

# GALLOPING GREYHOUNDS

## Another Saga Of The Misfortunes Of Misdemeanor Murphy And Felony Jones

By (You Guessed Whom)  
**Tom Thursday**

**“All year around, I am plagued by two creeps whom I couldn’t forget in the Foreign Legion. So, here I am in Miami, on an exclusive vacation—but it doesn’t exclude Murphy and Jones, after all!”**

**R**IGHT NOW this is how life looks to me: dogs have fleas; fish have hooks; cows get sliced and sold by the pound; and I am pestered by a pair of yamheads entitled Misdemeanor Murphy and Felony Jones. They tell me that life can be beautiful and I say nuts.

I am making my annual winter visit to the queen city of Florida, which is what the chamber of comics has the guts to call Miami, and my main idea is to have a pleasant vacation, with maybe a blonde on one knee (and, if I ain’t careful, her husband on the other). I have just slipped the air, along with his contract, to my white dope (spelled dope, not hope) who ring-labored under the nom-de-canvas of Barbitol Bleeker. This Bleeker blimpo was the guy I figured could take Walcott and Charles in the same ring and destroy both with a few deft smacks on the chin. However, since the boxing rules permit an opponent to sock his adversus, Mr. Bleeker never had a chance—unless they let him box long-distance, say him in one county and his opponent in the other.

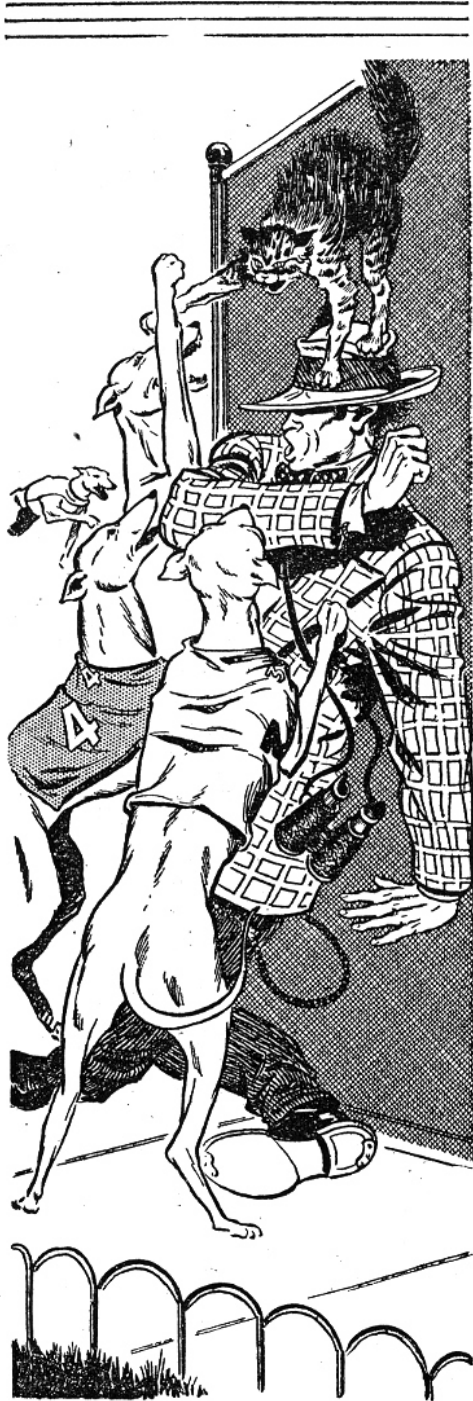
Well, I am just two days in Miami, stopping at the Hotel Bumhaven at ten bucks a day, rain, shine or hurricane, when the first of the three dog tracks opens for the winter season. They also open for the

suckers, but don’t say I told you. However, you might be surprised to note the number of good citizens who just go to the tracks to see the little doggies run after a rabbit that would never make a stew, because it ain’t even real. By a mere coincidence they have what they coyly call pari-mutuel betting, and the brave of heart always like to slap down a little bet on their favorite greyhounds. The fact that the doggie breaks a leg, or loses his kidneys, before he gets around the track, does not worry the bettors at all. They are just out there to see how the greyhound breed is progressing; and that is why some gents go home and beat their wives, or else jump into Biscayne Bay.

So the opening night I am out at the Flagami Track, with the sole idea of watching the greyhound breed improve, and little things like that. I am prepared to bet not over ten smokers before he gets around the track, does not care if I lose, and if the doggies don’t come in first, I merely feel that the trainer of the bow-wow has been bribed to feed the hound well-seasoned arsenic, instead of choice sirloin.

Well, I am standing near the rail minding my own business, which same I ain’t got any of, when a most familiar and peculiar odor smotes my nostrils. I am certain that the aroma must belong to either Misdemeanor Murphy or Felony Jones.

“Ah there, my good man!” comes a voice that couldn’t win a smile, even with the phone company. “It is with great pleasure that I see you again, my good friend!”



The dogs have all left the track and are now congregated around Cream Puss, who is perched atop one of the cash customers . . .

BY NOW I can tell by the scent alone that it has to be Felony Jones; and when I see his red traffic light beak, I know that my vacation is practically sunk.

"Whatever you have," I say, "you can keep. And that goes for diamonds at a dime a quart."

"Good friend," says Felony, "what I have you will want. Because," he adds, "who can resist a 20 to 1 shot in the third race?"

"The answer," I say, "is me. From you I wouldn't gamble if you told me that you had a tip that the Statue of Liberty was in New York Harbor."

Just then I look down at his extra large feet and note a giant alley cat waving its tail in all directions. Around its dirty neck, it has a ribbon in super technicolor.

"Where," I say, "did you get the white lion cub?"

"Oh, that is Cream Puss," says Jones. "He is my mascot and good-luck charm."

"How come you name him Cream Puss?" I inquire. "He looks like a yogurt inhaler to me."

"Let us not dilly or dally, please. I have come to show you how to win some money that is so easy, that a pickpocket would go on strike for higher wages. Now then—"

"You will have to pardon me," I say. "I have here in my hand 15 scratch sheets on the dogs and—"

Felony laughs very long and very loud. "Look," he says, "the reason they call 'em scratch sheets is because they are very lousy, indeed. Er, by the way, just what do them sheets say about Super Jet?"

"What," I ask, "do you mean by Super Jet? This track ain't booking airplanes."

Jones gives me what the professors call a supercilious look. "For your information," says Felony, "Super Jet is the purest of pure-bred racing greyhounds, sired by Larceny Lad out of Miss Jailbait.

He is racing for the first time on any Miami track."

"I would like to see this mongrel," I say. "Where do you keep him—in a safe?"

"Please follow me," says Jones, "and you will see nature's greatest gift to great greyhounds."

He takes me to the kennels, and about fifty mutts are barking like the brand of hamburger they are being fed is straight from the mule's rear end.

"Look!" says Felony. "Have you ever in your life seen such a magnificent specimen of *genus houndo*? Note the form, the legs, even the tail!"

"Nice tail," I say. "Is it all his?"

That crack stops Felony in his tongue. After blinking at me for a moment, he says, "You know nothing about great greyhounds. Do you know what Super Jet is worth?"

"In cash or hamburger?"

"He is worth no less than \$2000," says Jones. "And I bought him for a song!"

"What was the name of the song—*The Old Folks At Home*?"

"He will be what they call a sleeper in the third, and I want you to get some easy sugar because I have always liked you."

"I don't think the bum can run more than a block after ten bucks worth of top sirloin," I say. "I don't mind losing, but I want the hound to at least run halfway around the track. By the way, why ain't Super Jet standing on his legs—or is he sick?"

"He is resting. Always before a race, I tell him to take a nice little nap and rest. He is a very smart dog, and if you don't put at the least \$100 right on his nose, you will be a great sucker."

"Well," I say, "he has a big nose, and I may slap two smookers on its tip. Good afternoon, Mr. Jones."

I WALK AWAY from Felony and go to the paddock to see what the other mutts look like. They all look the same to me. Each owner thinks he has the best bow-wow on earth, until they get in a race—and then the hounds do their own thinking. To date, nobody can tell what the little babes are thinking, if anything. Nobody, that is, except Felony Jones, who claims he thinks right along with Super Jet. This sounds logical to me because, when it comes to thinking, it would take a damned dumb hound not to think better than him.

Well, I am about to make my selection for the first race, and I fancy a dog named Lightning Lad, as I figure that a hound with that speedy title should be able to nip the tail of the mechanical rabbit. I am about to go to the pari-mutuel windows to lay two smookers on the beak of Lightning Lad when another peculiar odor smites my delicate nostrils.

"Well, well, well!" says a voice in back of me. "If it ain't my old palsy-walsy. Am I glad to see you, and should you be glad to see me!"

"I am over-whelmed," I say. "Did the warden give you your usual five bucks when you got out?"

Misdemeanor Murphy rolls his eyes toward the stars, and a pained expression comes into his fawn-like puss.

"You hush," says Misdemeanor. "That last rap I took was a mistake. How did I know that the guy's check was a phony-baloney? Why, he never even had dough in that bank!"

"I see by the papers," I say, "that you were the guy that didn't have any moola in the cash-clink."

"Now, you hush," says Murphy. "All that is water over the Scotch. Right now I am a big dog-breeder, and intend to improve the breed of greyhounds, although," adds Misdemeanor, "I might consider any cash that goes with it."

"You got some greyhounds, same as Felony Jones?"

"Please, *please!*" says Murphy. "You have ruined my appetite by just mentioning the name of that bandit and lowdown louse. Besides, that ain't no authentic greyhound he's got; they tell me it's a cross between a St. Bernard and a mongrel Spitz."

"Well," I say, "if a St. Bernard and a mongrel Spitz can produce anything like Super Jet, I would like to see how it is done."

"Why," says Murphy, "that ape, Jones, could get the offspring of a giraffe and a sea cow and try to palm it off as a genuwine sand shark. Wait till you see *my* baby, Galloping Gun Moll."

"I never knew Alcatraz or Sing Sing had greyhound stables," I say. "Where is this wonder-dog you are yapping about?"

"Follow me," says Murphy, "and you will get one of the first views of next racing champion of the dog world."

"Who did she ever lick?" I ask. I never hear of the mutt on any American track, and I figure that she can't be any good, otherwise Murphy would not own her.

"I do not desire to have Galloping Gun Moll insulted," says Misdemeanor. "And I will tell you who she ever licked. She is the champeen of Poland, Denmark, Yugoslavia, and at least half of Berlin, Germany."

"How did she make out in Siam? Besides, I would like to see the press clippings."

"I got two tons of newspaper writeups," says Murphy, "but they are all in foreign langwidges; you would not understand same."

By this time we are at the kennels, and Misdemeanor halts in front of what looks like a cross between a mountain-goat and a thin zebra.

"Take a look!" says Misdemeanor. "Ain't she a beaut? Have you ever seen such lines, such legs, such ears?"

"The ears are okay," I say. "They look like wings on a airplane. Is *that* really a racing greyhound?"

"For your information," sniffs Murphy, "she is the winner of the third race coming up today. And, since you are a good palsy-walsy of mine, I am going to give you some inside dope."

"I am up to my tonsils in inside dope," I say. "What I need is some outside dope for a change; and listen, how come Galloping Gun Moll is in the same race as Felony Jones' Super Jet? You boys ain't framing up something together, are you?"

"I am very surprised at you," he says. "You should know that me and Felony have been bitter enemies since birth, or maybe even before. Besides, you will please forget all about Super Jet getting any place in the race. In fact," continued Murphy, "if that rhino comes in last he will be doing better than I thought."

"Listen," I say, "Mr. Jones tells me that his beagle will not only win first place, but will payoff 20 to 1. What do you think of *that*, Mr. Murphy?"

"I think," says Misdemeanor, "that he is full of nuts and other items. Because," goes on Mr. Murphy, "I think he got that hound of his out of a dog pound operated by the city, where it had been sent on account of old age and a touch of hydrophobia. As to paying off 20 to 1, they can make the odds one million to one and the mutt would still cross the finish line a week later."

"What makes you think Galloping Gun Moll will win?" I ask. "And what are the odds, if any?"

"Well, now," says Misdemeanor, "lithe odds on my entry would be practically 100 to 1, but some bum tipped off the track officials that she has won everything in

Europe; so they have belted down the odds to a mere 3 to 1. However,” opines Murphy, “put everything you own—including your step-ins—on Galloping Gun Moll to breeze home at least 50 lengths ahead of the show dog.”

“What makes you so certain that Super Jet ain’t got a chance?”

“Why,” says Murphy, “even if that walking boneyard was good, he still wouldn’t have a chance. I have took good care of all that. Well, be seeing you, and don’t forget to put the bankroll on Galloping Gun Moll.”

MURPHY walks away and I go to the pari-mutuel windows and place a bet on Sleep Walker to win the second race; the reason I bet on that baby is because all the armful of dope sheets I have break down and concede that he should be the favorite to leave the other entries in the next county. The reason why they call them dope sheets is because they are full of dope, and I always get my share. Anyway, Sleep Walker makes up his mind right after leaving the starting box that he don’t care to chase the mechanical rabbit; before they are half around the track, the other seven dogs run away from Sleep Walker like he had delirious smallpox.

I am tearing up my ticket, and throwing the pieces in the air like confetti, when along comes Felony Jones. Around his neck is Cream Puss, purring in all directions. When they reach me, Felony lets the dirty white alley cat drop from his neck and the feline walks around me three times like I am something special in catnip. Suddenly, he stops and tries to take a bite out of my left shin.

“Now, now,” says Felony, “you mustn’t do that. Naughty, naughty!”

“Take this bum away from me,” I say, “before I kick him into the next world.”

“Oh, he was just playing,” says Jones.

“He is very fond of shin-bones, and thinks yours are something special.”

“If he nips me again,” I say, “you will have to plant what is left of him. I am personally very particular what knaws on my shin-bones.”

Felony puts the cat back around his neck, and gets confidential. “I hope you will take advantage of my tip,” says he. “The odds are still 20 to 1, and Super Jet can’t lose.

“Well,” I say, “I have got some other special inside dope on Super Jet.”

“Look,” says Jones, “nobody ain’t got no inside information about Super Jet, besides me. Er, who gives you this special inside information?”

“Pal of yours, by the name of Misdemeanor Murphy.”

I wait a few moments for Felony to come down out of the air because he has as much use for Murphy as I have for six feet.

“Listen,” says Felony, “that leaping louse don’t know nothing about Super Jet, or any other dog. I don’t know what he is doing around here, unless he is out on bond.”

“He tells me,” I say, “that his Galloping Gun Moll will beat your hound so far that Surer Jet will think he has been running backwards.”

“Wait and see,” says Jones. “That beagle of his will no doubt drop dead from heart failure six yards from the starting box. Put your dough on Super Jet and get rich. See you later, kid.”

I am undecided whether or not to place a couple of smookers on either Super Jet or Galloping Gun Moll, as I know that both Felony and Misdemeanor are full of old-fashioned you-know-what.

NOW COMES the third race and I am wondering which hound will get in last. I scan my ton of scratch sheets and note that all the handicappers give the big

he-he and the large haw-haw to both dogs, indicating that neither had a chance of getting within two counties of the rabbit's rear-end. Then I observe that there is a hound in the race, named Canvas Crasher; and although he ain't figured to win anything but a little exercise, I decide to play a hunch and see what he can do. I have managed a regiment of canvas-crashers in the ring, and one more flop won't hurt; not for two smookers, it won't.

Well, the third race is something that would look good—even on television—where you got to be good to look good—and when it is over the whole joint is a riot, including the greyhounds. What takes place equals the Fourth of July with a big slice of Armistice Day tossed in to add to the racket.

When the eight dogs leave the starting box, a moment after the mechanical rabbit whizzes by, most of the hounds are neck and neck. All except Super Jet, who seems to be running on only three legs. He holds up his right front leg and it hardly ever touches the ground. Suddenly Murphy appears beside me and his map is wearing the latest in broad grins.

"I told you not to worry about Super Jet," he says. "The other dogs got four legs. See?"

"See *what*?"

"See that Super Jet must have something in his foot-pads of his right leg," says Misdemeanor.

"Like what?"

"Like, maybe, a sandspur," says Murphy. "Greyhounds do not desire no sandspurs in their tootsies, as same makes them very angry, indeed."

"Why, you dirty louse," I say. "Did you put a sandspur in that poor dog's foot?"

"Everything is fair," says Murphy, "when you are dealing with Felony Jones. Be seeing you, after you collect your bet

on Galloping Gun Moll."

I look at the track and the dogs are bunched fairly together just as they are rounding the turn into the home stretch. I look for Super Jet and see that he is still limping along more than half the course behind the field. As they enter the stretch I see that both Galloping Gun Moll and Canvas Crasher are practically nose and nose—and they are large beaks.

And then—wham!—it happens.

**A**BOUT ONE hundred yards from the finish line I see a large, white cat scamper out onto the track. It looks like Jones' Cream Puss—and what's more, it is. The alley cat heads off the dogs and then scampers up the board fence that surrounds the track. The dogs, howling like soused banshees, all make for Cream Puss and chase him to the fence. Then they stop at the foot and begin to howl their opinion of any tomcat that has the nerve to run on their private playground.

I look around the track and see Super Jet three-footing it along. His speed is about ten miles per hour, but he is getting there. When he comes to the other dogs howling at Cream Puss on the fence, everybody expects Super Jet to stop and join the serenade. But Jones' entry don't even look in their direction; he keeps limping right along.

The cash customers are getting apoplexy and assorted hysterics—especially those who have bets hanging in the balance. One old coot falls out of his box seat right onto his mush. The dames are screeching in all octaves, but the hounds are still greatly interested in Cream Puss, who is sitting neatly on top of the fence, making snooty faces at the pups.

Meantime, Super Jet finally reaches the win line, and a few yell with joy, meaning the ones who had a bet on him to win. Suddenly, I feel a slap on the back. It is

Felony Jones and he is nuts with pure happiness.

“What did I tell you!” he whoops. “*What did I tell you?* Even with that pebble he got in his paw he still wins the race. Boy, what did I *tell* you!”

Just then the announcer on the loud speaker says, “*Ladeez an’ gentle-mun! Your attenshun, pullease. Rule No. 96 of the Official Rules states, and I quote—‘If a race is marred by jams, spills or racing circumstances other than accidents to the machinery, while the race is being run,*

*and three or more greyhounds finish, the Judges shall declare the race finished, but if less than three greyhounds finish, the Judges shall declare it “No Race” and the moneys shall be refunded.’ ”*

I look at Felony Jones and his face is turning technicolor. “We wuz robbed!” he yells. “They can’t do this to me!”

“So they did it,” I say. “Good evening, Mr. Jones.”

