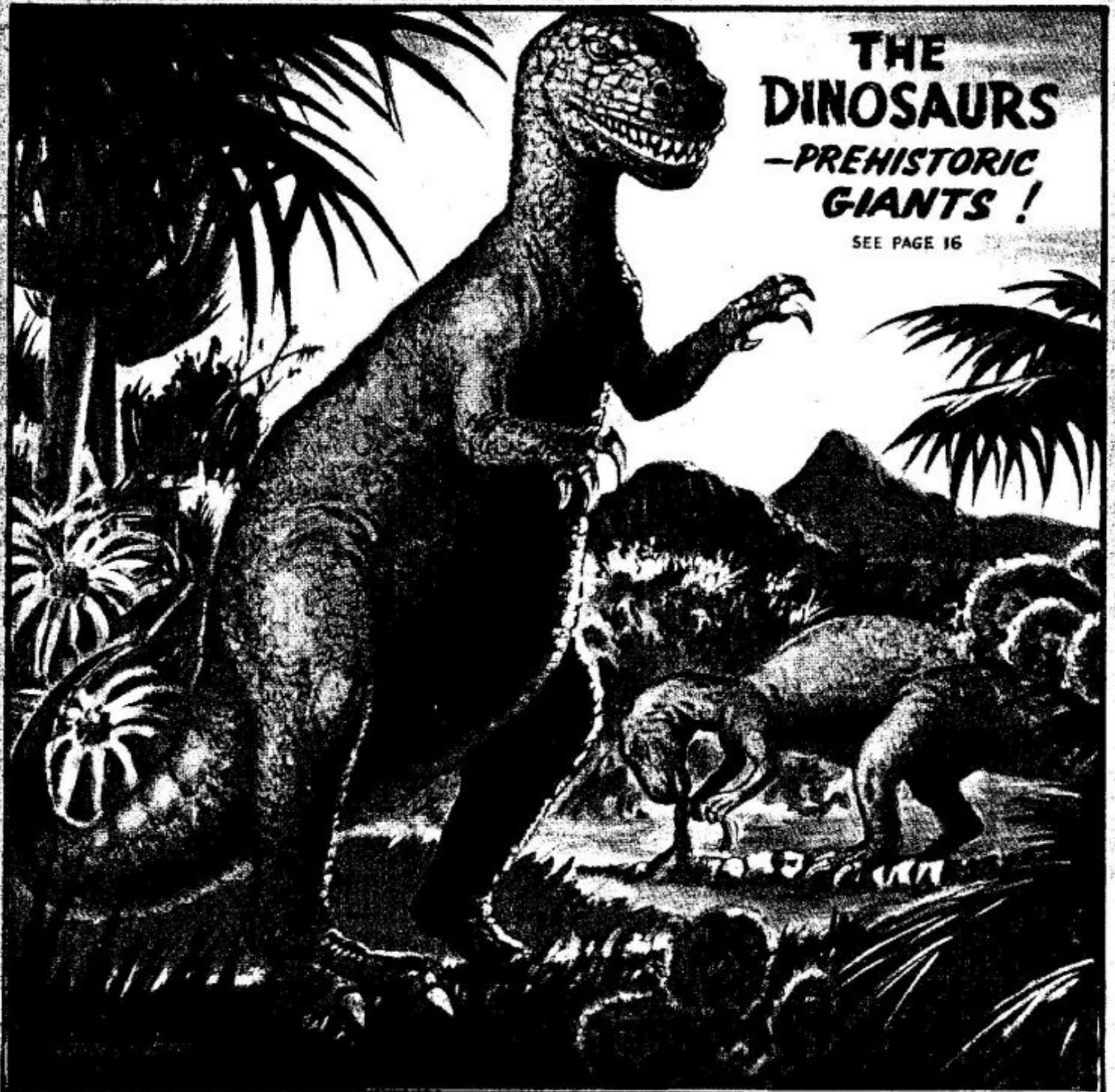


20 PAGES — PACKED WITH ENTERTAINMENT FOR BOYS OF ALL AGES!

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Turkey's Vengeance!



SPECIALLY WRITTEN FOR
THE SILVER JACKET BY
FRANK RICHARDS

TURKEY TUCK probably wouldn't have been barred from the picnic on the island in the Wynd had he not asked for it.

True, Compton and Drake and Lee did not yearn for the company of the fat Turkey. In fact, the less they had of it, the better they liked it. And though the supplies were fairly ample, Turkey's ineradicable habit of annexing the lion's share would have made it rather a thin feast for the founders thereof. And not a member of the Carcroft Co. was keen to pull Turkey's uncommon weight up the river as far as the island.

Nevertheless, Turkey would most likely have been permitted to hook on, had he been able to wait—but he couldn't wait! The bag of tuck was all ready in the corner study, when Bob Drake came up, to carry it down to the boat. As Harry Compton and Dick Lee were downstairs, Bob did not expect to find anyone in the corner study. But he found somebody — James Smyth Tuck! He found him with two plump paws groping into the bag of tuck, and a smear of jam on his fat face which indicated that some of the supplies had already disappeared on the downward path.

And so it came about that instead of being permitted to join up for the picnic on the island, Turkey was booted all round the corner study, and departed therefrom on his highest gear, wailing the echoes of the Fourth-Form passage with frantic yells.

Having thus disposed of Turkey, Bob Drake closed the bag, and carried it down. He rejoined Compton and Drake in the quad, and they headed for the school boat-house.

The idea was to push out their boat, and pull up the Wynd without delay. But there was unavoidable delay on the school raft: for, as it happened, Mr. Roger Ducas, master of the Fourth, was there, in the very act of stepping into a boat. The island up the river was out of school bounds: a circumstance which thoughtless juniors omitted to remember at times. But obviously it would have been injudicious to start for the forbidden spot under Roger's eagle eye.

So the Carcroft Co. loafed on the raft, admiring the scenery, till Roger got under way, and disappeared in the sunny distance up the Wynd. Not till the windings of the river hid him from sight did they deposit the picnic bag in their boat, and follow it in. By that time, Turkey Tuck materialised, coming to the edge of the raft.

"Like me to come, you chaps?" he inquired.

"No!" answered three chaps in unison.

"I'll steer for you if you like!"

"Thanks: we don't want to run anybody down."

"Yah!" snorted Turkey, "you're jolly well going out of bounds, and if you get copped, you'll get lines all round. And I jolly well hope that Roger will cop you, so yah!"

Splash!

Perhaps in acknowledgment of Turkey's kind wish, Bob Drake dropped the blade of his oar suddenly into the water, sending up quite a water-spout. Turkey, on the edge of the raft, had most of the benefit of it.

"Oooooooo!" spluttered Turkey as he was splashed right and left. He staggered back, stumbled, and

sat down on the raft with a bump. "Oh! Ow! Wow! Oh, haddocks! Ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The three juniors, laughing, pushed off. Turkey Tuck sat and dabbed water from his fat face, and glared after them as they went. They smiled back at him as they pulled away, and the last they saw of Turkey, he was still sitting on the raft with a crimson, wrathful, indignant fat face, shaking a fat fist after them. Then he disappeared from view, and they forgot his plump existence.

But Turkey did not forget theirs. Having mopped his face with a grubby handkerchief, Turkey rolled up the tow-path in pursuit, with vengeful thoughts in his podgy mind.

MR. ROGER DUCAS frowned.

He was annoyed.

It was a holiday for the master of the Fourth as well as for his form. Roger was enjoying it in his own way, which few members of his form, if any, would have cared to share. He was seated on a log, under a shady tree, with no sound save the twitter of birds in the branches to disturb him, on the thickly-wooded island in the Wynd. On one knee he had an open volume of Horace's *Odes*: on the other a note-book. In that quiet, pleasant, secluded spot, far from the maddening crowd, Roger was engaged upon the happy—to him!—task of translating Quintus Horatius Flaccus: a task which had occupied his leisure hours for many years, and was likely to occupy them for many more.

Lost to the world in that en-

trancing task, buried in B.C. 23 and quite forgetful of A.D. 1954, Roger naturally did not want to be interrupted. But he was interrupted by a splash of oars, a rustle of branches at the water's edge, and the sound of boyish voices:

"Hallo, there's a boat here already!"

"Somebody on the island!"

"Looks like it!"

"I say, that looks like Roger's boat, doesn't it?"

"Can't be Roger's! The old bean can't be here."

"Not likely! Picnics on an island aren't in his line. He chews Horace when he feels like chewing."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on: jump out. If there's somebody here, there's room for us too. Hold on to that branch, Bob, while I tie the painter."

Every word came clearly to Roger's ears, through the thickets that screened the schoolboys from his view.

His frown intensified. He knew those voices: Compton's, Drake's, and Lee's. Not only was he interrupted, in the midst of pondering deeply on what Horace might possibly have meant—if indeed he had meant anything—in Ode I, XXVI. But he was interrupted by Carcroft junior boys, to whom that island in the river was out of school bounds. Three Fourth-Form fellows breaking school bounds had broken the thread of his cogitations.

Roger could be kindly. He could also be severe. His look, as he rose to his feet, indicated that he considered this a time for severity.

Leaving Quintus Horatius Flaccus, and his note-book, in the grass under the shady oak, Mr. Ducas stepped through the trees and bushes that intervened between his quiet spot and the little landing-place on the island. His gleaming eye fell on three cheery juniors. They had floated their boat in, alongside his own: Bob Drake was holding on to an overhead branch, while Harry Compton had taken the painter in hand, to tie up, and Dick Lee had picked up the bag of tuck.

"BOYS!"

Roger's voice was not loud, but deep. It had rather the effect of a thunderclap on the Carcroft Co. They all jumped: Dick Lee dropped the bag of tuck, Harry Compton dropped the painter, and Bob Drake let go the branch, and the boat rocked.

"Oh!" gasped Bob, "it's Roger!" The Fourth-Form fellows generally alluded to Mr. Ducas as "Roger," but not in his hearing. Bob, startled, had done so involuntarily.

"Oh, crumbs!" murmured Dick

Lee, "I thought it looked like his boat—"

"Boys!" The thunder rolled again!

"Oh! Yes, sir!" stammered Compton.

"What are you doing here, out of bounds?"

Really it was a superfluous question. They were there, in a boat, with a bag of tuck: Roger could easily guess the rest.

"We—we—we—" shuttered Bob. He grabbed at the branch again, and steadied the boat. "We—we—we—"

"We didn't know you were here, sir!" murmured Lee.

"I can guess that, Lee!" said Mr. Ducas, grimly, "but I am here, and I find you out of bounds. You will return to the school immediately, and remain within gates for the rest of the afternoon. Each of you will write one hundred lines from the first book of Virgil. Now go!"

The three delinquents looked at him, and looked at one another, in eloquent silence. Then they pushed off. Evidently there was not going to be any island picnic that afternoon.

"Blow!" said Bob, as they floated away. "Gated—and lines! Blow!"

They pulled back to Carcroft, not in their bonniest mood. Mr. Ducas returned to his shady tree and Quintus Horace Flaccus, and was soon happily back in B.C. 23: though he was, as a matter of fact, booked for another interruption later.

"HERE, Tuck!"

Turkey breathed hard as he heard Crewe of the Sixth call. He would gladly have turned a deaf ear. He knew that Crewe wanted a fag; and Turkey objected to fagging, or any other form of exertion, on principle. But Crewe was a Sixth-Form prefect: and a Carcroft "pre" spoke as one having authority, saying, "Do this!" and he doeth it!"

Turkey was taking his ease, sprawling in the grass under a tree by the river. After his splashing at the school raft, Turkey had followed on up the tow-path, with the vengeful intention of giving the chums of the Fourth a Roland for their Oliver, in the shape of whizzing chunks of turf into their boat as they rowed. But laziness had supervened. The boat was well ahead of Turkey, and putting on speed was not in his line. He had sat down to rest: and once sitting down, the fat Turkey was, as usual, disinclined to get up again. With his fat head leaning against the tree-trunk, he dozed in the drowsy warmth of the summer's afternoon, and his gooseberry eyes were

closed when Harry Compton and Co. passed the spot, pulling home down the river. It was not till Crewe, of the Sixth stepped ashore from his skiff that Turkey's eyes opened: and then it was not till Crewe had called him twice or thrice.

"You lazy young sweep, get a move on!" snapped Crewe, impatiently. "Herr, I want this skiff taken back to the school raft: I'm going to cross to Ridgate. Take it back and tie it up at the raft. Do you hear?"

Turkey breathed harder. Gladly would he have told Crewe to take his skiff back to the raft himself, and be blown to him! But he couldn't, with a pre. So instead of telling Crewe what he thought of him, Turkey squeaked: "Yes, Crewe!" and clambered wearily to his feet.

Crewe walked off by the footpath through the wood, leaving Turkey to obey his behest. Turkey glared at the skiff. True, he had only to take it down with the current, which was not very much exertion. But the fat Turkey did not like any exertion at all. And he was in a very bad temper already. He had been left out of a spread. He had been splashed, and had failed to whizz those clods at the offenders as he had intended. And he had woken up hungry after his nap under the tree: and his fat thoughts strayed to the good things he had seen in the picnic bag in the corner study, and that made him hungrier. Altogether, it was a disgruntled Turkey: and having to fag for Crewe put the lid on, as it were.

But suddenly, as he was about to step into Crewe's skiff, the clouds rolled away from his fat face, and he grinned. Evidently, some bright and consoling idea had flashed into Turkey's fat brain.

"He, he he!" chuckled Turkey.

He stared up the river. He could see the top of the tall oak tree on the island. It was not a long pull—even for a lazy Turkey. They were there—naturally Turkey did not doubt that they were there!—enjoying the picnic from which he was excluded. What would they feel like if, after that picnic, they found their boat missing, when they were ready to return to the school!

Turkey chuckled at the idea! It would serve them jolly well right—leaving a fellow out of a spread, and splashing him into the bargain. And it was easy enough—now he had a craft at his command—Crewe's skiff. Of course he would have to be very cautious, and take care that they did not spot him.

He was going to be very cautious indeed.

Grinning, Turkey sat down in Crewe's skiff, and instead of floating home down the river, as Crewe had bidden him, pulled up to the island. Turkey was no whale at rowing, and he caught crabs galore, and he puffed and blew and perspired. But it was quite a short pull, and even Turkey was equal to it. And his fat grin grew wider when he spotted the boat tied up at the landing-place on the island, and not a sign of any of the fellows about.

Of course, they would be picnicking under the big oak, in the middle of the island, never dreaming that their boat was in danger. But it was—with the vengeful Turkey on the trail of vengeance: if it was their boat, as Turkey did not dream of doubting.

Cautiously, awfully cautiously, Turkey toiled the skiff in under the branches. He did not want to give the alarm. With infinite caution, he untied the boat's painter, and tied it on to his own skiff's stern. Not a sound of alarm came to his fat ears. But as the two craft bumped together with a thud, he wondered uneasily whether they heard: and hastened his movements. Out from under the overhanging branches, into the broad river, he pushed in the skiff with the towed boat trailing behind him. A rustling in the bushes warned him that he had, indeed, been heard, and that someone was coming down to the landing-place.

But he was safe now—far out of reach. He put all his beef into a long, strong pull, aided by the swift current, and fairly shot away, with the captured boat rocking astern. Whether Harry Compton and Co. saw him from the island, he did not know: neither did he care, now that he was far out of reach and whizzing away in the rapid current. And he never even dreamed that that rustle in the bushes had been caused, not by picnicking juniors, but by an angry form-master who had been interrupted a second time while striving to elucidate the meaning—if any!—of Ode I, XXVI.

He did not know that, under the shady branches, Mr. Roger Ducas was staring after him almost in stupefaction, amazed at the temerity of a boy in his form taking away his boat. He was already too far off to hear an angry voice bark from the island. He swept round a bend of the river, and floated happily down to Carcroft, grinning from one fat ear to the other. And Mr. Ducas, on the island, was left with feelings too deep for even

Quintus Horatius Flaccus to afford him any consolation.

"BOTHER Roger!"

"What a muck-up!"

"Never mind — we've got the spread for tea!"

Turkey Tuck almost fell down in his astonishment. He could hardly believe his fat ears when he heard those voices from the corner study.

It was tea-time: and Turkey, still grinning over the success of his retaliatory measures, was coming up to the studies. How and when Harry Compton and Co. would get off the island in the Wynd, he did not know: neither was he bothering about it. They were stranded, and serve them jolly well right: and Turkey dismissed it at that. So the sound of their voices from the corner study,

Next Month's

story of Carcroft

will be

"THE BORROWED
BIKE"

by

FRANK RICHARDS

when he firmly believed that they were stranded on the island a mile away, was naturally startling.

"Oh, haddocks!" gasped Turkey.

He blinked into the corner study. His gooseberry eyes popped at Compton, Drake and Lee, sitting round the table at tea. His fat ears had not deceived him—there they were: evidently not stranded on an island!

They glanced round at Turkey, and Bob Drake picked up a cushion, apparently for use as a missile. Turkey did not heed that. He goggled at the three.

"You—you—you're here!" he stuttered.

"Eh? Why shouldn't we be?" asked Compton, staring at him.

"How did you get off the island?" gasped Turkey.

"Pulled off in the boat, of course. Think we flew?"

"But — but — but——" Turkey fairly babbled. "Oh, haddocks! How—what——"

"You're lucky you didn't come, too, old fat fathead," said Lee. "You'd have got lines as well. Roger was there."

"Roger!" gurgled Turkey.

"Yes: he gave us lines for being out of bounds, and we came away."

Turkey gazed at them. Slowly his fat brain assimilated it. Why he looked so utterly and completely flummoxed, the chums of the Fourth did not know. But he did: and Bob forbore to hurl the cushion.

"You—you—you left Roger on the island?" gurgled Turkey, at last. "I—I—I say, he—he—he had a boat there, I—I suppose?"

"Of course he had."

"Oh, haddocks——!"

"What's the matter with the fat ass?" asked Bob, in wonder.

The fat ass did not explain what was the matter. He tottered away, no longer thinking even of tea. It was all plain to Turkey now—it was not the Co.'s boat—it was Roger's boat—that he had captured: it was not the Co., it was Roger, whom he had left stranded on the island. It was really awful.

There was one gleam of hope. If Roger hadn't seen the fellow who took away his boat—! Had he? Turkey could only hope that he hadn't!

That last hope buoyed up Turkey till Roger came in. He came in late for tea, and very wet. Roger had had to swim off the island: and he reached Carcroft in a state of wrath, compared with which the celebrated wrath of Achilles was a mere passing breeze. He did not deal with Turkey immediately. He had to change first. Then he sent for Turkey.

He did not waste time in words. He pointed to a chair with his cane.

"Bend over that chair, Tuck."

"If—if you please, sir, it wasn't me——!" bleated Turkey.

"I saw you taking away my boat, Tuck. Bend over that chair!"

"I—I mean, I never knew—I—I—thought—I mean I never wasn't—I mean to say, I never wouldn't——"

"BEND OVER!" said Mr. Ducas, in a voice that Stentor of old might have equalled, but never excelled.

Anyone passing Roger's study during the next minute or two might have fancied that the master of the Fourth was beating a carpet. It was a dismal and dolorous Turkey that wriggled away afterwards, with not a single speck of dust left on his plump trousers.