● SERIAL STORY

LOVE POWER

BY OREN ARNOLD

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YESTERDAY: Bob Hale flies west to find a location for the X-999 laboratory. Carolyn realizes that she is in love with him. Knows he loves Leana. She keeps her job, however, awaiting Bob's return. He finds an ideal hiding place, hurries home to supervise the transfer of X-999. Carolyn takes charge, tells Leana preparation for moving are underway.

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LEANA PLANS REVENGE

CHAPTER XII

LEANA SORMI, perfectly groomed, as always, because her scientific mind revolted against anything not precise and orderly, swung down the hallway in graceful strides. Carolyn watched her from a distance and had to admit the older woman's bodily beauty and grace. Leana had limbs, hips, torso, shoulders, hair and posture which any girl might envy, and Carolyn told herself, fearfully, that these can go a long way to offset a rather plain face. Especially if they are topped with a brilliant mind.

To avoid any clash, Carolyn's first urge was to hurry into her own office. She knew Leana was coming to see Bob. Next instant, however, she remembered the somewhat frantic way in which Bob had pleaded for help in his strange courtship with Leana, so she waited.

"You look lovely this morning," Carolyn said, by way of greeting.

Leana warmed ever so slightly. "I always wear white well."

There was no more. No smiles. No moment of geniality, no further bit of girl talk. Leana passed on as if detached from the world.

Carolyn sensed anew that she could never be of any help to Bob Hale in his personal heart matter. Everything in her rebelled against trying!

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LEANA went to Bob's office. Carolyn, anxious to escape the unavoidable eavesdropping, or interfering in any way, found excuses to stay away from her desk.

In characteristic bluntness, Leana drove straight to her point. "Robert, now that you have returned to actual work,"—she emphasized the last two words almost bitterly—"perhaps you will be so good to tell me the plans you have made."

The thrust escaped his notice. In truth, Leana was not so much concerned over the future of X-999 as she was of the fact that Bob had returned from the west yesterday afternoon, and had, to Leana's astonishment, taken Carolyn to dinner.

"Right, Leana! I was going to send for you. Or come to your office." Dr. Hale, although superior here, had always tacitly placed Miss Sormi in a position of virtual partnership and equality in their laboratory work. She had come to expect it. "As a matter of fact," he went on, "Carolyn has made most of the arrangements already. She is to—"

"Indeed! The matter was taken right out of my hands."

Her asperity caught his attention. He looked up at her in surprise. "But, Leana, she—why not? Carolyn is to be complimented. For efficiency. She had already ordered a freight car when I arrived home, had the exact train schedule on my desk. She had anticipated my reasoning that a freight car offers the best and safest transport.

"Carolyn arranged to load the car at the Meyer switch, only half a mile from here. The lead containers will be cast and ready by 6 or 7 o'clock tonight. The girl is priceless.

"There'll be so much secretarial work, so I've asked Carolyn to go west with us. Move out there, with her mother. Dependable help is invaluable, Leana, and she has proved herself."

He smiled tolerantly. "We're just not used to having a secretary, you and I. Somebody to do our work."

"The danger is enormous," said she, coldly.

"Unavoidably." He nodded agreement. "Which is all the more reason for getting our job done with dispatch. Carolyn has some good ideas about packing, too. Look, she suggests if ordinary coil springs be mounted on all sides of the padded containers, and they in turn padded again outside, there is practically no possibility of shock no matter how rough the trip may be. As you know, ordinary shock should not disturb X-999 anyway. Only heat or a percussion cap might do it. And yet, that first effort—!"

He recalled the explosion, which still baffled him. "For getting it to the train, Carolyn agrees that—"

* * *

CAROLYN, Carolyn, Carolyn!

Robert seemed full of her name. Leana's lips tightened, worked in and out nervously. She was shrewd enough to say no more, though, lest she reveal something of the deep resentment she felt. The Tyler girl had no place here, no right! She was an intruder. What had "efficiency" to do with it? Any child could charter a freight car, suggest a packing case.

Leana left Bob Hale's office, ostensibly to go to the laboratory. Actually she was tense with anger, unreasonable but real. She had expected him to spend all of last evening with her here in the laboratory and when he hadn't come at 10 o'clock she had investigated, only to learn that he was dining and dancing again.

Fury over that—Leana held it to be acute neglect of duty on Bob's part rather than any jealousy of her own—caused her to go sleepless most of the night, which left her unprepared for dispassionate thinking this morning.

She did not go to the laboratory. Something inside Leana Sormi had snapped.

She went to her own office again, carefully locking the door; sat at her desk to stare off at nothing. Her facial expression then would have caused anyone instant alarm. Again, in characteristic manner, she drove straight to a point, this time in her thinking.

* * *

OBVIOUSLY the X-999 situation had made Robert Hale a changed man. She, Leana, had done everything possible to control him. She—facts are facts, to be faced as such—loved the man. Undeniably.

She had all but thrown herself at him in person, and in a letter. And her only response had been a tersely polite note, impeccably reassuring but entirely unresponsive in its subtler, more meaningful tones.

On the other hand she was Robert Hale's partner in full confidence here. One of the only two persons in all the world who knew the priceless X-999 secret!

"There lies infinite power!" she whispered, so intent that she trembled. "Power in more ways than he suspects!" The fury swelled within her. "It is as much mine as his. I deserve it! He is nothing but a boy, here at the crucial time. I should have full charge of it! I can! . . . I . . . will!"

Obviously—the thought occurred to her in genuine logic—she could murder Robert Hale and be rid of him. Her vast scientific knowledge could easily devise a safe way. But—she loved him; or she had loved him, up to this moment. She discarded murder, then.

"But I can take X-999 for my own!" she whispered again. Her eyes were gleaming wildly now. She gripped the arms of her chair. "I can take every bit of it, and leave the cyclotron and the other equipment in such condition that he would need another year, at least, to repair them! In that time I can—I can—!"

The possibilities were staggering. And in Leana Sormi, to plan a course was to act on it at once.

(To Be Continued)

New General

Colonel Thomas Jackson Christian, grandson of the Civil War's famed "Stonewall Jackson," promoted to brigadier general, commander of the Army's Field Artillery Replacement Center at Camp Roberts, Paso Robles, Cal.

THIS CURIOUS WORLD

By William Ferguson

ANSWER: Approximately seven feet.

MAKER OF FLAGS

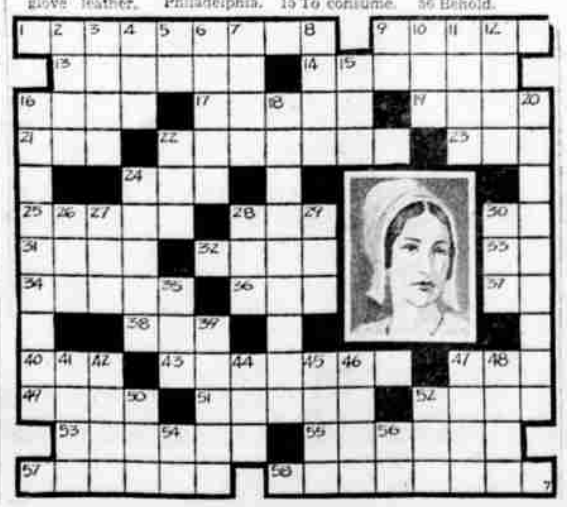
HORIZONTAL

1 18th century flag maker.
9 She was an expert seamstress or ——.
13 One who holds a check.
14 Thrower.
16 Burden.
17 Acts of selling
19 Earth.
21 Wriggling fish.
22 Mitleads.
23 Sheltered place.
24 Witticism.
25 Heron.
28 Three.
30 Liliaceous tree.
31 Stingy.
32 Shed for cattle.
33 August (abbr.).
34 To abdicate.
36 To freeze.
37 Upon.
38 To dress glove leather.
40 Shred.
43 Flags.
47 Neither.
49 Christmas.
51 Sugar sand.
52 Plants.
53 To feel sorrow.
55 Gelatin in agar-agar.
57 Labeled.
58 This —— dame lived in Philadelphia.

Answer to Previous Puzzle

VERTICAL

2 Tree.
3 Wild duck.
4 Sorrowful.
5 Year (abbr.).
6 To change a gem setting.
7 Verbal.
8 Lean-to.
9 Senior (abbr.)
10 Measure of length.
11 Prosperity.
12 Sea eagle.
15 To consume.
16 She is the —— maker of the first U. S. flag.
18 Oil.
20 She is the alleged —— of the flag's stars (pl.).
22 Speck.
24 Worth.
26 To harmonize
27 Male sheep.
28 Fish.
29 Fury.
30 Peasant.
35 Flap.
39 Diminished.
41 Emanation.
42 Guy.
44 Insect's egg.
45 Therefore.
46 Revolving device.
47 Unless.
48 Olive shrub.
50 Breakfast food.
52 2000 pounds.
54 Note in scale.
56 Behold.



OUT OUR WAY

By J. R. Williams

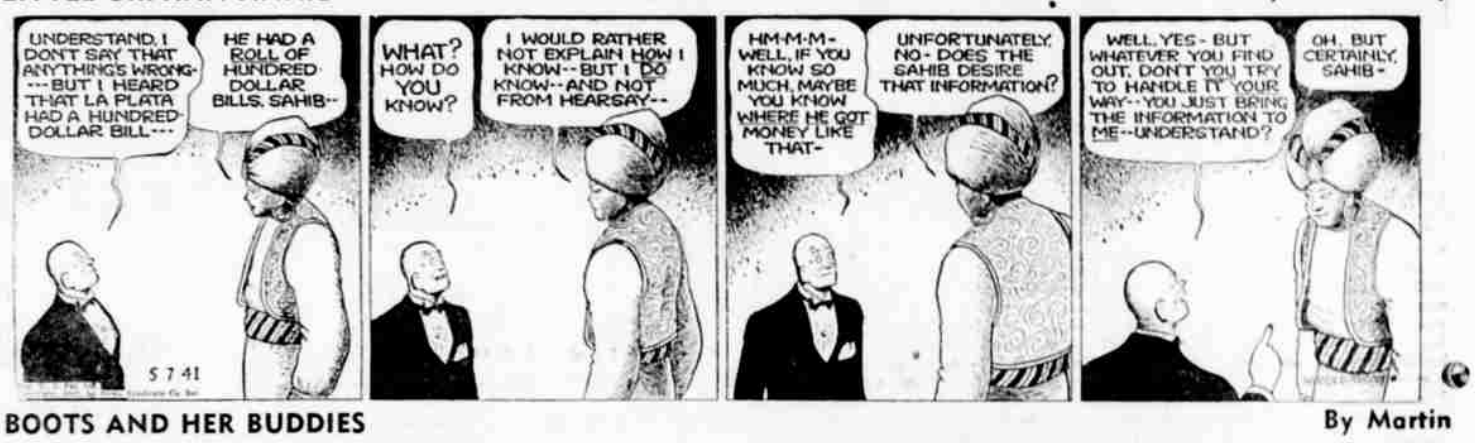
OUR BOARDING HOUSE, with Major Hoople

RED RYDER

By Fred Harman

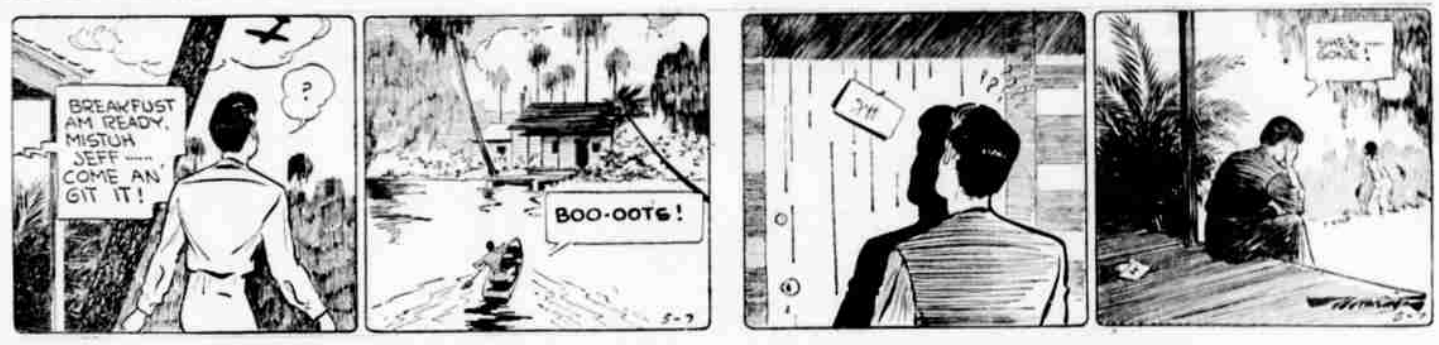
LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE

By Harold Gray



BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES

By Martin

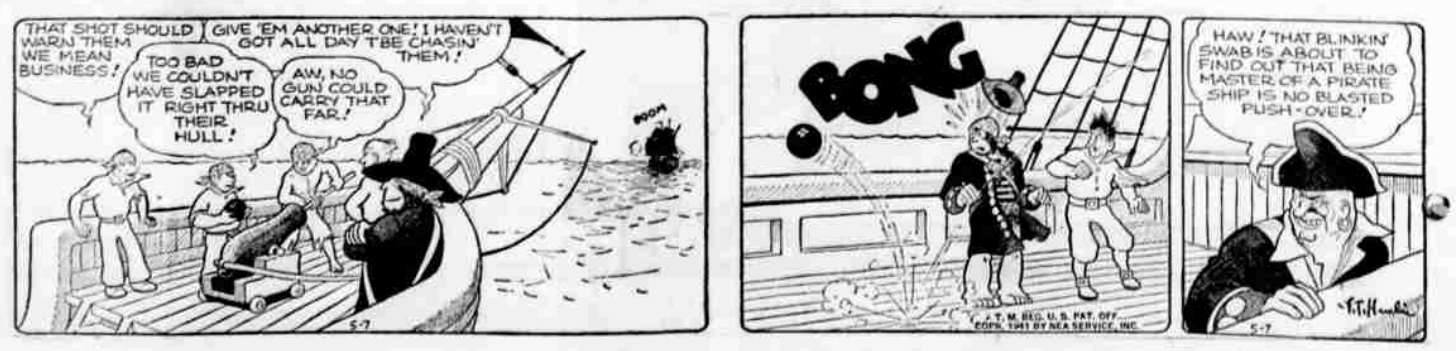


WASH TUBBS

By Crane

FRECKLES AND HIS FRIENDS

By Blosser

ALLEY OOP

By V. T. Hamlin