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THIS IS AUSTRALIA'S FAMOUS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS!

Turkey to the Rescue

By FRANK RICHARDS.

TURKEY TO THE RESCUE

"OH, haddock!" breathed Turkey Tuck.

But he did not breathe that ejaculation aloud.

He dared not.

Turkey heard footsteps. And the sound of footsteps, at the moment, was alarming—to the fattest member of the Fourth Form at Carcroft.

Turkey was seated on a log, on the shady footpath in Ridgate Wood, at a little distance from the school. He was enjoying life. On his plump knees was a bag of dough-nuts, from which Turkey was helping himself with sticky fingers. He chewed dough-nuts and was happy. But now he was worried.

Turkey was not worried by the circumstance that he had found that bag of dough-nuts in the corner study at Carcroft, where it had been intended to grace the festive board when Compton, Drake, and Lee came up to their study to tea. A trifle like that did not worry

Turkey. What worried Turkey was the probability that Harry Compton and Co. would be looking for him when they missed the dough-nuts. Footsteps coming up the shady path indicated danger.

It was a winding path, shaded by branches, shut in on either side by trees and hawthorns. Turkey could not see who was coming; but he could hear. More than one person was coming—three, Turkey thought, from the sounds. Turkey ceased his operations on the dough-nuts, grabbed up the bag with a fat hand from a fat knee, and backed swiftly into the thickets beside the path. He had time to take cover; and he did not lose time. He pushed through the hawthorns, backed behind a tree, and waited there, palpitating, for the footsteps to pass on.

They came closer. Turkey, out of sight, was within hearing if he stirred. He did not stir. He hardly breathed. He did not even venture to chew a dough-nut while he waited and listened. If the newcomers were

Harry Compton and Co., they would pass on, without seeing him, leaving him to dispose of the remainder of their dough-nuts at his leisure. He waited anxiously.

The footsteps ceased—at the log on which Turkey had been sitting a minute ago. Then he heard a voice.

"Squat down, you fellows!"

"Oh!" breathed Turkey, inaudibly.

It was not the voice of Compton, Drake, or Lee. The new arrivals were not the Carcroft Co. But Turkey knew the voice: and it was even more alarming than Compton's, Drake's, or Lee's. Well he knew the drawing, rather affected tones of Gus Corton of Topcliffe School.

Turkey was glad that he had taken cover—gladder than if the newcomers had been the Carcroft Co. Topcliffe and Carcroft fellows seldom met without a rag; and the fat Turkey was easy game. He remembered an occasion when Corton and Co. had tied up one of his fat



legs, and left him to hop home to Carcroft on the other. If Turkey had been cautious before, he was doubly cautious now. He was as still and silent as a mouse with the cat at hand. Without moving, and without a sound, he peered through the hawthorns, and had a glimpse of three Topcliffe caps.

To his dismay, the three Topcliffians had halted, and were seating themselves in a row on the log. Gus Corton had produced a packet of toffee, which he handed round to Vereker and Stacey. Evidently the three were going to take a rest on that log, and were in no hurry to go on their way. The hapless Turkey had to wait till they were through: hoping from the bottom of his fat heart that they wouldn't discover that a Carcroft junior was so close at hand, and quite at their mercy if they felt disposed for a ragging.

The minutes that passed seemed long—very long indeed—to Turkey Tuck. Ten or twelve minutes crawled by, and still the Topcliffe trio did not move on. They sat and chatted and ate toffee. Turkey shuddered, as he felt something tickling his fat neck. It was a spider. But he dared not move to shake off that spider. He dared not wriggle, lest the bushes should rattle and betray him. It was awful for Turkey.

Then suddenly he heard an exclamation from Corton.

"Carcroft cad!"

For a moment, it seemed to Turkey that he was discovered. The next, he realised that Corton's exclamation did not refer to him. Tramping footsteps came up the path under the branches: another newcomer was coming along—evidently a Carcroft fellow. The three Topcliffians were standing up now, staring at a blue-and-white Carcroft cap that appeared among the hawthorns.

"It's that chap Drake!" Turkey heard Corton's voice again, in low tones, "Walking into our hands, all on his own."

"Oh, I say," came a bleat from Vereker, "That Australian chap's a hefty brute—we don't want a row."

"He packs no end of a punch, this," muttered Stacey. "You had it on your nose once—you remember?"

"I remember," Gus Corton rubbed his nose, as if a twinge from that punch still lingered. "I'll make him pay for it now. We're three to one, and he won't have an earthly. We'll tie his leg and make him hop home, as we did that fat frump Tuck. And if he puts up a scrap, we'll give him the hiding of his life to begin with—"

"His pals may be about somewhere," muttered Vereker, uneasily. "Those three are usually in a bunch. If they came up—!"

"Nobody about now. Don't be such a rotten funk, Vereker. Here he comes— Get round him, and don't let him bolt."

Turkey heard rapid footsteps.

II

BOB DRAKE came to a sudden halt.

He was swinging cheerily along the shady footpath in Ridgate Wood, when he came suddenly and unexpectedly on the Topcliffe trio. He was on his guard at once. But Bob was not looking for trouble. He was, as Vereker had said, hefty: and as Stacey remarked, he packed no end of a punch. But he was a peaceable and good-tempered fellow. He could have knocked any one, perhaps two, of the Topcliffians into a cocked hat: but he had no particular desire so to do. In fact, he gave them a cherry grin as they circled round him, while at the same time keeping very wary.

"Pleasure to meet you, Drake!" grinned Corton. "Remember what happened last time we met?"

"Quite!" agreed Bob, pleasantly. "I punched your nose for playing tricks on a fat duffer who couldn't put up his hands. Like me to punch it again?"

"I don't think you'll do much punching this time!" drawled Corton. "You'll get damaged a bit, if you try it on."

"More than a bit," said Vereker.

"Quite a lot, in fact," said Stacey.

"I don't want a row, if you don't!" said Bob, cheerfully. "I'm looking for somebody, and I believe the fat villain came this way. Seen anything of a chap like a barrel? You've seen him before—chap named Tuck—"

"Never mind Tuck now," said Corton. "We haven't seen him, and don't want to—but we're seeing you, and we do want to—don't we, you fellows?"

"We do!" agreed Vereker and Stacey, grinning.

"Perhaps you'll be good enough to get out of the way, and let me pass!" suggested Drake. "I'm rather keen to get after Turkey—there may be some of my doughnuts left—if I can find the fat snooper. Now, then, let me pass!"

"It's not very far back to Carcroft," said Corton, meditatively. "I dare say you could hop it on one leg, Drake."

"I dare say I could! But I'm not going to try. If you're thinking of playing tricks on me as you did on that fat ass, Turkey, you'd better guess again." Bob Drake pushed back his cuffs.

"Just what we're thinking of!" grinned Corton, "and if you hit out, my dear man, we're going to rag you bald-headed. If you fancy you can handle three fellows at once, I wish you joy of it. Collar him!"

Gus Corton led the rush.

Bob Drake jumped back, and put his back against a tree—the very tree behind which Turkey Tuck was palpitating. His hands were up, and his blue eyes gleaming over them. Whether he could handle three fellows at once, was doubtful: but he was going to do his best. And that he was going to hit out, was clear immediately—for he met Corton's rush with a punch that made him stagger, and followed it up with another that drew a spurt of crimson from Vereker's nose.

But he had no time for more, for three pairs of hands grasped him, and he was dragged away from the tree, struggling in the midst of the trio, clinging to him rather like cats.

There was a mild trampling, and gasping, and panting, on the shady footpath. Three to one were long odds, and Bob, hefty as he certainly was, had no chance. But he was a good deal like a wildcat in the grasp of the three. They rocked in a struggling bunch.

"Oh, haddocks!" breathed Turkey, behind the tree.

He made a move—and stopped again! Turkey knew, only too well he knew, that it was up to him, or any Carcroft man, to weigh in and help, when a Carcroftian was struggling with three Topcliffians, three to one. Only too well he knew it! But—!

True, the fat Turkey was of little use in a scrap. Corton or Vereker or Stacey could have knocked him out with one hand. But to stand idle, in cover, while Bob Drake struggled desperately with three assailants, was really outside the limit. Gladly Turkey would have rushed into the fray, but—

But his fat heart failed him.

Terrific punching was on, a few yards from Turkey. Bob, overpowered as he was, was getting in some hard knocks: and the Topcliffians, enraged and exasperated and considerably damaged, were hitting back, hard. Corton and Co. had little regard for fair play, if any: they were very unfavourable specimens of the fellows at Topcliffe School. The combatants were hitting hard and hitting often: and Turkey felt his fat flesh creep at the idea of any of those hefty punches landing on his own fat person. He wanted to rush into the fray: he longed to rush in. But he didn't! He stayed where he was!

The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak.

There was a crashing and bumping in the footpath. Bob was down, with the three Topcliffe juniors sprawling over him.

Under them, he heaved like the stormy sea. But they had him down, and they kept him down. And, spent at last from the unequal struggle, Bob lay helpless, pinned down by the triumphant Topcliffians.

III

GUS CORTON mopped a streaming nose.

"Hold the hefty brute!" he panted. "We've got him."

"Keep him safe while I fix him."

Corton dragged a whip-cord from his pocket. He bent over Bob. The Carcroft junior made one more effort: but it was in vain. Vereker and Stacey held him fast, and Corton knotted the end of the cord round his ankle, bent his leg at the knee, and knotted the other end round both his wrists behind his back. That done, it was not much use for Bob to make another effort. He lay panting in the grass, while the three Topcliffians, standing round him, panted for breath, and rubbed damaged features. Corton pressed a handkerchief to his nose. It was spotted with crimson.

"The brute can punch!" he gasped.

"Can't he just?" mumbled Vereker, caressing a darkening eye. "Ow!"

"Oooooogh!" murmured Stacey. He was feeling his nose, which felt as if it was no longer there, "Oooh."

"We've got him!" Corton's eyes glittered down at Bob. "By gad, we'll start him hopping, and boot him as far as the road. Get up, you Carcroft cad!"

"Oh, you rotters!" breathed Bob. "You've got me—but if Compton and Lee came along, you'd be running like rabbits."

"Yank him up!" snapped Corton.

They grasped the Carcroft junior, and heaved him to his feet—or rather, to one foot. Bob stood unsteadily on his right leg. The whip-cord trailing from his wrists kept his left foot high above the ground. He lurched wildly as they let him go, and had to hop frantically to keep his balance.

Vereker and Stacey chuckled, amused by the sight. But Corton did not chuckle. The damage to his nose was too painful for chuckles. Gus Corton was in a savage temper, and in no mood for chuckling.

"Hop it!" grinned Vereker.

"They'll laugh, when you get back to Carcroft—like that," chuckled Stacey.

"Get going!" snapped Corton.

"We're going to boot you as far as the road—"

"Here, hold on, Gus!" exclaimed Vereker. "You can't boot a chap with his hands tied—"

"Can't I?" snarled Corton. And he showed immediately that he could, by lunging out with his foot.

There was a yell from Drake, as he staggered, and almost toppled over.

"Oh, you rotter! Oh!"

"That's a start," said Corton. "You're getting a lot more like that! Get going, you Carcroft smudge. Hop it! That'll help!" His foot lunged out again.

"Rescue!" roared Bob. He put his beef into that roar, in the faint hope that Carcroft ears might be within hearing. "Rescue, Carcroft!"

There were Carcroft ears quite close at hand: the fat ears of James Smyth Tuck. The fat Turkey palpitated behind the tree.

"Wastin' your breath," said Corton. "Get going, I tell you! Hop it!" And his foot lunged again, and again.

APOLOGIES

We have to say sorry to Mr. Arthur Neve for not mentioning his name on the "Cinemas" and "Handy Gadgets" articles that appeared in No. 24. They were the best in the magazine.

"Rescue! Compton! Lee! Rescue!" roared Bob.

It was then that Turkey Tuck had a brain-wave.

So far, the fat Turkey had palpitated in his cover: unseen, unheard, unsuspected. But even Turkey could stand it no longer. He simply couldn't stick in cover while the unfortunate Bob hopped on one leg, with Gus Corton's foot lunging behind him. And Bob's shout for help put an idea into his fat head! His podgy brain had a sudden inspiration.

Hitherto, Turkey had been as quiet as a mouse. Now he suddenly stirred, and plunged among the hawthorns, causing them to shake and rustle wildly. At the same time he yelled, at the top of his voice:

"Come on, Compton! Come on, Lee! Topcliffe cads! They've got Bob—come on, you fellows! Compton—Lee—Vane-Carter—Talboys—come on, you fellows, quick."

"Oh, gad!" Gus Corton dropped his foot, lifted to give Bob another lunge, "Look out—Carcroft cads—!"

"Hook it!" panted Vereker.

"Cut!" breathed Stacey.

They started even as they spoke. Gus Corton stared, for a moment, at the rustling, swaying hawthorns,

and then he raced after his friends. If there were a crowd of Carcroftians at hand, and it sounded like it, Corton and Co. did not want to stay and encounter them—very much indeed they did not. Three scared rabbits could not have covered the ground faster than the three Topcliffians. Almost in a moment, they vanished up the path, running for their lives.

IV

BOB DRAKE leaned on the tree, panting. Turkey Tuck's fat face grinned from the thicket.

"He, he, he!" chuckled Turkey.

Turkey had been in sheer terror of what might happen if his ruse did not succeed. But it had succeeded. Corton and Co. had vanished like ghosts at cock-crow: already their racing footsteps had died away in the distance. Turkey rolled chuckling out of the hawthorns.

Bob stared at him blankly.

He, like Corton and Co., had had no doubt that his friends were at hand. He was amazed to see Turkey on his own.

"Where's Compton? Where's Lee?" he exclaimed.

"He, he, he! Blessed if I know!" grinned Turkey. "Haven't the foggiest! I just yelled to make those cads think a crowd of us were coming, see?"

"Oh!" gasped Bob.

"Strategy, you know," grinned Turkey. "They didn't stop to ask questions! He, he, he! Of course, I'd have pitched into them if they hadn't cut! I'd have knocked them right and left. But—but there were three of them, you know, and—and—and I don't think I could have handled more than two—!"

It was Bob's turn to chuckle.

"I don't think you could, old fat man," he said, laughing. "Perhaps not even one! Maybe not half of one! But I'm no end obliged to you, all the same—and you can have the dough-nuts—!"

"Eh!" Turkey had forgotten, for the moment, even the dough-nuts. "I—I say, I—I never went near your study, and I never—" Turkey's fat voice trailed off. The bag of dough-nuts was still in his fat hand, and Bob's eyes were on it. "I—I—I mean to say—"

"Get me loose, fathead," said Bob. "Never mind the dough-nuts."

Turkey eyed him warily.

"You ain't going to kick a chap?" he inquired.

"No, you ass—!"

"And Compton and Lee ain't?" further inquired Turkey.

"No, fathead!"

(Continued Page 24, bottom Col. 1)



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TURKEY TO THE RESCUE

(Continued from Page 12)

"And I can keep the dough-nuts?"
"Yes, you blithering barrel!"
roared Bob. "Now get me loose!"
And Turkey got him loose.

HARRY COMPTON and Dick Lee heard of Bob's adventure in Ridgate Wood, and of Turkey's remarkable and successful ruse, over tea in the corner study: a tea minus dough-nuts. It was agreed unanimously that Turkey was not to be kicked—not till next time, at any rate. After tea, they strolled down to the Burrow; and at the door of that apartment, they heard Turkey's fat voice within: telling the tale:

500 6d., 8d., and 1/- comics (Austrian) for 3d. each plus postage. English thrillers and "Cowboy" comics of 1/- value for 6d. each plus postage. 100 Australian and English "Eagles" for 4d. each plus postage. All comics have covers and are in good condition. Apply for a list and send for requirements. Call or write to Graham Parks, 1 Thomas St., Clarence Gds., South Australia.

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"There were three of them," Turkey was saying, "but did I care? They had old Bob with his leg tied up—and he couldn't help—but did I care? No fear! I just rushed at them—fat lot I cared whether they were three to one or not! I just went for them—and did they run? He, he, he! You couldn't have seen their heels for dust! They handled poor old Bob all right, but they jolly well knew that they couldn't handle me! They just cut and ran—!"

The Carcroft Co. chuckled and walked on: leaving Turkey happily telling the tale!

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