

BURGESS BEDTIME STORIES

By Thornton W. Burgess

SISTER HOOTY'S DREADFUL TIME

The heartless traps with jaws of steel
Cure naught for what their captives feel.
—Old Mother Nature.

Of course they care nothing for the feelings of their victims. It is because they are truly heartless and have no feeling whatever themselves. They are not to blame for the frightful suffering they cause. It is wholly on the ones who set them that the blame rests.

Sister Hooty, young daughter of Hooty and Mrs. Hooty, suggest Owl in the Green Forest, was in frightful trouble, perhaps the most frightful trouble she could possibly get into. She was hanging head down from the top of a telephone pole flapping her great wings helplessly, one leg aching terribly from the relentless biting grip of merciless steel jaws that held her prisoner, and suffering even more from the desperation of terrible fright. She was caught by one leg in a steel trap.



She was hanging head down from the top of a telephone pole.

It would have been too dreadful had she known that it was the result of doing something that she shouldn't have done. But she did not know this. She knew of nothing she had done that she hadn't a perfect right to do. For over a week she had been living high on stolen Chickens. But she didn't know that she had stolen the Chickens. To her they had been just birds, and birds were her rightful food when she could catch them. In this respect those Chickens were no different from other birds. Under the rule of Old Mother Nature she was supposed to eat birds if she could catch them and this was all she had done.

Nor had she been careless, not really careless. She had sat on the top of that telephone pole a number of times and nothing had happened to her. Even if she saw that trap on top of the pole it meant nothing more to her than something perhaps to be kicked off of the way. She never had seen a

trap before. It meant nothing to her. She saw nothing whatever to be afraid of. Indeed, she didn't know what real fear was. You see, since she had left home she had lived until now wholly in the Green Forest, and there she never had had any fright.

So when she started to light on top of that pole, just as she had done several times before, something terrible seemed to leap up and grab her by one leg with a grip that felt as if that leg was being bitten right off, the unexpectedness of it added to the natural fright.

Of course she instantly began beating the air with her great wings to fly away from this terrible thing. The first two or three strokes lifted her only a couple of feet when she was stopped with a terrible yank and fell helplessly so that she hung head down against the pole a little below the top. That trap was fastened by a chain to the top of the pole.

Poor Sister Hooty! The jaws of that trap hurt her leg dreadfully, but her fright, so great that it was truly terror, was worse than the pain. In fact it was so great that for the time being she hardly felt the pain. It was all the greater because she didn't understand it in the least. It was something unknown, and more dreadful because of this.

For a while she flapped and flapped her big wings, beating them against the pole, hurting them but not minding it. Then she hung helpless, the leg held in the dreadful steel jaws of the trap stretched until it seemed as if it would be pulled off. You see the whole weight of her body was pulling on that leg except when she could lift herself a little with her wings. Down below the Chickens ran a-bout wildly frightened by this strange flapping thing above them. No harm coming to them, they quieted down after a while. A Crow flying over discovered Sister Hooty and soon all of his flock were flying about poor Sister Hooty, cawing as only excited Crows can, threatening to do dreadful things to her but not quite daring to touch her because of the strangeness of her trouble. Not one was sorry for her. The Crows were terribly afraid of big Owl's hunting at night. They hate them, for fear is the father of hate. Poor poor Sister Hooty. She couldn't know that a friend was coming.

BIGGIN HILL, England — (CP) Reverend Vivian Symonds bought a church 14 miles away in Surrey and hopes to move it to this Kent town, brick by brick. The vicar has asked his parishioners to help.

Contract Bridge

By Josephine Culbertson

"PLACING" THE CONTRACT

On the surface it would seem that North should have become declarer in the following deal, since East's spade lead would then have gone up to the A-Q-J. Superficial analysis, however, is often wrong!

North dealer.
North-South vulnerable

♠	A Q J	♠	K 10 9 8
♥	10	♥	K Q 6
♦	Q 10 9 4 3 2	♦	K 10 9 8
♣	2	♣	6 4
			W N E
			♠ 6 4
			♥ Q 8
			♦ J 7
			♣ A 8 8
			♠ 8 5
			♥ A K 6 4 7
			♦ A 10 9
			♣ J 7 5

The bidding:
North East South West
1 ♠ 1 ♠ 2 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 3 N 7 Pass
Pass Pass

West, led the spade three, dummy played the jack. East won with the king—and right there the defence collapsed.

Discussing the bidding, North said that perhaps he should have bid the notrump first, over South's two hearts, but he had not felt strong enough for that action. "Anyway," he concluded to South, "you caught on, from my spade bid, that I had good control of the suit, so it worked out just as well."

This was a decided understatement of North's part! The roundabout (and questionable) bidding worked out much better than if North had become declarer! Observe what would have happened if North had been declarer at three notrump, with East's spade lead coming up to his A-Q-J. The Jack would win, but when North made the necessary try for club tricks, East would win with the blank king and return a spade through the A-Q. East's suit would be established before declarer could make even one club trick, and the contract would be doomed.

In the final analysis, however, the placing of the contract would have been unimportant if East had defended properly! He should not have covered the spade jack at the first trick! Now the play would proceed exactly as though North had been declarer! Again West would take his side's first club trick, and again he would lead his second spade through dummy. The only virtue in South's being declarer was that it gave East the chance to go astray.

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KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED

By Zeno Grey



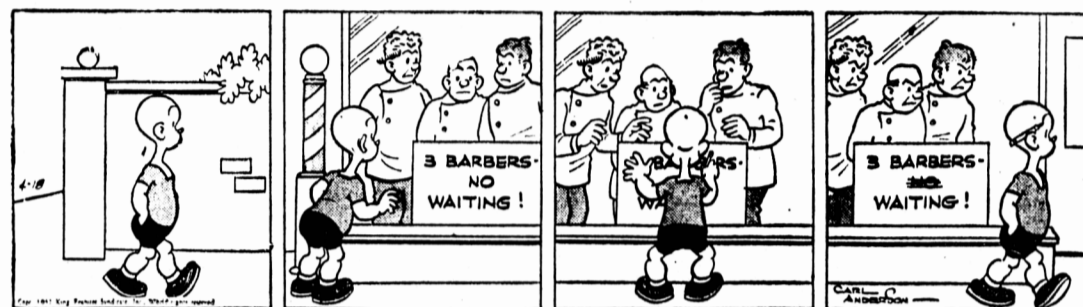
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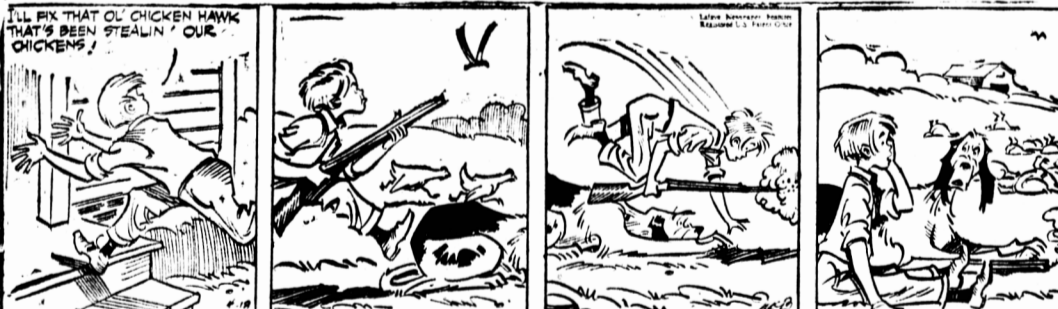
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By Clifford McBride



LIL ABNER

By Al Capp



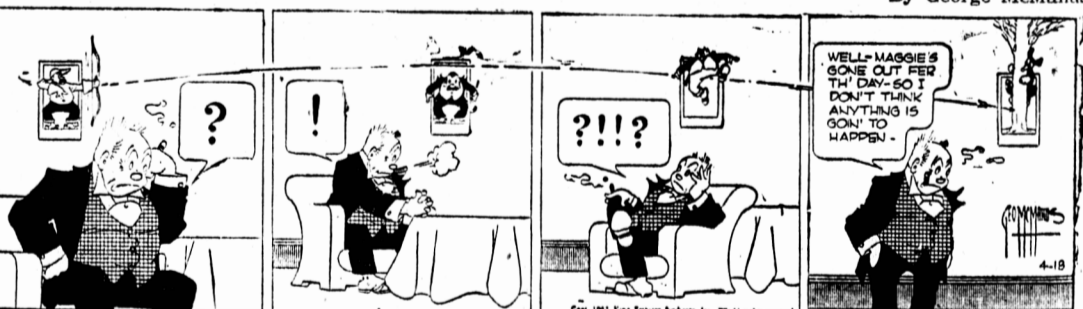
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