

JO ELLEN

By ALEXANDER BLACK.

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(Continued From Yesterday.)

The thing he whispered, close to her ear, was: "I knew your work."

Her whisper was more to the point: "I know what you can do if you want to get away."

Even in the dimness she could guess his skeptical stare.

"Wait over on the shadow side of that landing," and she pointed across the foreground jumble. Then she turned about, in her leaping way, and was gone.

Perhaps he lifted a hand to protest. She suspected she might turn. It was desirable that her plan should get its start during this hand piece—the oars of the Kinney band might be the temperamental.

The one waiting in the shadow side of the landing, with a doubtful patience, saw her float into view, and the skiff was soon at his feet. She sat alertly upright like a young ghost. She made him understand what he was to do. . . . There was an interesting detail. He was to lie in the bottom, which implied extending his feet under the thwart on which she sat. A young woman might do a bit of rowing alone on the Harlem of a summer evening. . . .

what this person in the bottom of the boat (seeing nothing but stars) was accu. . . . There might be a body somewhere. . . . And you were deliriously rowing him very well. Not rowing him very well. The oars were acting queerly.

She looked over her shoulder. There was a black boat, not exactly a skiff, with two men in it, midway of the river. She could hear the men talking, which reminded her of how treacherous words were on the water. She wondered whether the men were peering in particular or simply two men.

She looked again. The one with the oars had stopped rowing. She would like to see him move in wide curve. No. She must go straight. Only straightness would escape suspicion. Straightness carried her within a dozen yards of the other boat. One of the men began singing softly. There was something in the song about "a white robe she wore." The one who was not singing laughed.

Two dicks could be sitting in a boat. But they would have no orders to stop a girl who was rowing across the Harlem. And she decided that these were not dicks. It would be better if she didn't think about anything but the oars, and making them go in and out of the water cleanly. . . .

Liberty, both rivers—on a clear day I can see this hill 12 miles away. Some afternoon. What do you say?"

"I've been up in the Woolworth," said Jo Ellen. She didn't name her chief objection to visiting the sky scraper roof. Mrs. Simms was a cold woman, with an eagle's look that accused all girls. When the Simmses lived at Inwood—before Marti Simms, senior, became superintendent of the tall building down near Wall street—she had called Jo Ellen "that red sparrow." Perhaps "sparrow" wasn't radically insulting. But it was quite a piece with other things she said. A recollection influenced Jo Ellen's response to the suggestion. The matter was left to await circumstances—Uncle Ben's health for example.

Marty had another suggestion. This

was for a day at Coney Island. He was having his vacation, and was privileged to urge that they go on a Monday, for instance, when if they didn't have the place all to themselves they might at least feel slightly less jammed and pummeled.

For all of the interval Marty was peculiarly a problem. He was in no general way simply one of the persons to whom you could mention a certain

matter. He was Mr. Crook's cousin. He could tell a lot, which would be supremely interesting, and the whole absorbing affair with its oddness and mystery could acquire much by his participation. It would be painful to him, but things about families often must be painful. You had to have these pains. You got used to them, and naturally you knew things that

THE NEBBS



Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess

XII

At the start there was the turn of the old creek and the fragment of land left by the cutting of the shipway. Moored launches were to be dodged. One pregentious boat had a light in its cabin, but no one was on deck. Beyond was the open Harlem with the lamp-spattered light of the other shore. The water had a flat, oily quiet. There was no tide swirl. A power could be caught.

When the oars stopped, the deep pulsation of the crickets made the hark of the clove seem enormously still.

Two words, chopped off, as if to make the most economical possible use of sound, came out of the bottom of the boat.

"Straight across."

Did he think she was going to row him out into the Hudson or go exclaiming to the Bronx? Very likely he could fancy her as debating, or as having some theory. To let her know that straight across was good enough might have occurred to him as worth while. After all, it was his escape.

And she was helping. O yes! she was helping. Getting a drink of water for him was a small matter compared to this. When you really came to think of it, this was going pretty far, just to prove that you were sorry—and that you hadn't committed this was some sort of a crime. If he were captured while you were rowing him, that crook's women matter would be terrific. With him flat in the bottom of the boat, you might not know anything. It wasn't even as if you knew

Like a pilot to the one at the wheel. Very well. It was over with and she could row back—quickly, the way she preferred to row.

At the right of the dock there was, at low tide, a slope where the skiff rounded. Lamar of the docks so thick out when some sound halted him, and he quickly drew the nose of the boat into the cavernous space under the dock timbers, a space so inhospitable that their two bodies were wedged together. There was a hot odor of rotted wood, with a salty blend of other waterside smells. The blackness was complete, a blackness so thick that you might think you had died by it. Jo Ellen could feel the coming and going of Lamar's breath and guess the intensity with which he listened. An effect as of heels moving through mud seemed finally to die away, and Lamar's tight muscles relaxed. Jo Ellen wriggled resentfully. This was far beyond anything she had bargained for.

"In a minute," Lamar whispered. A long minute, that grew stifling. Jo Ellen's cheeks burned in the fearful intimacy of the contact. Seeing it through—in the dark, this was what she was doing. This was what you could let yourself in for if you had impulses.

When he pushed the boat into the open she could breathe a little better.

He was off, and she was pulling the skiff into deep water.

XIII

Marty Simms, standing on the deck of the houseboat with Puss Kinney, saw her draw in beside the landing.

"There's an idea!" exclaimed Marty. "Only you might have taken a fellow along."

Mrs. Tice came out. "Did we scare you off?"

"It sounded good from the water," Jo Ellen returned deceitfully. It was important that she should say good-night to the Tices without getting within range of the cabin lights. She was not sure about the condition of her dress. She would have preferred to go home alone, to streak home in the most affecting way so that suddenly she might sink in bed with time to think. However, going alone would be more eccentric than the vagary they were charging up against her. Being escorted by Marty was an inevitable obligation.

He wanted to hold her hand in the dim path, which seemed particularly foolish just now. Marty's talk, too, had an inconsequential sound, like the thin note of his violin which was lost altogether when you were a little way off. Nothing Marty might say could possibly seem important, like being in a pitch-dark place under a dock, pressed in a sweaty closeness, against a young man you didn't know. After that, holding hands—well, it was a kind of decent relief, but it did seem silly; and it was hard to get your mind around so that you could pretend to listen while he was saying

Barney Google and Spark Plug

IT WAS THE ONLY WAY OUT FOR BARNEY.

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck



New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

New York, July 2.—It has been a tough break for chorus girls this summer season. Those who haven't found millionaires in a matrimonial mood are living on doughnut fare. The road shows have closed and there's no more Hippodrome choruses—Shubert vaudeville.

To date there has been only three new summer shows and they are skippy in their choruses. Coupled with all this Broadway is short on Johns. They have taken reefs in their purses. An evening at the movies and a snack at a rapid fire lunch is the speed.

Just now there are 2,500 chorines out of jobs. The Stage Door Inn which provides positions as waitresses for jobless chorus girls has a waiting list of more than 500. Those who are working get only one day a week.

In the fall there isn't much hope either. Three more English revues with their own choruses are scheduled and the Folies Bergere is coming over with a lot of French girls. Madam Antoinette whose boarding house is a haven for show girls is in bankruptcy.

Madam held out for a better day and spent her \$3,000 savings trying to stem the tide. The general slump has also hit the chorus man. He is returning to the ribbon counter seeing no light in the abyssal depths.

Around noon hundreds of them clut about theatrical agencies in the Forties. Usually full of bright wisecracking chatter they are now glum. Many of them know that in a few more weeks they must return to the prairie cottage and village street from whence they came.

The lot of the chorus girl is becoming unhappier each season. Their wages, considering the few months of the year they are employed, are comparatively small. The self-respecting ones who do not gold-dig on the side are generally living in actual poverty.

Thirty thousand women had their hair bobbed in one week in Manhattan, according to figures compiled by a reporter who visited 96 of the leading bobbing parlors. O, yes! reporters now "cover" the bobbing parlors. Scandal thrives in them.

A friend of mine who owns a chain of sidewalk orange drink stands permitted me to act as clerk in one near the Winter Garden the other afternoon. It must be a prosperous business, for in three hours I took in 20 odd dollars. It was rather a pleasant experience save for the pudgy man who snapped his finger at me to serve him and said: "Make it snappy, George."

It was interesting, too, to see the public attitude toward one who is hiding down a rather unimportant job. It seemed to me invariably the best dressed folk were more courteous. I splashed some of the orange drink on a debonaire but portly gentleman dressed in the height of fashion. My apology was abject. "Tut, tut," he said, "life is full of accidents." He probably thought "if it weren't for an accident I might be hiding down your job." I wanted to ask him what fling of fate made him appear so prosperous.

A married man was driving a young girl home from a cabaret. As they were bowling along Central Park West the man nodded. When he awakened the taxicab door was open and his companion was gone. He supposed she had become indignant at lack of attention and when the cab was caught in a traffic jam hopped out. He didn't know until next morning that in some fashion she had fallen on her head, crushed her skull and died.

BRINGING UP FATHER

Registered U. S. Patent Office

HERE COMES YOUR WIFE, MR. JIGGS!

WELL—WHAT ARE YOU LAUGHING AT? GET OUT!!

YES—I'LL BUY THE GOODS—DON'T SHOW THEM TO ANYONE UNTIL I SEE YOU—WELL—IF YOU INSIST ON ME COMIN' RIGHT OVER—I WILL.

SORRY—MAGGIE—BUT I HAVE TO RUSH RIGHT AWAY TO MEET THAT MAN THAT JUST PHONED ME.

I KNOW—DEAR—BUSINESS IS BUSINESS—DEAR.

SO THAT'S HIS LITTLE GAME—I'LL FIX HIM WHEN I SEE HIM.

JERRY ON THE JOB

SEE JIGGS AND MAGGIE IN FULL PAGE OF COLORS IN THE SUNDAY BEE



THE CAREFUL EMPLOYEE.

Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban



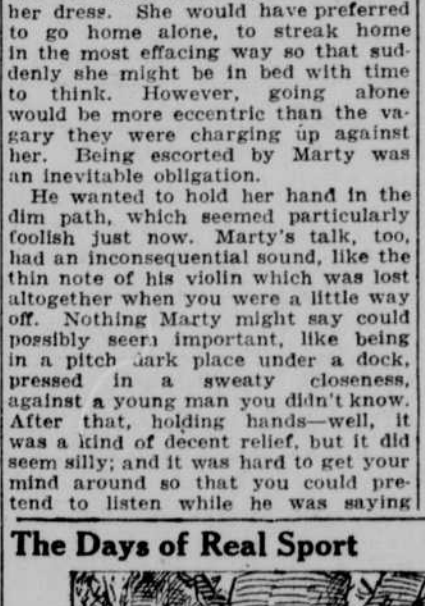
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The Days of Real Sport

By Briggs



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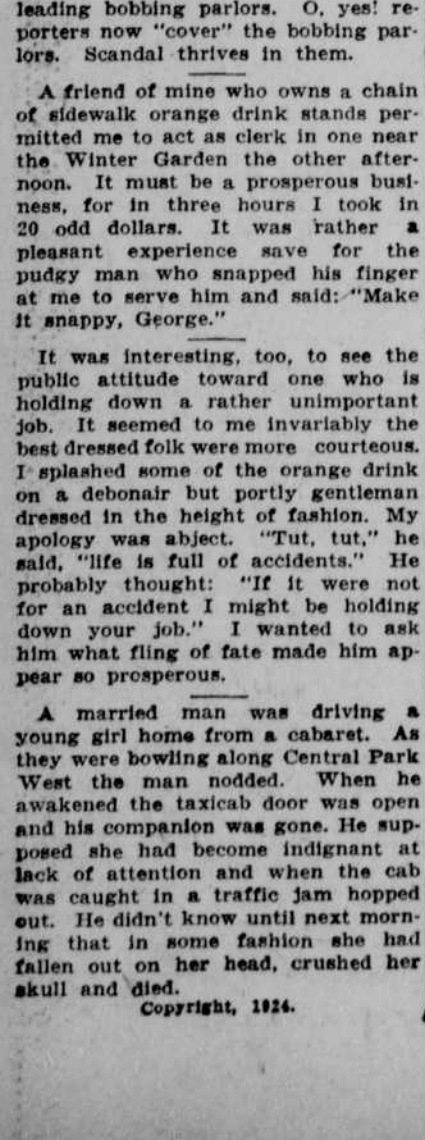
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