

COMET

26
BOUATTO

No. 132
(New Series)
Jan. 27, 1951

COMIC 2P
EVERY THURSDAY

This
Grand
Book
offered to every
reader of
COMET
COMIC



Kit Carson's
AUTOGRAPH
BOOK
of
COWBOY
HEROES
Specialty Produced for Readers
of COMET COMIC

SEE
PAGE
7

POOCHIE

FROM LORD YEWLESS'S BUTLER

Dear Poochie I am unable to buttle owing to butlers bunions - so will you take my place for today, as Lord Yewless is useless without a butler. Yours Truly, Butling P.S. Her bad tempered.

BAH! HOW DARE MY BUTLER GET BUNIONS WITHOUT ASKING ME! - AND THEN SEND A LITTLE PUP LIKE YOU TO BUTTLE. STILL - YOU'LL HAVE TO DO SO PASS ME MY HAT

COME, COME, MY HAT

SNATCH

SPLIT! SPLIT! TCHAH! A FINE START! NOW PASS MY COAT AND LEMME GET AWAY FROM YOU!

WHERE ARE YOU? COME BACK! HOW DARE YOU WALK OFF IN THE MIDDLE OF YOUR DUTIES! WHERE ARE YOU?

TCH! COME OUT OF THERE AT ONCE!

ALLOW ME TO ASSIST YOU!

I THINK I'M SACKED! I'M OFF!

SHORTY

THE DEPUTY SHERIFF

GRAB THAT YOUNG IMP, SHORTY - HE'S BUST MY WINDOW!

I'LL GET HIM, SHERIFF.

S'CUSE ME!

GOT A MATCH, PARD?

BANK

DYNAMITE

KEEP THE BOY - CAN'T STOP.

GOT YOU IN THE END, MY LAD! SHORTY ALWAYS GETS HIS MAN! REMEMBER - NOBODY GETS AWAY WITH IT IN THIS TERRITORY!

DAD!

WELL - ALMOST NOBODY

BILLY BUNTER AND COKER'S CAKE

A Grand Story of the Chums of Greyfriars

By FRANK RICHARDS



Billy Bunter's Sister

BUZZZZZZ! Mr. Quelch laid down his pen, in his study at Greyfriars, and picked up the receiver of his telephone.

"Well?" he barked into the transmitter. "Is that Mr. Squelch?" came a squeaky feminine voice.

"What? What? Mr. Quelch speaking!" rapped the Remove master of Greyfriars. "Oh! I mean Quelch! Billy's form master?"

"Billy's!" repeated Mr. Quelch. He did not know any member of his form by the name of "Billy."

"Yes, Bessie speaking." "Bessie?" said Mr. Quelch, blankly. Quelch's feminine acquaintances were few and he did not remember a Bessie among them.

"Billy's sister," explained the squeaky voice from the other end.

"I think you must have the wrong number," said Mr. Quelch.

"No, I haven't, if you're Mr. Squelch—I mean Quelch! I want you to give Billy a message from me, please. Will you tell Billy that I'm coming over from Cliff House to see him this afternoon as it's a half-holiday. I don't want him to be gone out when I come, Mr. Squelch."

"Who is speaking?" hooted Mr. Quelch.

"Eh? I've told you, Bessie."

"Bessie who?" "Oh! Bessie Bunter. Please tell Billy that I'm coming over to see him and not to go out and that I will stay for tea in the study and—"

Mr. Quelch breathed hard and he breathed deep. He was a busy man. He had neither time nor inclination to convey messages from a junior girl at Cliff House School, to a junior boy at Greyfriars. He was about to tell Bessie Bunter so when he heard a startled squeak from the other end.

"Oh, dear! I—I wasn't using your telephone, Miss Bellow! I—I—I was only—"

Sudden silence. Mr. Quelch almost banged the receiver back on the hooks. Bessie Bunter, at the Cliff House end, had evidently been using her form mistress's telephone surreptitiously, and had been caught in the act.

Mr. Quelch picked up his pen again, frowning. Certainly he had no intention of passing on that message to a boy in his form. Only a member of the Bunter tribe could have supposed, for one moment, that a form master's telephone could be used for such frivolous purposes. And in fact, a few minutes later, Quelch, deep in his work, had totally forgotten the whole incident.

And so it happened that Billy Bunter of the Remove remained in ignorance of the fact that his sister Bessie was coming over that afternoon, happily expecting tea in the study!

"I SAY, you fellows! I want you to back me up."

Billy Bunter cornered the Famous Five in the quad that afternoon and made that announcement, blinking at them seriously through his big spectacles.

Harry Wharton and Co. smiled. They had no doubt of what was coming. Bunter had a hundred lines to write for Mr. Quelch. He had asked nearly every fellow in the Remove to help him out with them.

"Nothing doing, old fat man," said Harry Wharton.

"You'd better cut in and get your lines done, you lazy fat ass," said Johnny

Bull. "Quelch will give you a detention if you don't hand them in."

"Oh, blow the lines," said Bunter crossly. "I've got no time for lines now. 'Tain't the lines—I ain't going to ask you that again—I know you're too jolly selfish to do a chap's lines for him—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Tain't that," hooted Bunter. "It's that beast Coker! You know he smacked my head the other day—"

"Yes, you fat villain," said Frank Nugent, "and we know you pretended to have your eyes blacked to land Coker in a row—"

"Serve him jolly well right," snorted Bunter. "Only it didn't work! But I'm going to get even with Coker and I want you chaps to back me up."

"Hem!" said Bob Cherry. "What's the big idea?"

"There's a parcel for Coker in the lobby," said Bunter. "Coker don't know yet—he's gone out with Potter and Greene. Well, there's the parcel and I happen to know that there's a cake in it—a great big cake."

"You happen to have poked your prying nose into Coker's parcel, do you mean?" asked Johnny Bull.

"Well, I just tugged open the corner and looked to see what was in it," said Bunter. "I can tell you, it's a whopper of a cake. That beast smacked my head, as you know—"

"What on earth's that got to do with his cake?" asked Bob Cherry.

"Well, that's how I'm going to pay him out," explained Bunter. "I'm not thinking of the cake—not at all—but just getting even with Coker, see? That's why I want you fellows to back me up. You snoop that parcel—"

"What?" "And get it up to my study and we whack it out," said Bunter. "See? Mind, I'm not thinking much about the cake—I'm not so jolly keen on grub as some fellows I could name—"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"But just to give that fathead Coker a lesson! You can't let Coker smack a Remove man's head and get away with it—"

"He never got away with it," said Bob.

"It's still on your shoulders."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You silly ass," yelled Bunter. "You know what I mean—"

"Yes, we know what you mean," cackled Bob. "You want to snoop Coker's cake and you want us to do the snooping. That's what you call backing you up, you fat fraud. Well," added Bob rather unexpectedly, "I'll back you up, Bunter."

"My esteemed Bob—!" exclaimed Hurree Jamset Ram Singh.

"My dear chaps, I'm going to back Bunter up if he wants me to. Do you, Bunter?"

"Yes, rather, old chap," said Bunter eagerly.

"Right-ho! Here goes!" said Bob. And he made a sudden grasp at the fat Owl of the Remove and backed him up against the wall with a bump and a bang.

Billy Bunter roared.

"Ow! Wow! Leggo! Gone mad? Wharrer you think you're up to?"

"Backing you up!" exclaimed Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Co.

"Ow! Beast! Leggo!" yelled Bunter.

"I didn't mean back me up like that—"

"I did!" said Bob. "That's the kind of backing up you'll get from this Co., Bunter! Like some more?"

"Beast!" roared Bunter.

Evidently he did not want any more backing up from the Co. They walked on, laughing. And it was borne in upon the fat Owl's podgy brain that, if Coker's cake was to be snooped from the lobby, his own fat hands had to do the snooping.

BUNTER found it quite easy, after all. Whether because Coker of the Fifth had smacked his head, or because he simply couldn't resist the lure of a "great big" cake, Billy Bunter was determined to snoop that parcel. And he did snoop it. Luckily for Bunter, there was no one about the lobby when he performed the snooping act. Nobody saw him as he negotiated the stairs, and rolled up the Remove passage with his plunder under his arm.

On a half-holiday nobody was about the studies. Bunter's study-mates, Todd and Dutton, were out of gates; No. 7 Study was vacant. Not an eye fell on Bunter in the Remove passage. He rolled into No. 7 Study, bumped down the parcel on the table and shut the door.

He was rather breathless, but his fat face registered satisfaction. Stairs always made Billy Bunter a little breathless, and he had to waste a minute or so in getting his wind. Then he started unpacking the parcel.

"Oh, crikey!" gasped Bunter, as the cake, at last, was revealed from the wrappings so carefully packed round it by Coker's Aunt Judy. "Oh, crumbs! What a whopper! What a whacker! Oh, gum! Ain't it scrumptious!"

It was scrumptious! There was no doubt about that! It was large, it was luscious, it was packed with fruit, it had marzipan on top—it was such a cake as Bunter dreamed about in his happiest dreams. And Bunter, all on his own, was going to scoff that scrumptious cake to the last plum and the last crumb! He beamed at that cake! He gloated over it! And his capacious mouth watered with anticipation as he grabbed a bread knife to commence operations on that scrumptious cake!

Tap! The door opened.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

He spun round to the door. He blinked at an angular figure that appeared there. Concentrated on cake, Billy Bunter had forgotten the existence of his form master, Mr. Quelch. Now he was reminded of it.

"Bunter!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!" stammered Bunter.

"Have you written your lines?"

"Mum-mum-my lines, sir!" stuttered the fat Owl. His fat mind was full of cake. In another minute his fat circumference would have been full of it. How was a fellow to remember lines at such a time?

"Your lines, Bunter!" repeated Mr. Quelch sternly.

"I—I—I— Yes—no—I—I was just going to, sir! I—I—I—"

"You have not written your lines, Bunter?"

"Nunno, sir."

"Very well," said Mr. Quelch, compressing his lips. "You will be given one hour's detention in the form room, Bunter. During that time you will write your lines and, in addition, a page of history."

"But—but—I—I—I say, sir—" stut-

tered Bunter. "Follow me!" thundered Mr. Quelch.

"Oh, crikey!"

It was the unhappiest fat Owl ever that rolled dismally after Mr. Quelch. But there was no help for it. That cake—that scrumptious, luscious cake—had to be left—not even tasted! It had to remain undevoured for a whole hour—while the hapless Owl, in the form room, worked out his punishment! Quelch had not even glanced at the cake! Bunter gave it a lingering, longing glance as he followed his form master from the study. Then the door closed on it and it was lost to sight—though to memory dear!

"WHERE'S Billy?"

Miss Elizabeth Bunter, of the Fourth Form at Cliff House School, asked that question. Bob Cherry, to whom it was addressed, shook his head.

"Haven't seen him for some time—"

"I sent him a message that I was coming over to tea," snapped Bessie. "If he's gone out—"

"Oh! If he expects you to tea I expect you'll find him in his study," said Bob.

"Yes! I'll go up," said Bessie, and she went up. She arrived at No. 7 Study in the Remove, pushed open the door and blinked in through the spectacles that were so like Brother Billy's.

"You here, Billy?" she asked. "I suppose Squelch told you—oh!" Bessie Bunter broke off as her blink round the study revealed two interesting facts—first that her brother Billy was not present; second that a large, luscious, scrumptious cake lay on the table with a bread knife beside it.

"Oh!" repeated Miss Bunter.

She rolled into the study and shut the door. Then she stood looking at the cake. Then she picked up the bread knife.

Billy was not there! Apparently he had gone out, regardless of the fact that his sister from Cliff House was coming over to tea. But that, after all, did not matter very much—Bessie did not precisely yearn for the company of Brother Billy. He had, at any rate, left her something for tea.

That was unusually decent of Billy. Bessie, knowing him as she did, would have expected him to scoff a scrumptious cake like that, utterly regardless of brotherly considerations. But he had not even cut it! There it was with the knife in readiness, uncut!

It did not remain uncut longer than a split second after Bessie picked up the bread knife. After that, there was a sound of munching in No. 7 Study. Any fellow who had passed the study door might have fancied that Billy Bunter was at home, and very busy.

Munch! munch! munch!

That cake was large, but it grew smaller by degrees and beautifully less! A happy shiny look came over Bessie's plump face. Slice after slice of scrumptious cake disappeared on the downward path.

Munch! munch! munch!

Bessie Bunter was like Brother Billy in many respects. She resembled him most in a strong objection to leaving anything eatable uneaten. Large as that cake was, Bessie was equal to it. When at long last the sound of munching ceased in No. 7 Study, only a few crumbs remained of Coker's cake.

Still Billy Bunter had not returned. Bessie did not feel disposed to wait for him longer. She found a pen and a sheet of imput paper and scribbled a note for him.

Dear Billy,

I think you mite have staid in as I was kuming over to tee. I can't wate anny longer. But thanks for the kake. Bessie.

Leaving that note on the table, Miss Bunter departed.

BILLY BUNTER came up the stairs and up the Remove passage at a speed that was really remarkable, considering the weight he had to carry. His detention was over at last, and the fat Owl was free to get back to Coker's cake. He flew up the stairs. He charged up the Remove passage. He hurtled into No. 7 Study. He bounded to the table. And then—

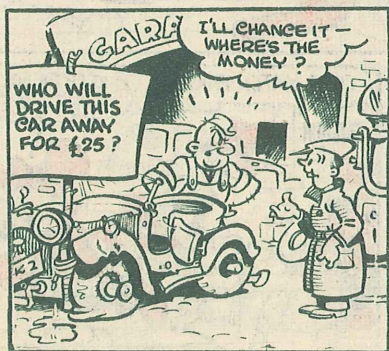
Then he gazed at a few surviving crumbs of that scrumptious, luscious cake. Then he read Bessie's note.

"Oh!" gasped Bunter.

Bessie Bunter had come and gone! The cake had gone—inside Bessie! Billy Bunter blinked at the scattered crumbs. He blinked at Bessie's note. And never, in the history of the Bunter family had any Bunter felt so utterly and thoroughly unbrotherly!

Poor old Billy! Better luck next time! Don't miss the fun at Greyfriars in next week's COMET.

CHUCKLE CORNER



THRILLS IN SPACE! MYSTERY AMONG THE PLANETS! HERE ARE THE OPENING CHAPTERS OF THE MOST AMAZING STORY EVER!

VIKINGS OF THE SPACEWAYS

By PAUL FLOOD

Mystery of the Planets!

TOM PENNANT, cub reporter on *The Daily Courier*, had been at school when Professor Temple had stumbled out of the battered space ship *Astronaut* with his crew of ex-convict heroes. It was the year A.D. 2005.

Tom had never forgotten the day when the geography lesson had been broken off so that the class could rush headlong to the junior common-room in order to see the arrival of the daring adventurers on the school's visiphone receiver.

How the lads had cheered as the bearded professor had spoken into the visiphone transmitter and, on behalf of his crew and himself, had thanked all mankind for the faith that they had had in him and his bold dreams!

The professor had explained that, contrary to expectations, the Heavside Layer had not entirely blanketed the wireless transmissions from earth, even though the Layer had blanketed the transmissions from the ship, and that his own instruments had been able to pick up many broadcasts from earth, with their cheering messages of hope and encouragement.

"And how great a help to us they were, I can never explain!" the professor had said.

Then Tom and all the others had gone back to their class-rooms and their abandoned lessons. But Tom confessed to the boy sitting beside him that, after having heard and seen Professor Temple, earthly geography seemed a pretty dull subject.

"If you had the chance, Tom," the friend whispered, "would you go with the professor on his next trip?"

"Would I not!" said Tom.

"I bet you wouldn't!"

"I bet you anything I would!"

The five hundred lines that Tom then received for having spoken during lessons was another reason why the day of Professor Temple's return to Earth was fixed for ever in Tom Pennant's memory.

During the years that followed Tom had read every word that the papers had had to say about the professor—and the papers had always treated the professor as a very great hero.

There was something about that first flight to the moon which had caught the imagination of the public. The fact that the professor's crew, on that first flight, had been recruited entirely from convicts, serving long sentences, had added a further "romantic" touch to the story of Professor William Temple.

These convicts had been offered their liberty by the World Government on condition that they volunteered to go with the professor on his first daring flight. When the *Astronaut* returned to earth, and her rusted, space-pitted, flame-scorched ports opened to let out a crew, more dead than alive from hunger and strain and the terrible cosmic ray burns, the world could see that they had bought their liberty at a very high price.

Other ships had succeeded the *Astronaut*—bigger and better ships. And the professor went far beyond the moon on his later voyages. But he still recruited his crews from among serving convicts, explaining that the risks of the voyages were still too grave to justify taking anyone but desperate criminals with him.

AS Tom grew up he began to feel that while the professor was still one of the world's most exciting characters, there was something decidedly queer about him.

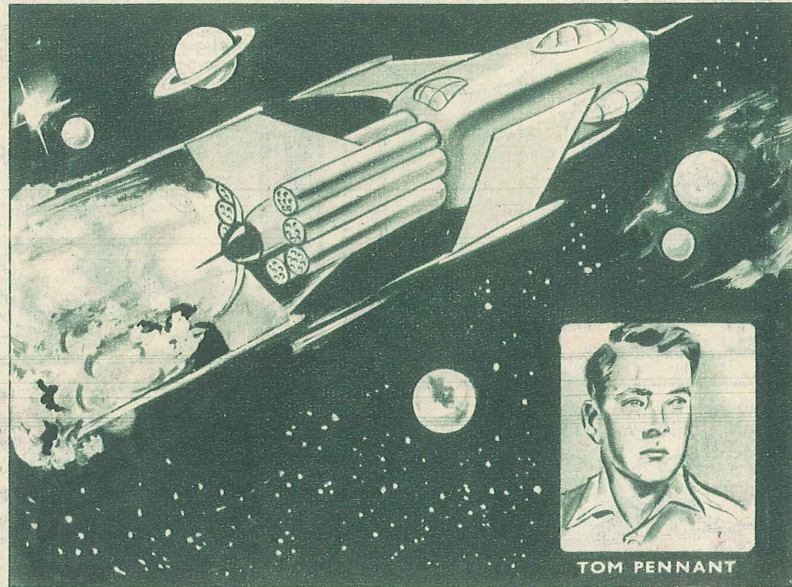
Not even Tom could have explained how he had come to feel this way—a view quite opposite to that of most other people; for the professor was now a world hero.

Tom's editor—the man who had nicknamed the professor "The Viking of the Spaceways"—was fond of Tom. It was generally known in the news room of *The Daily Courier* that young Tom Pennant was by way of being the editor's "little ewe lamb." But even Mr. Watson was known to have become exceedingly annoyed with his favourite young reporter when Tom had first aired his vague suspicions of the professor.

One day the editor said to Tom, half angrily:

"Tom, what is this bee that you've got buzzing about in your bonnet? I wish to goodness you'd tell me, if you've got anything more than a mere hunch to work on!" He added: "Why, Tom, you used to think that Professor Temple was the grandest chap that ever lived!"

"Well," said Tom. "I still do . . . in a way."



The editor said patiently: "In what way then, Tom, don't you think he's a grand fellow? Come on, Tom, let us have it! If there's a story in it I can assure you that my own personal feelings about Professor Temple will not stand in the way. News is news, you know. . . ."

"I know," said Tom a little uncertainly. "That's just it, Mr. Watson. I wish that I did have something more to go on than—"

He broke off and Mr. Watson urged him gently.

"Than what, Tom?"

"Than—than just thinking that there's something a little too good to be true about the professor. Oh, I know," Tom went on hurriedly as he saw that the editor was about to interrupt them, "that the professor has never made a penny-piece out of his inventions! I know that the first thing he did, once he had proved that his ships could make the voyage to Neptune, and even beyond, was to hand over the blueprints of the plans to the public. Or, rather, to the World Government, for the benefit of the public. So that the world could build its own ships—anybody's ships, everybody's ships—and so open up the vast sources of raw materials that the ten planets offer."

"Oh, yes," he went on doggedly, "I know that he made mankind a free gift of the Temple repulsion ray, for warding off meteorites. And his cosmic ray-proof clothing, and his artificial gravity generator, and the principle of the atomic jet, and . . ."

"Yes, yes, Tom! And everything. . . . I know all this. It's old history!" said the editor irritably.

"But not quite everything," said Tom quietly. "Not quite everything, Mr. Watson. Haven't you forgotten one small thing. . . .?"

Watson scratched his thin, sandy hair. He looked puzzled, but only for a moment. Then his face brightened.

"Oh, you mean the atomic heat ray? Yes, but my dear Tom, the professor explained that all perfectly well. He told us that he didn't want people killing each other."

Tom said quietly: "Why should they want to kill each other with the heat ray any more than with all the other things we still have, even though there's been no war for half a century—since the World Government was established? If people wished to kill each other, goodness knows there are plenty of dangerous means to do it. You say that he withheld the secret of the heat ray because he didn't wish people to kill each other with it. But he didn't mind," Tom said softly, "giving them the chance to kill each other in the ships to be designed according to his plans?" Tom shook his head, his young mouth set in obstinate lines. "That's what's worrying me, Mr. Watson, if you really want to know. Tell me, why have none of the other ships returned? None! Not a single one. Every space ship not built by Professor Temple has been lost in

space."

The editor looked serious. And Tom, with increasing confidence, went on:

"You can't say that there is any lack of first-class engineers available. Provided the plans were all right—and why shouldn't they have been?—the ships should have been all right! But somehow, none of them were quite good enough to come back, Mr. Watson."

"I inquired the other day at Lloyds. I asked them what they were quoting for freights to Neptune. They weren't, Mr. Watson! And you know, sir, that when Lloyds won't quote for an insurance risk it must be a very bad risk indeed!"

"Um!" said Mr. Watson, regarding his young reporter with a new interest.

"It's now seven years," said Tom, "since the *Icarus*, the first space ship that the professor did not build, set off for Mars. That was three years after Professor Temple's return from his first trip, and in those three years he went on—let me see—four trips, one far beyond the orbit of Neptune, without coming to any harm. So, sir, we may take it that the design of his ship was satisfactory?"

"Well," said the editor, a note of deep interest now obvious in his voice, "sit down, lad. I wonder if I can guess what you're driving at?"

"Actually," said Tom with a smile, "I'm not driving at anything. I don't know the answer to the mystery. I've merely got a hunch, Mr. Watson, put it like that. But all the same," Tom went on earnestly, "I feel it in my bones that there's something very queer that calls for a good explanation. I want to know why, of all the forty-eight ships which have left Earth since '08—ships, mark you, sir, which were thoroughly tested in Earth's stratosphere before going off into space, and fitted with every known safety device—only Temple-built ships have returned. Only!" He added earnestly: "Look, Mr. Watson, don't you think that the record's just a little too bad to be quite natural?"

The editor scratched his chin. His eyes were very reflective as he murmured:

"So, Tom, you think . . ."

Tom said impatiently:

"I've told you, Mr. Watson, that I don't think anything! I only want to know."

"But, Tom, you're not satisfied?" the editor persisted. "You do think that there's something fishy somewhere?"

"I think," said Tom firmly, "that there's a good deal that needs explaining. But," he added quickly, "I don't say that it has anything to do with the professor. Perhaps not. All the same, I'd like to know why he still insists on criminals—ex-jailbirds—to make up his crews. You remember how he refused the offer of those undergraduates from Oxford University—all first-class athletes—to man one of his ships? He said it was too dangerous!"

The editor laughed at this. But he looked grave as he said:

"Any more, Tom. . . .?"

"One thing, Mr. Watson. Where does the professor's money come from?"

Mr. Watson frowned. "But, Tom, he's a very rich man. His father was a rich man himself and his mother was the daughter of a very rich peer, Lord Bethesda. Plenty of money there, Tom!"

"There was, you mean!" said Tom. "How much do you think his ships cost him? Then there's fuel, wages, all sorts of expenses. I've looked it up, Mr. Watson, and I find that, apart from a few thousands he's got for his lectures and his books he's earned nothing in the past ten years. The thousands he has earned wouldn't pay for the tail-fin of one of his ships!"

Mr. Watson smiled at his favourite reporter's enthusiasm. He leaned forward and patted Tom's shoulder. He said:

"All right! Are you asking for the assignment, Tom? Well, I'll give it to you. But," he shook his head, suddenly very serious, "if it's what you and I think in our hearts it is. . . ."

Tom exclaimed: "Then, Mr. Watson, you . . . ?"

"Yes, Tom, I'll frankly confess to you that you've got me thinking! Let me put it in this way: Even if I didn't give you the job of proving the professor's all right—or not all right—I'd give it to some other reporter. Because I'm convinced now that the mystery ought to be cleared up."

"All the same," the editor added doubtfully, "if the professor isn't all he seems to be, then—well, Tom, I'm afraid you may find yourself in serious trouble!"

Tom said cheerfully: "And when did that ever stop a *Courier* reporter from going after the story, sir?"

Mr. Watson laughed. "Good for you, Tom! Well . . . you may be on to the biggest story in a century."

"I think I am, sir!" said Tom with his cheery smile. "When do I start?"

IT was no secret that the professor always recruited his space ship crews only from among convicts. So the first step to be taken in getting Tom taken on as a member of one of the professor's crews was to provide him with a false identity—such as is done in wartime, when a spy has not only to be provided with a false name and false identity papers, but with a completely false history as well.

"We'll have to do this properly," said the editor. "The professor's voyages last a very long time and when they've nothing else to do your companions on one of the professor's ships are going to question you pretty closely about your supposed criminal career, aren't they?"

"Yes," said Tom thoughtfully. Then his face brightened. "I say, sir! What about this for an idea? You remember that young spiv, Lionel 'Baby-Face' Johnson, the police pulled in the other day for a brutal smash-and-grab robbery?"

"Yes, I remember," said the editor.

"Well, that was a story I was going to follow up, if you recall. Now, it so happened that Johnson was never even charged with the crime. The police picked him up and were taking him off to Bow Street when the police car skidded on a wet road and crashed into a street refuge."

"Yes, that's correct."

"Well, Mr. Watson," said Tom excitedly, "don't you see what a wonderful opportunity that gives us? Johnson got such a bang on the head that he was taken to hospital suffering from concussion."

"And here's the important point. I was talking to the station sergeant at Randolph Road police station yesterday, where they know all about Lionel Johnson. The sergeant tells me that Johnson will be a long time in hospital and that he's completely lost his memory. He doesn't know who he is or even what his name is. In fact, he hasn't the faintest idea of what he's doing in hospital or what brought him there. And he hasn't any relatives, either. And I imagine his friends wouldn't risk their skins by coming to see him—especially as there's a policeman sitting by his bedside."

"I think I see what you mean," said Mr. Watson, his face alight with keen interest. "You suggest you should change places with this Johnson, eh?"

"Yes, sir. Why not? He's just my age and more or less like me in appearance. I've only got to see what sort of clothes he was wearing and get some more like them. And who's to know the difference? The police will give me all the details of Johnson's criminal career and I can learn

(Continued on page 7)



RUSTY RILEY



Rusty Riley, a British orphan, lives on an American ranch owned by Quentin Miles, who has adopted him. Rusty chums up with Patty, the daughter of Quentin Miles. Satan, a bad-tempered horse from a nearby carnival, causes trouble, but pals up with Flip, Rusty's dog. Charley, one of the showmen, steals Flip, has him clipped like a French poodle and dyed black, then works out a new act. Suspicious, Rusty gets a job at the carnival as a clown. He recognises Flip in the ring and calls to him. This ruins Charley's act and Charley goes to Law, hoping to prove the dog is his!

PROVIDING THIS DOG LICENCE AND THIS BILL OF SALE ARE GENUINE, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT YOU ARE THE RIGHTFUL OWNER OF THE DOG IN QUESTION... HOWEVER...

THANK YOU, YR HONOUR.. I KNEW YOU'D SEE IT MY WAY!

DON'T INTERRUPT, YOUNG MAN! AS I WAS SAYING-HOWEVER, I HAVE NOT YET HEARD THE OTHER SIDE IN THIS CASE... WHO IS THE OPPOSING CLAIMANT?

I GUESS I'M THE...THE OP...OP... WHAT YOU SAID, SIR... AT LEAST I'M SAYING FLIP IS MY DOG!

OFFICER BRING THAT BLACK DOG IN HERE!

YES, YR HONOUR RIGHT AWAY, SIR!

NOW SET HIM FREE I WANT TO SEE WHOM HE'LL GO TO!

FLIP!

COME HERE, INKY!

WOOF!

FLIP!

THAT'S ENOUGH FOR ME! THAT'S TEN TIMES BETTER EVIDENCE THAN YOUR SO-CALLED BILLS OF SALE..... I AWARD THE DOG TO HIS OBVIOUS OWNER, RUSTY RILEY!

WELL... ALL RIGHT, I GUESS HE WINS... I'LL BE GOING...

THANK YOU, SIR... THANKS VERY MUCH!

I DON'T THINK YOU'LL BE GOING JUST YET... YOU HAVE A FEW EXPLANATIONS TO MAKE CONCERNING THOSE FORGED PAPERS!

A WEEK LATER

GOLLY, TEX!.. IT'S SURE GOOD TO HAVE FLIP BACK AGAIN! THE BLACK DYE HAS ALL WASHED OFF!

I'M GLAD IT TURNED OUT OKAY FOR YOU IN THE END, RUSTY. GOING TO TAKE FLIP FOR A RUN?

IF YOU'RE GOING ON THE STATE HIGHWAY, RUSTY, MIND THE TRAFFIC!

GEE WHILLIKENS! THAT'S A STATE POLICE CAR! HE MUST BE AFTER SOMEBODY!

OH, GOLLY! THERE'S BEEN AN ACCIDENT! THERE'S AN AMBULANCE!

HE'S BADLY HURT.. WE'LL HAVE TO GET HIM TO THE HOSPITAL... WHERE'S THE MAN WHO HIT HIM?

HE BEAT IT!.. IT'S A HIT-AND-RUN CASE!

NOW, MISTER, YOU SAY YOU SAW THE ACCIDENT... DID YOU GET THE NUMBER OF THE CAR?

NO, OFFICER.. I WAS 'WAY OVER IN THAT FIELD.. BUT I HAPPENED TO LOOK OVER THIS WAY JUST BEFORE THE ACCIDENT, AND I COULD SWEAR THERE WERE TWO PEDESTRIANS!

TWO! ARE YOU SURE? WHAT BECAME OF THE OTHER ONE?

SEARCH ME! HE MUST'VE RUN AWAY! MAYBE HE WENT FOR HELP!

FLIP! HEY, FLIP, COME BACK!

WHAT'S EATING YOUR PUP SONNY? IS HE TRYING TO BE A BLOODHOUND?

HE'S PICKED UP A SCENT, BUT HE NEVER FOLLOWS PEOPLE UNLESS IT'S SOMEBODY HE KNOWS WELL!

Who is the mysterious stranger? Is it somebody Flip knows? Another stirring episode... next week

Dr. Penny

NATURAL HISTORY NO TELL ME, BIRD, WHAT FROM?

VERY GOOD- NOW, DO MONKEYS DESCEND FROM?

ICH-NOT AT ALL, BO THAT'S IRRELEVANT

ELEPHANTS CAN'T DOWN TREES!

NOT AN ELEPHANT, B HOWEVER, PERHAPS ME WHERE ELEPHANTS ARE FO

YOU DON'T HAVE TO THEY'RE SO BIG T GE

BOYS - CAN YOU
MAN DESCEND



MM-WHAT DID
TREES, SIR!



HEH! DON'T
BE SILLY,
SIR-



CLIMB



BY-IRRELEVANT!
YOU CAN TELL
ITS
AND!



FIND ELEPHANTS -
THEY DON'T EVER
GET LOST!



Kit Carson

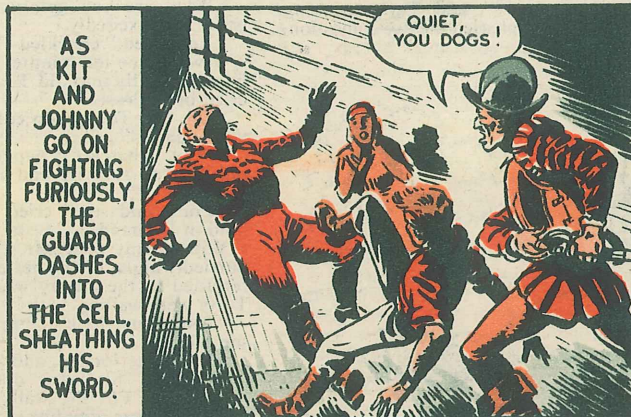
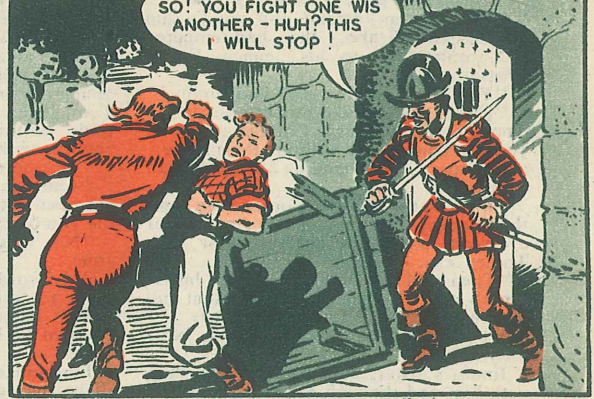
and the GOLDEN ARROW



Kit Carson and a young friend, Johnny Scott, are helping White Dove, an Indian girl, to find a treasure belonging to her tribe. The secret is in the symbols carved on the head of a Golden Arrow. They are pursued by Hawkeye, an Indian, but Kit and his friends outwit him and set out once more on the treasure trail. They come to a strange city inhabited by men of a bygone age who capture them and make them slaves. Kit and Johnny resist and all three are flung into a dungeon to await torture.



THE THREE PRISONERS BEGIN SHOUTING AND MAKING A TERRIFIC DIN.



The way to freedom is clear, now. But where is the Golden Arrow? More thrills next week!



The Queer Quarry

"I've got an errand for you," said Jasper Grabb, the bad-tempered ironmonger, to his nephew Jimmy Watson.

"Yes, Uncle, what is it?" said Jimmy. "I want you to take this bill out to old Tom Tooley at Quarry Cottage and don't ye dare come back without the money," said Jasper Grabb, handing him a bill in an envelope.

"But what if old Mr. Tooley hasn't got the money, Uncle?" asked Jimmy, for everyone knew how hard-up poor Tom Tooley was.

"Then he'll have to find it!" cried Jasper Grabb angrily. "He's owed me that bill for weeks now and I want me money. If I don't get it, I'll ha' the law on him. Now off you go!"

Jimmy's sister, June, was in the shop with him and they left together to deliver the bill. But as they walked along the street they were joined by a black and white cat which had followed them from the shop, and June cried:

"Oh, hallo, Tutty, do you want to come with us?"

"Yes, I do," said Tutty. He spoke in a human voice, for he was no ordinary cat. Far from it, in fact, for he was really an Egyptian prince and he came from a long line of wizard princes.

But he had been changed into a cat by an old wizard named Ur-huh, who was jealous of him because Tutty could do lots of magic himself. And a cat poor Tutty was doomed to remain until he could find a certain mummified Egyptian beetle called the Sacred Scarab of Shendi.

This Scarab was the only thing in the world which possessed the magic powers to change Tutty from a cat back to his proper self again. But it was lost and Tutty had searched everywhere for it. He was still searching and, while he was doing so, he was staying with Jimmy and June, who had befriended him.

Nor was Tutty his real name. He had a whole string of royal names, all of them very long and very difficult to pronounce. But one of them was Tut-u-kamen, so he was called Tut-tut for short and Tutty for shortest.

"Where are you off to, anyway?" he asked as he strolled along the street with Jimmy and June.

Jimmy told him and said: "I don't like this errand a bit. Everybody knows that poor old Tom Tooley has had no money ever since his quarry was closed down."

"Why was it closed down?" asked Tutty. "I don't know," said Jimmy.

"Is he a nice man?" asked Tutty. "Yes, he is!" cried June. "He's a very, very nice man indeed. He's ever so kind to animals and to children and to everybody. Everybody loves old Tom."

"Except people like Uncle, who doesn't love anybody," said Jimmy.

They left the town behind and walked on along a quiet country road until they came to Quarry Cottage where old Tom lived. Jimmy knocked at the door and Tom's voice called from inside:

"Come in!"

Jimmy opened the door and he and June and Tutty walked into a tidy little living-room. Old Tom, a white-haired man with a weather-beaten face and kindly blue eyes, was sitting in a chair wrapping a bandage round his ankle.

"Hallo, Jimmy!" he said. "How are you, June? Come in and sit down. I won't be a minute fixing this leg of mine."

"What's the matter with it, Mr. Tooley?" asked June. "Have you had an accident?"

"Yes, a bit of a one," said the old man. "I've been bitten by a dog."

"Who, you?" cried Jimmy in astonishment. "You're always so kind to animals

JIMMY'S MAGIC CAT!

A Super Story of Fun and Thrills

BY GEORGE E. ROCHESTER

and they all like you."

"Aye, but this one was set on me, d'you see?" explained old Tom.

"Who set it on you?" cried June in horror.

"Mark Moat, the poacher," said old Tom. "I've told him dozens and dozens of times that I'll not have him setting his rabbit snares in my quarry. Snares are cruel things and I've told him so. Well, this morning I found he'd set some in my quarry, so I pulled them up. He came along while I was doing so and he was so mad at me that he set his dog on me and it bit me."

"The beast!" cried June. "I know that dog. It's an absolute brute."

"Aye, well, we can't really blame it, seeing the sort of master it's got," said old Tom. Then he changed the subject and said: "Is that your cat there? I saw him come in with you?"

"Yes, he's ours," said June.

"And has he walked all the way from the town with you?" asked old Tom. "Or did you carry him?"

"No, he's walked all the way," said June.

"My word, but he must have plenty of sense to follow you like that," said old Tom, looking admiringly at Tutty. "Would he like a saucer of milk do you think?"

June looked at Tutty. He gave her the slightest nod of his head, for he never talked in his human voice except when he was alone with her and Jimmy.

"Yes, I think he would, Mr. Tooley,"



she said. "But please don't bother."

"It's no bother at all," said old Tom. "It'll be a pleasure."

He had fixed his bandage and, rising, he hobbled into the little kitchen to reappear with a saucer of milk.

"There you are, puss," he said setting it down on the floor for Tutty to drink.

He turned to Jimmy and said: "I suppose your uncle has sent you to see me, Jimmy?"

"Yes, he told me to give you this bill," said Jimmy uncomfortably, taking the bill from his pocket and putting it on the table.

"Aye, he wants his money," said old Tom. "And quite right too. He ought to have it. But I haven't any money, Jimmy," he said sadly, "and I haven't had ever since I had to close down my quarry."

"Why did you have to close it down, Mr. Tooley?" asked Jimmy sympathetically.

"Because it's poor stone that I get from it and I can't sell it," said old Tom. "They're getting a far better and finer stone from other quarries and nobody wants mine, not now. And I can't blame them, either."

He paused a moment, then went on:

"But you can tell your uncle that I'll get the money for him. I'll get it somehow even if I have to sell some of my furniture. I've never owed a ha'penny in my life until now and it's terrible."

"Well, don't you worry about it, Mr. Tooley," said June. "Something will turn up for you, I'm sure. It's bound to, the way you've always been so kind and good to everybody."

She and Jimmy stayed chatting with the old man a few minutes longer. Then after telling him they hoped his leg would soon get better, they left.

"Listen, Tutty," said June when they were out of earshot of the cottage, "you really ought to do something to help Mr. Tooley. With your magic, I mean."

"I'm going to," said Tutty. "I think he's a grand old chap. I'm sure he couldn't spare that milk he gave me, but he gave it to me all the same."

"And he only got bitten on the leg because he was pulling up those rotten snares of Mark Moat's to save the rabbits from being strangled by them," said Jimmy.

"Yes, I know," said Tutty. "Let's have a look at this quarry, I'd like to see it."

"It's over here," said Jimmy, turning along a narrow by-road.

They reached the abandoned quarry and stood on the edge of it, looking down. It was silent and deserted and, to Jimmy and June there was something very sad about it, because they knew that old Tom had laboured there in all sorts of weather for many long, hard-working years.

Suddenly Tutty pricked his ears and turned his head.

"Hallo, who's this coming?" he demanded.

Jimmy and June looked in the same direction. A rough-looking man, with a gun in the crook of his arm and a savage-looking dog at his heels, was coming towards them.

"It's Mark Moat, the poacher!" exclaimed June. "And that's the dog that bit old Tom!"

"Is it, indeed?" said Tutty grinning. "Then I'm very pleased they've come along

as he put as much distance as possible between himself and that beastly tree stump which had suddenly reared up and hit him—or, rather, against which he had hit himself.

With an oath, Mark Moat wheeled, whipped up his gun and aimed it straight at Tutty, who was still sitting on top of the stump of tree.

"Look out, Tutty!" screamed June.

But Tutty was looking out all right and the gun never exploded. For before Mark Moat could pull the trigger, the gun dropped from his hands and he suddenly vanished. At least, he seemed to vanish. What actually happened was that, on the exact spot where he had been standing, a furious little field-mouse with little squint eyes was now leaping frantically about and squeaking at the very top of its tiny voice.

"Where on earth's Mark Moat gone?" gasped Jimmy, gaping about him.

"That's him there, that field-mouse," chuckled Tutty, leaping down from the tree stump and chasing the mouse. "Ah, he's gone. He's scuttled away into cover. I suppose he thinks I'll gobble him up. He needn't worry. I wouldn't touch him with the end of a forty-foot barge pole."

"Did you change him into a field-mouse by using your magic?" cried June.

"Yes, of course," laughed Tutty. "And serve him right, as well, after setting his beastly dog on to old Mr. Tooley and then trying to shoot me, to say nothing of all the rabbits and other poor animals that he's killed."

"Yes, it does serve him right," agreed Jimmy. "But how long are you going to keep him a field-mouse, Tutty?"

"Until sundown this evening," said Tutty. "He can spend the rest of the day as a field-mouse until the sun goes down, then he'll be changed back into his proper self and I hope it will be a lesson to him. And now I'd better see about old Mr. Tooley's quarry."

"What are you going to do, Tutty?" cried June excitedly.

"You'll see!" chuckled Tutty.

It was some ten minutes later that June burst excitedly into old Tom's cottage and cried breathlessly:

"Oh, Mr. Tooley, do come and look at your quarry!"

"Why, whatever's happened?" gasped old Tom in surprise and alarm. "What's the matter?"

"Come and see!" cried June, catching hold of his hand.

With the mystified Mr. Tooley hobbling hurriedly along beside her on his stick, she returned to the quarry where Jimmy and Tutty were waiting.

"There, just look there, Mr. Tooley!" she cried.

Mr. Tooley looked, and as he did so his mouth and his eyes opened wide in amazement. For the walls of the quarry were no longer grey like stone, but were a bright brown in colour and were gleaming and shiny.

"Why, whatever is it?" gasped Mr. Tooley. "That's—that's not stone!"

"No, it's TOFFEE!" cried Jimmy, capering joyously about. "It's toffee, Mr. Tooley, and the most scrumptious, loveliest toffee you've ever tasted. I've got a bit here. Try it. All you've got to do now is to sell toffee instead of stone and you'll make your fortune!"

Mr. Tooley did make his fortune by selling the toffee. It was such marvellous toffee that folks clamoured for it from all over the country.

But Mr. Tooley never ceased to wonder just how this most amazing thing had happened. He never learned that Tutty had done it for him by means of his magic, for Jimmy and June and Tutty kept that to themselves.

And all the children for miles around were never short of the lovely toffee. Mr. Tooley didn't sell it to them. He gave it to them.

More fun and thrills with Tutty, Jimmy and June in next week's "COMET."



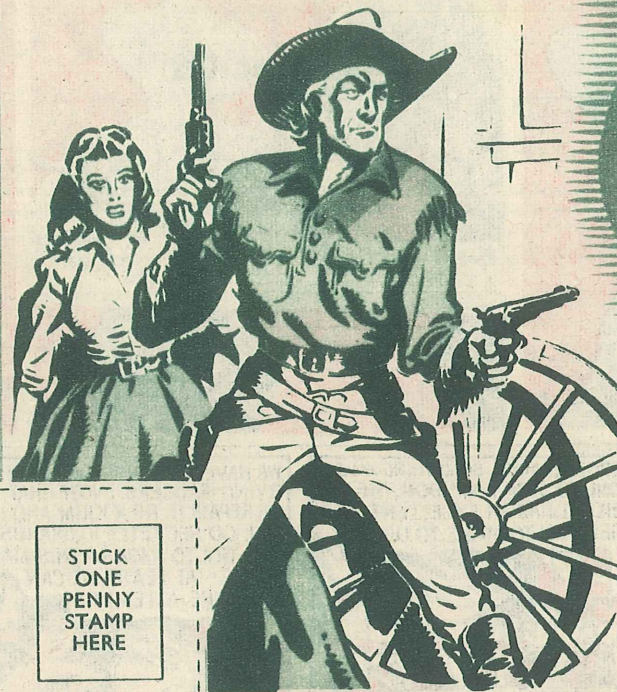
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VIKINGS OF THE SPACEWAYS

(Continued from page 3)

them up, just as an actor learns his part for a play.

Mr. Watson nodded.
"It's a wonderful idea, Tom," he said.
"Of course, we shall have to get the help of the Home Secretary for this. I shall have to persuade him that it's for the good of the country that we find out all about the professor. You realise, Tom, don't you, that you'll have to go before the judge as 'Lionel Johnson,' and be sentenced to imprisonment? Because you will have to be in prison before the professor will look at you for work in one of his ships."

Tom grinned.
"I don't mind, sir, as long as you don't leave me in prison too long!"

THE editor did not have to wait very long, and in the meanwhile, Tom, masquerading as "Baby-Face" Johnson, had been "arrested" by the police, charged with the crimes, and sentenced by the judge to ten years hard labour and then taken off to Wandsworth Prison to await transfer to Dartmoor.

A few days later the Governor sent for "Johnson," and told the guard who had brought the "prisoner" in to wait outside as the governor wished to have a word with "Johnson" in private.

As soon as the two men were alone the governor shook "Johnson" warmly by the hand.

"My dear Pennant," the colonel said, "our first obstacle is overcome!"

"Do you mean, sir . . . ?"
"I mean that the professor has just written to me to say that he would like to take you on as a member of the crew of the Pegasus."

AMONG the brutal faces of the Pegasus's crew, Tom Pennant's fresh young features stood out in almost laughable contrast. The first night aboard the space ship, as the crew sat down to supper in the for'ard mess—a small box of a room

just big enough to hold a dozen tightly-packed men—the cook, who was an enormous negro with only one eye and rather less than half a nose, had said to Tom:

"Golly, massa, you-all doan look like no murderer to me!"

Tom, digging hungrily into his rich, steaming stew, had laughed. He had been conscious that the cook's words had drawn on him the interested—almost, one might say, the suspicious—attention of the other members of the crew.

For as the cook had said, Tom certainly didn't look the average person's idea of a desperate character. Tom was just twenty; not too tall, and slimly built. He was fair haired and blue eyed, and his clear skin and honest eyes were the signs of a clean, healthy life. As the cook had said, Tom didn't look at all like a murderer! And the trouble, Tom thought, was that the cook's remark had apparently set up a dangerous train of thought in the others' minds!

"Oh, perhaps, Cooky, you've never heard of me? Never heard tell of Baby-Face Johnson?"

"Can't say as I have, massa," said the cook—Frisco Jim was his name—as he set a dish of delicious-looking hot doughnuts on the aluminium folding table. "Ought I to have heard of him?"

"Well, yes," said Tom with a smirk, well in keeping with the character that he had taken on. "Seeing as that same Baby-Face Johnson happens to be me!" He hoped that his voice sounded sufficiently impressive, as he laddled some more stew out of the dixie.

To get taken on as one of the crew he had had to provide proof that he was one of the most bloodthirsty young thugs that the governor of Wandsworth Prison had ever had in his care. So long as the other members of the crew believed that, all would be well.

But Tom knew that, if it were suspected for one moment that he was on the Pegasus under false pretences his life would be in the gravest possible danger. Will Tom discover the truth about the professor? Don't miss the story of his amazing journey in space, in next week's

"COMET."

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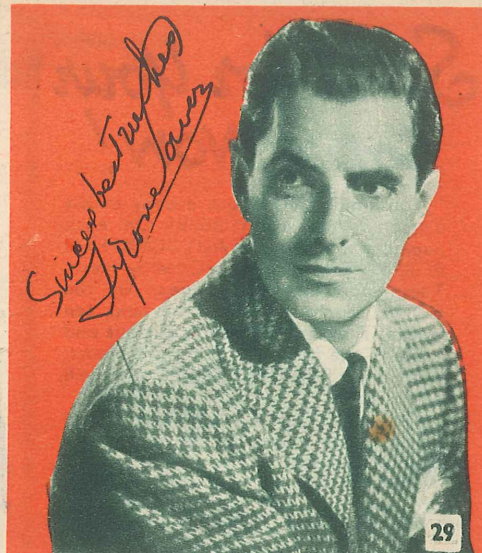
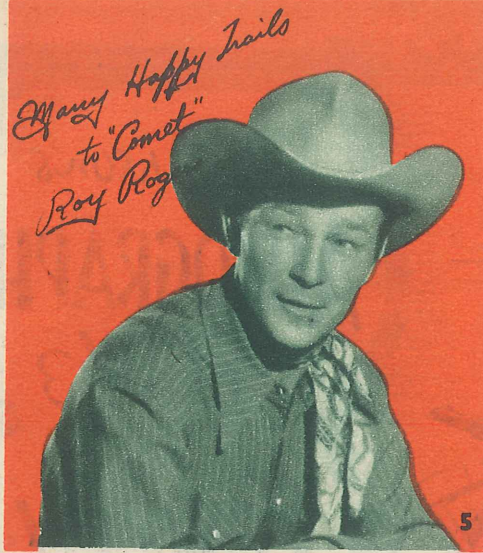
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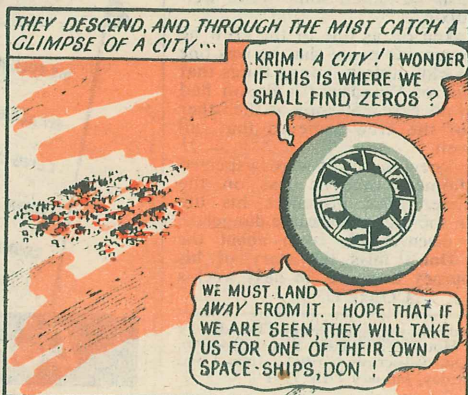
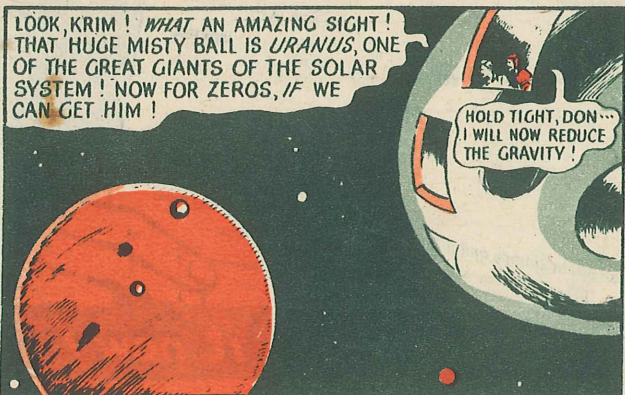
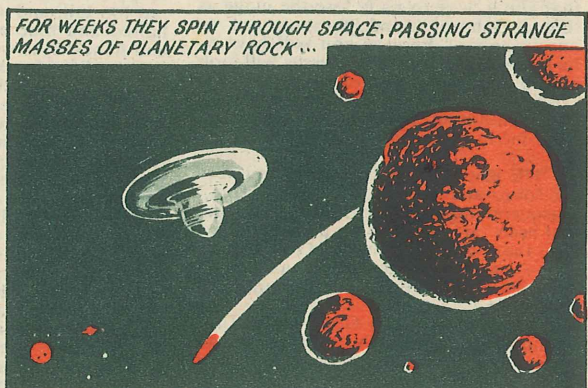
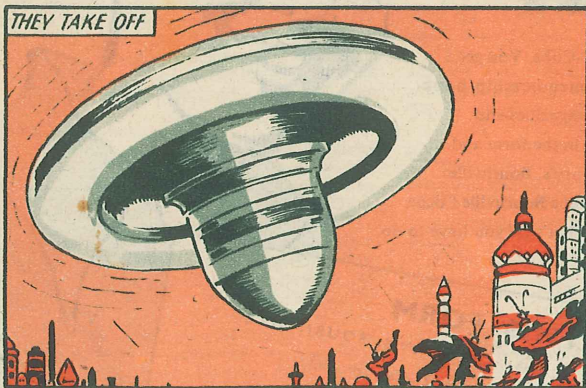
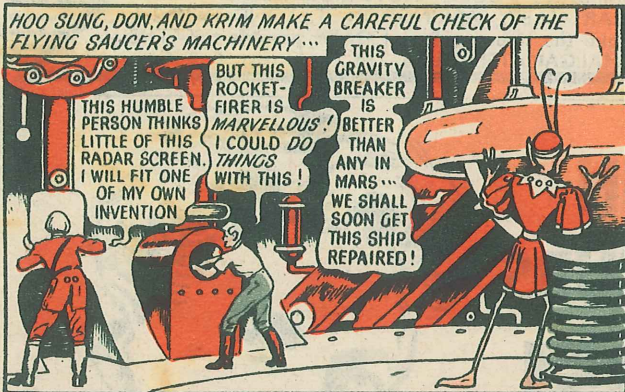
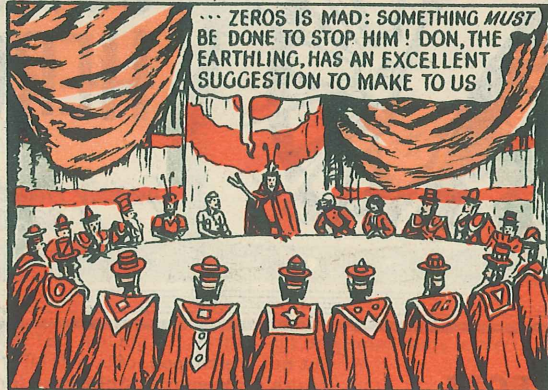
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DON DEEDS

Zeros, Lord of Uranus, dreams of conquering the universe and sends his flying saucers to attack Mars. Alphar, emperor of Mars, summons his Grand Council.



Will Zeros capture Don and Krim? More of this thrilling story next week!