

# The LOVE DODGER

By VIRGINIA SWAIN

BEGIN HERE TODAY  
BARBARA Hawley, 25, after teaching school for a year, decides to enter newspaper work in order to see life. When her fiance, BRUCE REYNOLDS, comes, she breaks with him and gets a job on the Indianapolis Telegraph, of which ALFRED NOYES is managing editor. Bruce makes an attempt at reconciliation, while Barbara replies, insisting she must live her own life.

## CHAPTER III

APPARENTLY the work of the newspaper office had been in swing for hours. There was the same buzz of telegrams, machines, the same running about, the same atmosphere of tense activity that Barbara had observed the day before.

Nobody looked at her this time. She went through the swinging gate to the enclosure which she thought must be the reporters' headquarters, and stood uncertainly beside a rickety hatrack. While she stood there, the woman who had looked at her with unfriendly eyes the day before, came in briskly and took her place at her desk.

She cleared it off, revealing a sign that said "Society."

It seemed to Barbara that she stood for centuries rooted to the spot.

Then the homely youth whom she had noticed before, brushed past her on his way to the mechanical department, with such speed that Bar-

bara staggered against the corner of a desk and would have fallen if someone had not put his hand on her arm.

She looked around, to find herself face to face with a man of possibly 30, whose eyes beamed upon her and whose unshaven face was curved into lines of friendliness.

"Just escaped a bad smash-up there," he said, beaming more broadly. "Accidents are right in my line, you know. I'm the police reporter, Bob Jeffries."

Barbara smiled at him, one of her dazzling, unexpected smiles, out of the midst of deep seriousness.

"Thank you," she said. "I should not have been in the way."

"That's not the way to talk in this hang-out," said Bob. "On your toes always and ready to fight for your rights. I beg your pardon, but who are you, anyway?"

Bob laughed. "Well, I can tell you what that means—obituaries, birth notices, obituaries, helpful hints and war correspondence, provided there should be a war."

Bob Jeffries whistled. "You don't exactly look it," he said. "But so much the better."

Barbara wondered what he meant. She looked around anxiously for any other woman in the office. There was only the society editor, who was dressed much as Barbara herself.

"Who hired you?" asked Bob. "What kind of work are you going to do?"

"McDermott hired me," she answered. "He said something about interviewing President Coolidge and sweeping out the office."

Bob laughed. "Well, I can tell you what that means—obituaries, birth notices, obituaries, helpful hints and war correspondence, provided there should be a war."

Barbara laughed too. But she was not sure what the joke was.

Just then she heard her name called in a loud and terrifying tone of voice. It was Wells, the city editor, who had told her the day before that there was no place for her on the staff.

Wells was looking over his glasses, searching the office for her. Barbara hurried to the desk.

"Oh," he said, in a rather surly tone. "So you're here. What do you know about Alfred Noyes?"

Barbara brightened. In this field she was at home. "A good deal," she replied.

"Take this stuff, then, and give us a story on him," said the city editor, handing her some notes and clippings from the morning papers.

Barbara grasped the papers and went back to Bob Jeffries. In this field she was at home. "A good deal," she replied.

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