

SERIAL STORY

LOVE POWER

BY OREN ARNOLD

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YESTERDAY: Carolyn admits overbearing Leana's conversation, but Bob prefers to forget it. Immediately they plan what is to be done with the remaining X-300. Carolyn suggests taking it west, billing it to a cave. Meanwhile power lines from Boulder Dam can be tapped for the laboratories. Strangely, a letter arrives for Bob. It is from Leana Sormi.

"TAKE A LOVE LETTER"

CHAPTER X

THE message which Bob held had been handwritten, and even the script gave hints of the writer's feelings.

"Robert, dear," the letter read, "I send this in desperation because I can write what I cannot say. Things have been so changed these past few days. You are utterly different. I hardly know you. But the worst is that you hardly know me any more, or you seem not to."

"Tell me, frankly, have I proved unsatisfactory to you in any way? For many months we have worked in harmony side by side, and while I hardly dared hope for such success as we have achieved, I know it to be far more significant than you realize. Don't you wish me with you any longer, Robert? Have I shown myself unworthy? Where have I failed? . . ."

There was more of it, in a pained outpouring. Bob read with increasing distress. Somehow on paper her plea affected him more than her spoken words had done. In truth, he had listened to her rather absentmindedly, but if Leana were this upset—

"Oh, Carolyn," he called abruptly. "I must move fast. The plane for the west leaves in barely two hours and—Look, can you take one more letter? . . . I had no idea she felt so keenly!"

The highly personal nature of the matter never dawned on him. Somebody had written him a letter, so in his mind it was logical for his confidential secretary to take a dictated reply.

"It's to Leana," he began. "Leana? You mean Leana Sormi? Isn't she here?" "Yes. But I'd better write. She wrote me."

Carolyn looked her surprise. "She is upset." Bob's voice showed infinite sympathy. "She is such a wonderful person, Carolyn! I have been most ungracious. But she is sensitive and I don't wish to embarrass her in the slightest. Ready?" Carolyn was ready, so he began:

"My Dear Leana: Your note has shocked me. That you had to write it at all was enough to show me up. Please forgive me. . . Paragraph. "Of course"—underline that, please, Carolyn—"of course, you have proved satisfactory to me. More than satisfactory. You are still the outstanding woman you were when you came, even more so, in my estimation. Leana, it is just that I am an insufferable ingrate myself! I forget to show appreciation. I—"

"Look, Carolyn, I don't mean to be that way! A man just gets his confounded nose into something and forgets everything else, see what I mean? Now how can I tell her that? She is a delicate, sensitive—"

CAROLYN suddenly found herself in the role of father confessor. It was as if Bob felt he had to apologize not to Leana but to her. Moreover, it disturbed her greatly.

"You are not unkind, Bob," she said, gently. "You mustn't feel it so."

"But I do! Her letter shows what a heel I am. I—well—Leana," his voice resumed the diatribe, "I humbly apologize for seeming inconsiderate of you, and I promise to be more careful hereafter. It is necessary for me to leave the city tonight on a business mission and when I return I—I will—"

He paused, his face serious. "I will endeavor to make up for my shortcomings. I regard you as the one person in this world closest to me. I—"

"Did you say 'closest'?" Carolyn interrupted.

"I—yes. But you phrase it as seems best, Carolyn."

"I am not very good at words. But—all right. Leana, it is my one fervent hope that you and I can always be near each other. I pray that our companionship, so pleasantly and fruitfully started here, can endure through life. It will be—"

CAROLYN had looked up in consternation, so that he paused again. She hadn't meant to reveal her feelings but she suddenly blushed with a sense of guilt. Guilt and distress. He saw the distress, at least.

"Please," he begged, "you write it, Carolyn. You see what I'm trying to say? I'm never good at this sort of thing."

"I can try, Bob." She almost whispered it.

"You're priceless. I've simply got to square this with Leana. I have no idea how discourteous I have been to her. I know I always was tactless, but—Look here, Leana really is tops. Know what I mean? She is!"

He paused to consider that. Carolyn said nothing. She was gazing at her fingertips.

To cover her feelings, she reached for the telephone directory.

"I'll call the airline's office for your reservation," she said flatly. "What city, Bob? Denver?"

"No. Somewhere in Arizona or Nevada. They have fewest people, wildest mountain lands. Say, Boulder Dam. You suggested that."

When the call was completed he tried again to resume dictation, but while his feelings were no less intent, words were even more elusive.

"Make it clear that I need her," he ordered, almost desperately. "You—need her? To, uh—"

"Yes! I was just thinking. I had no idea how much I relied on Leana. How invaluable she is. We have accomplished much. We must stay together always, for the good of science and of ourselves. We have a debt to humanity. Besides, Carolyn, she and I—Leana and I—"

He was stuck again, but in a moment Carolyn murmured, "Bob, are you confessing that you love Leana Sormi? Are you?"

HE turned slowly to her, face strained. For a long time he just stared in abysmal worry and confusion.

Then he slowly nodded. "I—guess that's it," he rasped, barely above a whisper. "I hadn't thought . . . hadn't thought . . . you . . . that would seem . . . right." He was still nodding, looking off at nothing now. "Together . . . Months together here. We understand each other. We have been very close . . . The work, Carolyn, must continue. It must!"

"Carolyn, you have to help me! I will pay you any salary, any price! You are brilliant in your own right. You can do things I can't. You have understanding. You simply have to help me with Leana, help me win her, show me how to—"

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denly stood up, then ran back to her own office cubbyhole. He saw that she had given way to uncontrollable sobbing. Her sympathy—or what he thought was her sympathy for his position—touched him. He hadn't meant to upset his lovely young secretary. Plainly, Dr. Robert Hale berated himself in anger, he was a fool around women, not understanding them at all.

(To Be Continued)

Headache 'Cure'



Mrs. Pearl Haines, Negro woman of Camden, N. J., bought this from peddler for \$3. He said it would cure her headaches. But when a contraption featuring alarm clock, thermometer and egg beater caught fire, Mrs. Haines turned headache over to cops.

OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams



RED RYDER



LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES



WASH TUBBS



FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS



ALLEY OOP



OUR BOARDING HOUSE, with Major Hoople



By Fred Harman



By Harold Gray



By Martin



By Crane



By Blosser



By V. T. Hamlin



THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson



ASNAIL TRAVELS AT THE SAME SPEED WOOD, GRASS OR ANY OTHER SURFACE—SINCE IT TRAVELS ON A BAND OF SLIME LAID DOWN AS IT GOES.

ANSWER: Yes. It is the brightest star of the Little Dipper, and forms the end of the handle.

HEAVENLY BELT

- HORIZONTAL Answer to Previous Puzzle 1 Imaginary heavenly belt. 6 It contains the sun's path. 12 Commanded. 13 Radical. 15 Over (contr.). 16 Race end. 17 River. 18 Upright shaft. 20 Sea eagle. 21 Male offspring. 22 Collection of facts. 23 Half an em. 24 Structural units. 30 Courtesy title. 32 More fastidious. 33 To prosper. 34 God of sky. 35 Denoting equal pressure. 37 Keystones. 40 Perfumes. 41 Trapped. 42 Plural (abbr.). 43 Radio bulbs. 45 Provided. 47 Herb. 49 Small island. 51 About. 53 Knot. 54 To vex. 55 Glade. 56 It has signs or divisions. 57 It shows the paths of the principal. 2 Genus of swans. 3 College official. 4 Unoccupied. 5 Biaphemes (pl.). 6 Stiff collar. 7 Credit (abbr.). 8 Musical note. 9 Italian river. 10 Tissue. 11 Persia. 14 Huge wild beast. 16 Its third sign. 19 Its second division. 23 To reject. 25 Acidity. 27 God of wisdom. 28 Street car. 29 Fabulous bird. 30 Wise. 31 Not edible. 32 Cessation of use. 36 Unkeeled. 37 Part of foot. 38 Ancient god. 39 Father. 41 Observer. 42 To snip. 44 To tattle. 46 12 inches (pl.). 48 Poem. 49 Snaky fish. 50 Musical note. 51 Fruit. 52 Male.

