

EPISODE 2

“FRANKIE! Time to go. Enough breakfast.”

“Ma, I want to get to school alert, full of vigor and vim, so I can be a tip-top student!”

“Four bowls is enough.”

“But I *love* POW!”

“You’re going to be late.”

“Just one more glass of Ovaltine. Did you know that’s what Captain Midnight drinks?”

“Frankie, you’ll be going to the bathroom all day! Now scoot!”

“Where’s Pop?”

“Why do you have to know everything? He’s on an early shift. Now just go.”

“GOOD MORNING, Class Six-B.”

“Good morning, Miss Gomez!”

“As I told you, we’ll start off today with our *On the Long Road* readers. Please take them out of your desks and open to page two seventy-one. That’s the chapter I asked you to read last night, so you shouldn’t have any trouble. Brigid, why don’t you start reading today.”

“Me?”

“Yes, Brigid, you. Go on, now. Right from the top of page two seventy-one.”

“Now?”

“Yes, Brigid, now.”

“Page two seventy-one?”

“Yes. From the top.”

“Now?”

“Go ahead, dear.”

“‘One clear evening in early spring Uncle Jack called for Bob and soon they were riding up the mountain road in the automobile when they reached the top of the mountain Uncle Jack parked the car but now he and Bob walked to a rock not far from the ob . . . ob —’”

“Observatory. Brigid, you don’t have to read so quickly.”

“Yes, Miss Gomez. ‘Observatory let’s sit down here said Uncle Jack this will be a good place to begin your study of astronomy we can get a fine view of the sky from here now what are some of the questions you would like to ask me Bob looked up and —’”

“Just a moment, Brigid. Franklin Wattleson, Mario Calvino, bring your books up here, please.

No, no. With what you have inside them too. Now, what is that, Franklin?"

"A magazine."

"Tell the class what it's called."

"*Radio Digest*."

"And you, Mario?"

"*Radio Builder*."

"And, Mario, what are we supposed to be reading?"

"*On the Long Road*."

"Then why are you two reading something else?"

"Well . . ."

"I know!"

"All right, Franklin. Tell the class."

"See, class, *Radio Digest* gives you the inside scoop on all your favorite radio shows. It's chock-full of tips on how they do sound effects like Silver's hoofbeats or the sound of flying. And, gang, not only will it tell you about the radio stars, but all your favorite radio writers too. So, boys and girls, if you haven't yet started your collection of this nifty magazine —"

"Class! That's enough, Franklin! Franklin and Mario, you may stand in the corner the entire reading session."

"But —"

"But what, Franklin?"

"If I put my face into the corner, it might squeeze it into a wedge. Like a piece of cheese. It'd be like

being on ‘Dick Tracy’! People would call me Wedge-Face!”

“Class! And for *that* remark, Franklin Wattleson, you may stay after school for an hour.”

“ALL RIGHT, Franklin, sit in the middle of your seat, feet flat on the floor, back straight, with your hands clasped before you.”

“Yes, Miss Gomez.”

“Do you understand why I asked you to stay today?”

“I said something I shouldn’t.”

“Exactly. You were being cheeky, weren’t you?”

“Yes, Miss Gomez.”

“I think I should warn you, Franklin, you’re becoming a serious problem. What would your parents say if I gave them a call?”

“You can’t.”

“Why?”

“We don’t have a phone. We use the one at Pearlman’s Candy Store.”

“Well, I’m sure I could write to your parents.”

“I could intercept it.”

“That would be breaking the law.”

“Miss Gomez, my ultimate purpose is the extermination of the most rascally and dangerous criminal in the world.”

“Franklin, how would your parents like it if I informed them that you copy Mario’s homework?”