

Reading for Women and all the Family



BIG TIMBER

By BERTRAND W. SINCLAIR

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(Continued.)

"I think it's better that I should go away," Stella said. "I want you to agree that I should; then there will be no talk or anything disagreeable from outside sources. I'm strong, I can get on. It'll be a relief to have to work. I won't have to be the kitchen drudge Charlie made of me. I've got my voice, I'm quite sure I can capitalize that. But I've got to go. Anything's better than this, anything that's clean and decent. I'd despise myself if I stayed on as your wife feeling as I do. It was a mistake in the beginning, our marriage."

"Nevertheless," Fyfe said slowly, "I'm afraid it's a mistake you'll have to abide by—for a time. All that you say may be true, although I don't admit it myself. Ofhand I'd say you were simply trying to wretch on a fair bargain. I'm not going to let you do it blindly, all wrought up to a pitch where you can scarcely think coherently. If you are fully determined to break away from me you owe it to us both to be sure of what you're doing before you act. I'm going to talk plain. You can believe it and disdain it if you please. If you were leaving me for a man, a real man, I think I could bring myself to make it easy for you and wish you luck. But you're not. He's—"

"Can't we leave him out of it?" she demanded. "I want to get away from you both. Can you understand that? It doesn't help you any to pick him to pieces."

"No, but it might help you if I could rip off that swathing of idealization you've wrapped around him," Fyfe observed patiently. "It's not a job I have much stomach for, however, even if you were willing to let me try. But to come back. You've got to stick it out with me, Stella. You'll hate me for the constraint, I suppose, but until—until things shape up differently—you'll

Bringing Up Father

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By McManus



understand what I'm talking about by and by, I think—you've got to abide by the bargain you made with me. I could not force you to stay, I know. But there's one hold you can't break—not if I know you at all."

"What is that?" she asked icily. "The kid's," he murmured. Stella buried her face in her hands.

"I've forgotten—I'd forgotten," she whispered.

"You understand, don't you?" he asked hesitatingly. "If you leave—I keep our boy."

"Oh, you're devilish—to use a club like that!" she cried. "You know I wouldn't part from my baby—the only thing I've got that's worth having."

"He worth something to me, too," Fyfe muttered. "A lot more than you think, maybe. I'm not trying to club you. There's nothing in it for me. It isn't his fault he's here or that you're unhappy. I've got to protect him, see that he gets a fair shake. I can't see anything to it but for you to go on being Mrs. Jack Fyfe until such time as you get back to a normal poise. Then it will be time enough to try to work out some arrangement that won't be too much of a hardship on him. It's that or a clean break in which you go your own way and I try to mother him to the best of my ability. You'll understand some time why I'm showing my teeth this way."

"You have everything on your side," she admitted dully after a long interval of silence. "I'm a fool I admit it. Have things your way, but it won't work, Jack. This flare-up between us will only smolder. I think you lay a little too much stress on Monohan. It isn't that I love him so much as that I don't love you at all. I can live without him—which I mean to do in any case—far easier than I can live with you. Don't worry," he replied. "You won't be annoyed by me in person. I'll have my hands full elsewhere."

a great deal. Even when they were together, she and her husband, words did not come easily between them. He was away a great deal, seeking, she knew, the old panacea of work, hard, unremitting work, to abate the ills of his spirit. She envied him that outlet. Work for her there was none.

Lefty Howe's wife was at the camp now on one of her occasional visits. Howe was going across the lake one afternoon to see a Siwash whom he had engaged to catch and smoke a winter's supply of salmon for the camp. Mrs. Howe told Stella, and on impulse Stella bundled Jack Junior into warm clothing and went with them for the ride.

When she returned from the launch trip Fyfe was home and Charlie Benton with him. She crossed the heavy rugs on the living room floor noiselessly in her overshoes, carrying Jack Junior asleep in her arms. And so in passing the door of Fyfe's den she heard her brother say:

"But, good Lord, you don't suppose he'll be saphead enough to try such fool stunts as that! He couldn't make it stick, and he brings himself within the law first crack. And the most he could do would be to annoy you."

"You underestimate Monohan," Fyfe returned. "He'll play safe personally so far as the law goes. He's foxy. I advise you to sell if he offers more than you are willing to break at him—he'll figure some way to get you. It isn't your fight, you know. You unfortunately happen to be in the road."

"Hanged if I do!" Benton ejaculated. "I'm all in the clear. There's no way he can get me, and I'll tell him what I think of him again if he gives me half a chance. I never liked him, anyhow. Why should I sell when I'm just getting in real good shape to take that timber out myself? Why, I can make a hundred thousand dollars in the next five years on that block of timber. Besides, without being a sentimental sort of beggar, I don't lose sight of the fact that you helped pull me out of a hole when I sure needed a pull. And I don't like this high handed style. No, if it comes to a showdown I'm with you, Jack, as far as I can go. What in thunder can he do?"

Life's Problems Are Discussed

The innocent victim rouses in me the same sentiment that Galett Burgess expressed for the purple cow. "I'd rather see than be one" any time. In the first place it involves two admissions which are extremely hurtful to one's pride and self-esteem. The first is that you were fool enough to walk into a baited trap; the second, that you were inert enough to stay there, because you hadn't the wit or the grit or the plain common sense to get out.

In every bunch of letters that I receive there always lurks the "innocent victim" one. I should say that the average is about one in eight. Now, I am far from denying that there are innocent victims in the world who are deserving of all the sympathy and help that can be bestowed upon them. I have just gazed from my window in time to see a large, handsome and aggressive blue Jay take an especially tempting bit of raisin bread from a small meek wren. I can only hope that the wren will get even in some particularly aggravating and ingenious way.

But to return to our muttons, the "innocent victim" letters. They stir me more than any I get, and the emotion is not always one of unadvised pity. It is often a feeling of resentment and indignation, righteous and unrighteous, I can't stop to bother about the fine distinctions. They are usually so humble and apologetic in tone. Now, why should an innocent victim apologize for being one? If innocent, no blame can be attached to him or her, and there is certainly no reason for anyone to apologize for circumstances which he could not possibly control.

I have taken a recent letter, and one which is fairly typical, by way of example. I have no way of verifying the statements, but I give the facts to you as they were sent to me.

This is the story:

A young girl who had lived in a small town in the West came to New York to get a position in a business office. She succeeded in securing a very satisfactory one, and lived happily with her married sister for a few months until the brother-in-law decided to move to another city. The girl remained alone. In her search for a room she met with a most unfortunate experience. She was sauntered and afraid to mention it, and confided in no one, attempting, as time went on to efface it as much as possible from her mind. She devoted herself wholeheartedly to her work and was holding

paid all of our expenses, he has another place now, but he gives me only the smallest allowance for food and refuses to buy me any clothes, and I am afraid I will freeze this winter."

If she does, I hope she will not write and describe her slow agonies to me and expect my sympathy. For I shall have none to bestow.

Any woman who has shown her capacity to support not only herself but her husband in time of difficulty has no excuse for doing without proper food and clothing.

If this woman's husband is the sort of a man she pictures him he is a small-minded tyrant, delighting in torturing and oppressing those who are in his power. And she, in accepting his tyranny and his insults, is lacking in independence and self-respect. She has shown her capacity to be a self-supporting woman doesn't have to endure physical and mental indignities from any one unless she enjoys that sort of thing.

But if my correspondent goes

about all winter ill fed, insufficiently clad, it simply means one thing, and that is that she is a born, dyed-in-the-wool, professional "innocent victim."

If a woman chooses to devote herself to a man whom her friends consider unworthy of her, I don't see that it is any one else's business. It is purely her own affair; but the moment she makes a spectacle of her private life and invites the sympathy of the world, that moment a healthy-minded community has a right to protest. There are only two decent and dignified courses open to the unhappy married. One is to get out, the other is to shut up.

We have heard quite long enough that it is a woman's lot to suffer and endure. It is a human being's right to make the biggest, finest thing she can of her life. Mistakes don't count, only intentions really count, and to be joyous, healthy, efficient, able to stand on our own feet, alone, if necessary—that is the inalienable right of each and all.

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You Can't Brush or Wash Out Dandruff

The only sure way to get rid of dandruff is to dissolve it, then you destroy it entirely. To do this, get about four ounces of ordinary liquid arvon; apply it at night when retiring; use enough to moisten the scalp and rub it in gently with the finger tips.

Do this to-night, and by morning, most if not all, of your dandruff will be gone, and three or four more applications will completely dissolve and entirely destroy every single sign and trace of it, no matter how much dandruff you may have. You will find, too, that all itching and digging of the scalp will stop at once, and your hair will be fluffy, lustrous, glossy, silky and soft, and look and feel a hundred times better.

You can get liquid arvon at any drug store. It is inexpensive and never fails to do the work.—Adv.

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Can you find my ——— Bill?
Never quiet, good or still.
Draw from 1 to 2 and so on to the end.

Grape-Nuts

and cream

A WISE PART OF ANY MEAL

THERE'S A REASON

Fashions of To-Day

By May Manton

There are so many occasions to which such a dress as this is adapted that it finds a place in every wardrobe. It is ideal for the college girls daily use, it is practical for general utility wear and it is always smart and attractive. The skirt is in three pieces with a gathered back which means pretty lines, and the blouse shows a vestee that is not alone one of the new features but which always allows effective use of contrasting material. As it is shown here, the blouse is made all of one fabric but the collar and vestee and turned-over portions of the cuffs could be of color or white to be pretty. Utility dresses are sure to be in demand this season and this one made of some serviceable material, such as a skirt of khaki colored galatea and the blouse of handkerchief lawn of the same color, would be absolutely available for practical needs.

For the medium size the blouse will require, 3 3/4 yards of material 27 inches wide, 2 3/4 yards 36, 2 yards 44, and the skirt, 4 3/4 yards 27, 3 3/4 yards 36, 2 3/4 yards 44.

The blouse pattern No. 9511 is cut in sizes from 34 to 44 inches bust measure, and the skirt pattern No. 9482 in sizes from 24 to 34 inches waist measure. They will be mailed to any address by the Fashion Department of this paper, on receipt of fifteen cents for each.

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