

JO ELLEN

By ALEXANDER BLACK. Copyright, 1924.

(Continued From Yesterday.)

To be here on the back door of a house in which nobody lived might seem a culminating irony, if Jo Ellen had been a psychologist. In fact, it changed the current of her feeling for the moment. It did more. It seized her attention. She could not have been sure what this something was, whether a flicker in the corner of one of the sneered windows or an effect in the door. The door was in the shadow of a roofed space between the house and the summer kitchen, and she had a sense of an ended movement, as though it might have been slightly open and then fully closed again.

The boys had found a way of getting into the house, and Billy, for one, had been firmly forbidden to violate its integrity as a locked place. Jo Ellen knew that at this juncture Billy was in the pirates' cave.

She went to the door and tried the handle.

That was a surprise, to have it swing freely. The winter kitchen, very dusty, and with the unaltered smell, stared back at her. From the middle of the dining room beyond, beyond a table, she saw the shadow of a man. Jo Ellen turned sharply and saw the man.

He made a strange movement with his hand. She could get this much before being able very clearly to make him out.

"What do you mean by that?" she demanded, advancing meanwhile to reach the door knob.

He shifted his position until his back was against the door.

"Let me say something to you," was his answer.

She could see him clearly now: a young man, tallish, with rather red hair, blue eyes, a jaw that would be remembered, and lips that seemed to wait. He was without hat or coat. A side of his soft collar was streaked with dust. There was rust on the cuffs of his shirt.

"Well, open the door first," said Jo Ellen, "if you don't mind."

Her hand went forward in a determined way.

"But I do mind," he said, without moving, "you needn't be afraid of me."

"Let me get this door open," commanded Jo Ellen. She tugged at the knob until the door bumped his heels.

"Look here, kid," he caught her wrist with an unequivocal grip. "Listen. Don't be a little fool. I want—"

"We'll see who's the fool," and Jo Ellen accomplished an astonishing wiggle, an utterly unbelievable wriggle, that brought her other hand close to the edge of the door.

"I wish you wouldn't do that," he said, without changing position, and

"Then I'm not lying,"
"I've heard of Stan."
"Does that mean I won't get the drink of water?"
"I can do better than bring water. Somebody—I'll bring a wrench to turn the thing."
"You're a good sport," said Stan.
"You're—"
She saw his eyes fix themselves under the frown. He seemed to stop breathing or at least to be suddenly

set. She followed the direction in which he stared and saw a face at one of the windows. It was Emma Traub, her mouth open and her nose flattening against the glass. In an instant the image melted as if wiped away by a gesture with a cloth.
"Hell!" came out of the stillness.
Jo Ellen shrugged nervously. "She doesn't matter."
The thick, hot silence settled again. "I'll be back in a minute with the

wrench," she said moving to the door. He glanced at her intently, and her look answered his.
"Keep your eyes open," he said. She glanced at him in his own eyes there was a reluctance, if not a mingling, though he was pretending to be off-hand and confident.
VIII
Her mother was not in the house. Uncle Ben sat on the porch reading newspaper. She came up at the

back door (life had become full of back doors), found a wrench in the box, then paused to give consideration to an idea. She had thought of the collapsible drinking cup when she thought of the wrench. There was no reason why she couldn't go further.

During the necessary detour from the back door she obeyed the instructions that weren't needed. She kept her eyes open.

Afterward she found it hard to re-

call precisely how she came to that other door and how she first knew that he had vanished. It had been funny to go from the cellar to one dusty room after another... even into the clothes closets and the attic. She called softly. (O-oo hoo! like Mrs. Tice.)

Mr. Stan was not there.

The Simms family's black sheep. Evidently there was no telling how a

black sheep would act. She had an interval of intensive thinking. If her mother saw her she would believe she was wishing. Well, perhaps she was wishing she could know why he had gone; and how. Did he decide at the last that he couldn't trust her? How could you trust a person after about? Yet she had been sure that he had trusted her.

(To Be Continued Monday.)

THE NEBBS

AT THE REQUEST OF ATTORNEY NIBBLICK JUDGE BLUE ADJOURNED COURT UNTIL MONDAY

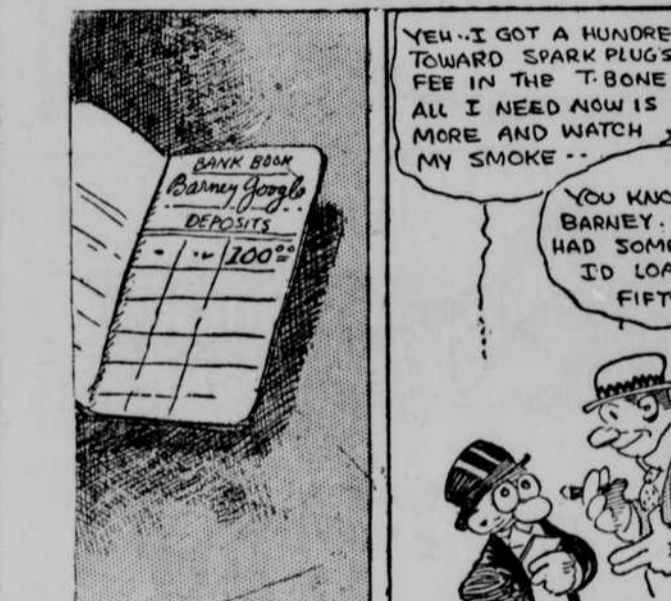


BETWEEN ROUNDS.



Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess

Barney Google and Spark Plug



BARNEY'D FEEL SAFER IN JAIL.



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck

New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

New York, June 28.—Among the most courageous workmen in Gotham are the "sandhogs." They are men who daily risk their lives under the Hudson river. They are encased in a shield that worms its way through the muck of the river's bottom.

In case of a break in the shield they are doomed to suffocate in the inflow of mud. The bravery of the "sandhogs" is really responsible for tunnels that span the river. Hundreds have had narrow escapes and a large number have been trapped.

The "sandhogs" are sturdy, hairy-chested men with booming voices. They are as husky as the toughest bar back. And they live to themselves in the water front boarding houses. Very few of the "sandhogs" are married.

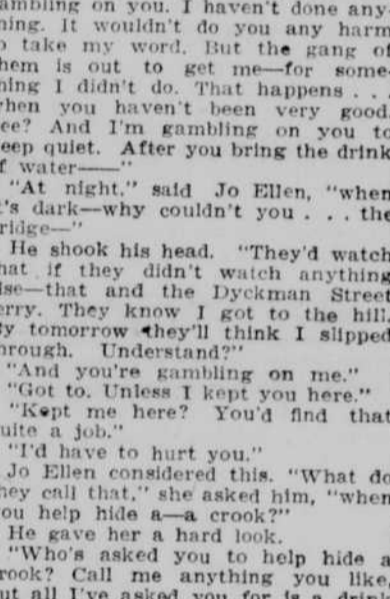
They dress in corduroy trousers and flannel shirts and are inveterate chewers of tobacco. The pay for the "sandhog" is sometimes as high as \$20 a day. He must accustom himself to darkness down in the subterranean depths.

His chief physical danger outside of a break in the shield is what is known as "the bends." This is a form of body cramp that contracts the body in the agony of terrible suffering. Unless the victim is brought hurriedly to air he dies in a frightful seizure.

Several years ago 22 "sandhogs" were rescued with "the bends." In their agony they attacked each other and for a half hour they battled in the pit, screaming, biting, kicking and clawing. All were unconscious when they reached the fresh air.

The "sandhogs" are men with unusual taciturnity. Even among themselves they speak only in monosyllables. Their attitude in life seems to be that as all are playing the most dangerous game in a crisis it is each man for himself.

BRINGING UP FATHER



JERRY ON THE JOB



VITAL STATISTICS REQUESTED



ABIE THE AGENT



The Criminal

"NOW SEE HERE YOUNG MAN - I THINK YOU KNOW WHERE THAT GOLF BALL IS - YOU EXPECT TO RETURN HERE LATER AND SEIZE IT AS YOUR OWN... YOU BELONG TO THAT DESPICABLE CLASS OF CITIZENS WHO COMMERCIALIZE THE LOST BALL AND YOU STOOP TO BASE METHODS TO GAIN YOUR NEFARIOUS END... BUT I SHALL HAVE YOU BLACKLISTED IN EVERY COUNTRY CLUB FROM THE ATLANTIC TO THE PACIFIC, AND I SHALL LEAVE NO STONE UNTURNED TO BRING YOU SCOUNDRELS TO THE BAR OF JUSTICE!"



ABIE THE AGENT

