

SO BIG

BY EDNA FERBER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY CLARK AGNEW

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(Continued)

"They found Dirk fair game, resent-

"Oh, Mr. DeJong," they said, "your

"Nothing, I suppose. It's a Dutch

"A dirk's a sort of sword, isn't it,

He would flush a little (one of his

He got on enormously.

Between the girls he met in society

"Take a letter, Miss Roach," to a slim

Their hair was shining, perfectly

Their breasts were flat, their figures

Among them Dirk worked immune,

It wasn't impossible. Those things

Dirk did not spend much of his time

His office was a great splendid

She had stood in the center of the

Sometimes Selina remonstrated with

She liked to stroll along the crowded

Independent, the negro newspaper in

ABE'S PLACE

and products and her pens. You saw

"Dirk, you seem to see no one but

"You can't afford not to."

Sometimes Selina came into town

On the big couch in the living room,

Selina had said, on entering Dirk's

"Don't, Mother! They wouldn't un-

Afterward, Ethelinda Quinn had

All unconscious, "Take a letter, M.

In the midst of this fiery furore,

occasionally met in the course of

He moved among them cool and

He loved the Michigan boulevard

She penetrated the Black belt, where

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She penetrated the Black belt, where

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She loved the Michigan boulevard

She loved the Michigan boulevard

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another lies before him for the choosing. A sociable woman, Selina, favoring life, she liked the lights, the color, the rush, the noise. Her years of grinding work, with her face pressed down to the very soil itself, had failed to kill her zest for living. She prowled into the city's foreign quarters—Italian, Greek, Chinese, Jewish.

pepper-and-salt pants and vest, cigar, unlighted, in his mouth, the heavy gold watch chain spanning his middle. "Well, you certainly made good, Mrs. DeJong. Remember the day you come here with your first lord?" "Oh, yes. She remembered. "That boy of yours has made his mark, too, I see. Doing grand, ain't he? Wa-al, great satisfaction having a son turn out well like that. Yes, sirree! Why, look at my daughter Carline!"



She Liked to Stroll Along the Crowded Sidewalks.

Chapter XIV Paula had a scheme for interesting women in bond buying. It was a good scheme. She suggested it so that Dirk thought he had thought of it. Dirk was head now of the bond department in the Great Lakes Trust company's magnificent new white building on along the crowded sidewalks, lined with crates and boxes and barrels of fruits, vegetables, poultry. Swarthy foreign faces predominated now. Where the red-faced overalled men had been she now saw lean muscular lads in old army shirts and khaki pants and scuffed puttees wheeling trucks, loading boxes, charging down the street in huge rumbling auto vans. Their faces were hard, their talk terse. Any one of these, she reflected, was more vital, more native, functioned more usefully and honestly than her successful son, Dirk DeJong. "Where 'r beans?" "In th' ol' beanery." "Tough." "Best you can get." "Keep 'em." Many of the older men knew her, shook hands with her, chatted a moment friendly. William Talcott, a little more dried up, more wrinkled, his sparse hair quite gray now, still leaned up against the side of his doorway in his shirt sleeves and his neat

Michigan boulevard north. Its white towers gleamed pink in the lake mists. Dirk said it was a terrible building, badly proportioned, and that it looked like a vast vanilla sundae. His new private domain was more like a splendid bookless library than a business office. It was finished in rich dull walnut and there were great upholstered chairs, soft rugs, shaded lights. Special attention was paid to women clients. There was a room for their convenience fitted with low restful chairs and couches, lamps, writing desks, in mauve and rose. Paula had selected the furnishings for this room. Ten years earlier it would have been considered absurd in a suite of business offices. Now it was a routine part of the equipment.

Dirk's private office was almost as difficult of access as that of the nation's executive. Cards, telephones, office boys, secretaries stood between the caller and Dirk DeJong, head of the bond department. You asked for him, uttering his name in the ear of the six-foot statuesque detective who, in the guise of usher, stood in the center of the marble rotunda—eyeing each visitor with a coldly appraising gaze. This one padded softly ahead of you on rubber heels, only to give you over to the care of a glorified office boy who took your name. You waited. He returned. You waited. Presently there appeared a young woman with inquiring eyebrows. She conversed with you. She vanished. You waited. She reappeared. You were ushered into Dirk DeJong's large and luxurious inner office. And there formality fled.

Dirk was glad to see you; quietly, interestedly glad to see you. As you stated your business he listened attentively, as was his charming way. The volume of business done with women clients by the Great Lakes Trust company was enormous. Dirk was conservative, helpful—and he always got the business. He talked little. He was amazingly effective.

Ladies in the modish black of recent bereavement made quite a somber procession to his door. His suggestions (often originating with Paula) made the Great Lakes Trust company's discreet advertising rich in results. Neat little pamphlets written for women on the subjects of saving, investments. "You are not dealing with a soulless corporation," said these brochures. "May we serve you? You need more than friends. Before acting, you should have your judgment vindicated by an organization of investment specialists. You may have relatives and friends, some of whom would gladly advise you on investments. But perhaps you rightly feel that the less they know about your financial affairs, the better. To handle trusts, and to care for the securities of widows and orphans, is our business."

It was startling to note how this sort of thing mounted into millions. "Women are becoming more and more used to the handling of money," Paula said, shrewdly. "Pretty soon their patronage is going to be as valuable as that of men. The average woman doesn't know about bonds—about bond buying. They think they're something mysterious and risky. They ought to be educated up to it. Didn't you say something, Dirk, about classes in finance for women?" "But would the women come?" "Of course they'd come. Women will accept any invitation that's engraved on heavy cream paper."

The Great Lakes Trust had a branch in Cleveland now, and one in New York, on Fifth avenue. The drive to interest women in bond buying and to instruct them in finance was to take on almost national proportions. There was to be newspaper and magazine advertising.

The Talks for Money on the Subject of Finance were held every two weeks in the crystal room of the Blackstone and were a great success. Paula was right. Much of old Aug Hempel's shrewdness and business foresight had descended to her. The women came—widows with money to invest; bus-

ness women who had thriftily saved a portion of their salaries; moneyed women who wanted to manage their own property, or who resented a husband's interference. Some came out of curiosity. Others for lack of anything better to do. Others to gaze on the well-known banker or lawyer or business man who was scheduled to address the meeting. Dirk spoke three or four times during the winter and was markedly a favorite. The women, in smart crepe gowns and tailored suits and small chic hats, twittered and murmured about him, even while they sensibly digested his well-thought-out remarks. He looked very handsome, clean-cut, and distinguished there on the platform in his admirably tailored clothes, a small white flower in his buttonhole. He talked easily, clearly, fluently; answered the questions put to him afterward with just the right mixture of thoughtful hesitation and confidence.

It was decided that for the national advertising there must be an illustration that would catch the eye of women, and interest them. The person to do it, Dirk thought, was this Dallas O'Mara whose queer hen-track signature you saw scrawled on half the advertising illustrations that caught your eye. Paula had not been enthusiastic about this idea.

"M-m-m, she's very good," Paula had said, guardedly, "but aren't there others who are better?" "She!" Dirk had exclaimed. "Is it a woman? I didn't know. That name might be anything."

"Oh, yes, she's a woman. She's said to be very—very attractive."

Dirk sent for Dallas O'Mara. She replied, suggesting an appointment two weeks from that date. Dirk decided not to wait, consulted other commercial artists, looked at their work, heard their plans outlined, and was satisfied with none of them. The time was short. Ten days had passed. He had his secretary call Dallas O'Mara on the telephone. Could she come down to see him that day at eleven?

No; she worked until four daily at her studio.

Could she come to his office at four-thirty, then? Yes, but wouldn't it be better if he could come to her studio where he could see something of the various types of drawings—oils, or black-and-white, or crayons. She was working mostly in crayons now.

All this relayed by his secretary at the telephone to Dirk at his desk. He

(Continued on page 6)

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