

THE DOPE

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS

by: George Barry, Jr.

The Dope walked down the street one day. He wasn't thinking about anything in particular, as was his habit. Suddenly, a horrific scream rent the air. The Dope stopped short. The screams continued. Following the sound, the Dope soon found that they were emanating from an alleyway, a few dozen yards ahead of him. He raced up to the opening and peered in. The buildings blocked out much of the sunlight but he could make out the figures of two men. One was lying flat on the ground, while the other, a big burly character kicked him repeatedly in the head.

The Dope jogged up to this scene of violence and shouted at the big fellow, "Stop! Stop! You must stop this at once!" The big fellow did not seem to notice the Dope for he continued to kick the unfortunate victim. Blood was streaming out of the poor man's head quite profusely and he was screaming quite profusely. "Listen here, my man," said the Dope, "you're going to kill this fellow if you're not more careful. Besides the screaming is driving me batty." The big fellow stopped his kicking for a minute and stared at the dope, "Listen pal, it's a free country, and if I feel like killing somebody then I'll bloody well do it!" The Dope thought about this statement for a few minutes. "Well, if you must do this, the least you can do is to keep the noise down", and, saying this, he took his handkerchief out of his pocket and stuffed it into the unfortunate victim's mouth. "There now! That's a bit better. Well, good-day to you sir", said the Dope as he turned to leave. "Yeah, goodbye pal", and with that, the big fellow began to jump up and down on the unfortunate victim's chest.

The Dope continued on his way down the street. It was a lovely day and the Dope stared at the bright, blue sky. For this reason, he didn't notice the child standing in the middle of the sidewalk and ran right into him. "I say, lad, very sorry about this!", stated the Dope, picking the child off of the ground. When the child was standing, the Dope noticed that the child had a cat firmly gripped by the tail in one hand and a bottle of turpentine in the other. Peering up at the Dope, the child snarled, "Hey, you old creep, why don't you watch where you're goin' ". The Dope replied, "Well, as I said, I'm frightfully sorry young man and I... ", he stopped short, for, as he spoke, the young lad began to pour the turpentine into the cat's rear-end. "My God, child, what on earth do you think you're doing!" "It's a 'speriment!", cried the child indignantly, "I'm tryin' to find out how much turpentine a cat'll hold." "Oh, I see!", exclaimed the Dope as he grabbed the little fellow by the arm, "Well, you're coming with me!" Amid the screams and kicks that exploded from the child, the Dope was able to reach his destination, the alleyway. Thrusting the child into the alley he shouted, "There now, you stay in there and carry out your experiment. I respect science as much as the next fellow but you're a menace to safety out there on the sidewalk. Besides cat noises make me nauseous." And with that he again started down the sidewalk.

Within the space of a few minutes, the Dope's reverie was again disturbed by loud noises. This time it was a distinctly feminine voice, pleading for help. Staring straight ahead, the Dope saw what he thought was a vision. A beautiful young woman, dressed in a striking white gown and with a head of stunning blonde hair, was rushing towards him. Racing headlong into his arms, the lady began to plead with the Dope, "Puh-leese, puh-leese, puh-leese suh," the lady spoke with a southern accent, "Ya'll simply must save po' li'lllo! me. Those, those,

unspeakable beasts were going to do unspeakable things to me!" Enjoying his new situation immensely, the Dope fondled the young lady quite unabashedly. He murmured, "Certainly, my dear, I'll protect you." As he said this, five rather unseemly, brutish types lumbered up to him. "Hey you! That our woo-mahn! We want!" The Dope looked at them for a few minutes and then, grabbing the damsel by the arm, took off at a dead run. After a brisk chase, the Dope stopped, grabbed the young lady and thrust her into the opening between two buildings. "There, my lady, you'll be safe in there." "But suh," the poor young thing moaned, "those horrible men are still aftuh us-all." "Nevuh you mind, now missy," he said, adopting a southern accent, "I'll protect you-all" With that, he delivered her a kick in the groin that sent her sprawling into the alley. Just then, the five villains, panting with both physical exertion and evil intention, glowered at the Dope, "Awright! Where woo-muhn!" Falling to his knees, the Dope sobbed, "Oh please, please don't hit me. She's right in there." He gestured toward the alley. Grunting and snorting, the five brutes hurried in. Getting to his feet, the Dope could just hear the muffled screams of the poor young woman, mingled with the cries of the cat and the moans of the unfortunate victim.

He began to head back down the street when a blinding flash of light appeared before him. The figure of a man in red flannel underwear with a cape and the emblem of some odd fruit on his chest formed in front of him. "I", said the man, "am the protector of the weak and innocent, the guardian of the poor, the defender of the downtrodden! I", he paused, "am Kumquat man !!!" Reaching into his pocket, he pulled out a small object and handed it to the Dope. "Here, have a kumquat!" The Dope was just about to thank this strange apparition when the young lady, evidently having freed herself from her captors, burst out of the alley. "Save me, save me, oh puh-leese save me!", she cried, grovelling at Kumquat Man's feet. Before the caped crusader had time to speak, the five burly brutes were in the process of carrying the young lady back to their debauchery. "Hold", cried Kumquat Man, "Cease and desist at once!" The five burly creatures turned around and looked at Kumquat Man and the Dope. "Oh Yeah," they grunted, "What you want?" The Dope broke out into a cold sweat. "Well, um, I must be going home now," he checked his watch, "My goodness, it's six o'clock. I'll just be in time to catch the news on T.V." He turned and began to walk away. "Wait!" cried Kumquat Man. "I must deal with these people first." He strode up to the five burly creatures and, reaching into his pocket with a flourish, handed each of them, including the young lady, a kumquat. "And here, take some for your friends in there", and, giving them kumquats for the big fellow, the unfortunate victim, the young lad and his cat, he walked back to the Dope. Putting his arm around the Dope's shoulders, he smiled and said, "And what's this about the news. I never miss old Knowlton, you know. I am really in to reality." And, as the various sounds of pain and of ecstasy wafted out of the alleyway, the two headed off into the sunset.

Moral: Why give of yourself when you can give a Kumquat ?

