



Reading for Women and all the Family



BIG TIMBER

By BERTRAND W. SINCLAIR

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(Continued.)

Trained to repression, schooled in self control, Stella rose to obey, for under the smoothness of his tone there was the iron edge of command. Her heart apparently ceased to beat. She tried to smile, but she knew that her face was tear wet. She knew that Jack Fyfe had seen and understood. She had done no wrong, but a terrible apprehension of consequences seized her, a fear that tragedy of her own making might stalk grimly in that room.

Sitting beside a window, chin in hand, her lower lip compressed between her teeth, she saw Fyfe, after the lapse of ten minutes, leave by the front entrance, stopping to chat a minute with Linda and Charlie Benton, who were moving slowly toward the house. Stella rose to her feet and dabbed at her face with a powdered handkerchief. She couldn't let Monahan go like that; her heart cried out against it. Very likely they would never meet again.

She flew down the hall to the living room. Monahan stood just within the front door gazing irresolutely over his shoulder. He took a step or two to meet her. His clean cut face was drawn into sullen lines, a deep flush mantled his cheek.

"Listen," he said tensely. "I've been made to feel like—like—Well, I controlled myself. I knew it had to be that way. It was unfortunate. I think we could have been trusted to do the decent thing. You and I were bred to do that. I've got a little pride. I can't come here again. And I want to see you once

Bringing Up Father



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By McManus

more before I leave here for good. I'll be going away next week. That'll be the end of it—the bitter finish. Will you slip down to the first point south of Conagar bay about 3 in the afternoon to-morrow? I'll be the last and only time. He'll have you for life; can't I talk to you for twenty minutes?"

"No," she whispered forlornly. "I can't do that. I—oh, goodbye; goodbye!"

"Stella, Stella!" she heard his vibrant whisper follow after. But she ran away through dining room and hall to the bedroom, there to fling herself face down, choking back the passionate protest that welled up within her. She lay there, her face buried in the pillow, until the sputtering exhaust of the Abbey cruiser growing fainter and more faint told her they were gone.

She heard her husband walk through the house once after that. When dinner was served he was not there. It was 11 o'clock by the timepiece on her mantel when she heard him come in, but he did not come to their room. He went quietly into the guest chamber across the hall.

She waited through a leaden period. Then, moved by an impulse she did not attempt to define, a mixture of motives, pity for him, a craving for the outlet of words, a desire to set herself right before him, she slipped on a dressing robe and crossed the hall. The door swung open noiselessly. Fyfe sat slumped in a chair, had pulled low on his forehead, hands thrust deep in his pockets. He did not even look up. His eyes stared straight ahead, absent, unseeing, fixed on nothing. He seemed to be unconscious of her presence or to ignore it, she could not tell which.

"Jack," she said. And when he made no response she said again tremulously, that unyielding silence chilling her. "Jack, I'm here."

He stirred a little, but only to take off his hat and lay it on a table beside him. With one hand pushing back mechanically his straight, reddish tinged hair from his brow, he looked up at her and said briefly in a tone barren of all emotion: "Well?"

She was suddenly dumb. Words failed her utterly. Yet there was much to be said, much that was new and to the point. They could not go with a cloud like that over them, a cloud that had to be dissipated in

the crucible of words. Yet she could not begin. Fyfe, after a prolonged silence, seemed to grasp her difficulty. Abruptly he began to speak cutting straight to the heart of his subject after his fashion.

"It's a pity things had to take this particular turn," said he. "But now that you're face to face with something definite, what do you propose to do about it?"

"Nothing," she answered slowly. "I can't help the feeling. It's there. But I can trust it into the background and go on as if it didn't exist. There's nothing else for me to do that I can see. I'm sorry Jack."

"So am I," he said grimly. "Still, it was a change we took—or I took, rather. I seem to have made a mistake or two in my estimate of both you and myself. That is human enough, I suppose. You're making a bigger mistake than I did, though, in letting Monahan sweep you off your feet."

There was something that she read for contempt in his tone. It stung her.

"He hasn't swept me off my feet, as you put it," she cried. "Good heavens, do you think I'm that simple sort of creature. I've got a little self respect left yet if I was weak last night?" the boy returned abruptly. His manner showed plainly that he was serious, very serious, and her half-mocking manner hurt him.

The girl raised her eyebrows in pretended surprise at his tone. "I did," she retorted.

"Twice," he exclaimed scornfully. "Well, you can't expect me to prance around all evening with a young race horse, when I'm supposed to be up here resting."

He laughed shortly and then leaped forward to look closer into the amused blue eyes opposite.

"I don't suppose I'll ever know you," he said, grimly — "you'll take care of that."

The girl drew back. "Why discuss personalities?" she parried, although there was a touch of discomfort in her manner.

"I brought you out to discuss personalities," he said stubbornly. "I love you!"

For a moment wide, startled blue eyes looked into serious gray ones; then she laughed a quavering little laugh.

"Children shouldn't play with fire," she began; then she nestled charmingly. He had been such a nice playmate—why must he spoil it all? She liked him, but she did not love him. He was only a boy, she argued to herself repeatedly.

"Seriously, boy," she said after a moment's silence, "are you trying to make love to me? You mustn't say another word. I don't believe you know what love means."

They paddled through an open space, and the sunlight shone gold on the boy's blonde hair. If she had not been so sure that he was amusing himself, she would have thought that he was suffering.

"What do you think love means?" he said gravely.

The girl was more certain of her ground now. "Love," she laughed triumphantly, "is that set of sensations which finding their way through the afferent nerves, stimulate certain ganglionic centers of the occipital portion of the brain, and extend upward through the higher areas of cerebral consciousness. There," she finished breathlessly. "I wasn't sure I could remember it, but it must be so, we studied it in psychology at college."

The boy didn't even smile. He nodded silently under a tree that hung rather low over the water, and then turned the canoe skillfully around.

"Will you let me paddle back?" she asked.

"Why bother?" he said shortly. "You won't spoil me at any rate," she said slowly. "Most people do you know, why don't you try?"

She was trying to keep the conversation in lighter channels away from the danger of deep water. She was light and frivolous herself, afraid to look into the deeper channels of her womanhood for fear of what she might find there. Things were so pleasant as they were now, and responsibility terrified her, and this talk of love, lately the boy had

All's Well That Ends Well

By Jane McLean

The girl stepped into the canoe and settling herself among the cushions, looked lazily across at the boy as he pushed away from the shore. Such an absurd boy, she thought to herself, who would persist in treating her like a piece of Dresden china when she could paddle a canoe as well as he could. And yet she liked him rather well. It amused her to be told that her eyes were noticeably blue and that she was conceded all in one breath. Boys are funny when they're very young.

"Well," said the boy, "are you sorry you came, or have you decided to be nice?"

"I'm always nice," the girl answered uncompromisingly. "Sometimes nicer than others. I'm really very nice to-day."

"Why wouldn't you dance with me last night?" the boy returned abruptly. His manner showed plainly that he was serious, very serious, and her half-mocking manner hurt him.

The girl raised her eyebrows in pretended surprise at his tone. "I did," she retorted.

"Twice," he exclaimed scornfully. "Well, you can't expect me to prance around all evening with a young race horse, when I'm supposed to be up here resting."

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Advice to the Lovelorn

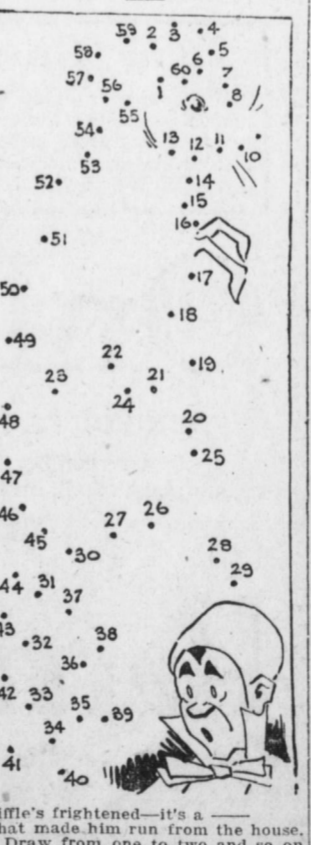
By Beatrice Fairfax

Every Right to Happiness
Dear Miss Fairfax:
A young lady refuses to consider marriage until she has had her engagement in the spirit of unselfishness and generosity. She had one leg amputated at the hip, and is for the rest of her life confined to crutches. Her fiancé insists on the marriage. Who is right? We think so much of your clear judgment in these matters and await your answer with interest.

R. S.

It is perfectly natural that a woman who has gone through this experience should offer her fiancé his freedom. Sensitiveness and pride lead her to do that. But real love and loyalty would naturally refuse absolutely. If the girl were going to be a cruel burden to the man she loved she might be justified in continuing to insist. But even on crutches a woman of her feelings, unselfishness and generosity can be far more of a helpmate to a man than could a woman who had her full quota of limbs and a distorted soul. I think there is every reason why love should be more important than pride and why the girl should marry and make a beautiful thing of the partnership on which she is entering. She mustn't let herself be afraid that only pity and chivalry are influencing her fiancé. If the

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DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

I am eighteen and know a young doctor five years my senior.

"My parents are off to Chicago for three months, and my friend has asked me to go to Atlantic City for two months and board in a hotel and so under his name. We are not engaged and I am puzzled as to what I should do. He admits he loves me dearly and desires to make me his wife when my parents return."

MADGE.

My dear child, of course you can't do this. Going under this man's name when you have no right to it would put you in an impossible situation. You must not dream of going to Atlantic City without the full knowledge and consent of your parents. You are too young to be in a hotel unchaperoned. No man who really cared for you would suggest such a thing unless he were so young that he did not realize the enormity of what he was asking. I think you should take your mother into your confidence at once, since your young doctor is (I say it sadly and thoughtfully) either a bit of a knave or a good bit of a fool! This isn't the way a man treats a girl he wants for his wife. It would blacken your name and might ruin your character. Remember, it can't be done.

MARIETTA BOYS IN SERVICE

Marietta, Pa., Oct. 4.—Mr. and Mrs. U. Grant Hipple, of Marietta, have given two sons for the service of the present conflict. Walter, the youngest, is on the battleship Nevada, and Ralph, the oldest, is in Georgia with Company C, Fourth Regiment of Columbia. Mr. and Mrs. John H. Mayer also have two sons in service. The youngest, James, is a member of the Engineering Corps, and Wayne left yesterday morning for Camp Meade with the drafted men.

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