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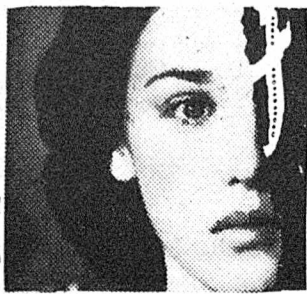
Restricted Adult

SUNDAY DEC. 12 "Bad News Bears"

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Bellikin's Trundle Truncated

Saturday, Dec. 11 at 9 p.m.

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BELLIKIN'S TRUNDLE

PRO

by Lydia Torrance

"Well! I see you two are getting along real well," says Olaf smiling.

"Olaf Norgaard! You're not one bit funny. Now you tell Morris he's only out here to see me because of your mama and he's to keep his hands off me." I shouldn't have shrilled at him that way but for a minute I couldn't tell what he was thinking. Here we were, married less than a month and he acted like he was almost glad to be getting rid of me! Was it my fault we were hitched so awkwardly? With his mama never dreaming, and him not able to tell her because she might have a stroke? It was the silliest fix I'd ever heard tell, much less bean in.

Olaf's eyes widened when I sailed into him and then he said, "Thanks for stopping by, Morris, but you can see how it is."

"O.K. Olaf," Morris said looking down at his straw hat. "Guess I'll see ya in town." He left, and when his truck started up Mrs. Norgaard came in from the kitchen.

"That's what you call courting? He didn't even stay to spoon. Or did you two have a tiff?"

I decided to take the bull by the horns. "We're not seeing eye to eye anymore," I said. "We're growing apart it seems. Living out in the country here I've started wondering about Morris." I could see Olaf almost turn white and he started making funny motions at me, but Mrs. Norgaard saw him out the corner of her eye and when she looked at him he pretended to be brushing off his shirt. "Getting fastidious there, son?" she said, and turned back to ponder me. I decided once I'd started it I might as well finish it - I wasn't going to tell too much, but Mrs. Norgaard needed to start thinking different.

"Yes," I continued, "out here in the country you start thinking that city values don't mean so much. You take Morris now - I don't know what I saw in him, and Mrs. Norgaard, hearing you talk about him has made me look deeply into myself and ask myself what I really want in life and what I expect of a man—"

"Well, well!" Mrs. Norgaard said, staring at me. "Quite the little philosopher aren't we? Morris certainly does have his weaknesses, and he's not the man for most women, and maybe not for you. But if you decide to throw him over, you'd best have some clear ideas of what you're going to do next! This isn't a home for muddled maidens and you may have to go back to Loner if you're not someone's fiance. I have some sourdough that's rising now, if you don't mind," she finished, and stalked back to the kitchen.

I was all excited. Someone's fiance! What a promising phrase! I smiled triumphantly at Olaf, but he was sitting in

the rocker holding his head. "Now you've done it," he whispered through clenched teeth.

"Why what do you mean? She didn't say anything like a warning."

"You don't know her. She knows what you're up to, I can tell."

"And just what am I up to, husband dear!" I said furiously. "You act like I'm trying to trap you into marriage, like I'm still trying to catch you, when we're already married, and it was you that caught me!"

"I know, don't rub it in," he moaned.

"Well, maybe we should get something straight. Are you saying I'm going about this all wrong? And if so, when are you going to start doing something about it? The only part of this you seem to mind is the sleeping arrangements!" I knew that would get him because twice now he'd tried to sneak into my room at night. The first time Mrs. Norgaard was on her way downstairs to see whether one of her African violets wasn't packed too tight - it just occurred to her in the middle of the night! So Olaf, who was in the hall, had to pretend he was going to the bathroom. The other time he scabbled at my door and I let him in, but then all he could do was worry. "We can't make any noise," he said. Then, "what if she brings you another quilt?" "Olaf, it's not me she always pampers," I said, but it was lost on him. Suddenly, "what if she brings me an extra quilt and I'm not there?" he said and leaped off the bed. "I better go back."

"Suit yourself," I said. "This stuff isn't why I got married. But I'm not sure how long you'll last."

So Olaf knew what I meant when I talked of sleeping arrangements. "I mind everything, Lyddie, you know that, but I don't see that we can do anything right yet about it, but wait: If she brings it up just say you want to help her, and you like me like a brother. But if she doesn't say anything don't you neither. Just lay low."

"Like a brother! That's not a good way to become a wife. Leastways not where I come from. It's sort of frowned on," I said and went up to my room.

Dear readers, it dragged on and on. I stayed at the farm six years-but Olaf always thought my timing was wrong, that some little thing which "would soon be over" would make "later" a better time. This lovely time of year when we're all filled with snow and joy I don't want to depress you and besides it was a long time ago. Maybe after Christmas I'll tell you the bleak, heart-rending final chapters of My First Love. So do try and have a Very Merry Christmas.

Cooke retires from U.

Murray S. Cooke, director of personnel services and relations at the University of Alberta, will retire Dec. 31.

Cooke has been employed by the university for the past 45 years. A graduate of the University of Saskatchewan in 1931, he worked with Consolidated Mining and Smelting in Saskatchewan and Credit Foncier Franco Canadian before serving in the R.C.A.F. during the Second World War.

He joined the Veterans' Liaison Act in 1945 and was subsequently appointed to the department of immigration where he worked for eight years prior to his appointment to the U of A in 1957.

A reception in Cooke's honor will be held in Lister Hall on campus Friday, Dec. 10, from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.



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