

IT'S PAPA WHO PAYS!

by JIMMY MURPHY
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MAMA, THIS IS THE FIRST NIGHT IN MONTHS I'VE BEEN ABLE TO GET HOME EARLY ENOUGH TO HAVE DINNER AT HOME, AND I'M SURE GONNA ENJOY IT!

GOODNESS, PAPA, DON'T STUFF YOURSELF ON MEAT AND POTATOES--- EAT YOUR SALAD AND VEGETABLES, TOO! DON'T DRINK SO MUCH WATER WITH YOUR MEALS--- HEAVENS, DON'T EAT SO FAST--- WHAT'S THE RUSH?



EAT MORE CELERY! IT'S GOOD FOR YOUR NERVES! HEAVENS, YOU HAVEN'T TOUCHED YOUR SPINACH!

I DON'T WANT IT, MAMA!

NO, YOU DON'T LIKE ANYTHING THAT'S GOOD FOR YOU! NO WONDER YOU'RE SO SCRAWNY! IT'S BECAUSE YOU EAT WRONG!

WHY WON'T YOU EAT THINGS THAT ARE GOOD FOR YOU?

I AIN'T FUSSY ABOUT FOOD, MAMA, BUT I DON'T LIKE SPINACH!

SPINACH MAY BE FINE FOR THE SYSTEM, BUT IT DIDN'T DO MY EYE ANY GOOD!

NO, YOU WOULDN'T LIKE ANYTHING THAT I DO, YOU OBSTINATE, STUBBORN, CONTRARY OLD BULL HEAD!

Toots and Casper

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ELLEN FERGUSON WAS HEART-BROKEN WHEN SHE LEFT LAST WEEK, TOOTS! POOR LITTLE WOMAN! SHE WAS STUNNED WHEN ABNER BROKE HIS ENGAGEMENT TO HER AND ANNOUNCED THAT HE'S GOING TO MARRY STELLA CLINKER!

ELLEN IS SINCERE AND TRUE BLUE! SHE ADORES THE VERY GROUND ABNER WALKS ON, BUT HE TURNED HER DOWN FOR A WOMAN WHO WOULDN'T GIVE HIM A SECOND LOOK IF IT WASN'T FOR HIS MONEY!

YOU DON'T SEEM VERY ENTHUSED ABOUT BEING ENGAGED TO ME, ABNER! CAN IT BE POSSIBLE THAT YOU'RE LONESOME FOR ELLEN FERGUSON?

YES, I AM LONESOME FOR HER, STELLA! I'LL ALWAYS MISS HER!

YOU MAY LIKE HER THE BEST NOW, ABNER, BUT SOMEDAY YOU'LL LOVE ME MOST BECAUSE I LOVE YOU, AND I'LL MAKE YOU LOVE ME!

I'LL MARRY YOU, STELLA, BUT MY HEART WILL ALWAYS BELONG TO ELLEN! I'D BE LYING IF I SAID OTHERWISE!

YES, HE LOVES ELLEN, BUT HE DOESN'T DARE REFUSE TO MARRY ME FOR FEAR I'LL EXPOSE THAT LETTER OF HIS! I'VE GOT A CLUB OVER THAT OLD BOY'S HEAD, AND WHAT A CLUB!

FROM NOW ON HE'LL DO EXACTLY WHAT I SAY!

ABNER AND I WILL BE MARRIED IN A FEW WEEKS, AND THEN WATCH ME PUT HIS MONEY IN CIRCULATION! I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG HIS DOUGH WILL LAST, BUT WHEN IT'S GONE I'LL THROW HIM OUT AND LITTLE ELLEN WILL BE WELCOME TO WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM!

ABNER, WHY DON'T YOU COME TO YOUR SENSES? SNAP OUT OF YOUR SILLY INFATUATION FOR STELLA, AND GO BACK TO ELLEN! SHE LOVES YOU, AND IT ISN'T FAIR THE WAY YOU CAST HER ASIDE!

CASPER, I'M GOING TO MARRY STELLA, AND THAT'S FINAL!

ALL RIGHT, GO AHEAD! I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE FAIR AND SQUARE BUT YOU'RE NOT! I WOULDN'T TREAT A STRAY DOG LIKE YOU TREATED ELLEN, AND I'M ASHAMED OF YOU!

IF CASPER ONLY KNEW THE TRUTH--- THAT I LOVE ELLEN DEARLY, AND I'D SOONER DIE THAN WED STELLA, BUT I'VE GOT TO MARRY HER TO PREVENT HER FROM EXPOSING THAT LETTER--- THAT CURSED LETTER--- IF I HAD ONLY DESTROYED IT---

IT'S A WASTE OF TIME ARGUING WITH ABNER, TOOTS! HE WON'T LISTEN TO ME--- THE ONLY PERSON WHO MIGHT HANDLE HIM IS UNCLE EVERETT, BUT WE DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS---

CASPER, THE PHONE IS RINGING!

HELLO! YES, THIS IS CASPER! WHO'S CALLING? WHAT? IT'S YOU--?

TOOTS---TOOTS! THAT WAS UNCLE EVERETT! HE JUST ARRIVED IN TOWN, AND HE'S ON HIS WAY HERE NOW! MAYBE HE CAN BRING ABNER TO HIS SENSES!

YOU'RE ALL ANXIOUS TO SEE WHAT UNCLE EVERETT CAN DO ABOUT ABNER, BUT IN THE MEANTIME, WHAT IS THE DREADED SECRET IN ABNER'S LIFE THAT WILL CAUSE HIM TO MARRY STELLA RATHER THAN ALLOW IT TO BE MADE PUBLIC?

(CONTINUED NEXT WEEK!)

JIMMY MURPHY

