

SO BIG

(By EDNA FERBER)

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(Continued from last week)

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—Introducing "So Big" (Dirk DeJong) in his infancy. And his mother, Selma DeJong, daughter of Simon Peake, gambler and gentleman of fortune. Her life, to young womanhood in Chicago, is a life of unorthodox, somewhat seamy, but generally enjoyable. At school her chum is Julie Hempel, daughter of August Hempel, butcher. Simon is killed in a quarrel that is not his own, and Selma, nineteen years old and practically destitute, becomes a school-teacher.

CHAPTER II—Selma secures a position as teacher at the High Prairie school, in the outskirts of Chicago, living at the home of a truck farmer, Klaus Pool. In Roelf, twelve years old, son of Klaus, Selma perceives a kindred spirit, a lover of beauty, like herself.

CHAPTER III—The monotonous life of a country school-teacher at that time, is Selma's, brightens somewhat by the companionship of the sensitive, artistic boy Roelf.

CHAPTER IV—Selma hears gossip concerning the affection of the "widow Paarlensberg," rich and good-looking, for Fervus DeJong, poor truck farmer, who is inseparable to the widow's affections. For a community "social" Selma prepares a lunch basket, dainty, but not of ample proportions, which is "auctioned," according to custom. The smallness of the lunch box excites derision, and in a seat of fun the bidding becomes spirited. DeJong finally securing it for \$10, a ridiculously high price. Over their lunch basket, which Selma and DeJong share together, the school-teacher arranges to instruct the good-natured farmer, whose education has been neglected.

CHAPTER V—Propinquity, in their positions of "teacher" and "pupil," and Selma's loneliness, lead to mutual affection. Fervus DeJong wins Selma's consent to be his wife.

CHAPTER VI—Selma becomes Mrs. DeJong, a "farmer's wife," with all the hardships unavoidable at that time. Dirk is born. Selma (for Vermont stock, businesslike and shrewd) has plans for building up the farm, which are ridiculed by her husband. Marie Pool, Klaus' wife, dies, and after the requisite decent interval Klaus marries the "widow Paarlensberg," who, sixteen years old now, leaves his home, to make his way to France and study, his ambition being to become a sculptor.

CHAPTER VII—Dirk is eight years old when his father dies. Selma, faced with the necessity of making a living for her boy and herself, rises to the occasion, and with Dirk, takes truck load of vegetables to the Chicago market. A woman selling in the market place is an innover friend.

CHAPTER VIII—As a disposer of the vegetables from her truck Selma is a flat failure, buyers being shy of dealing with her. To a commission dealer she sells her part of her stock, the way home she peddles from door to door, with indifferent success. A policeman demands her license. She has none, and during the ensuing altercation Selma's girlhood chum, Julie Hempel, now Julie Arnold, recognizes her.

CHAPTER IX—August Hempel, risen to prominence and wealth in the business world, arranges to assist Selma in making the farm something more than a paying proposition. Selma gratefully accepts his help, for Dirk's sake.

CHAPTER X—Selma achieves the success with the farm which she knew was possible, her financial troubles ending. At eighteen Dirk enters Mid-west university.

CHAPTER XI—Dirk goes to Cornell university, intending to make architecture his life work, and on graduation enters the office of a firm of Chicago architects. Paula Arnold, daughter of Julie, enters his life. He would marry her, but she has a craving for wealth and takes Theodore Storm, millionaire, for her husband. "The World was Begun."

"Perhaps not simply because he had a lot of money. But it certainly would be a factor, among other things."

Six months later Paula Arnold was married to Theodore A. Storm, a man of fifty, a friend of her father's, head of so many companies, stockholder in so many banks, director of so many corporations that even old Aug Hempel seemed a recluse from business in comparison. She never called him Teddy. No one ever did. Theodore Storm was a large man—not exactly stout, perhaps, but flabby. His inches saved him from grossness. He had a large white serious face, fine thick dark hair, graying at the temples. Within three years Paula had two children, a boy and a girl. "There! That's done," she said. Her marriage was a great mistake and she knew it. For the war, coming in 1914, a few months after her wedding, sent the Hempel-Arnold interests sky-rocketing. Millions of pounds of American beef and pork were shipped to Europe. In two years the Hempel fortune was greater than it ever had been. Paula was up to her eyes in relief work for Bleeding Belgium.

Dirk had not seen her in months. She telephoned him unexpectedly one Friday afternoon in his office at Hollis & Sprague's. "Come out and spend Saturday and Sunday with us, won't you? We're running away to the country this afternoon. I'm so sick of Bleeding Belgium, you can't imagine. I'm sending the children out this morning. I can't get away so early. I'll call for you in the roadster this afternoon for four and drive you out myself."

"I don't think I—"

"I'll call for you at four. I'll be at the curb. Don't keep me waiting, will you?"

Chapter XII

In town Dirk lived in a large front room and alcove on the third floor of a handsome old-fashioned three-story-and-basement house. He used the front room as a living room, the alcove as a bedroom. He and Selma had furnished it together, discarding all of the room's original belongings except the bed, a table, and one fat comfortable faded old armchair whose brocade surface hinted a past grandeur. When he had got his books ranged in open shelves along one wall, soft-shaded lamps on table and desk, the place looked more than livable; lived in. During the process of furnishing Selma got into the way of coming into town for a day or two to prowling the auction rooms and the second-hand stores. She had a genius for this sort of thing; hated the spick-and-span varnish and veneer of the new furniture to be got in the regular way.

She enjoyed these rare trips into town; and a holiday of them. Dirk would take her to the theater and she would sit entranced. Strangely enough, considering the lack of what the world calls romance and adventure in her life, she did not like the motion pictures. "All the difference in the world," she would say, "between the movies and the thrill I get out of a play at the theater. My, yes! Like fooling with paper dolls when you could be playing with a real live baby."

The day was marvelously mild for March in Chicago. Spring, usually so coy in this region, had flung herself at them head first. As the massive red-velvet door of Dirk's office building

fanned him into the street he saw Paula in her long low sporting roadster at the curb. She was dressed in black. All feminine fashionable and middle-class Chicago was dressed in black. All feminine fashionable and middle-class America was dressed in black. Two years of war had robbed Paris of its husbands, brothers, sons. All Paris walked in black. America, untouched, gaily borrowed the smart habiliments of mourning and now Michigan boulevard and Fifth avenue walked demurely in the gloom of crepe and chiffon; black hats, black gloves, black slippers. Only black was "good" this year.

Paula smiled up at him, patted the leather seat beside her with one hand that was absurdly thick-fingered in its fur-lined glove.

"It's cold driving. Button up tight. Where'll we stop for your bag?"

He climbed into the seat beside her. Her manipulation of the wheel was witchcraft. The roadster slid in and out of traffic like a fluid thing, an enamel stream, silent as a swift current in a river. When his house was reached, "I'm coming up," she said. "I suppose you haven't any tea?"

"Gosh, no! What do you think I am! A young man in an English novel?"

"Now, don't be provincial and Chicagoish, Dirk." They climbed the three flights of stairs. She looked about. Her glance was not disapproving. "Isn't this so bad. Who did it? She did! Very nice. But of course you ought to have your own smart little apartment, with a Jap to do you up. To do that for you, for example."

"Yes," grimly. He was packing his bag—not throwing clothes into it, but folding them deftly, neatly, as the son of a wise mother packs. "My salary'd just about keep him in white linen house-coats."

"I'm going to send you some things for your room, Dirk."

"For God's sake don't!"

"Why not?"

"Two kinds of women in the world. I learned that at college. Those who send men things for their rooms and those that don't."

"You're very rude."

"You asked me. There! I'm all set." He snapped the lock of his bag. "I'm sorry I can't give you anything. I haven't a thing. Not even a glass of wine and a—what is it they say in books?—oh, yeh—a biscuit."

In the roadster again Paula maintained a fierce and steady speed for the remainder of the drive.

"We call the place Stormwood," Paula told him. "And nobody outside the dear family knows how fitting that is. Don't scowl. I'm not going to tell you my marital woes. And don't you say I asked for it. . . . How's the job?"

"Rotten."

"You don't like it? The work?"

going up on the corner of Milwaukee avenue and Ashland, west."

"And ten years from now?"

"Ten years from now maybe they'll let me do the plans for the drygoods box all alone."

"Why don't you drop it?"

He was startled. "Drop it! How do you mean?"

"Cluck it. Do something that will bring you quick results. This isn't an age of waiting. Suppose, twenty years from now, you do plan a grand Gothic office building to grace this new and glorified Michigan boulevard they're always shouting about! You'll be a middle-aged man living in a middle-class house in a middle-class suburb with a middle-class wife."

"Maybe"—slightly nettled.

They turned in at the gates of Stormwood. A final turn of the drive. An avenue of trees. A house, massive, pillared, porticoed. The door opened as they drew up at the entrance. A maid in cap and apron stood in the doorway. A man appeared at the side of the car, coming seemingly from nowhere, greeted Paula civilly and drove the car off. The glow of an open fire in the hall welcomed them. "He'll bring up your bag," said Paula.

"How're the babies, Anna? Has Mr. Storm got here?"

"He telephoned, Mrs. Storm. He says he won't be out till late—maybe ten or after. Anyway, you're not to wait dinner."

Paula, from being the limp, expert, fearless driver of the high-powered roadster was now suddenly very much the mistress of the house, quietly observant, giving an order with a lift of the eyebrow or a nod of the head. Would Dirk like to go to his room at once? Dinner at seven-thirty. He needn't dress. Just as he liked. Everything was very informal here. They roughed it. (Dirk had counted thirteen servants by noon next day and hadn't been near the kitchen.)

He decided to bathe and change into dinner clothes and was glad of this when he found Paula in black chiffon before the fire in the great beamed room she had called the library. Dirk thought she looked very beautiful in that diaphanous stuff, with the pearls. Her heart-shaped face, with its large eyes that slanted a little at the corners; her long slim throat; her dark hair piled high and away from her little ears. He decided not to mention it.

Dirk told himself that Paula had known her husband would not be home until ten and had deliberately planned a tete-a-tete meal. He would not, therefore, confess himself a little nettled when Paula said "I've asked the

Emerys in for dinner; and we'll have a game of bridge afterward. Phil Emery, you know, the Third. He used to have it on his visiting card, like royalty."

The Emerys were drygoods; had been drygoods for sixty years; were accounted Chicago aristocracy; preferred England; rode to hounds in pink coats along Chicago's prim and staid suburban prairies. They had a vast estate on the lake near Stormwood. They arrived a trifle late. Dirk had seen pictures of old Phillip Emery ("Phillip the First," he thought, with an inward grin) and decided, looking at the rather anemic third edition, that the dinner was running a little thin.

The dinner was delicious but surprisingly simple; little more than Selma would have given him, Dirk thought, had he come home to the farm this week-end. The talk was desultory and rather dull. And this chap had millions, Dirk said to himself. Millions. No scratching in an architect's office for this lad.

At bridge after dinner, Phillip the Third proved to be sufficiently the son of his father to win from Dirk more money than he could conveniently afford to lose.

Theodore Storm came in at ten and stood watching them. When the guests had left the three sat before the fire. "Something to drink?" Storm asked Dirk. Dirk refused but Storm mixed a stiff highball for himself, and then another. The whisky brought no flush to his large white impassive face. He talked almost not at all. Dirk, naturally silent, was loquacious by comparison. But while there was nothing heavy, unavital about Dirk's silence, this man's was oppressive, irritating. His great white face gave the effect of bleached bloodless bulk. "I don't see how she stands him," Dirk thought. Husband and wife seemed to be on terms of polite friendliness. Storm excused himself and took himself off with a word about being tired, and seeing them in the morning.

After he had gone: "He likes you," said Paula.

"Important," said Dirk. "If true."

"But it is important. He can help you a lot."

"Help me how? I don't want—"

"But I do. I want you to be successful. I want you to be. You can be. You've got it written all over you. In the way you stand, and talk, and don't talk. In the way you look at people. In something in the way you carry yourself. It's what they call force, I suppose. Anyway, you've got it."

"Has your husband got it?"

"Theodore! No! That is—"

"There you are. I've got the force, but he's got the money."

"You can have both." She was leaning forward. Her eyes were bright, enormous. Her hands—those thin dark hot hands—were twisted in her lap. He looked at her quietly. Suddenly there were tears in her eyes. "Don't look at me that way, Dirk." She huddled back in her chair, limp. She looked a little haggard and older, somehow. "My marriage is a mess, of course. You can see that."

"You knew it would be, didn't you?"

"No. Yes. Oh, I don't know. Anyway, what's the difference, now? I'm not trying to be what they call an influence in your life. I'm just fond of you—you know that—and I want you to be great and successful. It's maternal, I suppose."

"I should think two babies would satisfy that urge."

"Oh, I can't get excited about two pink healthy lumps of babies. I love them and all that, but all they need is to have a bottle stuffed into their mouths at proper intervals and to be bathed, and dressed and aired and slept. It's a mechanical routine and about as exciting as a treadmill."

"Just what do you want me to do, Paula?"

She was eager again, vitally concerned in him. "It's all so ridiculous. All these men whose incomes are thirty—forty—sixty—a hundred thousand a year usually haven't any qualities, really, that the five-thousand-a-year man hasn't. Somebody has to get the fifty-thousand-dollar salaries—some advertising man, or bond salesman or—why, look at Phil Emery! He probably couldn't sell a yard of pink ribbon to a schoolgirl if he had to. Look at Theodore! He just sits and blinks and says nothing. But when the time comes he doubles up his fat white fist and numbles, 'Ten million,' or 'Fifteen million,' and that settles it."

Dirk laughed to hide his own little mounting sensation of excitement. "It isn't quite as simple as that, I imagine. There's more to it than meets the eye."

"There isn't! I tell you I know the whole crowd of them. I've been brought up with this money pack all my life, haven't I? Pock patters and wheat grabbers and peddlers of gas and electric light and dry goods. Grandfather's the only one of the crowd that I respect. He has stayed the same. They can't fool him. He knows he just happened to go into wholesale beef and pork when wholesale beef and pork was a new game in Chicago. Now look at him!"

"Still, you will admit there's something in knowing when," he argued.

Paula stood up. "If you don't know I'll tell you. Now is when. I've got Grandfather and Dad and Theodore to work with. You can go on being an architect if you want to. It's a fine enough profession. But unless you're a genius where'll it get you? Go in with them, and Dirk, in five years—"

"What?" They were both standing, facing each other, she tense, eager; he relaxed but stimulated.

"Try it and see what, will you? Will you, Dirk?"

"I don't know, Paula. I should say, my mother wouldn't think much of it."

"What does she know! Oh, I don't mean that she isn't a fine, wonderful person. She is. I love her. But success! She thinks success is another acre of asparagus or cabbage; or a new stove in the kitchen now that they've brought gas out as far as High Prairie."

He had a feeling that she possessed him; that her hot eager hands held him though they stood apart and eyed each other almost hostilely.

As he undressed that night he thought, "Now what's her game? What's she up to? Be careful, Dirk, old boy."

As he lay in the soft bed with the satin coverlet over him he thought, "Now what's her little game?"

He awoke at eight, enormously hungry. He wondered, uneasily, just how he was going to get his breakfast. She had said his breakfast would be brought him in his room. He stretched luxuriously, sprang up, turned on his bath water, bathed. When he emerged in dressing gown and slippers his breakfast tray had been brought him mysteriously and its contents lay appetizingly on a little portable table.

There were flocks of small covered dishes and a charming individual coffee service. A little note from Paula: "Would you like to take walk at about half-past nine? Stroll down to the stable. I want to show you my new horse."

The distance from the house to the stables was actually quite a brisk little walk in itself. Paula, in riding clothes, was waiting for him.

She greeted him. "I've been out

FOR AND ABOUT WOMEN.

DAILY THOUGHT.

Other men's sins are before our eyes; our own behind our backs.—Seneca.

Horse's Neck.—Perhaps the most agreeable and healthful of all cold drinks are those made with lemons. Starting with the simpler variations of an eternally popular theme, we give a recipe for an easily made horse's-neck—most refreshing after tennis or golf.

A thin-skinned lemon is peeled in one long strip, and the peel is arranged in the glass so that one end hangs over. Into the shaker are put cracked ice, the juice of the lemon, a heaping tablespoonful of sugar, the juice of half a grapefruit, and a dash of orange bitters. After this mixture is shaken and chilled, it is turned into the glass with the peel, and the glass shaved ice may be added if one wishes the drink to be very cold.

Lemonade for Large Parties.—No child's birthday fete—or, indeed, no grown-up one's, for that matter,—is complete without a huge bowl of fruit lemonade; and, for a large party, we suggest this recipe which requires the juice of eighteen lemons, the grated peel of two additional lemons, and the juice of six oranges and of two grapefruits. Two pounds of sugar are put into a saucepan with one quart of water. When the sugar is melted, the liquid is allowed to boil for two minutes. It is then skimmed, removed from the fire, and cooled, and the fruit juice is added to it. The mixture is then set away to chill. When it is time to serve the drink, half this mixture is strained into the punch-bowl, and two quarts of charged water are added. The bowl is set into a larger receptacle of cracked ice. Charged water is added to the second half of the sweetened fruit juice as needed. Instead of being used as a punch, this drink, of course, may be shaken with cracked ice in a shaker and then poured into glasses. It may be made more attractive by the addition of a little fruit syrup, such as half a cupful of currant or raspberry syrup, a few fresh pineapple sticks, and a thinly sliced banana.

In passing, let me say we are not bobbing the hair—hat. This accessory has mounted into a position of supreme importance in the summer wardrobe. For wear with either the elaborate organdy or with the chiffon afternoon frock, the big pictorial hat of this delicate straw is encountered on every hand. Frequently it has a short brim in the back which is turned up to contrast with the sheltering front brim, and its trimming runs through a range of floral, ribbon and velvet ideas.

Our last model is a fine French voile in white which gains one's immediate support through the fact that the distinguished tunic top may be worn over various colored silk slips. In this case a green foundation is chosen, and this color is repeated in the Jacob's ladder of green voile holding together sleeves and yoke of real filet lace. The front is ornamented by lines of drawn work. This final model belongs, of course, to the category of the more formal lingerie creations, and may be worn at either the big summer garden party or the Casino lunch.

Bright bands, always a favorite means of trimming children's clothes, are more than ever stressed this season. Junior dresses for afternoon and evening often use bands of flower patterns. Sometimes voile or georgette are printed with floral stripes on a white or one-toned ground, thus eliminating the necessity for further ornamentation.

One clever little frock used on one side of an apple green voile a band of embroidery in apple blossom pink worked out on a white ground. Another favorite way of using embroidered bands is to place them across the top of that group of plaits which so often appears directly in front. They may also produce a bolero effect on a one-piece frock by tracing the outline of a little jacket.

It's a long waist that has no turning! O, yes, quite true, but that prolix waist of ours has not completely turned yet. Witness to this is found in the latest imports from Paris. The fact is that, in spite of all this propaganda about natural waists, we cling tenaciously to the unnatural ones. In dance and afternoon gowns, to be sure, our normalcy seems to be pretty well established. In sports clothes, and in many of the little informal street and resort frocks we find a fashioned-looking skirt in connection with an elongated top.

When you speak of the jabot you come upon the real pillar of the porch dress. It is used in a hundred different versions, and always it contributes its quota of color contrast and novelty. For example, a charming little white dimity dotted in red is completed with a collar frill and jabot of plaited red organdy. Similarly, a coat dress of powder-blue handkerchief linen closes with one jaboted reverse of finely plaited white organdy. Thus it cascades through all the morning creations of cotton—a waterfall supplying no end of style power.

Another element of style interest is centered in the tiers which are concentrated, apron-like upon the front of the gown. Incidentally, in fact, these tiers are featured in many other types of summer clothes, and they are especially noteworthy in some of the new chiffon dance frocks. As an illustration of their function in the lingerie domain I think immediately of a lovely French voile—buff of background and blue of design, which employed this tiered apron to define the long front waistline. Each tier was bound in the same plain blue piping, short sleeves and round neckline. In the back a higher waistline was prescribed through the medium of a narrow girde.

This frock I have just described had for its design the popular coin dot. And speaking of these—well, if we start we shall never end. For they're minting these coin dots by the wholesale in all the cotton, as well as the silk and cotton mixtures.

FARM NOTES.

—Milk kept cold does not sour readily. Bacteria which cause souring make little growth in temperatures below 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

—While busy with farm work do not neglect the young calves. For best results, calves should not be turned out on grass until three months of age.

—If any stock are pastured away from home or with other stock they should carry identification marks. Ownership may then be established easily. A tattoo or notch in the ear cannot be lost.

—Simple records will show how much the garden is worth to the family. Such records show rental value of land; depreciation on tools; supplies, such as seeds, fertilizers, etc.; labor; amounts of vegetables harvested, and their cash value at the farm.

—In 1923 the average amount of seed used by the 400-Bushel Potato club members was 17.5 bushels per acre. In 1924 it was 20 bushels. The amount of seed used per acre has an influence on the yield, say crop specialists of The Pennsylvania State College.

—Buying and using small, inferior stallions is a mistake many new horse breeders make. Cheap prices should not be the sole guide to buying. Consider size and type if good results are expected. Disappointment lurks around the corner for the man who does not choose the sire of his colts wisely.

—Red mites and body lice are the chief parasites on chickens during the summer months. Oil drained from the crank case of the automobile or tractor may be used to paint the roosts and nests for the control of the mites. Sodium fluoride dusted into the feathers around the vent and over the breast is a good cure for the lice.

—Aim for More Eggs—A cool, clean house, plenty of mash, grain, with a side dish of succulent green feed, and lice and mites held in check will supply the farm flock with ideal conditions for summer egg production. Along with this cull the flock every two or three weeks. By so doing the layers should produce 18 eggs per bird in June, 16 in July, 16 in August and 7 in September.

—Colts should have a little grain to supplement their rations when pastures get short during the summer. If there is no natural shade they should be brought in during the day time and let out at night. Cool drinking water, nice legume hay and some oats will make a good combination for the colt while he is indoors. Once every month level up the colt's feet so that he will develop nice straight limbs.

—The high perishability of eggs, especially during warm weather, makes it important that great care be exercised when making purchases. The following points are suggested by E. J. Lawless Jr., specialist in poultry marketing, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, to aid housewives in having an egg supply of high quality:

—Purchase eggs from persons or firms that guarantee quality.

—Buy only a week's supply at one time unless they are to be held in cold storage.

—Candle eggs occasionally to see how they grade. Return all poor eggs. Lower grade eggs can be used for cooking.

—Keep eggs in a cool, fairly dry place.

—Do not keep eggs near products that have distinct odors.

—Break eggs in a separate dish before using.

—Buy direct from producer wherever the opportunity permits.

—Own your own poultry where possible.

—According to George A. Stuart, grain marketing expert of the Bureau of Markets, the farmer will receive a higher premium for his labor if the wheat is sold on grade; the shipper will be guided in loading cars with graded wheat, and the miller will be protected against buying a product that he cannot mill.

If he markets graded wheat, the farmer who has poor wheat will learn the cause of the low grade and likewise will understand what conditions he must correct to receive a premium for his labors.

Every farmer should know whether his wheat grades "garlicky" when marketed. If there is one or more garlic bulblet in 2.2 pounds of the grain, it goes into this grade and receives a discount of seven to twenty cents a bushel depending upon the season.

Baking tests show that garlicky wheat does not ordinarily impart an odor of garlic to the bread made from it if dry bulblets are present in small quantities, but if new and juicy, they will impart the odor, even in small quantities, and will seriously interfere with milling.

—Only fair crops of apples, peaches and pears are now expected in the United States this year, Department of Agriculture crop officials declare. Frosts in late May reduced prospects in many scattered sections, particularly in some of the central States, Virginia, Michigan, and portions of New York.

The condition of apples on June 1 was nearly 10 per cent. below the usual average on that date. The northwestern States expect more apples than were picked last year, but for the country as a whole the crop seems likely to be lighter, although much depends on the rainfall during the next few months.

Peach production shows a large increase in California where most of the crop is canned or dried, but in practically all other important States the crop is expected to be substantially smaller than last year. Even in Georgia, where many young trees are coming into bearing, the crop is expected to be less than 7,000,000 bushels compared with 8,333,000 bushels last year.

The pear crop also is reported only fair this year, California alone among the important producing States expecting materially larger crop than in the preceding season.



"I Used to Ride the Old Nags, Bareback, on the Farm."

two hours. Had my ride. You ride, don't you?"

(Continued next week.)