

● SERIAL STORY

FRANTIC FESTIVAL

BY EDMUND FANCOTT

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CHAPTER X

"NOT going?"
"No."
"You're staying?"
"Yeah."
"You're crazy."
"I ain't crazy."
"Then why are you staying?"
"We're having a Christmas party."

"And you're Santa Claus."
Beano was stubborn. "When I was a kid I never had fun at Christmas time. Now I can help these kids to have a good time and I'm not going to spoil their party. Besides, there's a turkey in there as big as an ostrich, and I don't want to miss that turkey dinner."

"Not if it costs you 20 years in the pen!"
"I'll beat it after dinner, not before."

"You'll beat it with a pair of cuff links on your wrists that won't come off till they unlock them."

Beano's jaw set like a rock and Benny shrugged his shoulders. He had seen Beano like that before and knew he was beyond the influence of sweet reason.

He shrugged his shoulders again, took another mince pie and went to join the others. He was not any too happy about the situation.

Benny returned to the wide living room of the lounge where a cheerful fire was blazing in the stone fireplace.

The Christmas tree was gay with color and sparkling with tinsel. Everybody had been so busy that no one had noticed his absence. He joined Ross Benson, who was taking a moment off while Fay went disentangling some problem with Myra.

"Nice girl you got." His eyes watched Fay.

"She's not my girl," said Ross.

"That's right," said Benny.

"Keep away from them."

"Not me," said Ross. "I love 'em."

"Wait till you get older," said Benny. There was a warning note in his voice.

"Nothing doing," said Ross.

"You're only young twice and the second time it's too late."

"Well, if you must, pick 'em like that." He nodded towards Fay.

"Now that's a nice kid. Too skinny for my taste but look at that smile, all over her face, but it's the genuine thing. Get her and you keep her."

"I'm not playing for keeps."

Benny drifted over to Fay and Myra. Myra noted the slight uneasiness that dampened his usual assurance.

"Feeling good, Benny?"

"Sure, I am, but them kids won't if they're going to eat all that stuff in the kitchen."

Meanwhile Beano was thinking hard. You couldn't trust anyone in these days, least of all a pair of dicks whose job was to recover the diamonds to save their company paying out a heavy sum for insurance. Guys that would choose a time like Christmas to chase other guys who hadn't really done anything wrong couldn't be trusted to understand how innocent a guy really was. But if they couldn't find the ice they couldn't pin anything on him unless Benny was playing ball with them for the reward for recovery.

BEANO felt alone and deserted.

At least Leona was faithful. Absentmindedly he hitched a leg up and half sat on the table.

Then a sudden inspiration hit him. The Christmas tree! If he went up to Leona's room and got the rest of the ice he could put it all together in the leather pouch and wrap it up in some red paper. He could label it, "To Leona, with all my love, from you know who," and hang it on the tree.

They wouldn't be giving the presents until after the turkey dinner. He could tell Leona so the wouldn't open it. He'd have to be Santa Claus again to make sure nothing went wrong. Then if the dicks did come before he got away they could search the house from top to bottom and they wouldn't find a thing. Who would think of searching a Christmas tree for hot ice?

The more he thought of it the better he liked the idea.

A little later he was bending somewhere around the back of the tree. Myra strolled round to him.

"Don't tell anyone I told you," she said, "but it looks to me as if you've been sitting in something."

Beano's hand went around to his seat and came away quickly.

"Mincemeat," he said. "Must have sat on some pies in the kitchen."

"Seems like it," said Myra.

"They're so soft you'd hardly notice it."

"Yeah," said Beano. "I thought it was warm."

"Just out of the oven. It's hard to carry them that way. Here's

some paper to wrap them up in."

She handed him a sheet of paper with bells and holly on it.

"Hold this a moment," said Beano. "I'll go and fix myself."

He handed her a small packet. It was labeled "To Leona with all my love from you know who."

She held it, waiting for him to return, wondering to what depths Beano had been smitten by the sultry beauty of Leona. She turned the little parcel over in her hands and something of the shape of the diamonds inside came through to her touch.

He pressed a little harder, letting her fingers follow the hardness and feeling the stones move under her touch.

Then Beano was back, taking the little parcel from her. He tied it carefully well up in the back of the tree and smiled with a satisfaction that confirmed Myra's suspicions.

Then she noticed that he was with Leona, nodding at the tree and going into an involved explanation. Leona chewed candy as he talked and gave no hint that her peace of mind was in any way disturbed.

That night, Leona sat up in bed late to make up her beauty sleep and to plan her future. It seemed mainly to consist in convincing her father that Beano was a gentleman with means of his own that could be split with the family if her father was insistent. She would also have to convince her father that Beano's intentions were honest and that it would pay better than her new job as an artist's model.

After deciding her course of action with her difficult parent she began to dream of her touseau.

As far as she was concerned, careers for girls were very much overrated. Her ideal of a life was to be left alone most of the day

in an apartment of her own with all the movie magazines and a box of chocolates, and a husband to come home at night and take her to a show.

(To Be Continued)

Tear fluid is an exceedingly powerful destroyer of bacteria, according to the discoveries of an English biologist.

The tongue yields approximately 8 per cent of the oil extracted from each whale.

There are 317,000 licensed dogs in New York City.

Florence Nightingale was born May 15, 1820.

CREDIT WITH THE CONVENIENCE OF CASH



PURCHASE COUPONS

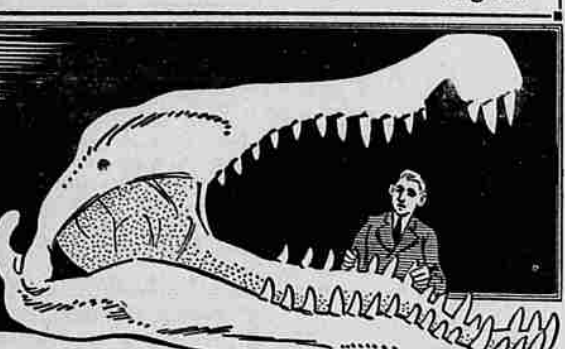
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THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ALLIGATORS
WITH SKULLS MORE THAN SIX FEET LONG
ONCE LIVED IN TEXAS! THE FOSSIL SKULL
OF ONE HAS BEEN RESTORED.

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QUOTE UNQUOTE
"TALL BANK TELLERS ARE SOMETIMES SHORT," Says
WALT SANDBERG,
Negaunee, Michigan.



FROM GIBRALTAR TO THE
SUEZ CANAL BY WAY OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN
IS ABOUT THE SAME DISTANCE
AS NEW YORK CITY IS
FROM SAN DIEGO,
CALIFORNIA.

T. M. REG. U. S. PAT. OFF. 12-30

MOVIE ACTOR

HORIZONTAL Answer to Previous Puzzle

1. Pictured movie actor.
- 12 Part of "be."
- 13 Short for Melvin.
- 14 Neckwear.
- 15 Negative word.
- 16 Nothing.
- 18 Is (Latin).
- 20 Encountered.
- 22 Small lump.
- 24 Cultivate.
- 26 Age.
- 28 Sun god.
- 30 Music note.
- 31 Reseach.
- 33 Sleeping.
- 37 Near.
- 39 Insect.
- 40 Complete.
- 42 Sun.
- 44 Child.
- 46 Pastry.
- 47 Sheltered side.
- 49 2000 pounds.
- 51 Postmaster (abbr.).
- 52 He played the 78 Rules.
- 21 Malayan coin.
- 23 Become.
- 25 Us.
- 27 Head (slang).
- 29 Too.
- 32 Airtform fuel.
- 34 Steep flax.
- 35 Solid food.
- 36 Spinning toy.
- 38 Weight of India.
- 41 Pinch.
- 43 Hawaiian wreath.
- 45 Speck.
- 48 Abstract being.
- 50 Small horse.
- 52 Total.
- 53 Craggy hill.
- 55 Insane.
- 57 Animal.
- 59 Part of body.
- 60 Talents.
- 62 Prong.
- 63 Since.
- 65 Bustle.
- 66 Friend.
- 68 Expire.
- 71 Upon.
- 73 Mother.
- 75 Symbol for lithium.

VERTICAL

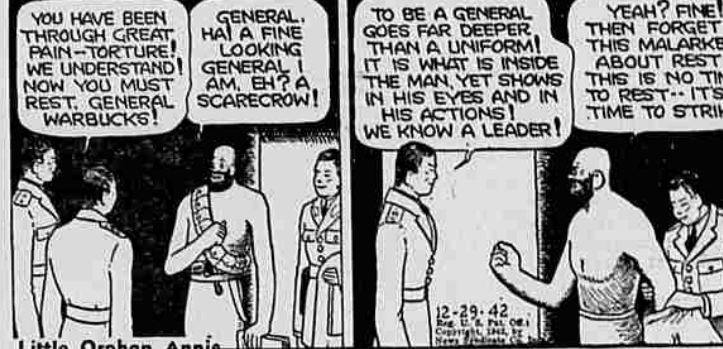
1. Company.
- 2 Prince.
- 3 Ream (abbr.).
- 4 Driving order.
- 5 Otherwise.
- 6 Street (abbr.).
- 7 Endeavor.
- 8 Born.
- 9 Half an em.
- 10 Wand.
- 11 He is a screen.
- 17 Throw slowly.
- 19 Fox.
- 20 motion pictures.
- 24 Beeset.
- 26 Weep.
- 28 Festival.
- 30 Health resort.
- 32 Geographical drawing.
- 34 Color.
- 36 Trick.
- 38 Self.
- 40 Water barrier.
- 42 Be sick.
- 44 Venetian boat.
- 46 That one.
- 48 Rules.



CLEANING POWDER Out Our Way By J. R. Williams



Red Ryder



Little Orphan Annie



Freckles and His Friends



Wash Tubbs



Boots and Her Buddies



Alley Oop



Our Boarding House With Major Hoople



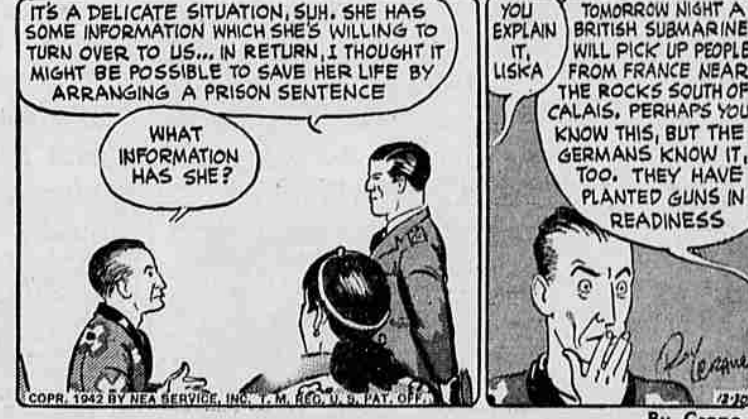
By Fred Harmon



By Harold Gray



By Blosser



By Crane



By Martin



By V. T. Hamlin