

—By Williams

OUR BOARDING HOUSE

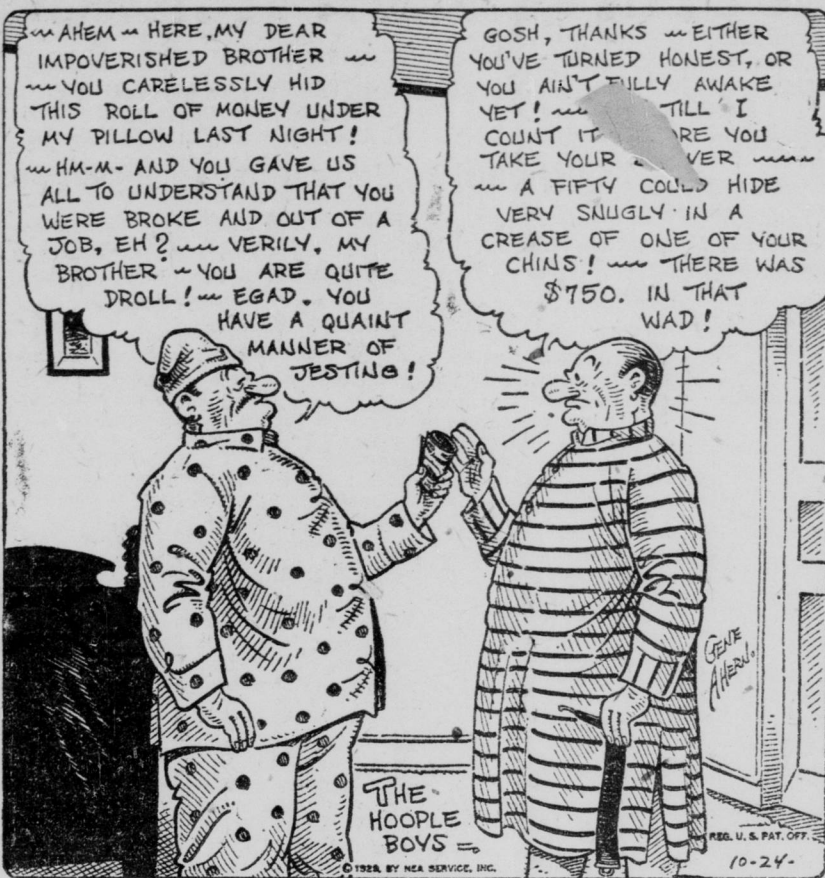
—By Ahern

BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

—By Martin



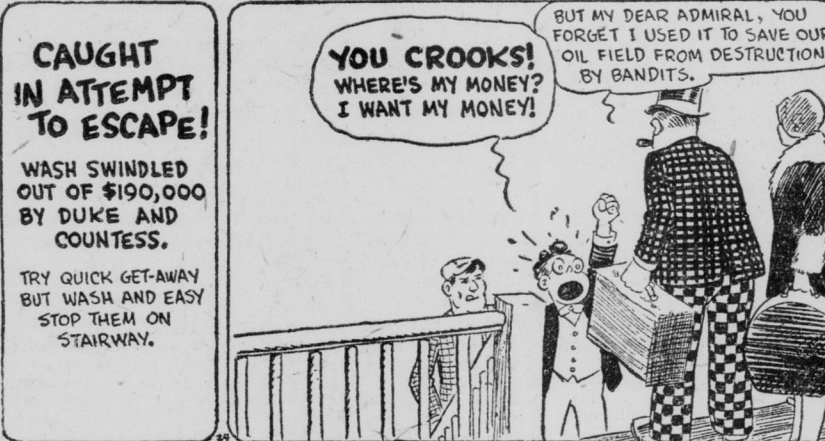
MOMENTS WE'D LIKE TO LIVE OVER - J.R. WILLIAMS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



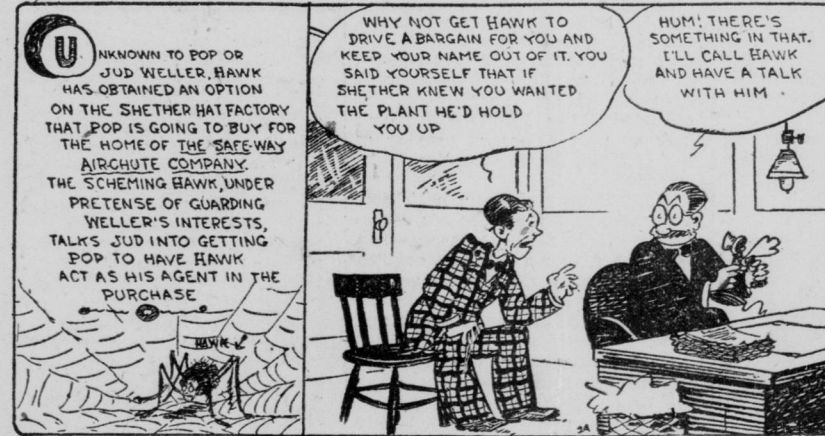
WASHINGTON TUBBS II



SALESMAN SAM



MOM'N POP



THE RETURN OF TARZAN



Tarzan followed close upon the warrior, waiting for a clearer space in which to hurl his rope. Suddenly he caught a fleeting glimpse of a tawny hide working its way through the matted jungle grass. It was Numa, the lion. He, too, was stalking the black man. Instantly Tarzan realized the native's danger.

Now Tarzan's attitude toward his erstwhile prey changed completely. Here was a fellow-man threatened by a common enemy! Like a flash, things happened. The lion sprang from a bush. . . . Tarzan shouted a warning, and the warrior turned just in time to see Numa halted in mid-air flight by a slender rope.

The moose stopped the beast, but the strain overbalanced Tarzan. He came tumbling to the ground. The lion turned upon him. Defenseless, Tarzan of the Apes was nearer death than instant than ever before! It was the black man who saved him. His spear arm flew back, then shot forward. A poisoned spear-head transfixed Numa's sleek hide.

Hideously raging, the brute turned again upon the black, but Tarzan's rope again caught him. Swiftly the ape-man ran thrice around a giant tree, binding Numa fast. Next his giant arm encircled that roaring throat. A long blade sank into its fierce heart. Across the body of their kill, the white man and the black made signs of peace and friendship.



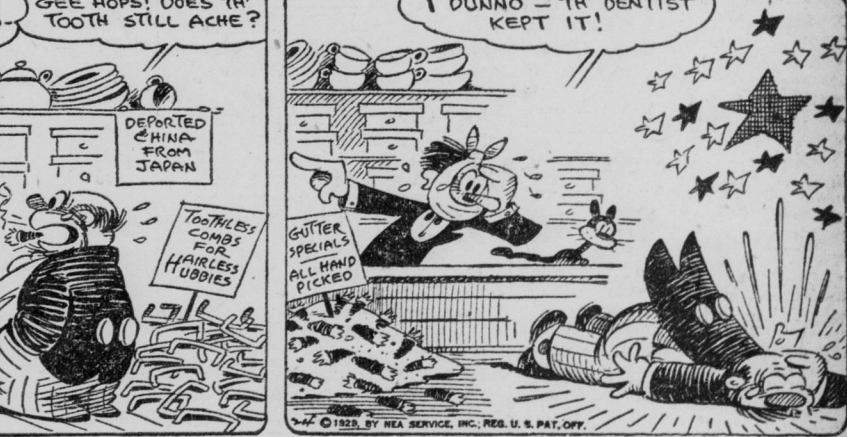
—By Blosser



—By Crane



—By Small



—By Taylor



—By Edgar Rice Burroughs



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# The Innocent Cheat

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CHAPTER XLIV (Continued)

She struggled to turn her thoughts away from such a fate and fasten them upon Bob! It was even greater torture to dwell upon him. Just when they had ended their foolish quarrel—when happiness unbelievably sweet had come to them—this!

Until that moment, when the full import of what had befallen her swept over Helen, she had not guessed how cruel are some of the tricks of Fate.

Mrs. Wethering came to ask her where she would have her luncheon served, as it was Helen's habit to take it in any place that suited her mood.

She was denied entrance. But Helen was fast becoming an enigma to her, beginning with Helen's association with Eva Ennis, so she asked her question through the door and went away without protest when Helen answered that she did not want any lunch.

Late in the afternoon Helen went out. Mrs. Wethering saw her walking toward the lake. When the time grew past the dinner hour and she had not returned the housekeeper became alarmed and went into conference with Ashe about it. "I'm afraid," she said, "that something has happened to Miss Nellin."

CHAPTER XLV

HELEN was found sitting beside the lake, chilled but indifferent to her discomfort. In the darkness she seemed a part of the rustic bench on which she sat, so still was she.

Ashe spoke to her in a low-pitched voice, imbued with a sense of tragic unhappiness in her attitude.

She answered quietly that she would not have dinner—they need not keep it waiting for her.

"But might I suggest, miss, that the air is growing chilly?" Ashe said unhesitatingly.

Helen stirred and looked about her, noting for the first time that daylight had completely gone and a mist was hanging over the shore of the lake. She shivered slightly, got up and walked up the path to the house.

She went to her room and refused Mrs. Wethering's frequently repeated offer to bring her a tray. Presently she locked her door, but a little later the housekeeper was obliged to disturb her again.

"Mr. Ennis is here," she announced, raising her voice to make certain that Helen could hear her. "He insists upon knowing how you are. I have told him that you are indisposed, but he begs to see you. If you aren't too ill to come downstairs."

For a while no answer came, then a voice that Mrs. Wethering scarcely recognized as Helen's told her to send Bob away. "I can't see him," Helen added with a note of fierceness.

Mrs. Wethering concluded that they had quarreled and she was not at all averse to carrying Helen's decision to the young man who waited below in a fever of impatience to be with his sweetheart.

"But I must know that she isn't seriously ill," he protested.

"She is tired," Mrs. Wethering answered stiffly, "and does not wish to be disturbed."

She did not mean to be rude, but Bob sensed the rebuff behind her words and it brought the first doubt of Helen's reason for not seeing him. Perhaps she wasn't ill, after all, and her housekeeper knew she was making excuses.

"Will you carry up a written message to her?" he asked huskily. Mrs. Wethering could not refuse. Bob took a notebook from his pocket, wrote a few words hurriedly on a leaf, tore it out and gave it to the woman, folded over.

A MOMENT later Helen took it from her through a crack in the door. She read it through tears. "Unless you are too ill to come down, Helen, please see me," it said. Helen swayed against the door, closing it, and Mrs. Wethering heard her cry, "Oh, I can't, I can't, I can't."

"Miss Nellin! What is it? What's wrong?"

"Tell him to go away! Tell him I can't come down!"

Mrs. Wethering repeated this message to Bob in no uncertain terms and he was obliged to accept it as final. He left the house in a bewildered state of mind.

What could have happened? Had Helen repented their reconciliation so soon after vowing that nothing ever could part them again? It was unbelievable!

But illness need not have prevented her from sending him a word telling him when to return—unless her condition was far more serious than Mrs. Wethering had admitted.

The thought drove him to beg his mother, when he reached home, to telephone Bramblewood and inquire about Helen.

Word came back that she was sleeping. No, there was nothing to worry over—just a slight indisposition.

Crossly the housekeeper hung up the receiver, and hoped the Ennis family would not disturb her again until morning at least.

The next day Helen came down as usual to breakfast, her eyes purple rimmed in a terse, white face. She went through the motions of eating, but what food passed her lips was tasteless and unwanted.

Mrs. Wethering hovered in the background, watching over her, genuinely concerned for her health.

"Why, she looks as if she had a dead spirit in her body," the woman ejaculated to herself when first she glimpsed Helen that morning.

She was not far wrong. Helen felt as though her soul were dying within her. It was all so hopeless, so black, whichever way she turned.

She did not doubt Bob's love and faith, but she could not bear the thought of letting him sacrifice everything in the world to prove his loyalty.

And she dared not tell him of Brent's cruel alternative. He would never let her marry Brent. She knew that. He'd believe in her and want to fight to save her. And there was no hope of victory.

Her night of torture had convinced her that Brent was right in saying the world would believe her guilty with him in the plot to gain possession of the Cunningham millions.

She had no defense. She saw now how easily she had been convinced that she was the Nellin girl. She had been so secretive at school. Who would accept her story that she had not known who her parents were? Would they not all think that she had been concealing the fact that her father was a nationally known crook?

A CROOK! She, the daughter of an iron of infamy went deep into her heart with every thought of him. But Brent hadn't proved it! He hadn't proved that she was Helen Page!

With this declaration she sought to encourage herself to feed the only hope she had. But she knew Brent too well to believe that he would have done this thing without the proof he claimed to have. It was a false hope, and she knew it.

What would Mrs. Ennis say? What would any mother say if her son wanted to marry a girl who was stigmatized with crime?

Brent's cruelty had warped Helen's judgment, caused her to view all aspects of her situation with doubt and despair. All but Bob's love. It was the one thing she believed in unquestioningly.

All that day she lived in a panic lest he come to her and demand an explanation of her refusal to see him the night before. How horrible to have him think she did not love him—that she was so fickle she could change toward him overnight.

And he must believe it. What else was there for him to believe? Oh, why hadn't Ashe instructed Mrs. Wethering and Ashe to say she was not at home? That would have given her time to find a way to treat Bob less callously.

Too late to think of it now. . . . But surely there was something she could do. . . . something besides