

# JO ELLEN

By ALEXANDER BLACK. Copyright, 1924.

(Continued from yesterday.)

"If you want me to stay here," she said jerkily, "you'll have to think a little about your talk."

"That's a threat. A threat!"

"Then he threw his arms about her. 'O Jo Ellen!'"

XIII.

Jo Ellen let it be known that she had chosen a Sunday to visit Inwood. It should have been a simple matter to communicate this intention. Nothing could be more reasonable than a visit to her mother. Yet it seemed to cost a good deal to get the thing out. Marty's lips suddenly became lower.

Mrs. Simms was mute, but her thought seemed to stare like words chalked upon a dark wall. For the only day in the week when Jo Ellen could have her husband or be of any use around the house, she was choosing to be off to her own people—haunting her privilege of shedding things, strutting freely where other were tied to a chair or to a kitchen range.

When Sunday morning came Simms senior, his stockingless feet covered by canvas slippers, smoking proudly in the midst of a Sunday edition, paused to say, "Good idea. Give them my respects. Wish you'd ask Bogert why he never comes down."

But no single sop of sympathy could mollify the clank of the chain. Her going was made to seem, at the last, like an affront. A sense of what lay behind her dragged through the miles and stained the brightness of the day. Yet it was necessary to pretend. There were searching eyes at Inwood. Being pitied would be a finisher.

Uncle Ben loomed on the top step in a posture that suggested awaiting an event. He was in the front row of everything that happened, embusily cheerful, ready to blow encouragingly upon every flame of hope, roaring over his own jokes, fearful of pauses. There must be nothing disagreeable; this was fixed in his mind. His pleasant about the prodigal daughter and the faded child expressed his theory of an occasion. He even wished that the old baseball team might get out in the afternoon.

# New York

--Day by Day--

By O. O. McINTYRE.

New York, Aug. 15.—Thoughts while strolling around New York: Noon. And here I am just up. Once an Egyptian always a late sleeper. I love to be lazy. Too many frobit-ten souls living by time clocks. Hot dog! A parade. Wish Sousa would write another march. Ex-Ambassador Gerard.

An elfish chip of a girl between two stout men in checks and derbies, the famous gambler who wears a silk patch over his eye. Herb Roth, the caricaturist. A button and a waggle look. Street hawkers doing their stuff along the library wall. A bluecoat—and they vanish.

An Oriental rug sale. Keshons, Sarooks, Insaphans and Arakshahs. At least that's what the sign says. Means nothing to me. Rag carpets are my speed. More padded cafes. No bootlegger is a hero to his waiter. Glida Gray's mervo limousine in a show window.

Wonder if I've got enough money for a hair cut. A beggar hurls his crutch at a policeman. And runs like a rabbit. As I live and breathe! A drug store selling drugs. Old blue veined chubmen tottering to their bridge. What's the name of Eddie Foy's fifth child?

An organ grinder and his monk. Didn't know there were any left. Hope there's bean soup for dinner. Wish Tiffany's would put up a sign. It seems downright snobby without it. Kindly gathers from east side. And they have more fun than the Rollos rolling hoops.

Two Frenchmen with spade shaped beards. And quizzical little eyes. Trousered to quizzicalness and boot-ed to misery. Why would anyone leave Cafe de la Paix for this shimmering city. Charlie Tomme, the poet. And a famous bachelor.

Overcrowded buses. An obsequious waiter in the Waldorf making out a bill. And a tired looking man waiting for the bad news. A cat on an iron picket fence. I tried it once. And lost the northeastern section of my Sunday pants. And grandma licked me to boot.

In a promenade of 10 streets a reporter found 62 new restaurants. Restaurants in New York fall in greater proportion than any sort of business. Every waiter, after he saves a few dollars, opens a restaurant and 90 per cent of them fail.

Speaking of restaurants I noticed George Rector among the avenue throngs the other afternoon. It recalls the old days when Broadway was a hell-roaring street. Rector, dapper and debonaire could be seen each evening at 6 standing resplendent in his dinner jacket in the entrance to old Rector's. He homed the wheat without offending. He knew his New York as few knew it. Nowadays the head waiter knows few of his patrons. He fits from place to place.

The musical saw craze threatens the same horror as the ukulele craze. The old-fashioned saw is played with a fiddle bow and the various tones are produced by bending the blade of the saw at different angles. A small shop has opened on West 37th street where only musical saws are sold. Two instructors are there and promise to teach the novice in 10 lessons at \$5 a lesson. The saw craze was brought to New York by an Arkansas lumberman who is said to have discovered the music that could be brought from the tool. He appeared several years ago in a mid-night musical revue.

They dragged me out to one of those interpretive dances again. This one was where the ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics came to life in the dance of the solar gods. I didn't catch any of it not even on the second bounce but I was entranced by a fellow in front of me who went to sleep. His toupe slipped as he slumped in his seat and for half an hour it threatened to fall to the floor. But I didn't get to see exactly what happened for I nodded too and he fixed it before I came back to consciousness.

A zippy game by the Inwood Giants would sort of love things up. Mrs. Rewer expressed a desire to know how Marty's mother was behaving. She sought to read an answer in the looks of Jo Ellen. Having read the make-believe she tried to retaliate without something spoken to go on. The make-believe might mean either Marty or his mother. It might mean both. It might mean hunger for a rest home. Whatever it meant, she found the blight a bitter thing to see.

The grandmother refused all condolences.

"What's the use of bluffing?" was her challenge. "Why don't you swear, Ellen, and have it out? A good damn or two."

This stirred a laugh in Jo Ellen. "I must explode," said Mrs. Bogert, with her energetic finger gesture in the gray hair, "that you ought to whine. Of course not. But you've been up against it hard. If you haven't smashed anything or anybody it'll mean you have a good deal on your chest. Hell them and be done with it."

"It's just a job," Jo Ellen remarked from the porch chair. "And I didn't bring it with me."

"Good work!" Bogert strained the pockets of his trousers. "She's a sport. Wants a change."

Mrs. Bogert was not diverted. "Wants a change to blow off. That's what she needs. I know when people are natural. This business of being sweet in advertising puts a crimp in you. Patience, you. But we got to keep things said up. You can say it here, and get a little help."

"All right," said Jo Ellen. "When I must explode I'll try to do it here."

Mrs. Rewer was halted. "Sometimes she's a Bogert and sometimes a Rewer. Maybe generally a Bogert trying to be a Rewer, and that's some strain."

"Oh, I'm not trying to be meek," expostulated Jo Ellen, "if you mean something like that. I tell you, it's my job. There's no way out. What's the good of peeving? And that isn't it, either. If I begin discussing, there'll be real trouble. I can seem to stand things if I shut up."

"You talk like an old woman," said Mrs. Bogert, "and I want you to be an honest-to-God girl."

"I know!" cried Bogert, "you want her to be red-headed, and she—"

Mrs. Bogert grinned sharply. "I don't want her to get her wires crossed. This Simms crowd has a strange hold on her—"

Jo Ellen laughed again. Her mother winced at the sound. "She said, 'You're a dear old bunch. You wanted me to have something nice and soft and happy. And I didn't strike it. There was a war, and I hated it and didn't do much. This is my share.'"

"Damn it!" Bogert burst forth, forgetting his good resolutions. "Mrs. Simms doesn't belong to your share. I'll say that."

Mrs. Rewer lifted her hands deprecatingly.

"Well," said Jo Ellen, "she's a kind of a beast." But she holds the reins. "That can be changed," Mrs. Bogert declared. "You can be squeezed until there's only a rag of you left. Holding in and thinking about your duty. A fine old-fashioned idea that's killed a lot of women, bled them white, then finished them off. Of course, you might be blubbering, and we might be striking you and pleading with you to be noble. That's one way to wither women. It just happens that I know other sympathizing anything. I'm selling you to kick at kicking time, no matter whose shins get hurt. You'll last longer."

Jo Ellen stood up with a menacing suddenness.

"This is funny. You'd think they beat me every morning before breakfast."

Mrs. Rewer had been watching.

"It might be a good idea," she said, "to let Jo Ellen alone, or we'll make her glad to get back to her jail."

Ben Bogert slapped his knee, and his mother, of a sudden, was out of her chair and had Jo Ellen in a firm grip. Bogert gulped when he saw that the three women were crying.

"Say..." He left his ejaculation in the air. The spectacle was too much for him. He stared in a tortured awe at the tears of all the people in the world who mattered most. It was as if Woman wept.

Then he saw Jo Ellen break loose and begin the descent of his long flight of steps. This amazing turn completed his dismay. He made a leaping motion, then checked himself when he became aware that Emma Traub was standing at the foot of the lower flight. Well, this was as good a way as any to break up the game. Emma Traub would answer the purpose very well. If breaking up the game was what Jo Ellen had in mind.

XIV.

"Thought I saw you," said Emma.

Jo Ellen knew that the truth went further. Emma's passing was not likely to have been a matter of chance. She always knew about things. Old Lot Mallin represented gossip. Emma represented secrets. To Jo Ellen the mystery of her seemed to survive all intervals and to have its old creepy fascination. She inevitably suggested whispers. "How's your father?" Jo Ellen asked, with a feeling of forcing herself into another scene.

"Slipping. I give him about six months now. After that I'll sell the house. You've had trouble yourself."

"Yes."

"You've had a raw deal for a honey-moon."

"If you don't mind, we won't talk about it."

"I see. It's as bad as that."

"I didn't come up here to—"

"One had to be plain with Emma."

"Yes, but it's no sin to be sorry. You're just like you used to be—quick. And that's what makes it worse... a girl like you, and then, 'bingo, no husband.'"

"I have a husband," retorted Jo Ellen.

Emma eyed her with a curious, boring look. There was always something passionate in her curiosity. "A husband?" Emma repeated the words as if she were measuring them against what she saw. In any other imaginable person the transparent process would have been profoundly insulting. Jo Ellen endured the or-

deal because she had a curiosity of her own. Probably this curiosity was behind the impulse that had carried her down the steps. She wanted the Emma Traub version of Myrtle Fleck. "I knew a case like yours," said Emma, intently. "The girl..."

(To Be Continued Tomorrow.)

# THE NEBBES



# BASHFUL RUDY!



# Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess



# Directed for The Omaha Bee by Sol Hess



# Barney Google and Spark Plug

# BARNEY CAN'T BELIEVE HIS EARS.

# Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Billy DeBerk



# BRINGING UP FATHER

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

# Drawn for The Omaha Bee by McManus



# JERRY ON THE JOB

# A WIDE-AWAKE EMPLOYEE.

# Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hoban



# How to Start the Day Wrong

# By Briggs

# ABIE THE AGENT

# Drawn for The Omaha Bee by Hershfield

