

JO ELLEN

By ALEXANDER BLACK.

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(Continued From Yesterday.)

He was capable of going this long way around to prove something to win something. More obstinacy would not have lasted so long. He must have cared as he said he cared, and this would be amazing. . . . She began to have a new sense of being enveloped. The hazards they had fused about at home were absurdly less than this which belonged quite apart, which had nothing to do with rush hours, with districts or employments. She began to know that it was really not an outside hazard, but something inside herself. . . . Yes, it was herself she was afraid of. Afraid. She had not known much about fears. There was always a way of chucking them. And they always came from outside, things you could laugh at or fight. When the school was a-fire, when she fell out of the tree, when Uncle Ben sat up in bed with the crazy look, when she bumped her head diving and wondered whether she should strangle before she could get her head to the top of the water—any number of incidents could confirm her confidence in escaping real fears. But this one started under her skin, not precisely like the feeling you would have at the very edge of a high place; more as if a stealing numbness began at a moment when you knew it would be necessary to leap away. Other feelings boiled up. This was a sinking, though it made your heart go. . . . Perhaps it started with her always being willing—not really willing, but knowing that she was secretly willing—to see him once more. Only once more. But when she had seen him once more the secret willingness was not stifled. It had something to do with knowing that he wouldn't be checked by any ordinary word, that even when absent for so long he was persisting. Above all, it was the difficulty of that feeling that couldn't be rubbed out. Whatever she did she would have to do with that feeling still there.

The thing to do was to make the next meeting, wherever it might happen, really the last. By being openly insulting, terribly so. It would be his insulting the feeling inside of her. All the better.

The meeting had better happen as soon as possible. Any evening when she left the office he might be waiting somewhere, she looked for him in the crowds. Four days went by. She looked for him on Sunday when she had visited the Tices and was skirting the Hill. There was a letter from Zimmer, saying that Lamar was opportune. He was going to try him in a position vacated by a drafted man. There were letters from Marty, but no sign from Stan Lamar. Perhaps. . . .

Then, at the top of the steps into the subway, he touched her arm. He was bronzed and smiling. It was as if he also were going home. His space for her in the jam at the train door and kept a space while they stood during the hot, clattering journey. There was a seat for her at Ninety-first street and presently one for him beside her. He told her of his trip into the west; about the war horses; that he had made some money—not in any profiteering way; there was a lot of money to be made if you knew horses and how to handle men—army men included. He had expected to be drafted, and when luck turned the other way it looked like a tip. He would wait. If the United States wanted him it could have him. Meanwhile, he had gone to work again in New York. This was where he belonged.

"I won't pretend anything," he said. "I know where you are. It gave me an idea. My father has known that the boss of yours since he was a boy. Don't see each other much—not at all now, I guess—but they must have been pretty close once. Eberly's hard as nails, but they seem to remember. A cautious one. Had to see that before he would do anything. X-rayed me. There's a recommendation. Passed by the censor isn't it. It was passed by Eberly. You've been passed by Eberly."

It was all very adroit. Not a word about past meetings, nor a past letter. Nothing to rebut. Nothing to cause occasion for saying that this was a last meeting, positively the last.

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she had always fancied Marty as a sort of poetic friend, who, if his friendship ever became ardent, would give liberal circumspect warning that could be coped with as occasion might demand. The blunt, ultimate challenge had an amazing splash to it. Marty was changing.

"I know," he was saying, "you may not think I'm worth it yet. . . . 'Please don't tell me,' said Jo Ellen, 'you're going to bring home a halo.' 'I don't mean anything like that,' he went on. 'It'll only be that I've done something—something—'"

"I'm not ready to marry anybody." "Not this minute. It's a long way off—months and months—we can't tell how long. And I want to carry with me—that you will marry me. Can't you see what a difference it would make—to know that the one I've always been in love with—"

"You haven't always been in love with me, Marty. This is just—" Jo Ellen wanted time to think. Time was the one thing she couldn't have.

"Always," persisted Marty. "We scrapped a little once in a while. But I know. I know it now better than

ever. I know that I need to go on. I'm surer about you than anything else in the world. If I had your promise I could report at nine o'clock and tell the old war to do what it likes. Jo Ellen, let me have it to think of that I own that wild heart of yours!"

She wished he hadn't said "wild heart." It was annoying that in her breast there should be a thumping at the moment. Heart was all right, but the phrase sounded like something he had thought out. If she had a little time to think. . . .

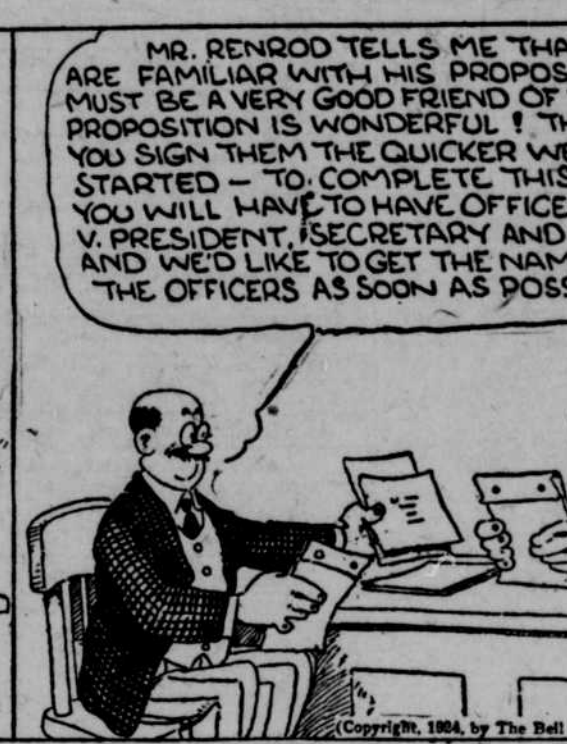
(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

THE NEBBS

RENROD'S REPRESENTATIVE CALLS ON NEBB AND SLIDER WITH THE NECESSARY PAPERS FOR A HALF MILLION DOLLAR NOXAGE CORPORATION



MR. PRESIDENT.

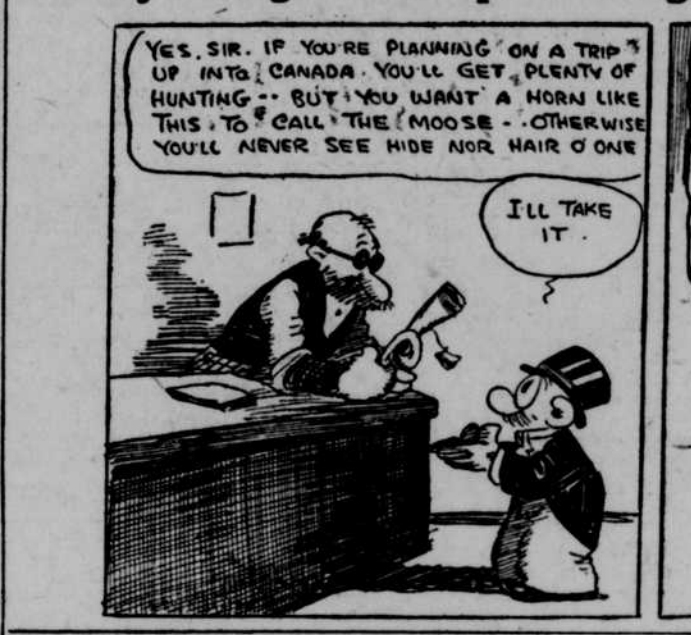


MR. RENROD TELLS ME THAT YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH HIS PROPOSITION. HE MUST BE A VERY GOOD FRIEND OF YOURS. THE PROPOSITION IS WONDERFUL! THE QUICKER YOU SIGN THEM THE QUICKER WE'LL GET STARTED - TO COMPLETE THIS CORPORATION YOU WILL HAVE TO HAVE OFFICERS - PRESIDENT, V. PRESIDENT, SECRETARY AND TREASURER AND WE'D LIKE TO GET THE NAMES OF THE OFFICERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE



Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess

Barney Google and Spark Plug



"THE CALL OF THE WILD."



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBeck

New York --Day by Day--

By O. O. MINTYRE.

New York, July 24.—A novelist calls Manhattan a monster of riveted stone crouching upon the shore of the sea. There are many who believe that none who step upon the narrow strip of island escapes the terrible inquisition. Those who are inherently kind become cruel. Love becomes a pretense.

Yet every evening on that famous lighted avenue of make-believe and highway of sham—Broadway—strolls a young woman with a strikingly beautiful face. At her side clinging lightly to her arm is a young man who walks with rather uncertain step.

His eyes have the pathetic focus of the blind. There is one of the tragic aftermaths of the war. She was a young petted darling of the footlights. He was an obscure checker in a cafe but they fell in love and were to be married.

The war came along and in France he was blinded by an exploding shell and taken as a prisoner. The records reported him killed in action. She hoped against hope and finally gave him up as dead. Six months before the armistice she became engaged to another man.

He was young, rich and loved her. She left the stage and prepared for a great wedding and a honeymoon tour of the world. Two weeks before the event news trickled back that her war sweetheart was alive and on his way home.

She decided her first duty was to him and gave up her marriage plans. It was not until she met him at the pier that she knew he was blind but she never faltered. And two days later they were married in a little Jersey town.

They live now in an obscure Bronx flat. He is mastering a trade. Nightly she is lured by the shining path that was once her world. He is at her side. They are happy. "Happier," she says, "than I ever thought it possible to be."

His coming fell on a Sunday, which he regarded as a miracle of good fortune. It had a certain dash as by temporary detachment from immense and dramatic happenings. His laugh alternated with a look of darkening thoughtfulness. Uncle Ben noted how his eyes followed Jo Ellen.

The crisp day in late September, with something silvery in the sunlight, gave a nervous animation to everything connected with the meeting. The special evening dinner brought a lot of talk from Uncle Ben. Mrs. Bogert was in a jocular mood. Jo Ellen's mother had least to say.

From the first Jo Ellen knew that Marty would want the high place for their parting. It seemed to her innocent of him that he should suggest that stroll after dinner and find the inevitable path with so transparent a casualness. Going there was, she thought, a fresh indication of his persistent sentimentalism. They had, in a few months, become so much older than when they were there before, and the juvenile traditions invested it so tenaciously, that one ought to have expected to find it shrunken. Yet it was curiously the same, with the same obliterating encirclement of trees, the same primal quiet, the same crackling cushion of sun-baked leaves.

When they were seated Jo Ellen knew that he would want her to kiss him, and she knew she would kiss him. He looked handsome, and a handsome soldier ought to be kissed when he was going away. No matter how you hated war, you knew he wasn't to blame, and that he meant to do his part well.

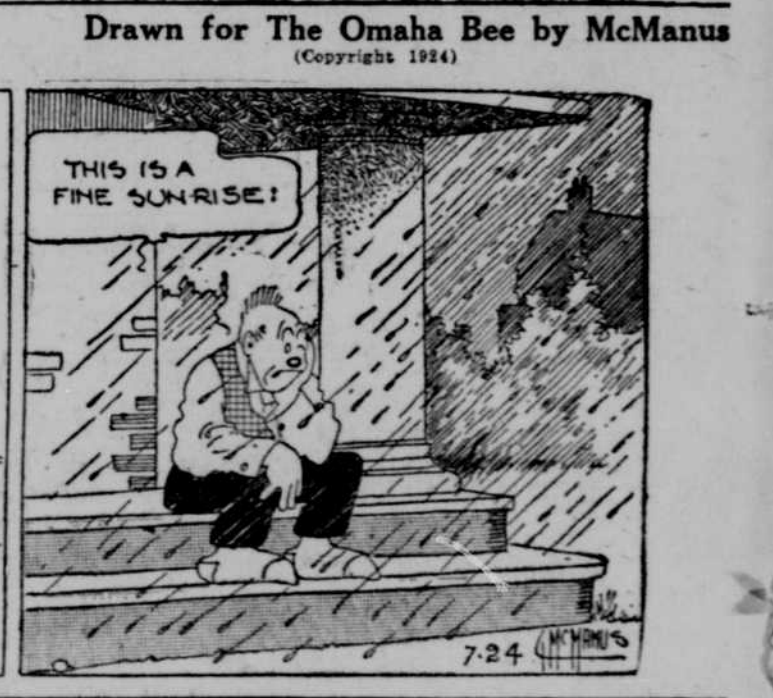
Then Marty surprised her after all by forgetting the scenery and all approaches. He had thought it out terrifically.

"Jo Ellen," he said, taking very firm hold of her hand, "will you marry me when I come back from France?"

"Marry you?"

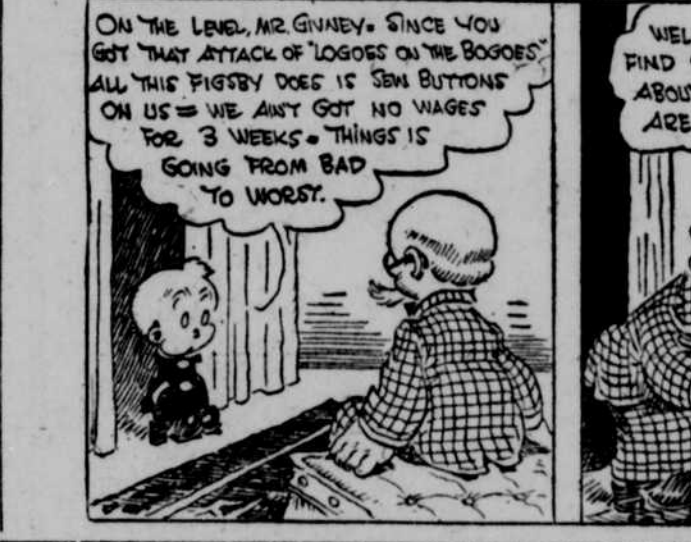
The gasp was not contemptuous, or indignant, or even evasive. It was simply that for once Marty had succeeded in taking her breath away. The very length of their acquaintance gave the directness an acute novelty. In any vista of a future

BRINGING UP FATHER



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus

JERRY ON THE JOB



DELAYED INFORMATION



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban

Park Row is wrangling about who coined the term "sob-squad" as applied to women writers on newspapers. It is admitted the accouchement took place during the Harry Thaw trial. The city editor of the old morning Sun declares it was A. E. Thomas. The city editor of the Morning Telegraph says it was Karl Decker.

Frank Ward O'Malley of the Sun, who has retired to his country place at Brielle, N. J., is a worry magazine editor and one of the most consistent colers of newspaper phrases. Because his articles were unsigned he did not get the credit that was his due. O'Malley wrote one story a day which appeared in the first column on the back page of the Sun.

O'Malley, incidentally, in my opinion was the world's best reporter. Several times while employed on a New York newspaper I covered assignments with him. He never asked questions and never took notes. He appeared to be uninterested in the particular story he was covering. But the next day he had all the facts besides. He could pick a story out of the thin air and make it readable. Once a little East Side girl strayed five blocks from her tenement home in search of a flower. That was all there was to the story but O'Malley wrote a column and a half and New York next morning had a lump in its throat. Another time he wrote two columns about an old Fifth avenue cab horse that had been turned to pasture after 15 years service. He had the gift of lifting the commonplace into the realms of wonder.

GIVE ME THE PAPER QUICK -- I WANT TO SEE WHO WON THE FIGHT

I'VE GOT A BET WITH JIMMY SCHMALZ THAT BATTLING FISH WOULD BEAT KNOCKOUT JOHNSON -- PRETTY SOFT

I HAD TO GIVE HIM ODDS BUT WHAT DO I CARE -- I'VE GOT A CINGH BET I JUST WANT TO SEE WHAT ROUND THE BATTLER WON -- AH -- HERE 'TIS

HOW ABOUT A LITTLE GAME AT MY HOUSE ON SATURDAY NIGHT?

FINE -- WHO'S GOING TO BE THERE??

I'M FIFTY DOLLARS LOSER, MR. KABIBBLE -- WILL YOU TAKE A CHECK OR CASH?

CASH

HE SEEMED ANGRY OVER YOUR TAKING THE CASH

LET HIM BE SORE -- AFTER ALL, HE'S A STRANGER TO ME!

THE CHECK MAYBE IS GOOD

MAYBE! BUT I NEVER TAKE A CHECK ON SATURDAY NIGHT -- IT GIVES YOU TWO NIGHTS TO WORRY ABOUT IT!!

How to Start the Day Wrong



ABIE THE AGENT



Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield