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Miss E. Rich of Brooklyn, N. Y., says: "I don't know what the cause was, but every few days my stomach would feel all bloated up with gas, my appetite was poor and I felt sick to my stomach—to say nothing of head-aches."

Never thought of using Carter's Little Liver Pills until nothing seemed to help. After using Carter's I felt relieved at once—and now at last my stomach "talks back" I answer with Carter's and have the last word."

Recommended and for sale by all drug stores, 21c.

SO BIG

By EDNA FERBER

(C. Doubleday, Page & Co.)

MARRIED.

SYNOPSIS.—Introducing "So Big" (Dirk DeJong) in his infancy. And his mother Selma DeJong. Daughter of Simon DeJong, gambler and gentleman of fortune. Her life to young womanhood in Chicago in 1888. Her husband, a gambler, a man of what assembly, but generally enjoying himself. At school her chum is Julie Hempel, daughter of August Hempel, butcher. Simon is killed in a quarrel that is not his own, and Selma, sixteen years old and practically destitute, secures a position as stenographer at the High Prairie school, in the outskirts of Chicago, living at the home of a truck farmer, Klas Pool. In 1891, twelve years old, son of Klas, Selma perceives the kindred spirit, a lover of beauty, like herself. Selma hears gossip concerning the "Section"—the "widow-Parlaments"—rich and good-looking, for Pervus DeJong, poor truck farmer, who is inseparable to the widow's attractions. For a commensurate lunch box, Selma prepares a lunch box dainty, but not of ample proportions, which is to be according to custom. The smallness of the box excites derision and Selma is teased and humiliated. The bidding becomes spirited. DeJong finally securing it for \$10. Over their lunch basket, which Selma and DeJong share together, the school-teacher, arranged to instruct the farmer, whose education has been neglected.

CHAPTER V.—Continued

Selma opened McBride's grammar. "Ahem!" a school-teacherly cough. "Now, then," she'll parse this sentence: Blucher arrived on the field of Waterloo just as Wellington was receiving the last contingent of Napoleon. "Just" may be treated as a modifier of the dependent clause. That is: "Just" means: at the time at which. Well, just here modifies at the time. And Wellington is the subject.

This for half an hour. Selma kept her eyes resolutely on the book. His voice went on with the dry business of parsing and his deep resonance struck a response from Selma's heart. "Just" responds when a hand is swept over its strings. Selma kept her eyes resolutely on the book. Yet she saw, as though her eyes rested on them, his large, strong hands. On the back of their was a golden glow that deepened at his wrists. Heavier and darker at the wrists. She found herself praying a little for strength—for strength against this strong and wide-eyed man. This, this abstraction that held her. A terrible, stark and pitiful prayer, couched in the idiom of the Bible.

"Oh, God, keep my eyes and my thoughts away from him! Keep my eyes and my thoughts away from the golden hair on his wrists. Let me not think of his wrists." "The owner of the beautiful, square, white teeth, wide along the south side of his farm. How much does he receive at \$150 per acre?"

He triumphed in this transaction, began the struggle with the roof of 678. Square roots agonized him. She washed the slate clean with her little sponge. He was leaning close in his effort to comprehend the fabled little fact that marched so tractably under Selma's mastery pencil.

She took it up, glibly. "The remainder must contain twice the product of the tens by the units plus the square of the units." He blinked. She was breathing rather fast. The fire in the kitchen stove snapped and cracked. "Now, then, suppose you do that for me. We'll wipe it out. There! What must the remainder contain?" He took it up, slowly, haltingly. The house was terribly still except for the man's voice. "The remainder . . . twice . . . product . . . tens . . . units . . ." "A something in his voice was a note—a shiver. She felt herself quivering away, as though the whole house were gently rocking. Little delicate agonizing shivers chased each other, hot and cold, up her arms, down her legs, over her spine. . . . "plus the square of the units is the same as the sum twice the tens . . . twice . . . the tens . . . the tens." His voice stopped.

Selma's eyes leaped from the book to his hands, unconsciously. Something about them startled her. They were clenched fists. Her eyes now leaped from those clenched fists to the face of the man beside her. His head came up, and back. Her wide, startled eyes met his. His were a blaze of blinding blue in his tanned face. Some corner of her mind that was still working eagerly noted this. "Then his hands were clenched. The blue blaze scorched her, enveloped her. Her cheek knew the harsh, cool feel of a man's cheek. She sensed the potent, terrifying pungent odor of close contact, the mixture of tobacco smoke, his hair, freshly laundered linen, an indefinable body smell. It was a mingling that disgusted and attracted her. She was at once repelled and drawn. Then she felt his lips on hers and her own, incredibly, responding eagerly, wholly to that pressure.

Chapter VI

They were married the following May. Just two months later, Selma was at once bewildered and calm; rebellious and content. Overlaying these emotions was a something of a grim amusement. Beneath them, something like fright. She moved with a strange

air of fatality. It was as if she were being drawn inexorably, against her will, her judgment, her plans, into something sweet and terrible. When Pervus DeJong was elated, joy, voluble. He talked little; looked at her dumbly, worshipfully.

There were days when the feeling of unreality possessed her. She, a truck farmer's wife, living in High Prairie the rest of her days? Why, no! No! Was this the great adventure that her father had always spoken of? She, who was going to be a happy young woman on the path of life—any one of a dozen things. This High Prairie winter was to have been only an episode. Not her life! She looked at Maartje. Oh, she'd never be like that. That was stupid, necessary. Pink and blue dresses in the bound for her. Frills on the window curtains. Flowers in bowls.

Some of the pangs and terrors with which most prospective brides are assailed she couched to Mrs. Pool, while that active lady was slandering about the kitchen. "Did you ever feel scared and—and sort of—scared when you thought about matrimony, Mrs. Pool?" Maartje Pool's hands were in a great batch of bread dough which she pummeled and slapped and kneaded vigorously. She shook out a handful of flour on the baking board while she held the dough mass in the other hand, then plumped it down and again began to knead, both hands doubled into fists.

She laughed a short little laugh. "I ran away." "You did? You mean you really ran— but why? Didn't you, lo—like Klas?" Maartje Pool knickered briskly, the color high in her cheeks, what with the vigorous pummeled and rolling, and something else that made her look strangely young for the moment—girlish, almost. "Sure I liked him. I liked him."

"But you ran away?" "Not far. I came back. Nobody ever knew I ran, even. But I ran. I knew."

"Why did you come back?" Maartje elucidated her philosophy without being in the least aware that it could be called by any such high-sounding name. "You can't run away far enough. Except you stop living you can't run away from life."

The girl's look had faded. She was world-old. Her strong arms ceased their pounding and thumping for a moment. On the steps outside Klas and Jakob were scanning the weekly reports preparatory to going into the city late that afternoon.

Selma had the difficult task of winning Roelf to her all over again. He was like a trusting little animal, who, wounded by the hand he trusted, is shy of it. Still, he could not withstand her long. Together they dug and planted flower beds. In Pervus' dinky front yard. It was too late for tulips now. Pervus had brought her seeds from Iowa. They ranged all the way from poppies to asters; from purple iris to morning glories. The last named were to form the back-

porch vine, of course, because they were so easily trained. Selma, city-bred, was ignorant of varieties, but insisted she wanted an old-fashioned garden—marigolds, pink, magenta, pink, blue and Roelf dug, spaded, planted.

Her troussess was of the simplest. Pervus' household was already equipped with such things as they would need. The question of a wedding gown troubled her until Maartje suggested that she be married in the old Dutch wedding dress that lay in the bride's chest in Selma's bedroom. "A real Dutch bride," Maartje said. "Your man will think that is nice." Selma was delighted. Selma, in her love like a kitten in the sun. She was, after all, a very lonely little bride with only two photographs on the shelf in her bedroom to give her courage and comfort. This old Dutch wedding gown was many inches too large for her. The skirt—back over-

lapped her slim waist; her slender little bosom did not fill out the generous width of the bodice; but the effect of the whole was amazingly quaint as well as pathetic.

They were married at the Pools. Klas and Maartje had insisted on furnishing the wedding supper—ham, chickens, sausages, cakes, pickles, beer. The Reverend Decker married them, and all through the ceremony Selma clutched herself because she could not keep her mind on his words in the fascination of watching his short, stubby beard as it wiggled with every motion of his jaw. Pervus looked stiff, solemn and uncomfortable in his wedding clothes—not at all the handsome giant of the everyday corduroys and blue shirt. In the midst of the ceremony Selma had her moment of panic when she actually saw herself running shrieking from this company, this man, this house, down the road, on toward—toward what? The feeling was so strong that she almost surprised to find herself still standing there in the Dutch wedding gown answering "I do" in the proper place.

After the wedding they went straight to DeJong's house. In Maartje the vegetable farmer cannot neglect his garden even for a day. The house had been made ready for them. Throughout the supper Selma had had thoughts which were so foolish and detached as almost to alarm her. "Now I am married. I am Mrs. Pervus DeJong. That's a pretty name. It will look quite distinguished on a calling card, very stately and fine."

"MRS. PERVUS DE JONG

At Home Fridays."

She recalled this later, grimly, when she was Mrs. Pervus DeJong, at home not only Fridays, but Saturdays, Sundays, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

They drove down the road to DeJong's place. Selma thought, "Now I am driving home with my husband. I feel his shoulder against mine. I wish he would talk. I wish he would say something. Still, I am not frightened."

Pervus' market wagon was standing in the yard, shafts down. He should have gone to market today; would certainly have to go tomorrow, starting early in the afternoon so as to get a good stand in the Haymarket. By the light of his lantern the wagon seemed to Selma to be a symbol. She had often seen it before, but now that it was to be a part of her life—the DeJong market wagon and she, Mrs. DeJong—she saw clearly what a crazy, disreputable and poverty-proclaiming old vehicle it was, in contrast with the neat strong wagon in Klas Pool's yard, smart with green paint and red lettering that announced, "Klas Pool, Garden Produce." With the two sleek farm horses the turnout looked as prosperous and comfortable as Klas himself.

Pervus swung her down from the seat of the buggy, his hand about her waist, and held her so for a moment, close. Selma said: "You must have that wagon painted, Pervus. And the seat springs fixed and the sideboard mended."

He stared. "Wagon?" "Yes. It looks a sight." The house was tidy enough, but none too clean. Pervus lifted the lamp. There was a fire in the kitchen stove. It made the house seem stuffy on this mild May night. Selma thought that her own little bedroom at the Pools, no longer hers, must be deliciously cool and still with the breeze fanning fresh from the west. Pervus was putting the horse into the barn. The bedroom was off the sitting room. The window was open. This was her first night in Selma's room. It was dark when he awakened her at four. She started up with a little cry and sat up, straining her ears, her eyes. "Is that you, father?" She was little Selma DeJong again, and Simon DeJong came in, gay, debonair, from a night's gaming.

Pervus DeJong was already padding about the room in stocking feet. "What—what time is it? What's the matter, father? Why are you up? Haven't you gone to bed?" Then she remembered.

Pervus DeJong laughed and came toward her. "Get up, little lazy bones. It's after four. All yesterday's work I've got to do, and all today's. Breakfast, little Lina, breakfast. You are a farmer's wife now."

Dirk DeJong was born in the bedroom off the sitting room on the fifteenth day of March, of a bewildered, somewhat repulsive, but deeply interested mother; and a proud, foolish, and vulgar father who was of no account, considering the really slight part he had played in the long, tedious, and racking business, was dis-

proportionate. The name Dirk had sounded to Selma like something tall, straight, and slim. Pervus had chosen it. It had been his grandfather's name.

Sometimes, during those months, Selma would look back on her first winter in High Prairie—that winter of the 1891, the schoolhouse fire, the chilblains, the Pool pork—and it seemed a lovely dream; a time of ease, of freedom, of careless happiness.

Pervus DeJong loved his pretty young wife, and she him. But young love thrives on color, warmth, beauty. It becomes prosaic and inarticulate when forced to begin its day at four in the morning by reaching blindly, dazedly, for limp and obscure garments dangling from bedpost or chair, and to end that day at nine, numb and sodden with weariness, after seventeen hours of physical labor.

It was a wet summer. Pervus' choice tomato plants, so carefully set out in the hope of a dry season, began to rot.



"Farm Work Grand! Farm Work is Slave Work."

came dragged gray specters in a waste of mire. Of fruit the field bore one tomato the size of a marble. For the rest, the crops were modestly successful on the DeJong place. But the work necessary to make this so was heart-breaking. Selma had known during her winter at the Pools, that Klas, Roelf, and old Jakob worked early and late, but her months there had encompassed what is really the truck farmer's leisure period. She had arrived in November. She had married in May. From May until October it was necessary to tend the fields with a concentration amounting to fury. Selma had never dreamed that human beings toiled like that for sustenance. Toil was a thing she had never encountered until coming to High Prairie. Now she saw her husband wrenching a living from the soil by sheer muscle, sweat, and pain. During June, July, August, and September the good black prairie soil for miles around was teeming, a hotbed of plenty. There was born in Selma at this time a feeling for the land that she was never to lose. Perhaps the child within her had something to do with this. She was aware of a feeling of kinship with the earth; an illusion of splendor, of fulfillment.

As cabbages had been cabbages, and no more, to Klas Pool, so, to Pervus, these carrots, beets, onions, turnips, and radishes were just so much produce to be planted, tended, gathered, marketed. But to Selma, during that summer, they became a vital part in the vast mechanism of a living world. Pervus, earth, sun, rain, all elemental forces that labored to produce the food for millions of humans. She thought of Chicago's children. If they had red cheeks, clear eyes, nimble brains it was because Pervus brought them the food that sustained them. So something of this she tried to convey to Pervus. He only stared, his blue eyes wide and unresponsive.

"Farm work grand! Farm work is slave work. Yesterday, from the load of carrots in town I didn't make enough to bring you the goods for the child so when it comes you should have clothes for it. It's better I feed them to the live stock."

Do Selma and her husband "live happily ever after"? It is obvious that there is potential tragedy in the situation.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Cruel Old Custom

There was a time when "laughing" faces were actually manufactured to meet the demand of those who wished to be amused. Up to the end of the reign of James II. when "sculpture" work was carried out by roving tribes of gypsies called Comprochios, who were of Spanish origin. They bought and even kidnapped children, and practiced a science, or art-of-human-disfigurement. Children thus treated grew up with an immovable and fantastic grin. They were an attraction at all successful traveling booths and entertainments until the custom was repressed by William III.

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