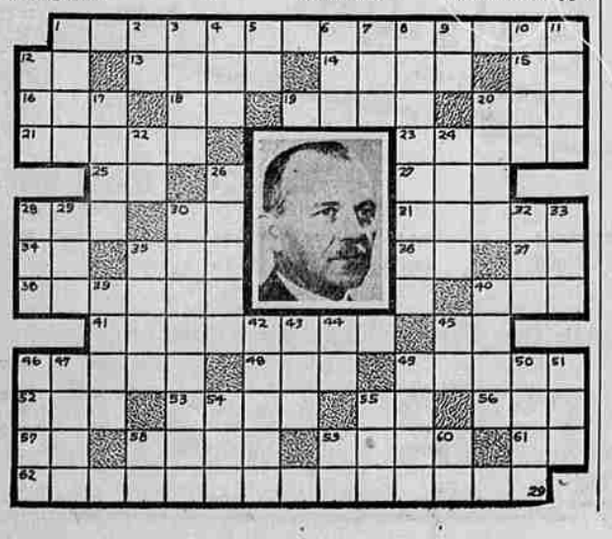
HORIZONTAL

1 Pictured Turkish statesman, ——-——.
12 Ells English (abbr.).
13 Headstrong.
14 Ages.
15 Symbol for erbium.
16 Swiss river.
18 Iron (symbol).
19 Roman road.
20 Collection of facts.
21 Peculiarity.
23 Repulse.
25 Leave.
27 Anger.
28 Dutch city.
30 South latitude (abbr.).
31 German city.
34 International language.
35 Article.
36 Music note.
37 Decigram.
38 County in Arizona.
40 Mass of butter
41 Tea container.
45 Negative.
46 Entity.
48 Triumphed.
49 Defect.
52 Office of Civilian Defense (abbr.)
53 One who inherits.
55 Pair (abbr.).
56 River (Sp.).
57 Lira (abbr.).
58 Boat paddles.
59 Let fall.
61 Any.
62 He is the —— -.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

VERTICAL

1 Scorch.
2 Symbol for krypton.
3 Float.
4 Employ.
5 Be quiet!
6 Soap hemp.
7 Exist.
8 Messengers.
9 Bone.
10 Smooth.
11 Russian mountains.
12 Consume.
17 Fury.
20 Mimics.
22 Type of moth.
24 Gaelic.
26 Fragrant oleoresin.
28 Work unit.
29 Drone bee.
30 Chinese city.
32 Note in Guido's scale.
33 Louse egg.
35 Preposition.
39 Sour.
40 Gush.
42 West African mortar.
43 Scottish burial mound.
44 Chief priest of a shrine (Babylon.).
45 Symbol for sodium.
46 Sift.
47 Beige.
49 Out of.
50 Prevaricator.
51 2000 pounds.
54 Bitter vetch.
55 Before (prefix).
58 All right (colloq.).
59 Doctor (abbr.)
60 Jumbled type.



Out Our Way
By J. R. Williams

Our Boarding House
With Major Hoople

Red Ryder

By Fred Harmon

Little Orphan Annie

By Harold Gray

Freckles and His Friends

By Blosser

Wash Tubbs

By Crane

Boots and Her Buddies

By Martin

Alley Oop

By V. T. Hamlin