



# Reading for Women and All the Family



## BIG TIMBER

By BERTRAND W. SINCLAIR

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(Continued.)

"How is it going to end, the fire?" Stella forced herself to ask. "Will you and Jack be able to save any timber?"

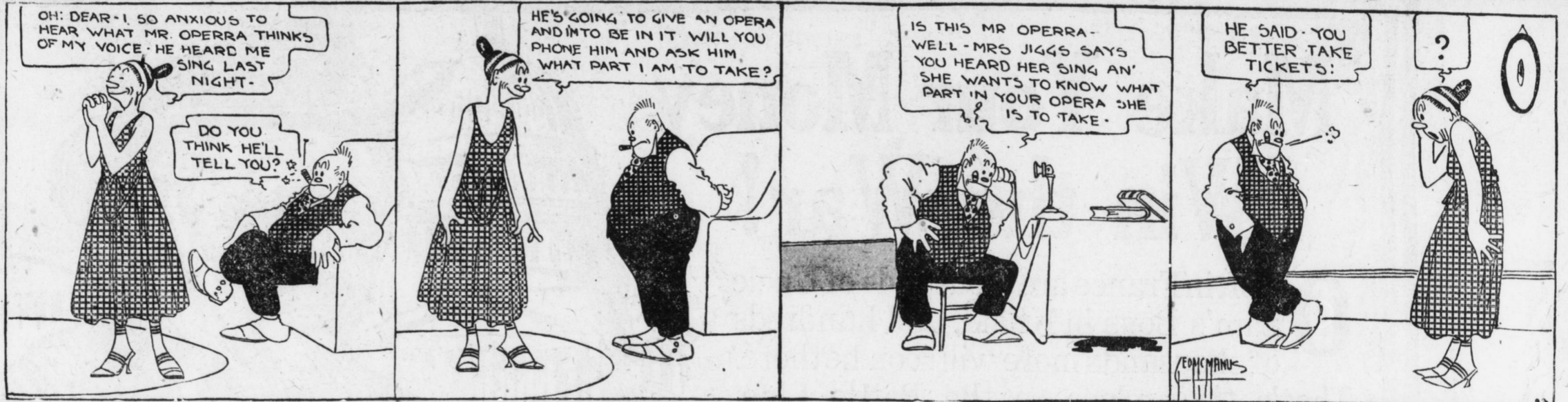
"It should rain hard and in the meantime the boys keep it from jumping the fire trails we've cut I'll get by with most of mine," he said. "But Jack's done for. He won't have anything but his donkeys and gear, and part of a cedar limit on the Tye which isn't paid for. He had practically everything tied up in that big block of timber around the point. Monohan made him spend money like water to hold his own. Jack's broke."

Stella's head drooped. Benton reached out an ax calloused hand, all grimy and browned from the stress of fire fighting and covered her soft fingers that rested on his head. "It's a pity everything's gone to pot like that, Stell," he said softly. "I've grown a lot wiser in human ways the last two years. You taught me a lot, and Jack a lot, and Linda the rest. It seems a blamed shame you and Jack came to a fork in the road. Oh, he never chirped. I've guessed it the last few weeks. I owe him a lot that he'll never let me pay back in anything but good will. I hate to see him get the worst of it from every direction. He grins and doesn't say anything. But I know it hurts. There can't be anything much wrong between you two. Why don't you forget your petty larceny troubles and start all over again?"

## Bringing Up Father

Copyright, 1917, International News Service

By McManus



"I can't," she whispered. "It wouldn't work. There's too many seats, too much that's hard to forget."

"Well, you know about that better than I do," Benton said thoughtfully. "It all depends on how you feel."

The poignant truth of that struck miserably home to her. It was not a matter of reason or logic, or her making any sacrifice for her conscience's sake. It depended solely upon the existence of an emotion she could not definitely invoke. She was torn by so many emotions, not one of which she could be sure was the vital, the necessary one. Her heart did not cry out for Jack Fyfe except in a pitying tenderness, as she used to feel for Jack Junior when he bumped and bruised himself. She had felt that before and held it too weak a crutch to lean upon.

The nurse came in with a cup of broth for Benton and Stella went away with a dumb ache in her

breast, a leaden sinking of her spirits, and went to sit on the porch steps. Ten minutes piled into hours and noon came when Linda awakened. Stella forced herself to swallow a cup of tea, to eat food; then she left Linda sitting with her husband and went back to the porch steps again.

As she sat there a man dressed in the blue shirt and mackinaw trousers and high calked boots of the logger turned in off the road, a burly woodsman that she recognized as one of Jack Fyfe's crew. "Well," said he, "if it ain't Mrs. Jack Fyfe."

He broke off suddenly, a perplexed look on his face, an uneasiness, a hesitation in his manner. "What is it, Barlow?" Stella asked kindly. "How is everything up the lake?"

It was common enough in her experience, that temporary embarrassment of a logger before her. She knew that for men with boyish souls, boyish instincts, rude simplicities of heart. Long ago she had revised those first superficial estimates of the gross, hulking creatures who worked hard and drunk harder, coarsened and calloused by their occupation. They had their weaknesses, but their virtues of abiding loyalty, their reckless generosity, their simple directness, were great indeed. They took their lives in their hands on slid road and springboard that such as she might flourish. They did not understand that, but she did.

"What is it, Barlow?" she repeated. "Have you just come down the lake?"

"Yes'm," he answered. "Say, Jack don't happen to be here, does he?"

"No, he hasn't been here," she told him. The man's face fell.

"What's wrong?" Stella demanded. She had a swift divination that something was wrong.

"Oh, I dunno's anything's wrong particular," Barlow replied. "One of 'em, Lefty he sent me down to see if Jack was at the Springs. We ain't seen him for a couple uh days."

Her pulse quickened. "And he has not come down the lake?"

"I guess not," the logger said. "Oh, I guess it's all right. Jack's pretty skookum in the woods. Only Lefty got uneasy. It's desperate hot and smoky up there."

"How did you come down? Are you going back soon?" she asked abruptly. "I got the Waterbug," Barlow told her. "I'm goin' right straight back."

## "THEIR MARRIED LIFE"

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"Human nature is a funny thing," said Helen to Louise, who had dropped in to have a quiet chat. "Why, what are you thinking of dear?" Louise queried.

"Oh, something that happened this morning over at the library!" "Do you still belong to your library?" "Yes, and I am glad I do. I have read more books on the war and on things I am interested in than I ever would have if I hadn't been connected with it."

"Well, what about the incident you had in mind?" "Oh, yes! Well, you remember Miss Walsh, that awfully attractive girl who has charge there?" "I certainly do."

"Can you imagine anyone trying to hurt that girl in any way?" Louise dropped her work, now thoroughly interested. "Why, no, Helen, I should say not."

"Dealing With a Thief" "Well, when I got in there she was in the midst of the most embarrassing situation. I couldn't help hearing the entire thing, because there was no privacy about it. I wandered about for a time looking at books, but I couldn't help hearing everything; the place is so tiny."

"It seems that one of the subscribers was arguing with Miss Walsh about a certain book that had been taken out. I stole a look at her, and she was a flamboyant-looking creature—lip rouge, and a veil with a heavy mesh."

"Miss Walsh said, 'I don't like to contradict you, but I saw you take the book.' 'Why, didn't you call after me?' she asked. 'I haven't, and when you taken it absent-mindedly, if I took it at all, but I'm absolutely positive I didn't take it.'"

"Miss Walsh kept getting redder, but she resolutely held to her ground. 'Oh, yes you did,' she insisted. 'I had written, and when you stopped at the shelf and took a book from it and walked out.'"

"Goodness!" gasped Louise, interrupting here. "I don't see how the girl dared to do it."

"Fitted For Success" "Well, Miss Walsh is like that, Louise. She knew she was right and she simply dotes on that library. You mark my words, she'll make her way in this world. She's exactly the kind of a girl needed in the business world."

"Well, go on," Louise said quickly. "Oh, yes! Well, the woman looked just as unconcerned. There she was, seated behind the counter, one hand on her hip, in the most nonchalant way, and an innocent look on her face, as though she was trying to puzzle the thing out."

"To be Continued."

I accepted, feeling quite safe to go with him. While we were out he tried to put his arm around me, but I would not allow it. I was so surprised at his action that I did not know what to say, but just removed his arm. Do you think his action proper, considering our friendship?"

"I dearly love his sister, but don't know whether I ought to say anything to her about this, as it has made me feel so bad that I could cry every time I think of it. I do not know what I will do if ever he is at home when I visit his sister. He never said anything to me to warrant his actions and therefore I do not know what to make of it. I don't think I have ever given him reason to believe that I would allow anything of the sort. I feel so 'blue' since this has happened."

Your letter brings out a point I want to emphasize, viz., the difference between propriety and prudery—the distinction between dignity and straitlaced hypocrisy. Surely any girl with common sense ought to recognize that a boy she has known for fifteen years and has known to be a gentleman for all those years—a boy who has himself said that he

feels as if she were his sister—may put his arm around her to express the very affection and comradeship of which she has spoken. How can you be so evil-minded as to find insult or impropriety in that simple action? If your own mental attitude is simple and fine and sweet a situation like this need have no more of suggestiveness of evil in it than if it were his sister who had slipped her arm around you. Too many girls nowadays have a desire to read harm into simple situations—to interpret in terms of emotion and sex actions which are only based on affection and human interest.

GO TO NIGHT SCHOOL Dear Miss Fairfax: I am 16 years, and now only I want to seek an education. I come to you, of all the writers of the paper. Can you, Miss Fairfax, advise me where to go? I do not wish to go to high school because I did not graduate from public school. I was stupid and my only great hope was to be rid of it. Now I work every day and don't get home until 7 o'clock. I love to go to night school, but the thought of facing it is more than I can bear. I have no sister,

and very few girl friends, because I never go out. I think I could go to boarding school, and perhaps that would be my one delight. I have spent my long and dreary Sundays in church and in Sunday school, helping little children, for many years. Now, dear Miss Fairfax, you shall solve my problems. I am lonely, but learning I truly want.

CONSTANT READER. My dear child, what you need, above all other things, is the discipline of making yourself do the very thing you say you can't do. The reason you left school in your youth was because you hadn't the grit to go on in spite of handicaps, and to force yourself to get an education even though that meant a little humiliation and trouble. Now take your own self firmly by the hand, lead yourself to the Y. W. C. A. or the Y. W. H. A.—whichever one fits in with your religion—and there enroll in some classes. I have the utmost sympathy with you dear, and I know that you will be a much happier girl when you have gone sincerely and honestly about mending the sad gap in your neglected education.

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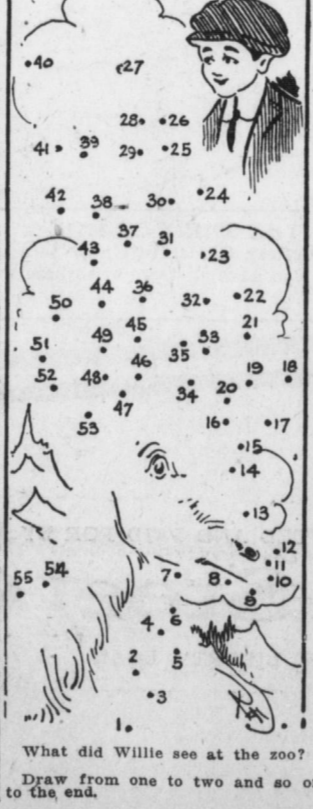
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