# LEER

number three

JANUARY 1951

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# love among the bug-bugs...

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The foetid slime of the Venusian swamp--jungle gurgled. It trembled. It boiled and heaved. Then, the nauseous purple surface parted as something thrust itself upward.

The girl's terror-laden scream ripped the fog-shrouded air.

For she had instantly recognized the something. It was the front end of a Great-Venusian-Bugbug! (Not the head, for Great-Venusian-Bugbugs carry their heads 'midships, normally having no predilection for sticking their necks out. Just the front end).

The girl shrieked again as more of the monster's 117-foot bulk came into view. And again. And again.

She was wearing a strapless fur brassiere, which she filled competently, very brief shorts of some sleazy material, and floppy-topped patent leather boots reaching halfway to her knees. (Floppy-topped patent leather boots, although unsuitable for mucking about in Venusian swamp-jungles, are Romantic. If the author doesn't mention them, the artist will automatically repair this oversight.)

She screamed once more as the Great-Venusian-Bugbug's seventeenth tentacle emerged from the ooze. She knew she was facing death, or perhaps a Fate Worse Than.

A few minutes earlier (Terran Standard Time) the Bugbug had been at peace in the depths of his swamp nest. In the semi-liquid mass he had breathed contentedly the clean, sweet tang of $H_2S$ released by decaying vegetation. He had eaten his fill of beryllium ore, and the butyl mercaptan from the rubberworm that had suicidally wriggled into one of his three ingestive organs had provided just the proper fillip for dessert. So he had been mulling happily over alien memories of

the last time he and the five other sexes of Venusian-Bugbug had assembled for a mating. How long before? Who understands the time-sense of a Great-Venusian-Bugbug?

His pleasant reverie had been interrupted by the crash of the spaceship. Not by the impact itself; on Venus, things flopped and crashed and clattered all the time. But the hyperradioactivity seeping from the shattered drivers had set up a tickling sensation in his impervium-tough hide, an odd sensation that had aroused his curiosity and brought him to the surface.

Again yet the girl screamed. Twice. Once at the Great-Venusian Bugbug and once at the other Thing that had come lurching into sight among the giant toadstools.

She knew what that one was too. It was a Shrdlu!

The Great Venusian Bugbug gave a Bugbug's equivalent of a mental shrug.

But, his curiosity was aroused, and he decided he might as well investigate this strange, tiny, utterly alien creature. Was it really alive? But he had to be quick, before it was devoured by the prowling Shdrlu.

So he sent out a probing telepathic tentacle.

WHAM!

It hit him suddenly. All at once she (the term "she", like the concept of only two sexes, was confusing, but he understood it with a vague intuition) was the essence of all beauty and the quintessence of desirability.

It was L O V E ! !

The Bugbug found himself in the Venusian version of a blush and hastily shifted the frequency range of his visual organs. He had --entirely inadvertently--been viewing on a band that rendered the girl's fur brassier, sleazy shorts (and yes, even her floppy-topped patent leather boots!) completely transparent.

And that was Wrong. The Bugbug feeling toward this petite and enchantingly lovely creature was not mere common lust. Not at all! It

was a Pure and Spiritual Love.

He felt the terror i n her thoughts. He did not interpet it as such, for a Bugbug knows no fear of anything. But she was perturbed and quickly he sensed the reason.. it was the Shrdlu, now crouching for its fatal spring.

And Love told him his duty. He must protect this lovely creature called Girl, at any cost to himself whatsoever.

He concentrated his senses on the Shrdlu, contending with caution and hesitation. To interfere would violate the ancient armed truce between Bugbugs and Shrdlus. Furthermore, this was not just any old Shrdlu. This was Etaion Shrdlu, most deadly and vicious of his vicious and deadly tribe.

But Love called!

# # #

The rest of the story is simple enough. Etaion Shrdlu tries to eat the gal. The Bugbug, motivated by his Pure and Spiritual Love, intervenes. There's one hell of a battle, good for plenty of wordage, and the swamp becomes littered with blood, guts, pieces of monster, uprooted toadstools, etc. There are grunts and groans and gurgles, with an occasional shrick from the wench.

Eventually the Shrdlu gets thoroughly pied up and hellboxed. But in the process the Bugbug gets well kicked around also, with maybe a few fairly essential parts missing. He has Suffered for Love, and looks like the botton of an ill-tended parrot cage.

As the Bugbug drags himself toward her after the fight, while the Shdrlu still kicks in convulsive death agonies, the girl thinks she is about to be eaten. But somehow the battered, bleeding Bugbug manages to pass the word about his Pure, Spiritual and Undying Love.

So he becomes her protectorand manages to convey her, patent leather boots still unsullied by the foetid purple slime, to some outpost of Earthmen. Maybe, just to make it more poignant, the rescuers misunderstand their relationship

and perforate poor old Bugbug before she can stop them. So Bugbug dies with the lovelight still gleaming in his visual organs, and the gal weeps bitterly over his dead 117-foot body.

# # #

This stinkeroo, or a slight variation thereof, has a vile habit of popping up about four times a year---like malaria or delerium tremens or other recurrent malady.

One writer in particular makes a habit of perpetrating this abomination. However, I shall now go chicken. Not through fear of libel because if the guy sued and won he'd collect only sixteen cents and a dull pocket knife. But these pro-writers have a preternaturally high feuding quotient, higher than fan-letter-writers, and almost as high as fanzine editors. And I have a strange aversion to bombs and live copperheads in my mail. So nameless he shall remain. But you got a builty conscience, Bub?

On the idea that a reasonably broadminded Earthman might find a non-human interesting company despite his odd appearance, I'll gladly go along. These reprints from the bad old days, in which the hero and his pals blast the bejesus out of Martians, Venusians, and other off-Earth races simply because they are dirty old furriners, make me want to puke.

Love is more closely associated with asethetic standards than with logical reasoning. (For proof, look at some of the characters who commit matrimony or engage in less formalized relationships. Illogic thrice compounded.) And aesthetic standards are based on familiarity. The individual accepts as beautiful that which he has been trained to regard as beautiful, and tends to reject as ugly and/or bizarre anything not fitting his familiarity patterns. Try this out on yourself sometime.

And Earthman might fall inlove with a female praying mantis. But that would hardly be an example of Love Conquers All; it would be a case history for a psychiatrist.

# A Word Or Two About A Few

I've always liked to read the reviews of the bundles in the FAPA mailings, but have hesitated to include my own opinions, for fear of saying the wrong thing. However, no more am I to fear....and below you will find a few remarks about a few fanzines from the last bundle.

STEFANTASY::It's a beautifully printed magazine, but I do wish he'd used some other magazine for reprinting from besides Typo Graphic....I agree with Danner about kinescope recordings. From what I remember of TV back in the San Francisco Bay Area, they constituted about 95% of the programs; some were pretty good, but when I visited New York and saw the original productions, brother what a difference!...I'm looking forward to more of the advertisements.

THE FANTASY AMATEUR:::Attention, Burbee--I'm not 7 pages in arrears as you list; LEER#2 should have taken care of that 8 page requirement--if you didn't get a copy, how come I was credted with at least one page?...Glad to see Walter Willis on the waiting list. If he is unable to transmit cash for his membership fee I'll be glad to pay it...and by all means,

let's get Degler in the FAPA! I came into actifandom too late to get in on his story, and would like to hear more from him.

ASTRONAUT SCIENCE FANTASY::Someone with the character of Sherlock Holmes to fit in science fiction has already been created---how's about Captain Future? Or, better still, "Lens" Kinnison, who was a super-duper Sherlock?....Material rather dated, but then, who am I to comment on this? A very neat and good looking fanzine. Who's your mimeographer?

HORIZONS::I always admire Harry's grit and determination in mimeographing on yellow second sheets. I shudder even yet at the time I had with that kind of paper ten years ago, when I was deluging the AAPA with the FORT SMITH AJAYER (anybody here remember that?), but then, it was all I could afford in those days, and from the looks of LEER, I can't afford much more now....The possibility of libel suits against FAPA is something a few members should consider carefully before making the type of remarks that has made FAPA (in)famous! Could anyone tell us about the responsibility of the official board in this regard?....After reading buttals and rebuttals about the Crane Fund from both Harry and Coswal, I am, for one, very glad Crane is returning from the east, as I have heard.

NUDITY::Yes. How about some? And p.s., if you won't staple your 'zine together, then, p u l e a s e number the pages, so I can keep the darn thing together. I finally got all the pages together after pulling the bundle apart....Looks like your wish about credit for LEER came true, if you ask me. Why don't you write for a copy of PEON, bub, instead of this round about way of requesting a copy--or did you? The last issue of PEON had a story right down your alley!

PHANTEUR::Know what you mean about liking hydramatic drive. We have a '47 Olds with it out here in Hawaii. Not much use for long drives out here, for the farthest you can go is 103 miles and you're right back where you started from, but I still like it best of all. My wife especially enjoys it--and with her driving, it saves me the cost of repairing the clutch as often as I used it....Enjoyed your remarks about "Rocketship XM"---see "Leerings" this issue about its showing here at the Naval Air Station.

SNaKE PIT::Let's have more articles such as "This is the Real Word." My birthday is January 15--what's my story?

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## —A TOAST—

Here's to the girl from St. Paul

Who went to the Birth Control Ball

She bought all the devices

At most fabulous prices

And noone asked her at all.

# Three Eyed Towner

A circle of white,

And a squareof black to the right,

A square peg in the midst of that,

A head so very flat,

A churning of ground and a twisting,

An often thing and so persistent;

A homosexual watching o'er all this,

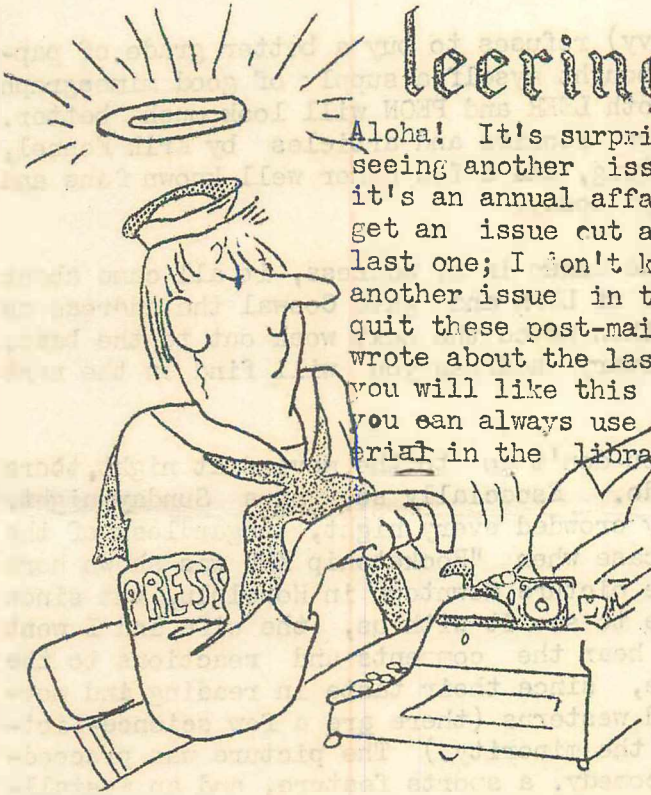
Towner looking three-eyed through the mist,

Only the homosexual knows,

Where the fact flows,

In this Ghod-awful mess,

Has Towner eyes too many or heads too less?




# leerings

Aloha! It's surprising even to me that you should be seeing another issue of LEER out so soon. Usually, it's an annual affair; but whatever got into me to get an issue out again within two months after the last one; I don't know. However, I hope you'll find another issue in the next mailing. I soon hope to quit these post-mailings. Thank you for those who wrote about the last issue (both of you!) and I hope you will like this and future issues. If you don't you can always use and extra supply of "reading" material in the library, can't you? I'd like to have some material for future issues, and will be glad to look over any you'd care to send. Anything I can't use in LEER, I'd like to consider for PEON, my 'sub(?)'-zine. The reason for the doubt is that I'll gladly send a copy to anyone who wants to send a postal card asking for one. The current issue has a novelette entitled "GOO!" by Eli Nye Spry (a fake name if I ever heard one!), articles and features by T. E. Watkins, Roy Cummings, A. A. Aardvark, Jim Harmon, and even yours truly. Starting with the next issue, I'm going quarterly with PEON, in order to put out a much better looking fanzine. I've been using this navy paper for the past

three years, but since it (the navy) refuses to buy a better grade of paper, I've finally broken down and bought myself a supply of good mimeograph paper. So, future issues of both LEER and PEON will look much better. Coming up in future issues will be stories and articles by Erik Fennel, Mike Fern, H. S. Weatherby, Ed Ludwig, and a few other well known fans and authors. Why not request your copy today?

In the event you wondered about the mixup in my address, it all came about when I mailed out the last issue of LEER and gave Coswal the address as 402 Bristol Street, in Honolulu; then moved the next week out to the base. So the correct address is the military address you will find on the next page.

Out here at Barber's Point, if you don't go to the movies at night, there is practically nothing else to do. Especially so, on a Sunday night. Therefore, the movies are usually crowded every night, regardless of the picture showing. Such was the case when "Rocketship XM" was shown here several Sundays ago. I caught the picture downtown in Honolulu, but since company had come out to the base to see it with us, the wife and I went again. I especially wanted to hear the comments and reactions to the picture from the sailors around me, since their taste in reading and movies runs usually to detectives and westerns (there <u>are</u> a few science-fiction fans, but we are very much in the minority.) The picture was preceeded by a cartoon, a Three Stooges comedy, a sports feature, and an installment in the current serial, "Congo Bill." I think the Three Stooges were the most enjoyed, followed closely by the serial, stinker as it is. There were a few spots in the picture that seemed to draw interest -- one of the takeoff of the rocket from earth, and another during the scene where the

influence of less gravity is seen. However, sailors are quick to draw double meanings from anything, and the "double moonlight" speech by the pilot gave them quite a kick. There was an undercurrent of coversation, throughtout the entire picture--a sure sign of boredom out here...The next day, in several of the bull sessions around the hangar, the previous night's picture was discussed, as is practically every other picture. The average opinion seemed to be that the picture was one of the worst seen as yet. The technical faults of the picture were very evident even to the unenlightened. "Destination Moon" wasn't shown up on the island or on the navy movie circuit as yet, but when it does, I'll be anxious to compare its reception with that of "Rocketship XM". Should make an interesting comparision, and I shall try to give the two different reactions at a later date, if you wish...

That's it for now--see you soon.

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