

SERIAL STORY

LOVE POWER

BY OREN ARNOLD

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YESTERDAY, in Dr. Hale's laboratory, Carolyn learned something of the power of the new discovery X-999. A pound has more explosive power than 15,000 tons of TNT. Finally, Carolyn began to smile. Dr. Hale has forgotten about her. But he enjoys dinner, and dancing with his new secretary, Leana is furious.

HALE MOVES X-999

CHAPTER IV
LEANA SORMI'S indignation was almost frightening to Carolyn for a moment. The older girl's lips were taut, pale; and she talked in peculiar clipped manner revealing a hint of foreign accent which didn't show ordinarily. Then fear in Carolyn was suddenly replaced by anger.

"Miss Sormi," she said, levelly, "if any reprimanding is to be done, Dr. Hale is the one to do it. He hired me!"

Robert Hale had been acutely distressed by the whole scene. He felt himself responsible, and yet—Carolyn quickly caught herself up. "Oh, I beg your pardon! Both of you. Let's not be touchy. It's quite late and of course we are all on edge tonight."

That was reasonable. Leana left them without another word, and with his manner Bob Hale thanked Carolyn. He bade her go home and ordered a taxi for her himself, canceling any plan to work all night.

"Rest, but come back early," he said. "There is so much to do tomorrow. So much every day now! Of course Leana is upset. So am I, Miss Tyler. You—I don't know what I should have done without you today, and tonight!"

He pressed her hand with fervor, and gazed longingly after her when the cab drove away. Carolyn told herself again that she had never encountered so extraordinary a young man. She felt far removed from him professionally because of his fame as a scientist. But personally, woman to man!

The vague stirring within her kept her delightfully awake for an hour even after retiring. Then sheer physical fatigue triumphed and seemingly in a matter of seconds it was morning. She dressed hurriedly. Dr. Hale had said come back early, and this job was a fascination anyway. But just how early did he mean?

SHE was back at the laboratory, breakfastless, by 8 a. m. Robert Hale was already there. He confessed that he hadn't slept nor even undressed.

"I sat all night thinking," admitted he, grimly. "Planning our future."

Carolyn squelched a little smile at the word "our" but she didn't misunderstand him; Dr. Hale was wrapped up in the great discovery and its potentiality, she knew.

"I have already arranged for a man," said he now. "A man to drive a truck tonight. There is a farmhouse, vacant, 30 miles out of the city. A friend of mine owns it and the acreage around it. There is a tight barn, too. Guards can be disguised as woodcutters and—"

Carolyn interrupted. "But Dr. Hale, why do you tell me this?" "Hmmm?" He looked surprised.

"If it is to be a secret hiding place—you know scarcely anything about me! Might not I—?"

"No. I have studied you, Miss Tyler. Analyzed you, yesterday. I trust you wholly. And anyway, I had checked on your credentials before you came, as I told you."

"A few must know all the intimacies here, the secrets. Leana Sormi. Myself. Now you. For the time being we three are enough. The X-999 is so dangerously explosive and so unprecedented in every way—What I needed in you was a confidential secretary but if you feel that the work may be too—"

"Oh, Dr. Hale!" He had honored her highly and she felt deep gratitude. "I love it! What do you wish me to do first this morning?"

There was a pile of unanswered letters. After he had labored an hour with trivial, routine dictation, Carolyn volunteered to answer all that she could alone, submitting the typed answers only for his approval. By noon only a scant dozen remained that demanded his own phrasing.

She ate alone in the drive-in place a few blocks away, and was soon back typing. In mid-afternoon her employer asked if she could work this night again.

"I shall be very busy in the laboratory arranging a leaden case," he explained. "It is under way now, in fact. We might slip out for a bite together again, at 6:30 or so. Hmmm?"

"All right, I'll call Ken. We—"

"Hmmm?"

"Ken Palmer. You met him, remember? He wanted to take me to dinner tonight and—"

"Oh, Oh I see. Then of course, Miss Tyler, you will go."

"I will not!" She dimpled at her boss. "Ken is just a nice convenience. I told him I had a job this week. I shall wait for you right here."

THAT was that, it developed. Dr. Hale showed no skill at arguing his point, and no enthusiasm for it anyway.

But there was no dancing at this second dinner hour together as there had been last night. Indeed, this one was a bit formal; Carolyn saw that Robert Hale was physically weary now and this disturbed her.

Robert Hale was so—so different. The man with the truck came at 11:30. He was an efficient-looking but somewhat arrogant individual. Dr. Hale, Leana Sormi and Carolyn all went to the laboratory with him. Immediately both the driver and Carolyn were astounded.

From the great laboratory, surrounded by armed guards—themselves enough to arouse curiosity—Robert Hale carried a parcel no bigger than half a shoe box. But he strained with the weight of it.

"Partly wrappings, partly the leaden case," he explained to Carolyn. "The actual content is only a thimble portion, of course. The lead is essential to guard against powerful radiations. It would take sudden heat or a shock like a dynamite cap to explode it, but—"

They had come then within earshot of the driver, who spoke then.

"What's in it?" he asked, jokingly. "Jewels, huh?"

"No," Dr. Hale said, calmly. "Nothing like that. But it demands the utmost care."

"Yeah? Think of that! I'll help you with the rest of 'em."

"This is all. Only the one."

"Yeah?" The truck driver was incredulous. He had a two-ton truck, enclosed. For just one tiny parcel, hardly six inches square, to sit in that big van looked silly to him. And why did some screw professor want it sent out at night to an abandoned farm? And why must it rest, like eggs, on thick cotton padding?

Robert paid the man in advance, generously, but that didn't satisfy his curiosity. They had to ignore his veiled probing.

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"You must go home as soon as you can and sleep," she ordered, kindly. All at once she felt embarrassed. Bussing her own boss! She couldn't even imagine herself feeling this friendliness and proprietorship for the banker where she had last been secretary; but

"No. Leana knew about him. From a bonded firm, she said. Moving the X-999 in this manner should excite less suspicion than moving it in an armored car with a guard. Now I must hasten on out to the farmhouse to receive it. I will drop you by your home."

No more was said about it, but Carolyn's intuitive common sense had been stirred almost to the point of alarm.

(To Be Continued)

Cotton Blossom

Alice Beasley, charmer who's to be "Maid of Cotton" at Memphis famous Cotton Carnival, May 13-17, has a look at cherry blossoms in Washington while on tour of country.

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OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. William



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

Store your furs and winter garments in our new vault—
New Method Cleaners—Phone 4471.

By Harold Gray



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

By Martin



WASH TUBBS

By Crane



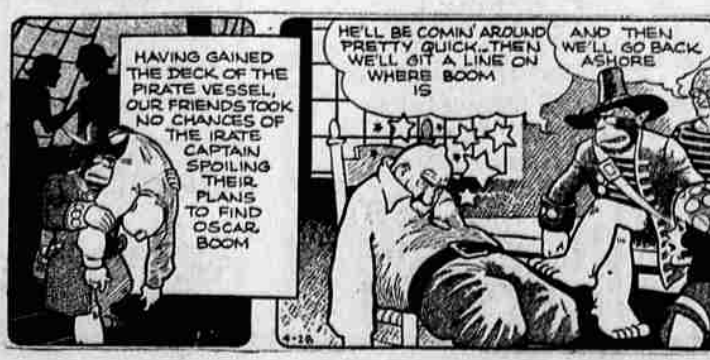
FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

By Blosser



ALLEY OOP

By V. T. Hamlin



OUR BOARDING HOUSE, with Major Hoople

