

CLASSICS TO GO
THE COSMIC
DEFLECTOR
AND TWO MORE STORIES

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The Cosmic Deflector

It's one thing to force the Earth out of its orbit, and another to force it back in again!

His face red with haste, and his blue eyes glittering, Dan Holcomb burst into the laboratory.

"Just look at this, Lucile!" he cried, flinging his hat halfway across the room, and almost dancing in his joy. "Lord! Look at this, will you!"

Lucile Travers glanced up from her Bunsen burner, and stared in surprise at Dan's six-foot bulk. She was used to her lover's flaming enthusiasms; but never had she seen him so beside himself. How boyish he seemed, with his lean, keen, studious face, and eyes that were all a blaze of youthful delight!

"There! Take a peep at that, old girl!" he rushed on, as he snapped out his wallet and displayed a handsomely embossed letter.

Her eyes popped half out of her head as she glanced at the sheet. "Twenty-five—twenty-five thousand dollars, Dan!" she gasped. "Why, it—it can't be real!"

"But it *is* real! Boy! this isn't any pipe dream, believe me! A neat twenty-five thousand—that's what I'm offered for my Deflector!"

While she stared at him dazedly, he did an impromptu hop, skip and jump. She did not need to be told about the Cosmic Deflector—had she not been at Dan's side during these many months when he had worked at it? Had she not shared his enthusiasm at the Gravitational Ray Theory?—the

idea that gravity was due to an invisible ray shot out by the electrons and hence was akin to electricity in its origin? Had she not believed, with him, that this ray formed a current, which, like electricity, could be bent, or twisted from its course? Had she not glowed at the discovery of the telurium compound—telurox, they called it—which, on burning, would send out beams that diverted the rays of gravity? And had they not, poring together over his plans, decided that it would be possible to alter the movements of the very planets?

All this was in the girl's mind as her eyes raced along the lines of that incredible letter. It was from Hogarth, Wiley and Malvine, a well known firm of construction engineers. And there was no doubt that it actually did offer \$25,000!—\$25,000 for all rights in the Deflector, along with Dan's services for a year!

"Who'd have thought it?" enthused the inventor. "Why, Bert Wilcox—you know, my old college chum—introduced me to Wiley only last Tuesday, and told about the Deflector. When Wiley asked me to lay the plans before him, I didn't imagine —"

He rambled on for a minute, then broke short. "But good heavens, Lucy, let's forget all that! It's not the Deflector I want to think about! It's you! You, Lucy! Don't you see? Our waiting—it's over now!"

She did indeed see. For three years they had been engaged, almost since the day when they had met as laboratory assistants here at Columbia Chemicals. But Dan, saddled with the care of his aged parents, had seen no way out of a financial morass that might mean further years of waiting.

Down from her vivid brown eyes and over her lovely face the tears were streaming as his strong arms gathered about