

The Daily Novelette

Mildred Looking for Work  
By JANE OSBORN

IT HAD never occurred to Professor Langdon Moore that it required any particular amount of skill to handle a hammer, chisel and other carpenter's tools with sufficient dexterity to make small repairs that were needed to make his newly purchased farmhouse near Pleasant Lake habitable and even attractive. Neither had it ever occurred to him that he could possibly become a member of his own society or eager for companionship in passing the month of July alone in this retreat. With the notes for the revision to one of his popular textbooks ready, it had seemed like an ideal arrangement to combine five or six hours of writing each day with the diversion of mending his rather tumble-down house and preparing his own meals.

Just at present he was standing cautiously on the top of a ladder in front of his house engaged in the difficult feat of taking mosquito netting into one of the windows of his living room. As a university professor of mathematics it seemed possible that he had not been able to measure the window and cut off the netting accurately, but as he lifted the piece of green net to the window he saw that it lacked a few inches of extending from top to bottom of the window. He was just about to climb down from his ladder when Ann Bates came in at the path that led from the road to the house. Ann was nineteen; but her straight bobbed hair, her boyish middy blouse worn over a short full blue skirt made her look much younger. As the professor glanced quickly at her she seemed like a child.

"Good morning," she began. "Is there any work I can do for you?"

"There is work enough," the professor returned, and as he removed his long-tinted glasses and looked at her Ann saw that he was much younger and far less formidable than he had seemed when she first spoke. "The

are a great many things to do, only twenty-five cents an hour isn't much to pay."

So it was agreed that Ann should spend the half hour that remained getting ready something for the hungry professor to eat.

"Since you are going to do more work for me," said Prof. Moore, whose curiosity concerning the young Jack-of-all-trades was steadily increasing, "would you mind telling me what I can call you?"

"Call me 'Red Wing,' if you want," she said. "That's not my real name, though."

While Mary Ann was away Prof. Moore did some thinking. He was quite sure that having once met the mysterious Red Wing life in his solitary cabin would be pleasanter if he might occasionally see her again. At twenty-five cents an hour, with \$3.12 still to be earned, she still needed to work twelve hours and a half. Now it would be delightful to have Red Wing come for two days, to spend six hours each day. But then the pleasure would soon be over. If he made some excuse to have her one hour a day then his joy might be extended over twelve days. Twenty-five cents an hour was absurd payment, but if he paid her more then she would not have to work so many hours.

That afternoon he told her she might work out the half hour, and that then after that he would need her for one hour each day, to get his midday meal. Ann proved to be as good a cook as she was a carpenter.

It was next to the last day, and Red Wing and Prof. Moore felt very well acquainted. Since the first day he had always found excuse to remain with her in the kitchen of his cabin while she washed his breakfast dishes and cooked his lunch. Sometimes he dried the dishes for her and twice had sat beside her to help her peel potatoes. By chance their fingers had touched over the tin pan that contained the potato peels and he felt the warmth of those odd little tanned hands.

Now the next to the last day Prof. Moore felt that he must solve the riddle of her identity. She had seemed reticent before when he had started to probe

and he did not like to force her confidence.

"Shan't I ever see you again?" he began. "That is, after you have finished tomorrow? You said you only wanted to earn five dollars."

"It has been very easy work," she said, avoiding his question.

Ann was rolling out some pie crust for a meat pie for dinner and her hands were floury. Heedless of this, Langdon Moore took the rolling pin from her hands and held the flour in his own.

"Who are you, Red Wing, anyway? It isn't fair to come here and steal my heart away and then leave me without even knowing who you are or why you came?"

Ann Bates made only a faint attempt to free her hands.

"Do you mean you—do you love me?" she asked, looking at him out of frank, round eyes.

"Of course, I love you, and whoever you are, I want you to—to be my wife. You are young, of course, but I'll wait if your parents insist."

"Oh, I don't believe father will make us wait very long," said Ann, who had quite forgotten the pie crust. "If it was any one else he might. But father admires you so much. He will be glad that I fell in love with you instead of some one else. Because you know, I did. That first morning after I'd put in the netting I knew I was hopelessly in love with you and I'd never marry any one all my life if you didn't love me, too. And now everything has turned out beautifully and father will be so surprised."

"But who is your father?" demanded Langdon Moore. "And why have you been working for me?"

"Oh, father is Prof. Bates, professor of mathematics at Vernon University. I think you came to our house once when I was quite a little girl. But

FIRE NEAR VALLEY FORGE

Blaze Starting in Woods Lasted 15 Hours—Citizens Aid Guards

A forest fire near Valley Forge Park was extinguished this morning, after the aid of citizens, park guards and the Paoli Fire Department was called in. The fire lasted about fifteen hours.

The blaze started in a strip of woods just west of Valley Forge Park, but separated from the historic ground by a small hill. When the flames became too much for the fighters, the fire warden summoned the Paoli Fire Department, which arrived with ten men. The fire still spread, and endangered a small farmhouse and stable, which were surrounded by the flames, but were saved by the green lawn surrounding the park. Park guards were unharmed, with men living nearby. Park superintendent ordered precautions taken to prevent the fire spreading to the park, but the lack of wind and a knoll between the park and the adjacent valley kept the park out of danger.



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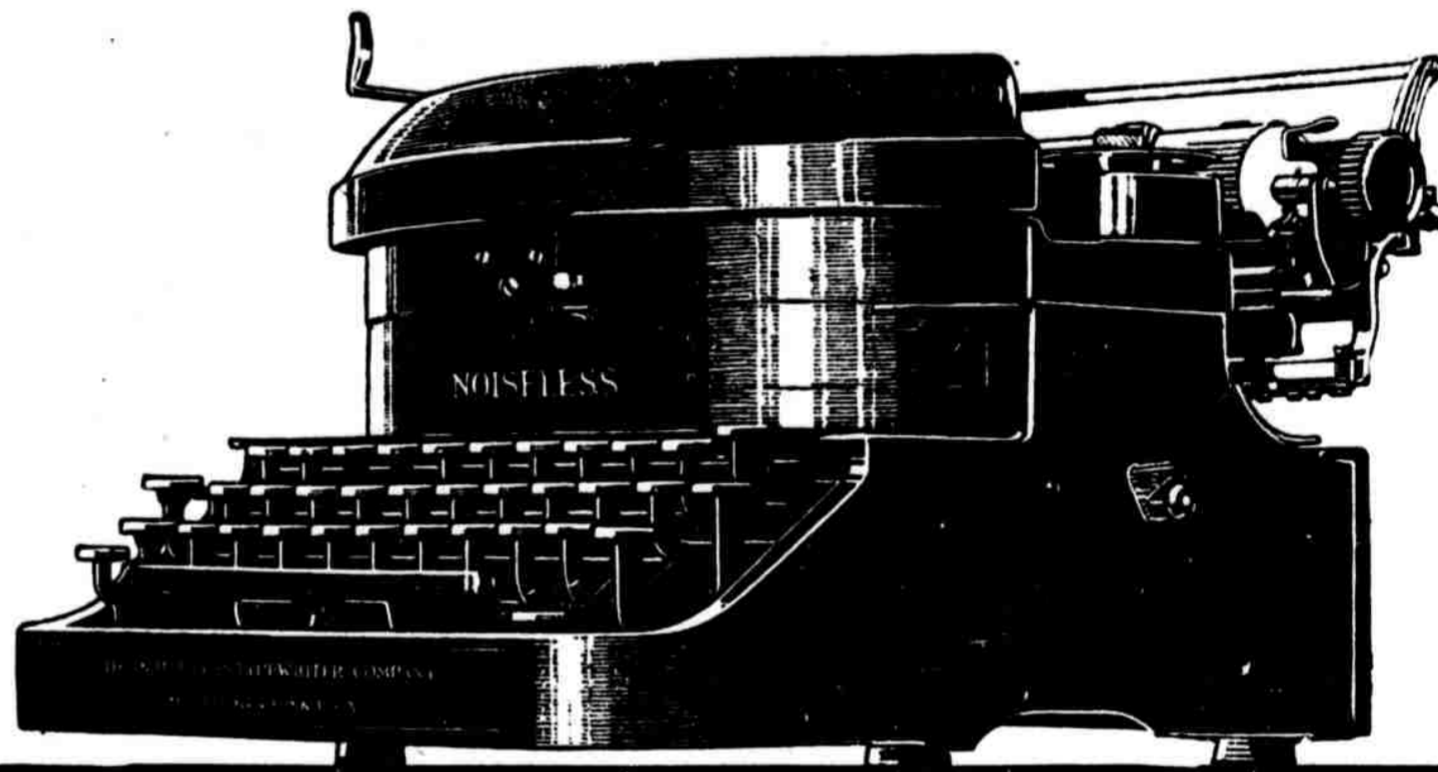
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