

LOVE BRAVES AN ATOM BOMB

by OREN ARNOLD

AWED by what he knew now to be true, Dr. Robert Hale backed slowly away from his observation chair, moving as if under a hypnotic spell. The sheer potency of what had occurred here seemed to have numbed him even though it was expected and planned.

He glanced once at Miss Sornli. She knew! She looked ghostly, her eyes wide as she waited there by the door, gazing back spell-bound at the great unit in full realization of what it contained.

Neither spoke until they were outside.

"Robert!" She whispered it tremulously, and repeated, "Robert!"

Faces strained, they were still staring back in.

"Wait here," said he. "I'll go back and—"

"No! No, no!"

"Just to throw the switch, Leana. You know that must be done!"

The switch was a massive bar; Miss Sornli stood transfixed while he put both hands to it and pulled. The weird hum that had dominated their laboratory stopped instantly, as if genuinely glad of its own release, but the silence that followed was almost a tangible thing.

Robert glanced at the windows, verifying for the hundredth time that they were both high and barred. The steel door across the room he knew to be doubly locked. Back near Leana Sornli, he paused only to push a button that controlled the lights, then moved outside, and locked the door. They walked a hundred yards toward the offices before either spoke again.

"Don't be uneasy," he labored to say it easily himself. "Go about your personal routine."

"Yes, Robert."

"Say nothing of course. I—I shall take the precaution of setting an armed guard. A man, several men, with rifles."

"Rifles!" She spoke contemptuously.

Dr. Hale nodded, looked afar off. "I know. Impotent now, Leana. But—only you and I know! You and I! The only two people in the world who do know! The only two people since—since Creation!"

"You and I," murmured Leana. "Two people. You and I."

It was late summer, 1940.

FOR an eternity they stood there, a dark-haired, hatless young man and a blond woman in white, just thinking, trying to grasp it, striving to be sensible in the face of their achievement. A factual two minutes passed and he turned toward the office door. He inhaled deeply.

"There is no hurry," said he. "No hurry at all, Leana. We absolutely must be calm at this stage. The armed guard will serve as a precaution. It may be several days before we—before we can—well, everything must be recorded first, Leana! The records must be brought absolutely up to date and copies sent to the principal universities and commercial laboratories just as a safeguard. I told you I had advertised for a secretary. Stenographic help which



Illustrated by Walt Scott
Faced straining, they gazed spell-bound at the great unit. "Wait here," Robert said. "I'll go back and—"

"No! No! No!" she sobbed. "I knew would be needed."

"Yes, Robert."

"They were to call at 4. It is past 3 now."

"They?"

"The applicants. I advertised in the newspapers for applications by mail. A few wrote excellent letters with good references. I will go in now."

His study was down a hall and through an inner glass door with his name letter on it, and as he approached the door, up four long steps, he gradually became conscious of a girl standing there. He paused and looked owl-eyed at her.

She was an extraordinarily pretty person. That much was instantly clear. She had a stature somewhat shorter than his own, and hair as dark as his. The hair fell to her shoulders and bounded part way up again in an orderly if oddly intricate set of curves and curls. Her eyes—most surprisingly—were as violet as Leana Sornli's, and her skin almost as fair. She wore a tailored street costume of simple but highly becoming lines. Dr. Hale's mind, long trained for minute observations, quite automatically catalogued these pleasant details.

"How do you do?" she greeted him. "You must be Dr. Hale. My name is Carolyn Tyler and you wrote me to call."

"Oh." The day's work had been of transcendent import to Dr. Hale anyway, and now violet eyes were trained upon him. He repeated, "Oh."

"Your advertisement said 'specialized secretary willing to face

certain exceptional conditions at exceptional pay.' That interests me on both counts, sir, as I wrote you. I'm a bit early, but I am eager to start."

Dr. Hale swallowed. "Oh. Oh yes, Miss—Miss Tyler. I—you."

CAROLYN smiled at him, in slow amusement. So this was the renowned scientist, Dr. Hale! Not a cold, calculating freak or anything of the sort. Just a man. A youngish man at that, like somebody's brother. Ever so good-looking in spite of tired eyes and tousled hair. Sensitive mouth. Slender but oddly powerful hands. And ill at ease with girls!

He didn't invite her in. He just stared and talked there in the hall. "The pay—any price, any salary you need. I—I rather like you. Very much in fact. Credentials were sound. And you had initiative enough to get here ahead of the others. But—Miss Tyler, you don't realize—you—what of secrecy—and danger? Danger, Miss Tyler! This is not—I—"

She sought to calm him. "You make me curious. I keep secrets, and I am not afraid of many bugaboos, Dr. Hale."

"But this isn't scary thing! Not—not snakes or ghosts or childish things. I—I can't even phrase it! This is something that will revolutionize civilization itself!"

Carolyn began to sense the intensity of his feeling. Curiosity became tinged with a vague sense of alarm. Her lower lip tucked in and she gazed intently at him, trying to understand.

(To Be Continued)

Our Boarding House

With Major Hoople



Boots and Her Buddies



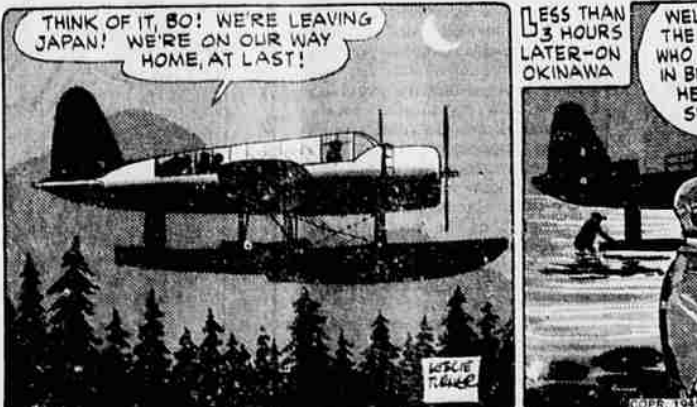
Freckles and His Friends



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To obtain complete cutting pattern for doll body with pajamas, finishing instructions, actual size chart for embroidering features of the Crib Doll (Pattern No. 5037) send 15 cents in COIN plus 1 cent postage. YOUR NAME, ADDRESS and the PATTERN NUMBER to Anne Cabot, La Grande Evening Observer, 700 Mission street, San Francisco, Calif.

Washington Merry-Go-Round

(Continued from Page 4)

to spend six days learning the nomenclature of the M1 rifle, a machine gun, and the working mechanism of a hand grenade now that the war is over? Why is it necessary to compel 120 surgeons, after a tour of 21 months overseas, to appear on a rifle range and practice slow and rapid firing, while other surgeons are forced to sit in the target pits, raising and lowering the targets?

Attention Col. Othel Deering, Buckingham army air field, Fort Myer, Fla. Many men in your outfit ranging from 80 points to 150, complain they are kept polishing airplanes and picking up cigar butts, when all are entitled to discharge. They point to the order of Maj. Gen. S. G. Henry, assistant chief of staff, that "effective immediately all enlisted men with a point score of 85 and more will be sent to separations centers for immediate separation." Attention Col. John R. Kane, Casan Field, Boise, Idaho. Is it necessary to continue flight training of men, some of them entitled to discharge, in such a way that 18 men were killed in a crash after V-J day?

Official Records

Water Turned Off, Sept. 18: George M. Carlton, 1329 Y avenue; Mrs. Walter Apple, 1611 Washington avenue.

Water Turned On: N. L. McIntyre, 703 Y avenue; G. P. Harris, 307 Adams avenue; Ed Kemp, 703 Y avenue.

TO STUDY TRADE PORTLAND, Sept. 18 (UP)—Both the U. S. and Chinese governments have given approval to a trade and industrial mission to visit China and survey trade possibilities. John S. Campbell, national director and regional vice-chairman of the China-America Council of Commerce and Industries, Inc., said today.

Two Piece Frock



8911
1242

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