

SYNOPSIS

Ben Elliott - from "Yonder" makes his entry into the lumbering town of Tincup, bringing along an old man, Don Stuart, who had been eager to reach Tincup. Nicholas Brandon, the town's leading citizen, resents Stuart's presence, trying to force him to leave town and Elliott, resenting the act, knocks him down Elliott is arrested, but finds a friend in Judge Able Armitage. The judge hires him to run the one lumber camp, the Hoot Owl, that Brandon has not been able to grab. This be longs to Dawn McManus, daughter of Brandon's old partner, who has troubled. disappeared with a murder charge hanging over his head. Brandon sends his bully, Duval, to beat up Ben, and Ben worsts him in a fist fight and throws him out of camp. Old Don Stuart dies, leaving a let for Elliott, "to be used the going becomes too tough." Ben refuses to open the letter at this time, believing he can win the fight by his own efforts. Fire breaks out in the mill.

CHAPTER IV-Continued

"Getting her!" Ben panted as Able tried to say something to him. "Getting her!' He coughed and his words had come in a half strangle but, even so, the exultation in his tone was unmistakable.

Living flame no longer leaped and roared through the hole in the floor. Thick smoke swept upward but that he cried out:

"Good work, Buller! Over there. though; leok!"

Fire had taken fresh hold in a greasy timbe: and was worming its er's letter, eh? . . . Well, maybe Buller dashed a half dozen pails of thing may turn up. No, I guess I "Keep going, Buller!" Ben cried. gave me just yet!" "I'll take half your men."

He went slipping down the slide resumed his pacing. and at the bottom called men from the bucket line.

Stretch out, the rest of you!" he called. "Now, this way, you lads: in here and mop her up, and make it fast!"

speed became less imperative.

had been subdued completely did stopped and tied his horses. Ben Elliott relax. Then, with lanfloor, completely ice glazed, charred got a mill standing, though?" in places, and surveyed the damage. As he swung his lantern and looked can say for it." about, peering at timbers eaten half vital damage, he moved slowly, said by any chance Ben Elliott?" little, as a man will who is thinking scherly.

finally.

make the best of things. Ben laughed shortly.

many other things. If-"Say, chum!"

It was the night watchman. sheathed in flakes of ice from his down you might be interested." waist down, whom Ben hailed. "Where were you?"

"Eating, when it broke out." Ben only nodded. The watchman, by long custom, went to the boarding house food was kept warm for him. "I went through the yard and the mill. fust like you told me to do. I looked in at the boiler the last thing. I hadn't been out of here ten

"Yeah. Gasoline starts in a hur-

"Gasoline!" the watchman croaked, "Sure." Ben laughed drily. "The ground floor was drenched with it. They'd scraped rubbish into piles and soaked them, too. They almost did a good job. Almost five minutes' start, or if I hadn't happened to see a garage fire put out with salt ce where nothing else was handy to smother it, and it'd have been all day with us."

He rubbed his chin, thoughtfully. ble, Elliott. Can we deal?" "Didn't see anybody? Or hear anybody?"

"Not a soul or a sound." Elliott looked up. No snow was

falling. "Buller!" he called. The foreman,

face blackened, eyebrows gone, came up at his hail. "Herd this crew in clese. It snowed early in the eveof trailing and I don't want tracks all over the country."

He did his job of trailing. The away from the trampled snow about the mill-yard. the mill toward decks of logs. The toward town but Ben did not follow | mill to Elliott. far. He stopped when he found a "Yes, a fire, Bird-Eye. Never mind

three-gallon demijohn badly concealed beneath the end of a log. He sniffed its neck and nodded grimly.

carried to the mill in that container. "And now," Able said, after he also had sniffed the bottle in Buller's house, "what's to be done?" He tried to smile but deep trouble was in his old eyes.

The fuel of an incendiary had been

For the first time since he had come to Hoot Owl Ben Elliott shook his head dubiously as he dropped into a chair. He was both grave and

"They're getting the least bit rough," he observed.

"Rather rough, I'd say!" Able's face flared suddenly in righteous wrath. "D-n Nick Brandon! I'd give a good deal to hang this night's work on him!

"It'll take no less than a miracle now to pull us through. Two weeks to get the mill running? Benny, in that time we'll be busted wide open! They'll have a case against me, I'll be walked as administrator and the timber will be at Brandon's mercy."

"Yeah. . . . Wide open . . . and at his mercy."

Able rose and paced the small room, hands in his hip pockets. He came to a halt before Elliott and eyed him narrowly. He stood so a moment as if in debate with himself. "We had a fire," he said, "Not the

was all and as Ben ran up the icy kind you fight with fire, exactly. . . slide for the first time and saw this But old Don told Bird-Eye that you'd have to use fire to fight another kind with, didn't he?" Ben smiled slowly.

"You're thinking of the old tim-

way up beneath the trimmer saw. | . . . But we're not licked yet. Somewater on the spot and it went black. won't use whatever it was Stuart

The old man shook his head and

"What can turn up to give us a fighting chance, now?" he muttered.

CHAPTER V

fast!"
Stubborn flames ate into the lit- STILL, something did turn up.

Just at breakfast time, while ter on the ground floor. Again and Ben was prowling the mill, admitagain they broke out, but the driv- ting to himself that perhaps it was ing heat was gone, roaring gases no time to look at his hole card-the longer gave impetus to the spread letter that the old cruiser had sent of destruction as the first need for to him with its intriguing inscription-a stranger behind a light driv-Not until the final curl of smoke ing team swung into the mill-yard,

"Well, you had a fire!" he said as tern lighted, he entered the saw Ben approached. "See you've still "Standing, yes. But that's all you

"That's tough!" The man eved away, at burned belting, at other him in genuine concern. "Are you

"I am." "Elliott, my name's Blackmore. He stopped beside Able Armitage Glad to see you! I was in here and talked with Harrington week be-"Well, the insurance'll cover it," fore last and he was saving out the old justice said, as if trying to some veneer logs for me. I'm with the Veneer Exporting corporation and we're in the market for quite "But she's two weeks idle at the a few cars of stuff. Wonder if I inside. And belting gone and a good | could interest you in a deal. Market's right good and we're in need of some more stuff to fill out a ship-

"That's a close guess. Shoot!" "I'll pay you a hundred and twenbirch; standard specifications and kitchen for his midnight meal where delivery inside of two weeks on, busy, so I name the top and pass out to the railroad. any dickering."

ment. Maybe with your mill shut

A hundred and twenty. . . . And minutes before I just happened to ninety for birch! Ben's heart leaped tion!" Ben declared to Able. "I've glance through the window and see but he gave no outward indication got to watch Buller and the mill. of the great relief that surged too. I've got to think about marthrough him.

"Two weeks?" he asked.

"Yes, and less. Let's see. . I'll have to have thirty thousand delivered in just eleven days to be safe in getting 'em to Montreal on time. I'll take fifty thousand at the price but the thirty will have to be loaded on track first."

"That'll be fast production." "All of that! But if I can't get the stuff from you I can from Brandon by going up a few dollars a thousand. My cards are on the ta-

Ben considered, rubbing his chin with a knuckle. He looked up the road which led toward camp to see a man approaching with that quick, space devouring stride of the

woodsman. "Had breakfast?" he asked.

"No" "Blanket your team and go eat. ning. Maybe I'll want to do a job I'll have an answer for you by the time you're through."

As the veneer buyer entered the boarding house Bird-Eye Blainefresh tracks of a single man led the traveler from camp-had reached

"For the love av-" he began, tracks went out along the siding turning his amazed stare from the

name? I mean 'Bird-Eye.' Why do angered at his failure, they call you that?"

"Oh, that! Why, I looked veneer "I see. And you've been on the Tough nut? I'll tell the world!" Hoot Owl for three years, haven't you? Know the timber pretty well?"

"I know ivery quarter stake by its. first name!"

"How much bird's-eye and veneer birch is there within draying distance of the steel? Let's get down to cases. Do you think there's ten thousand? Or fifty?"

"Fifty? Naw! Tin?"-twisting his head. "Twict that, annyhow, 'Nd on twinty-three the' 's another bunch av ut. Scattered all through, too, but bunched, Misther Elliott, loike ye don't see ut frequent. That makes ut easy to git out."

"What I'm getting at is this: With the crew I've get could we get thirty thousand out in ten days?" Bird-Eye shrugged.

"Domn, b'v. but that's a chore! With this crew av hay tossers?" He shook his head, "Mebby you could . . you 'nd Paul Bunyan. Most men couldn't even so much as start."

"Wait here. I'll see you in a few

He entered Buller's house where Able Armitage sipped coffee glcomily, neglecting the food on his plate. "This is the nineteenth," Ben

said. "With what bank balance we have, how much must we get together to meet the payroll, that one note that you think can't be renewed and interest on others that'll be due? My figures are all up at

Able considered at length. "Three thousand might let us

out. Why?" He put that question dryly.

"I just wondered." Ben turned to Buller. "How many men will you need to get the mill in shape? I mean, how many can you use and not have them falling over each other?"

"Oh, four or five besides myself." Ben nodded. "That'll give me fifteen of the mill crew to throw into the woods." His eyes snapped as he looked back at Able. "A half hour ago I was feeling about half licked. I'll make the three thousand by the first or break my neck!"

"What are you getting at, Benny?" Able demanded.

"This." Ben hitched his chair close to the table and with a relish



"Getting Her!"

which indicated the love of battle, sketched his plan.

By noon that plan was in partial operation. Bird-Eye Blaine, his duties as barn boss temporarily delegated to another, and Ben Elliott cruised through the timber north of camp, belt axes in their hands. And in the morning the camp crew, augmented by fifteen men from the mill, left off the work of felling timber in strips, scattered through ty dollars a thousand for bird's eye the woods and dropped marked maple and ninety dollars for veneer trees. Swampers were with them, clearing the way for teams that followed close on the sawyers' heels say, thirty thousand. I know you're and drayed these high quality logs

"But it's a man's sized job to keep your eye on such an operakets so we'll be all set when we commence to saw again. And the devil of it is I'm only one hand and there are only twenty-four hours in a day!" He grinned. "Where's this good man you told me about? Jeffers? Is that his name?"

"Tim Jeffers? Over in the next town! But I doubt he'll even listen. He hasn't wanted a job in three years."

"Doubting isn't knowing," Ben said grimly and the next afternoon drove hard for Jeffers' little farm clearing.

The old logger met Elliott with an eye that seemed at first to be hostile but which on closer observation proved to be only one of severe appraisal.

"So you're after a camp foreman," he said. "No, I've quit the timber for good, Elliott, I'm through, A man has trouble enough without hunting it. I'm not a young man. son. I've no years nor strength any more to put into another man's

losing fight." "We won't lose. Brandon's tried quiet city has consistently refused and he hasn't got me licked yet. and we'll run him into his hole!"

But the man was obdurate and served.

that now. Where'd you get your Ben left him, chagrined and a bit

"Brandon's got a crimp in the whole country," he muttered as he stuff from Brandon for years ontil drove on toward camp, "And here I got sick with disgust fer th' mon." I am, trying to do four men's work.

> In Tincup he drove to the express office to inquire for the new piston head for the locomotive which was due. He wanted to start loading his veneer logs and getting them out to the siding as rapidly as they came from the woods. He had signed a contract with the time for delivery specified and wanted to run no chance of delay.

> But the repair part was not there. "Got the bill of it." the station agent said. "But it hasn't shown up. Ought to be along tomorrow." However, the next day did not bring the repairs and the driver of

"And the agent, he wants to see you," the man added enigmatically. "Didn't that pisten head come

next trip to town. "I told you the agent wanted to

see you.' The other's manner was doggedly mysterious and Elliott, without further questioning, harnessed and drove to Tincup.

The agent shook hands cerdially and drew him inside the tiny ticket office. He spoke in a cautious tone. although they were alone,

"The messenger on the train says he put that engine part off for me the night the bill came through. It ain't here and I'm takin' a chance of losing my job just telling you even that much."

Ben frowned.

"What are you driving it? It's not here and you'll lose- You mean, the express company'll hold you responsible for an article lost out of the depot?"

"That don't worry me. The shipment came in and I never saw it and if I was to tell you that the only thing that could've happened was that it was taken off the truck while I was handling baggage It wouldn't be a bad guess. But if certain parties knew I told you that much the railroad would get such a complaint about me that I'd be out of a job between days and don't you forget it!"

"Oh, I see." Ben looked at a calendar. "It took them five days to get it back to me. Can't wait that long. Give me a telegraph blank. I'll have 'em notify me by wire when they ship and if I have to meet trains myself . . . why, I can do that, too."

The other nodded and gave Ben a worried look.

"I sort of liked the way you did up Duval in that log rollin'; and I heard about the trimmin' you gave him at camp. And I'm . . . Well, I've seen enough raw stuff go on around this man's town to feed me up. I'll help you all I can but I've got kids to think about." Ben made a wry face.

"Even children don't seem safe," he said. "Some of us have got only our dander invested in the particular fracas I'm mixing in, but everything the little McManus girl has got is at stake."

"Yup. You're- Little girl?" "Yes. The McManus girl. She owns the Hoot Owl."

"Oh," the agent said with a queer look.

The following morning, a half hour after the men had gone to the woods, a sawyer came running toward the camp office just in time to catch Ben before he left for the

"Hi, Elliott!" he called. "Hold on a minute!" He came breathlessly up to the sleigh.

"Somebody cut three inches offen the measures last night. Thought you ought to know. Logs three inches short might be thrown out." "Somebody cut- How'd you find

that out?" "Well, we left the measuring stick layin' on a tree we'd dropped last night. I'd marked it myself. figurin' on making one more log before we quit and then we decided not to. It snowed just a mite durin' the night. I laid the measure down again this morning and made another mark, forgetting about the first which was covered up with snow, you see. When I marked, it knocked the snow off the log, showing up my first one three inches off. I thought that was funny so I measured again. Somethin' was wrong, sure. We looked her over and found where a piece had been cut off the stick and then we saw where tracks-"

"Be with you pronto," Ben muttered as he turned his team back toward the barn.

He found five of the saw gangs with shortened measures. Fortnnately, the discovery was made early in the day and only a few-underlength logs had been made. However, it proved to Ben that menacing influences struck in unexpected ways and from all quarters. An unexplained snowshoe trail was found which led in from the north and none knew who had made it. The visitor evidently had gone out by road in the dead of night.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Santa Fe Has No Railroads Although Santa Fe is the capital of New Mexico, no railroyd enters there. A citizenry in love with its

everything up to and including fire to permit the railroads to build through Santa Fe. It largely be-Come along with me, Tim Jeffers, cause of this that the charm of the ancient town has been pre-

Darwin's Theory Given Rap by English Author that of most social creatures—a repetition over hundreds of millions of years of the same biological events

hand, natural selection and the sur- case. vival of the fittest, the very core of Darwin's theory, are no longer accepted as the sole agencies at work in the creation of new species and varieties. Since the days of Mendel thing unstable about the first adven- pour them all right out just as they it has become apparent that the mechanism of heredity is both delicate and complex. Moreover, there are the endocrine glands, with their tremendous potentialities for modifying tile could evolve, something that was blow the rest away.-John Oliver Ben's supply team reported the fact | the organism. Lastly, the relation | the result of a crisis. of that organism to its environment is not nearly so direct and simple as Darwin assumed. How the more er form seems always to be the reimaginative biologists think about sult of critical instability. Despite yet?" Ben demanded angrily of the evolution and especially the problem the convincing array of fossils that supply teamster after the man's of man's descent is well exemplified by "The Coming of Man," a recently toed horse of today evolved from an published book in which Dr. R. ancient, five-toed equine animal not Broom, an English authority on much bigger than a St. Bernard dog, amphibians, sets forth his own hypothesis.

developed in the sea. How, then, digital diminuendo. did the first amphibian evolve? ventured on land and adapted itself mammal. With man it is the same terly new circumstances? When we ever evolved. In a state of someask such questions it is apparent thing like fermentation, he has al-

Probably no biologist doubts the | that natural selection and the survalidity of evolution. On the other vival of the fittest do not meet the

Doctor Brown holds that physical structure, courage, pugnacity, efficlency were not solely responsible for the transition. There was someturer that came out of the sea. He was like an unstable chemical com- ing that a faithful hand will take and pound that changes into something sift them, keep what is worth keepelse-something out of which a rep- ing, and with the breath of kindness Examine all the other animals, and

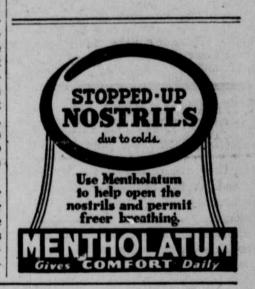
the transition from an old to a newshows plainly enough how the onethe jumps are marked. Between five toes and four toes there is no It is generally agreed that life first gradual transition, nothing like a

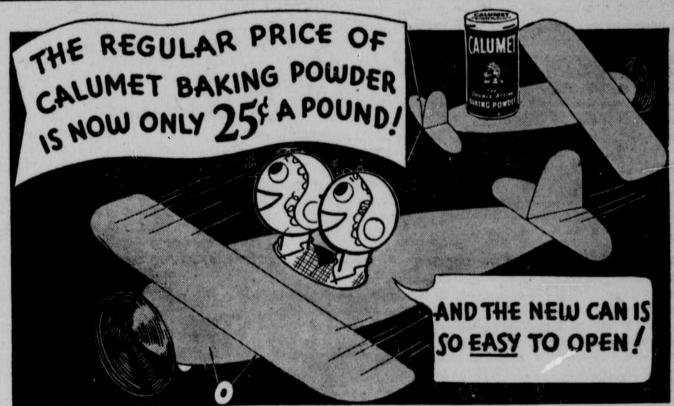
Crisis, everywhere crisis, whether What was the bold animal that first it be fish or amphibian, reptile or wholly or partially to life under en- - one of the most unstable creatures

ways been in a critical turmoll. Unlike the ant or the bee, he is not highly specialized. If he ever does settle down, his history will be like years of the same biological events and facts. He will cease to evolve. -New York Times.

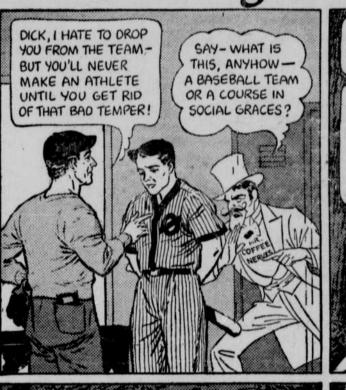
A Friend

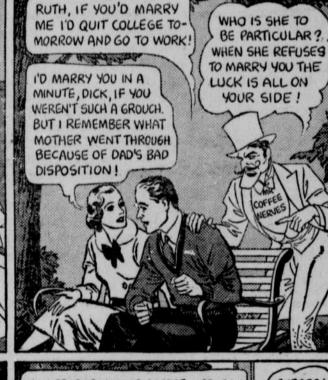
Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person; having neither to weigh thoughts nor to measure words, but are, chaff and grain together, know-Hobbes.

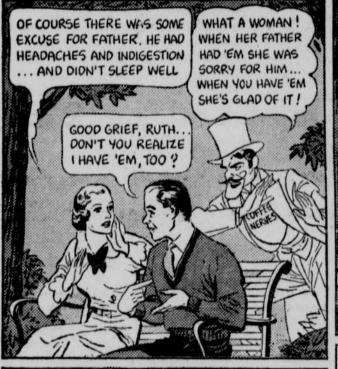




Along came Ruth

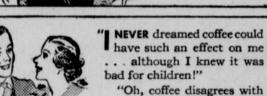












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