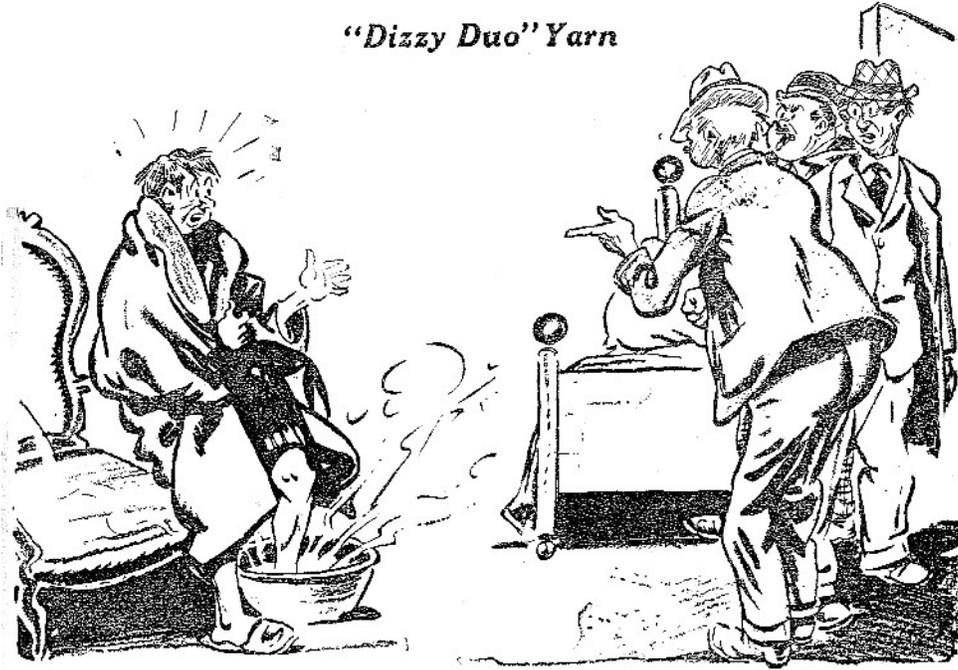


Rubber Sole Mates

"Dizzy Duo" Yarn



By Joe Archibald

Author of "Caught Shot," "Pie a La Murder," etc.

Elmer Twiddel was all set for a fancy dive in the hot seat when Iron Jaw plunged into a mental somersault. But Snooty exchanged a trail of ink for a trail of blood, which led him straight into the arms of murder's bookkeeper, who was always in the red—for blood.

THERE are times when the crime wave in Beantown is not quite big enough to wet down a cowlick on a baby's scalp, and then there are times when it almost drowns the citizens who are paid to snipe unlawful characters. One day me and Snooty Piper, who work for the *Evening Star*, are sitting in the Greek's listening to an important soprano strain her pipes on a radio program. Snooty is very bored with everything and wants to know why the mayor does not lay off half the police force as why should taxpayers cough up for nothing.

"It is a fine thing," Snooty complains. "The worst crime that has happened in this burg since last Christmas was when I got

nicked with a razor in a barber's chair. Why don't somebody start somethin', Scoop?" He yawns, blinks and stretches, then settles down in his chair again.

"A good journalist makes news, Snooty," I says. "Have you forgot? We will get a gun and a knife and go into a crowded subway an'—"

"Shut up," Snooty interrupts. "The screech owl has stopped. There is news coming over the radio."

"How could there be?" I says. "We know there isn't any."

But it is quite a morsel of dishonest society gossip that we get from the gabby box. The announcer says that no other than Homely Boy Billinger has cut loose from

the can up in Dannemora, New York, and did not tell the warden he was leaving. A couple of guards asked the very tough criminal on his way out and got erased from the social security lists by a toy cannon that Billinger had acquired in some very underhanded manner.

“Ye-e-o-ow!” Snooty says. “That is very startling, isn’t it, Scoop? Boy, I would like to catch him!”

“Ha, ha, you can have him,” I says. “I would rather try and nab a gorilla’s firstborn out of its crib. Did you forget what that rough character was in for? He has robbed forty banks, rubbed out seven country gendarmes, three G-men, eleven policemen and two dames who wore out their welcome with him. I hope he is heading west on a very fast rattler at this moment, Snooty Piper!”

“That is just my luck,” the crackpot sighs, wiping some beer off the sleeve of his green coat. I wish he would wear something else besides green, as I have been bilious ever since I met the halfwit. “He is Public Enemy A Number One now, and all the G-men in—er—everywhere will be after him. I—”

“I know what you’re thinkin’,” I says. “You have carried that G-man badge you found until you think you are one. If you found a sword, you would think you was a general. Well, listen, you nitwit, you flash that once more with me around and I’ll—”

“Oh, don’t get hysterical,” Snooty says. “Anythin’ seems to scare you lately. Tsk, tsk!”

By great force of will I keep from strangling him.

“It is the next morning that still more crime news piles up. Me and Snooty no sooner arrive at the *Evening Star* than Dogface tells us to get over to East Boston right away as a taxpayer has been exterminated and a safe has been robbed.

“It is at the Winkly Ink Factory,” the

city editor neighs. “Hurry up before the deceased has his funeral.”

“That is where you would find a dark deed, huh?” Snooty says. “I bet a radio comedian would give somethin’ for that gag, ha, ha!”

“Get out of here!” Dogface yowls. If he had tried to cut the crackpot’s throat then, I would have helped.

WE GO over to East Boston and right off Maverick Square is the Winkly Ink Works. When we walk into the office we find it is quite stuffy inside as there are eight people in it and Iron Jaw O’Shaughnessy, who is the only citizen we know of who can keep out of the bighouse by getting money under false pretenses. Iron Jaw is a detective, but he could not catch Primo Carnera if he had the big boy cornered in a dog kennel.

“What are you two mental deficient doin’ here?” Iron Jaw trumpets at us in a very mean tone of voice.

“Why, Mr. O’Shaughnessy,” Snooty chides him, “haven’t you heard? I have been made the society editor. I came to ask who won the bridge prizes? I wish you would step aside a yard or two as how can we see the safe?”

The flatfoot wants to throw us out, but he knows that we have a pal who lives in Back Bay who could have the whole police force fired if we just asked her to. It is Abigail Hepplethwaite who has got a dollar for every clam shell on the Maine Coast.

We ignore Iron Jaw and take a look at the deceased character. He is a night watchman who will never lose any more sleep because somebody has massaged him on the noggin with a paperweight that could slow up an elephant if it was tied to the pachyderm’s leg. The safe has been robbed, too, and there is a very excitable citizen milling around. It looks like he is

trying to tear tufts of hair out of his noggin although he is as bald as a medicine ball.

"The payroll was in there!" the taxpayer yells, falling over the county corpse expert. "Seventeen hundred an' fifty dollars. I been robbed!"

"If you haven't," Snooty chirps, "Somebody is a great kidder!"

"Any clues?" I ask very politely.

"Sure," Iron Jaw bays. "The assassin left his auto license and a passport pitcher. He used a stamp pad on the desk there to make fingerprints. Git out of my way, you—" The flatfoot suddenly reaches down and seizes a sheet of paper that is on the floor. "I got somethin', Mr. Winkly. He left a heel mark. Look!"

The policemen all gather around, and then Snooty asks Iron Jaw to move one of his pontoons just a little and O'Shaughnessy does it very testily.

Snooty says: "Look! I got somethin', Mr. Winkly. A heel mark. Arrest Iron Jaw as it is the same heel mark he found."

It is a murder investigation, but all guffaw. Iron Jaw takes off his derby and throws it at Snooty Piper, and the crackpot just misses getting decapitated by the iron skimmer. The derby goes out through the window and into traffic, and three days later we find out that it gave a truck driver a brain concussion.

It is nobody else but yours truly who finds the clue that bags the real dishonest character who erased the watchman. It is a whole footprint on a sheet of Winkly Ink stationery, and one part of the heel don't show. Iron Jaw tears the paper out of my hand and hollers: "Well, this time I got somethin'. Look, Mr. Winkly!"

"Couldn't you even thank me, you walkin' opera house?" I says, very nettled.

Mr. Winkly proves to be a much better detective than Iron Jaw O'Shaughnessy, but that is nothing for him to brag about. "I got an idea," he yelps. "This tells me

who did the terrible crime. It is a man who walks on the sides of his feet and wears rubber-soled shoes. I got one who does, and he is so bowlegged that a very fat pig could walk between his legs without grazing his knees. He is my bookkeeper, Elmer Weevil. He'll be here any minute. I want him arrested."

"Leave it to me," Iron Jaw says very importantly. "He will be headed for the high-voltage chamber before lunch time. Go ahead, Piper, and tell your readers that O'Shaughnessy has made a pinch this time that will stick. Ha-a-a-ah!"

"Yeah?" Snooty comes back. "If Notre Dame was playin' Vassar and you bet on the Irish, I would take Vassar."

NOW, in about five minutes who waddles in but a citizen with a chest thick through as a hogshead, and he wears a very shiny blue serge suit that fits him like Iron Jaw's topcoat draped over a fire hydrant. Elmer is very bowlegged, to say the least, and if he stood right beside a very knock-kneed citizen, their legs would spell OX. But Elmer does not look like a comic-strip figure and he has not got angel bones like a buzzard from bending over books. He is a citizen with a very easy pan to look at, and from above his hips he is quite a perfect specimen like you see advertised in swimming panties.

"Why—er—" Elmer tosses out, "what h-happened?"

"You tell us, ha, ha!" Iron Jaw brays. "You are under arrest for murder and robbery. Come quietly now or—"

Elmer Weevil is quite indignant and says so. Iron Jaw shows him the footprint on the piece of paper and Elmer gets as green around the chops as grass on the Common after quite a nice spring rain.

"That your hoof mark? Sure it is," Iron Jaw answers himself. "You killed him, huh? I thought so."

"It is quite a grilling you are giving yourself, isn't it?" Snooty taunts Iron Jaw. "Ha, who thinks you are a detective? You do! Who don't? Everybody! Ask yourself some more questions, Iron Jaw."

"Listen here, you garter snake, I won't stand any more. Just one more crack outta you an' I'll—" Iron Jaw reaches up to whisk off his derby, and Snooty asks did he forget he parked it near the curb across the street.

"That is my footprint," Elmer gulps. "Y-yeah. But I am innocent. Somebody stole them shoes las' night. I was lookin' for them. There was a nail in one an' I was goin' to get 'em fixed because it punctured my foot. I got an alibi. I'll prove where I was las' night!"

"Go ahead," Snooty pipes up. "The corpse expert says the watchman has been browsing across the great divide for about seven or eight hours and that means he was killed at midnight. Where was you?"

"I'm in charge here," Iron Jaw bellows. "Don't answer him, Weevil!"

"I was with a dame," Weevil says, ignoring the flatfoot. "You call her up. I had a date. At midnight we was at her flat cookin' hamburgers. Her name is Lila Lowe and she is a blonde."

"Tsk, tsk," Snooty says. "Why, Elmer Weevil!"

The cops say if Snooty doesn't shut up, they will throw him out. I tell them I will hold his feet.

"Oh, yeah?" Iron Jaw snarls. "What an alibi! We will find out, you crook. What is her address, huh?"

"I forget," Elmer stammers. "I had a couple of snorts las' night but she give me her 'phone number. I got it here. Look! It is Kenmore 3-6791. There—ya-a-a-ah! Call her up. Ask her if she knows Elmer Weevil."

Iron Jaw does. He gets a citizen on the wire who says she is not Lila Lowe and is

not a blonde, has gray hair and arthritis and for him to try a blind date somewheres else. Elmer gets quite weak in the knees and says for Iron Jaw to try Kenmore 3-6971. The flatfoot does, and after he gets through he says he got the Y.M.C.A. and there is no squab there named Lila Lowe.

"You're a liar, Elmer," Iron Jaw bays. "Let's go down to LaGrange Street and get your name in the book. It looks like you will get fricasseed by the state's chef, you wise aleck. Well, every criminal slips up, and don't you listen to the Crime Smacker Program every Tuesday night, Elmer? Crime don't pay!"

It looks very much to me like Elmer Weevil is quite guilty, and they take him out of the ink factory with the bracelets on. Me and Snooty report the heinous crime and then go down to the Greek's to think things over. Snooty says that Elmer might be innocent as he saw grease stains on his vest. Hamburger could make them, he opines.

"That is quite a clue," I sniff. "If they put your vest in a pan of water, they would have as nice a bowl of consommé as you ever tasted in a beanery. Own up this time. Iron Jaw has got the right dishonest character!"

Snooty shakes his head in disbelief, and we hang around until the first edition of the *Evening Star* comes out. It tells about Elmer Weevil and his awful crime. But Snooty reads about Homely Boy Billinger as he already knows about the Winkly Ink factory rubout.

"It says here, Scoop," he starts to read out loud, "that G-men and all other citizens who wear a badge are sure that Billinger is in the East as that is where his moll was seen last. The rough character will go to her first as she is his only weakness. It says he rubbed out two citizens once for just looking at her in a beer joint out in Ohio and that he is a very

jealous criminal who cuts dolls' throats for making him wait more than a minute on a date. I would like to catch up with Homely Boy as there are five thousand smackers reward out for him."

"If it was a million and I found him caught in a bear trap," I says, "I would walk right by him without looking. I would rather scratch matches on the wall of a powderhouse. I wish you would forget all about Billinger."

IT IS THAT same night that we go and see Elmer Weevil in the ice box, and we get there just as he is telling Iron Jaw that he just remembered the blonde riot's address and the number of her flat. Elmer says he was so upset when he was accused of the terrible crime that he could not think straight.

"I guess I wrote the phone number down wrong," he says, "but you'll find her there."

"It is very funny to me," Snooty says to Elmer, "why she has not showed up to go to bat for you, Elmer. The papers are quite filled up with publicity about you."

"Maybe she's scared," Elmer suggests. "Maybe she thinks they will make her an ac—er—what is it they call people who help?"

"An excessory," Iron Jaw says. "That is a legal term, Weevil."

"Boy, is he smart, huh?" Snooty snorts. "Let's go and call on the squab, Scoop. There is a man's life at stake, Iron Jaw, or is that very important?"

"He's still stallin'," Iron Jaw says. "We have got him ignited for murder and he is a cinch to get braised in the armchair at—"

We go over to the address that Elmer gave us and knock on the door of a flat marked G-2. Out comes a very frowsy looking broom-and-mop expert who weighs ten pounds for every year of her

life and she is at least fifty if she is half a day.

"Does Lila Lowe live here?" Iron Jaw rumbles.

The ancient squab looks at us and shakes her frowsy head.

"Never heard of her. But this mornin' a blonde jane moved outa here. Packed up an' left an' she was paid up two weeks in advance. What's she done?"

"Was anybody in here to see her late last night?" Snooty tosses out.

"I didn't see nobody."

"No?" Snooty glowers at her. "If you are holdin' anything back, I would have a care, my good woman. I'm a—" The crackpot reaches into his pocket for that badge, and I step on his foot so hard that he lets out a yell and scares even Iron Jaw.

"Come on," I says fast, "there are a million blondes in Boston. Elmer must've been scalded last night an'—"

"Yeah," Iron Jaw says, "he ain't kiddin' me no more, Weevil ain't. I'll see you boys at the trial."

We leave Iron Jaw out in the street and go over to the Greek's. Just before we walk in, Snooty gives a doll the eye. He is walking over to her when a citizen comes out of a cigar store and he is half a head taller than Jim Braddock and is built like a grain elevator.

"Been waitin' long, dearie?" he says to the squab.

"Come on, Scoop," Snooty says hastily and almost runs into the Greek's. "She wasn't so hot, huh?"

"Some day you will get embalmed on account of a dame," I says. "Don't any of them look homely to you?"

"I guess it is just the playboy in me," the crackpot says. "I feel sorry for Elmer Weevil."

"He is a dishonest character and should be punished," I says.

I open up an *Evening Star* and start

reading how the G-men are sure that Homely Boy Billinger is in Boston. I show where it says so to Snooty Piper, and he grins like he saw his name in a list of Sweepstake winners.

"I think I will go to Chicago," I says. "I heard they are looking for good reporters there. How much would it take to get a bus out there, Snooty?"

"Just when things are getting very interesting here, you want to leave town," he snaps at me. "With Billinger here an' his moll loose somewhere an'—I think I will prowl around tonight and forget that date I've got with a dame over in that School Street chili joint. I have an idea, Scoop—"

"Good night," I says, getting up, "I will see you in the A.M., Mr. Piper. Tonight my will power does not know its own strength."

THE NEXT DAY I meet Snooty in the madhouse of the *Evening Star*, and he gets over in a corner and says I should have been with him the night before.

"Give me just one good reason," I sniff.

"I went over to where Elmer Weevil lived," he says. "And I did some Charlie Chan-ing. It is amazing what I discovered, Scoop. I followed a citizen, who walked with a cane, all the way to a doctor's office. I went over to that place where Elmer said Lila Lowe lived and flashed my G-man's badge and got into the flat. What do you think? It is a very shiftless place she lived in. A garbage can was out on her fire escape that hadn't been emptied and I found half a hamburger in it. That means that Elmer was telling the truth, Scoop."

"You get screwier by the minute," I tell him. "How many citizens do you think eat hamburger in Boston, huh?"

"And I met a swell dame when I went

into a tavern over near Park Square about midnight, Scoop," the crackpot goes on. "What a number! She has henna hair and a pair of eyes that make you think of violets and lambs playin' on a lawn. I have found her at last, Scoop! The one and only dream girl—"

"I will call the Greek for some paregoric," I says. "My giblets are playin' hop scotch. Dream girl! Aw-w-w-w, cripes! Stop, Snooty, you're killin' me."

"It is very evident you have no interest in the fine things of life," he says loftily. "I am essentially the domestic type. I had only to meet Ida to discover it, Scoop. Her name is Ida Clare."

"Ida never believed it!" I says. "You could knock me over with a pick-axe, Snooty Piper. Shut up or I'll complain to the authorities. The state maintains a place for citizens who keep losing their marbles. I suppose you would even tell me now that Elmer Weevil is not a criminal."

"Ida says I must bring you along some night as she wants to meet you," he goes on. "She says she'll take a chance as nothin' makes her sick. Quite a sense of humor that baby has!"

There are times when I won't even answer Snooty

In a couple of days they have Elmer Weevil all set to get tried for murder, and everybody is forgetting about the citizen except Snooty Piper as Homely Boy Billinger is getting the top billing in the leading rags of the U.S. Snooty Piper says that he would bet with Lloyds of London and give them odds that Elmer Weevil will elude the roasting settee. He tells that to Iron Jaw O'Shaughnessy one evening when we meet the citizen who should have been octuplets at birth, and Iron Jaw says that Snooty is quite a die-hard.

"Ha, ha," the flatfoot brays, "it is a wonder you don't stand on the sidewalk every day yelling at motorists to go and

get a horse. Wait until the jury listens to Elmer's alibi."

"If I did not have a date in a half hour," Snooty counters, "I would think up names to call you, you big sperm whale! Come on, Scoop."

As we saunter down Tremont Street he tells me that he is going to give me a knockdown to Ida that night. She is meeting us in front of a tavern on Park Square, not far from The Bradford, he says. I says I can't wait.

"You are not very funny, Scoop," Snooty sniffs when he catches up with me. "And remember to have some manners tonight as Ida is very refined. Please do not down a glass of beer at one drag as it is very common."

We meet Ida in front of the tavern, and for once I do not blame Snooty as she is a dish that would look pretty good even at Earl Carrol's table. She is wearing a gray squirrel coat that I am sure cost quite enough sugar to sweeten a warehouse filled with lemons.

"Quite an eyeful, huh?" Snooty says with pride. "But don't snatch, Scoop. How does he look to you, Ida?"

The doll grins and says why don't I take off my mask as Hallowe'en is over.

"Oh, yeah?" I snap.

THE SWELL DISH pats me on the chops and says she was only kidding. Snooty leads her into the tavern like she was blown glass, and we have a couple of snorts. Then Ida invites us up to her place and says we can have a nice chat there, and maybe later she will call up a friend for me. We all do like she says and we go up in a little apartment house where she keeps her lipstick. Ida gets her fur coat off and then goes into a kitchenette. I look at Snooty and give him a very approving nod just as the doll ankles back again.

"Snooty, honey," she drawls, and I

blink. (It is like saying, "Here, Fido, you gorgeous thing," to a big airdale.) "I feel just like cooking a hamburger or two. If Scoop would go out and—"

Snooty rises off the sofa like he is being lifted by a medium, and his hair kind of stands up. It is nothing to what we hear next. Out of a closet comes a citizen that freezes up my arteries. He has a baby face with big round cheeks, but his eyes would set fire to a heap of asbestos if he looked at it long enough. It is a very rough character whose kisser has been peering out of newspapers at jittery citizens for days. Homely Boy Billinger!

"Well, Mame," Billinger says as Snooty Piper fights off a swoon, "how are ya? Dyed your blonde curlies, hah? T'ink I wouldn' know that squirrel coat I give ya? Oughter remember. I killed two guys stealin' it. Two-timin' me, ain'tcha? I got a pal up in the big house that said he heard ya was. Got a kite into stir that said so. Well, well, Henna Top, who are these panty waists, hah? Interduce me 'fore I spill their gizzards on the floor."

"Uh—er—let's t-t-talk things over, h-hah?" Snooty chokes out. "S-so you're Homely Boy, huh? Now let's g-g-g-get ourselves p-p-pulled t-t-together. She's only a friend of ours an'—"

"W-well, maybe I won't bump ya off yet," Homely Boy says, putting the cannon back in his shoulder holster. "I need a coupla pals to help me blow this burg. Y-yeah, what mob ya hang out wit'?"

"The Ch-Chelsea Assassins," Snooty says. "Just say what ya want us to do, Billinger, an' we're wit' ya!"

"I knew you was reg'lar," the doll says to us, then turns to Public Enemy A Number One. "Listen, kid, I was scairt the cops would tag me when they heard ya got out so I dyed my hair. I was only thinkin' of you an'—"

"Y-your dream girl!" I whisper at

Snooty. "You cock-eyed—"

Snooty Piper reaches into his pocket to mop his pan. He yanks out a bugle napkin, and something comes with it and falls right at the feet of Homely Boy Billinger. All the air goes out of me like I was a tire nudged by a six-inch spike when Homely Boy picks up the G-man's badge. He drops it with a very nasty yell and reaches for his roscoe.

"Gover'ment dicks, ha-a-a-ah? Mame, ya double-crossin'—"

Snooty makes a dive at Homely Boy, but his dream girl grabs him by the scalp and yanks him back onto the seat of his pants. Homely Boy fires at me and I feel a slug take some padding out of the shoulder of my nineteen-fifty burlap just as I duck under a table. I reach up and push it over, and the public enemy swears very coarsely as the table leans firmly against his shins.

"Ha-a-ah!" yelps Snooty, and I see his dream girl pulling him across the room like he is a rug and Snooty's face is all pulled up toward his scalp. I know if the dame don't let go of his hair in very few minutes, he will be nothing but a grinning skull from the neck up.

Homely Boy is getting up and is groping for the cannon, but I step on his fingers with one foot and on his neck with the other. Homely Boy opens his mouth very wide and I kick some of his bridgework loose, and it almost chokes him to death. Then I go and save Snooty Piper, not that I know why. I grab the henna doll's locks, and yank very earnestly, and she yelps, "E-e-e-ek!" and lets go of Snooty's toupee. I push her into a closet and turn the key in the lock.

WE BOTH sit on Homely Boy and wait for indignant citizens to hammer the door down. Some of them are cops. They come in and want to know what do we mean by such disgraceful

conduct.

"I guess it is the beast in us," Snooty retorts. "Just step up, boys, and meet Homely Boy Billinger who is wanted everywhere like a repeal of the gasoline tax, ha, ha! Get the moll out of the closet and take her down to a beauty parlor and get her hair soaked with peroxide before you lock her up in the bird cage. Then make her tell that she was cooking hamburgers for Elmer Weevil in a flat on Commonwealth Avenue the night a watchman was made defunct at the Winkly Ink factory. Hold it! Don't do that until I tell you to, as there is something we have to do yet."

"Don't tell me we are not through, Snooty," I groan while they truss up Homely Boy. "I can't stand much more. If a grasshopper skidded into me now, I am sure I would get a stroke."

"Of course you realize," Snooty says, "that we have not captured the assassin who murdered the citizen that the taxpayers thought was rubbed out by poor Elmer. But I can lay my hand on him, I am sure, in just about an hour. We will go over to Dorchester where Elmer lived and take Iron Jaw and some big policemen with us."

It is only an hour later that Iron Jaw knocks on the door of a rooming house in Dorchester and a citizen says for him to come in. The flatfoot does, also four gendarmes and me and Snooty Piper. A very startled bosco is sitting in a chair soaking a foot in a pan of hot water and his map turns very pale like the top of blanc mange pudding when he takes a gander at us.

"Come on, Mr. Eddie Flicker," Snooty says. "Tell us how you robbed the Winkly Ink factory safe and eased the watchman out of circulation. Oh, don't look so surprised. You stole Elmer Weevil's rubber-soled shoes when he was out and

wore them during the awful crime, and you left a print on some paper so's they would think he was the dishonest character. There was a nail in Elmer's shoe, and it give you quite a stabbing, huh? You live in the same house as Elmer and you had a good chance to cop the shoes. I followed you to the doctor one night, and when you left I went in and asked the M.D. who was the citizen being treated for blood poisoning. He tells me."

"It's a lie!" the bosco named Flicker squawks. "Prove it."

"With pleasure," Snooty says jauntily. "I will take you down to headquarters and will take off Elmer Weevil's shoe and see if the puncture on Elmer's foot is in the same place yours is. Now, that is very simple. I bet even O'Shaughnessy here will understand how simple it is. Ha, ha. It's no use, Flicker, as we have got the blonde alibi anyway that will lift Elmer out of the sizzle sofa. He was with her cookin' hamburgers while you were committing a very unlawful crime."

"Aw-w-w-w nuts!" Flicker cracks. "Ya got me. Ain't that a break? Jus' because that sap has a nail in his shoe—aw, what's the use? Them's the breaks I git. I was hit by an eight ball when I was ten years old an' I ain't been the same since. I will plead nutty as that is my story and I'm stuck with it!"

"Come on, Scoop," Snooty says. "I think that is everything. Homely Boy's torch, when she read in the papers that he was in a jam, knew that Elmer would name her as his out and that meant that her pan would be in the rags, and she knew Homely Boy would see it and come after her with a cannon if he was hiding

anywhere around as she knew how jealous the rough character was.

"So she took a powder from her tepee on Commonwealth Avenue and went out and dyed her blonde toupee with henna, as she figured Elmer might have given the gendarmes quite a good description of her. She also did not want to be mugged for the papers because she figured some very smart policemen might tumble that it looked like one in the rogue's gallery. They might pick her up and get the prints of her lunch hooks and then where would she be? Just where she is now!"

"Quite a dream girl you found," I says. "While Elmer was frying, I bet she would be cookin' hamburgers and not batting an eye. When you pick up anything again, Snooty, make it a black widow spider!"

Iron Jaw goes out like he had a gallon of vodka poured down his feed pipe. He mumbles to himself something about waking up like he does after every other nightmare. We go down to headquarters with the rest of the citizens, and the doll squawks and we match shoe nail punctures and find they are in the same place on each foot like Snooty said. Then everybody shakes our hands and says we are marvelous and what will we do with the five thousand dollars.

"We?" Snooty repeats, raising his eyebrows. "It is the wrong pronoun, ha, ha! I might buy Binney a necktie as he has worn the same one ever since I knew him. I have not made any plans, but I am thinking of a hunting trip to Africa and I might take in the northern lights up in Alaska. Now don't bother me as you can interview me tomorrow."