

1. Ticket for a Killing

OF course, I should have been in Florida. You see, me, I am strictly not any kind of a snowbird whatever.

Definitely not in a New York gutter, pal.

So most times, when it comes around the late end of fall and there is that nip in the air nights, I make like the birdies and fly south. It is very seldom indeed that you will find Steve Harragan mushing up Broadway behind a team of huskies in a snowstorm.

Only this one I am going to tell you about sort of sneaked up on Manhattan and me. Right from out of a clear black sky. Sure, I knew all about it. I'd heard the radio telling all and sundry that a cold front was coming in from the Atlantic. I'd heard all that, only one thing and another had sort of detained me in New York a few days longer than I'd intended.

The one thing being one Cornelius McCrimmon, and the other being the city editor of my old newspaper, the *Saturn*. And since Corny McCrimmon and the city ed. are one and the same vulture, you will see where there was some slight pressure on me to stick around the island.

Especially when I point out that Corny is all kinds of a mean man, such as dearly loves to extract pints of plasma from rock, and that he has somewhat of a grip on me on account of I still cling to my old *Saturn* press pass, even though I don't work for him any more, and also that he is forever putting the squeeze on me to perform little jobs or else hand in my press pass.

This is a thing I have no desire to do at all, such a press pass being a very useful thing to carry around New York, as it gets a man into all kinds of places, and also out again, which is sometimes even handier.

So this time I was to cover the arrival of some big shots from Europe. Seemed Corny had gotten the tip that some unfriendly folks were going to start trouble for them when they got in. Nobody started any kind of trouble at all. The only trouble that