



SO BIG (BY EDNA FERBER) ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLARK AGNEW

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I—Introducing "So Big" (Dirk DeJong) in his infancy. His mother, Selma DeJong, daughter of Eimonson Peake, gambler and gentleman of fortune. Her life, to young womanhood in Chicago in 1883, has been unconventional, somewhat seamy, but generally enjoyable. At school her chum is Julie Hempel, daughter of August Hempel, butcher. Selma is killed in a quarrel that is not his own, and Selma, nineteen years old and practically destitute, becomes a school-teacher.



"Gone!—for Ten Dollars to Pervus DeJong."

the doorway, on the soap box, for all High Prairie to see. "Five cents I'm bid for this lovely little mouthful put up by the school teacher's own fair hands. Five cents! Five—"

Chapter V

The evenings turned out to be Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Supper was over by six-thirty in the Pool household. Pervus was there by seven, very clean as to shirt, his hair brushed till it shone; shy, and given to dropping his hat and bumping against chairs, and looking solemn. Selma was torn between pity and mirth. If only he had blustered. A blustering big man puts the world on the defensive. A gentle giant disarms it.

Advertisement for Southern Pacific, featuring the text 'This way of romance EAST' and an illustration of a train. Includes contact information for C. P. MOODY, Agent, Phone 226.

Advertisement for Hill & Co. Furniture Department, featuring the text 'We want you to investigate our FURNITURE DEPARTMENT' and 'DE LUXE BEDSPRING'.

By the first of March he could speak a slow, careful and fairly grammatical English. He could master simple sums. By the middle of March the lessons would cease. There was too much work to do about the farm—night work as well as day.

At half-past eight she closed her book suddenly. "I'm tired. I think it's the spring coming on." She smiled a little wavering smile. He rose and stretched himself, his great arms high above his head. Selma shivered.

He did not make an apt pupil, though painstaking. Selma would go over a problem or a sentence again and again, patiently, patiently. Then, suddenly, like a hand passed over his face, his smile would come, transforming it. He would smile like a child, and Selma should have been warned by the warm rush of joy that his smile gave her.

On Saturday—the fourteenth of March—he walked in at seven. Klaas, Maartje and Roelf had driven off to a gathering at Low Prairie, leaving Selma with the piglets and old Jakob. She had promised to make taffy for them, and was in the midst of it when his knock sounded at the kitchen door.

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