



By Thornton W. Burgess

REDDY FOX EXPLAINS More often than you may suspect, to be prepared will win respect. -Jimmy Skunk.

Jimmy Skunk was minding his own business when a strange Dog came along and started to attack him. Jimmy always does mind his own business. And because this is

true, he expects everyone else to mind their own. People who meddle in the business of other people are likely to regret it. That Dog was regretting that he had not minded his own business and kept away from Jimmy Skunk. He was regretting it aloud with yelps and whines, and little choking coughs. He was rubbing his face on the ground. For a few minutes he was blind, and all the time he didn't know what had happened. He knew it had something to do with this not too big stranger in the black coat with white stripe. But just what, he didn't know. He knew he hadn't gotten near enough to that. And there was a terrible smell. It filled the air. It stung and choked him. And the smarting of his eyes had something to do with this. As soon as he could see again, he put his tail between his legs and sneaked away. Every few steps he stopped to rub his face with his paws, and sometimes to rub it in the leaves on the ground. Jimmy Skunk watched him long enough to be sure that he was on his way, then turned back to poking around the edge of the big rock just as if nothing had happened. He was looking for fat Beetles. All the time Reddy Fox and his small son, Little Too-Smart, were watching him from a safe distance. "You see," said Reddy, "it doesn't pay not to be polite. That Dog



Reddy looked as if he felt a bit foolish. He grinned ruefully.

wasn't polite. He is bigger than Jimmy Skunk, and he thought he could shake Jimmy Skunk to death. You have seen what happened. Jimmy was prepared. Jimmy always is prepared. He doesn't go looking for trouble, but he is always prepared to meet it if it comes his way. People who are always prepared for trouble, seldom have trouble.

"But what is it he does, and how does he do it?" cried the Little Fox. "He carries a little bag of scent. Don't you smell it?" Reddy grinned as he asked this.

Little Too-Smart made a wry face. There would have had to be something very, very wrong with his nose had he not smelled it. He wrinkled his nose. "I don't like it," said he.

"But why should just a bad smell make that Dog cry and rub his face so, as if he were hurt," persisted the Little Fox.

"That scent is more than just a bad smell. It is sort of a fine mist that Jimmy throws and if it gets in anyone's eyes it makes them smart."

"Have you ever had any in your eyes?" asked his small son.

Reddy looked as if he felt a wee bit foolish. He grinned ruefully. "Yes," said he. "It was a long time ago when I was not much older or bigger than you. I learned the hard way what you have had a chance to learn without unpleasantness or discomfort."

"Were you impolite?" asked the Little Fox.

Reddy chuckled again. "Yes," he admitted. "Yes, I was impolite. But I have been polite ever since. So Jimmy and I really are very good friends. As I have already told you it pays to be polite. That Dog probably will be polite if he meets Jimmy Skunk again, or one of his family."

"Does he throw that scent with his tail?" asked Little Too-Smart. "If he doesn't, how does he throw it?"

Reddy shook his head. "No," said he. "he doesn't throw it with his tail. But just how he throws it I don't know. I do know that he can and does throw it. You don't want to get too near either in front of him, behind him, or on either side. If you get that smell on your coat you'll lose all your friends. No one will have anything to do with you and you'll have to live alone for a long, long time. It pays to be polite."

Contract Bridge

By Josephine Culbertson

A HELPFUL OPPONENT

South didn't have the ghost of a chance for his three-notrump contract in the following deal until an opponent came to his rescue.

South dealer North-South vulnerable.

Bridge hand diagram showing cards for South and North.

The bidding: South West North East 2NT 3 3 Pass 3NT Pass Pass Pass

As it happened, four spades would have been a much better contract, in fact, easily makeable against any defence, but South, with two or three stoppers in each suit outside of spades, could not be blamed very much for feeling that three notrump would be safe.

West opened the heart jack. East followed suit with seven-spot, and declarer ducked. West continued with hearts and now of course East had to play his queen. South could have straightened out matters for the defenders by winning this trick, but he was not that accommodating; he ducked again, and from that point on, successful defense was out of the question.

East, forced to shift, led a diamond, but declarer's queen of clubs held, and the following play knocked out one of West's high spades. South had every suit under excellent control, and ended up by losing only two hearts and two spades.

This, of course, is scarcely a hand for advanced players, because they will see at a glance that East ruined the defence by failing to make the proper play at the first trick. That proper play was, obviously, to overtake the heart jack with the queen so as to avoid any chance of blocking West. It is evident enough that with West making that correct first play, declarer would be helpless. If he ducked the first trick, East would of course return a heart, and West could keep pounding at his long suit. This marked defense would hold South to two heart tricks, three diamonds and three clubs - he could not win a single spade trick.

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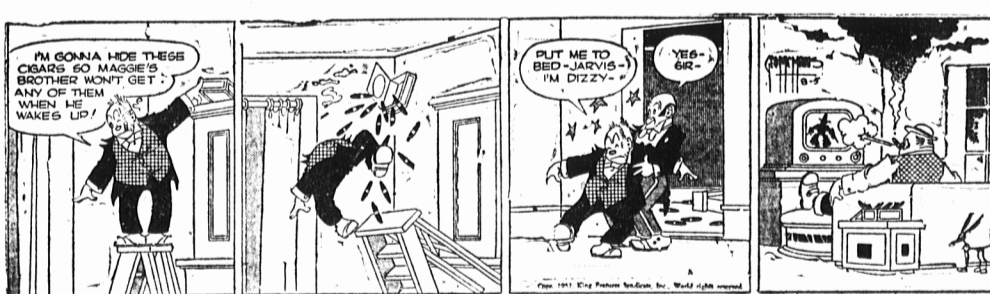
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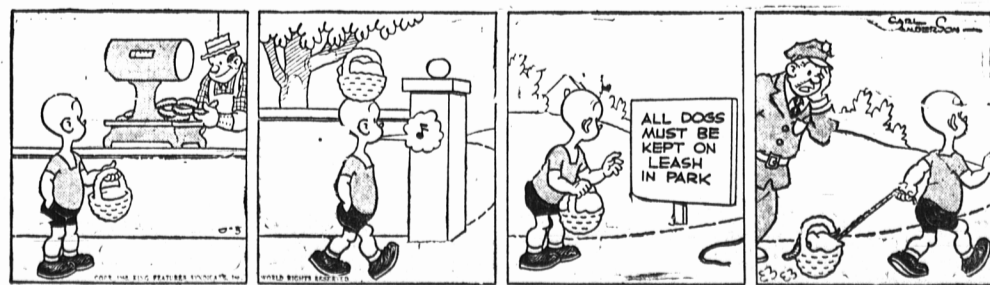
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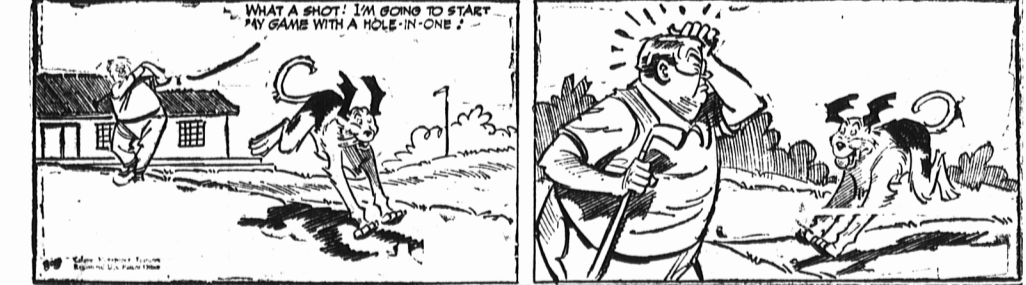
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