

The LOVE DODGER

By VIRGINIA SWAIN

BEGIN HERE TODAY when BARBARA HAWLEY, 29, breaks with dance, BRUCE REYNOLDS, and a job on the Indianapolis Telephone Company, see the

ANDREW McDERMOTT, the manager, both of whom, the police reporter, says, are friendly.

Barbara, in her letter, in the lovesong she signed "Violetta" asking how to act a young man socially superior to her.

Barbara attends the newspaper dinner at the Lighthouse Inn with SINBAD SULLIVAN, 32, a man about town.

While she is dancing with him, Sinbad suggests a game of cards.

To Barbara's horror, she sees Bruce Reynolds.

The sound of a shot comes from an important man in the room.

NOBEL HOLLOWELL, a prominent broker, was found dead in the room. A suicide note was in his pocket.

A doctor and a coroner of the city, who were present, say that Hollowell was alone in the room at the time, but Barbara finds a woman's scarf near the body.

When Barbara returned to the office, she found Bruce had been making repeated efforts to get her on the phone.

Now GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER XV.

"HE call came just as Barbara was ready to leave the office. 'What is the name, please?' she heard the switchboard operator say. 'No, Miss Hawley is not in. Yes. Not till tomorrow morning.'

Barbara took a step toward the telephone, and halted. Then she walked away and caught an elevator going down.

THE hall of the Hadley boarding house was quite dark, except for a narrow pencil of light from a transom.

Bruce hung up the telephone receiver and turned away wearily. A triangle of light struck across the wall by the staircase. Someone had opened a door upstairs.

Bruce started. A girl was standing on the lower steps, suddenly revealed by the half light. He drew back. "I beg you pardon. I did not know there was anyone in the hall."

"Oh, that's all right," came a child's

ish voice. "Guess I scared you more than you did me. I've been standing here for a couple of minutes, trying to figure out who was using the telephone."

"Why, it's Miss Cranby," said Bruce, "the lady that couldn't use the hammer." He smiled a little.

She giggled. "Aw, now. Don't rub it in. None of us women can. But what are you doing at this hour of the night?—it's after 2 o'clock."

Bruce hesitated, then spoke rapidly. "Telephoning a woman who doesn't want to talk to me. That's the kind of fool I am."

Violetta looked at him sharply. Then she sighed and sat down on the lower step, propping her chin in her hands. "Life's funny," she said.

"When you want 'em, you can't have 'em. And when they want you, you can't see 'em for the dust."

Then down beside her. "I guess there's nothing to it, anyhow—this love stuff. Better forget it all and go about your business."

Violetta shook her head and shot a sidelong glance at him. "Oh, no, that's not so. Life wouldn't be anything without love. I'd hate to think I had to go through the rest of my life all by my lonesome. Besides, some women aren't like this girl of yours." Bruce did not see the gleam of malice in Violetta's eyes.

"No—they're not," he agreed, hotly. "Some of them really love." He broke off in embarrassment. "But what idiots we are, to sit here in the wee small hours, talking a lot of silly bunk."

Violetta answered him eagerly. "But it isn't bunk. Sometimes it helps lots just to talk about your troubles. I says to myself, the first time I saw you—there's a gent with a secret sorrow. And I wished like anything that I could help you."

Bruce turned. "That was nice of you to bother about me, but really, Miss Cranby, I'm afraid it isn't

worth it. I guess I'll always be a bungler, where women are concerned. I'm made that way." He tried to smile.

Violetta turned her great, shadowy eyes toward him. "How can you say that, Mr.—why, I don't believe I even know your name!"

"Reynolds," said Bruce. "I thought you knew."

"No, I told you mine that day you hung the picture for me, but you didn't tell me yours, and I didn't like to ask. But I knew, we'd be good friends."

Bruce smiled rather absently. "It's good of you to say so. But I mustn't keep you sitting here. It must be nearly 3 o'clock."

The girl moved closer. "But I want to talk to you. I can't sleep. I'm not happy, either. Had a lot of trouble in my time. But I've almost got through the woods now. I'm not in love with anybody any more. So I'm not so miserable as I was. But I'm lonely. Nobody in this whole town to talk to. Most of the Janes that work at Campbell's aren't my class—not that I feel stuck up—but you know how it is. A girl's got to be careful."

Bruce sat moodily staring into the shadows of the hall. Violetta looked at him. Detachment was still strongly written on his face.

Suddenly she put her face in her arms and began to cry silently. Her shoulders shook. She brought out a wisp of a silk handkerchief. It was some moments before Bruce saw that she was weeping. He sat lost in his own troubles.

"Why, Miss Cranby," he said, bending over her, "don't cry like that. Please don't." And then as the sobbing shook her body still more violently—"Is there anything I can do?"

She shook her head, without lifting her face. "There's nothing anybody can do," she whimpered. "I wish I was dead, that's all. And I won't tell you anything more about it. I wish I was dead."

Bruce looked at her helplessly. At last he brought out a fresh, folded handkerchief and proffered it to her. "I'll tell you," he said at last, "You've got the blues from sticking around this old boarding house. We'll have to get together some Sun-



Bruce hung up the telephone receiver and turned away wearily. A girl was standing on the lower steps.

day and go out to Stony Point or to a hike. You need to get out doors more, and I do, too."

Violetta lifted her head, but not too eagerly. Her eyes were dry.

"That would be swell," she exclaimed. "But why couldn't we go in a day or two. And promise me you won't cry like that again. It really doesn't pay, you know. No love affair is worth all that."

Violetta smiled, baring white teeth. "All right," she said. "May be it won't be so bad, if there's somebody to talk to sometimes. I have been so lonely I thought I'd bust."

He helped her to her feet and went up the stairs with his arm around her. At her door they said good night.

Inside his room, Bruce crossed to the window and stared out at the snowy night. The frown had returned to his face.

The Telegraph office buzzed with the Hollowell suicide story that day.

"You and Bob certainly do grab all the luck," said Jepson, the feature editor. "Imagine being right on the scene of a story like that. And me at home taking care of a teething baby. I told the wife we ought to break our necks to get to that party."

Wells called Barbara to the desk.

"You gave us a good protection last night at the Lighthouse, Miss Hawley. Think we owe you a day off or something, for unearthing that clew to the unknown woman companion of the dead man. Added just the touch of color needed to make it an A-1 story."

Barbara winced at the name.

"Very well," she said, listlessly.

She put on her hat and coat and left the building. An E. Washington car took her to Irvington.

Mrs. Lydia Stacy's house was one of a row that stood among heavily shaded lawns.

Barbara found the house and walked up a flagged path. As she went, a motor truck whizzed up the driveway past her, and she turned her head idly, to look at it.

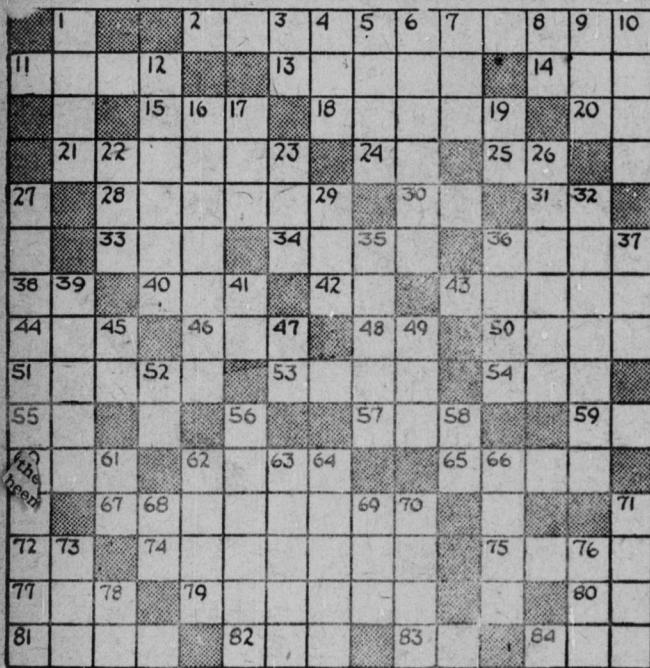
"Parlison Dry Cleaners," said the sign on the back.

The driver sprang out and ran up the steps to the servants' door at the side of the house. Barbara watched him. After a moment the door opened and a servant handed him a red garment of some kind loosely wrapped in a sheet.

Barbara went up the front steps and rang the bell.

"To Be Continued."

Today's Cross-Word Puzzle



HORIZONTAL

- According to pattern.
- Sea food.
- Decree of sultan.
- To cut off.
- Native metal.
- To ignore.
- Father.
- Provides food.
- Sixth note in scale.
- Third note in scale.
- To rescind.
- Toward.
- Point of compass.
- Bear.
- Crown of the head.
- To knife.
- Morindin dye.
- Sorrowful.
- To depart.
- Relative pronoun.
- Fishing bag.
- Peak.
- Point of compass.

- To put up (poker).
- Depart by boat.
- Delicately colored jewel.
- Driving command.
- Subsists.
- Cover.
- Second note in scale.
- Beverage.
- Caterpillar hair.
- Poems.
- Cloth.
- Exclamation of surprise.
- To rotate.
- To instigate.
- At the present time.
- Indian wigwams.
- You and I.
- Observed.
- Scarlet.
- Therefor.
- Jewel.

VERTICAL

- Radio dial.
- 3:1416.
- Anger.
- To telephone.
- To accept as heir.
- Guided.
- Deity.
- To soak up.
- To reach across.
- Inns.
- Says again.
- Before.
- Standard type measure.
- Constellation.
- Fluid in a tree.
- To chant.
- Changes.
- To loiter.
- Prodigals.
- Pertaining to sound.
- Coarse, woolly hair.
- Honey gatherer.
- Rental contract.
- First note in scale.
- Seventh note in scale.
- Italian river.
- Prophet who trained Samuel.
- Behold.
- Marine fish.
- To accomplish.
- Part of verb to be.
- Let it stand.
- Figure of speech.
- Troubled.
- To apportion.
- Measure of area.
- Farewell.
- Not as much.
- Flower stalk.
- Garden tool.
- Female sheep.
- You and I.

Answer to Yesterday's Crossword Puzzle:

REPORTS RETURNS
APARIA POSEIDON
TO STARTED BO
ADORE SWEAT
FORE RUTAS EAST
IRENENATE ARSE
ASIMAN STOR
ELON PITHS
BAIINIB TEEOD
ELSE SMUG TRAPA
SOON TORA SEWED
TINT CUSTS DENT
IN PASTELS SE
NISLOT OPAL R
GREATER STATORS

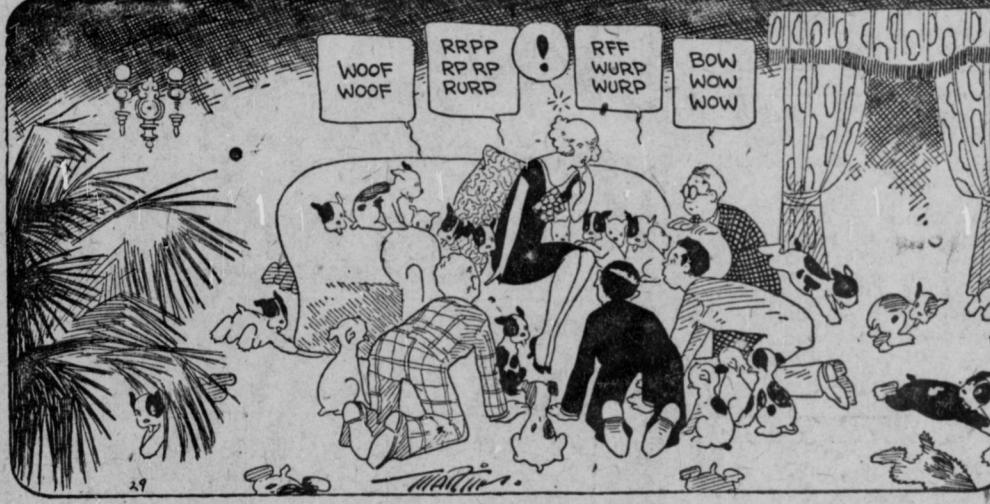
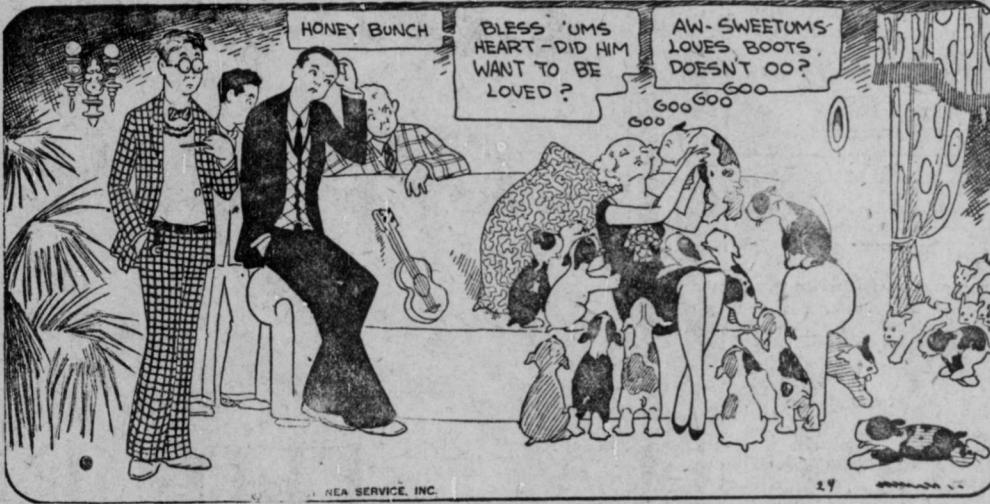
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BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES—By MARTIN



OUT OUR WAY—By WILLIAMS



OUR BOARDING HOUSE—By AHERN



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS—By BLOSSER

