

# Fantasy and Science Fiction

FEBRUARY *Including Venture Science Fiction*

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*There have been complaints in some circles that The Magazine has not been publishing enough wholesome stories. Struck to our very vitals by this charge (which is probably true), we hasten to make amends. The story following is as wholesome as they come, and if this doesn't satisfy the critics we wash our hands of the whole affair. It is by the well-known travel authority and merry-andrew, Don White of London, author of "Eril, Ethel, Maude, Zelda, Kitty, Tulip and Vanessa and the Leprechaun" (you'll never see it here). Happy landings on a chocolate bar!*

## PEGGY AND PETER GO TO THE MOON

*by Don White*

"HURRY, PEGGY! HURRY, PETER!" said Nanny. "It is nearly time to go to the moon!"

Nanny helped Peter on with his new red mittens. "Is the moon really made of green cheese, Nanny?" He was only nineteen and a little backward, so Nanny only smiled.

"Here comes cook with the sandwiches," cried Peggy.

Cook's apple-dumpling face broke into a rare smile at the sight of the two excited children. "Ah, the loves," she said. "I've made your favourites. Red caviar for you, Miss Peggy. . . ."

"Oh, thank you, cook," Peggy turned to Nanny, "Nanny, nanny,

why can't cook come with us to the moon?"

"Ah, the little loves," said cook, then went on, "and for you, master Peter, a real treat. Curried Negombo *guni* shrimps. Isn't that a surprise? And Mary-Anne has made you both a thermos of hot Bonox and Rum."

At last they were all ready to go. How smart Peggy and Peter looked in their new red mittens, their new patent leather saddle shoes. Peggy was wearing her mink-collared gold lame party frock, the one that she hadn't worn since Rosemary Jane's party celebrating the defection of her father to the Russians. Peter was

wearing his new slim-styled raw silk Ivy League romper suit.

Peter was full of excited questions all the way to the secret Rocket Range in Kensington Gardens, but Nanny just boxed his ears, playfully.

A big sign on the barbed-wire gate of the Rocket Range said **TOP SECRET—NO ENTRY**. In a sentry box stood a stern looking guard.

Peter stood on the back seat of the Rolls Royce and saluted as they drove through, like a real soldier.

Peggy grew suddenly sad, and snuggled into the crook of Nanny's arm. "Oh, dear Nanny, how I shall miss you on the moon. When I grow up, I want to be just like you and wear black lace underwear from France and carry a pearl-handled Smith and Wesson .22 in my handbag."

The Rolls Royce pulled up silently in front of Professor Love's research laboratory. Professor Love was waiting at the door to meet them.

"Ah, here are my little Loves," he said, with a kiss for Peter, and a man-to-man handshake for Peggy.

"Are you coming to the moon with us, daddy?" asked Peter.

He smiled at his only son. "Not this trip, Peterkins. Perhaps next time."

Nanny smiled, and said, "now don't cry, Peggy. Sit quietly, like

good children, while daddy finalises the launching arrangements and I'll pour us all a brandy and soda."

"Mine with water, please, Nanny," said Peter, "soda makes my tummy gurgle," and they all laughed.

Professor Love returned to the room. "I think we're all ready to go now," he said, and led the procession onto the Secret Rocket Range.

"Oh, look at the rocket!" cried Peter, jumping up and down with excitement.

The Professor opened a door in the tail fin of the spaceship. "Today you will learn some of the secrets of the great void beyond the atmosphere of earth," he told them, earnestly. "Have they got clean hankies, Nanny?" He went on, "at the top of the steel ladder is a small cabin, with just room for you both. On the wall you will see a big red button, which you must press, and then the rocket will take you all the way to the moon." He pressed the two children to him. "Goodbye, my Loves," he said.

"Goodbye, Daddy," said Peter and Peggy. "Goodbye, Nanny!"

"Wait a minute," said Nanny. "Why in the excitement you almost forgot your sandwiches."

They all laughed. Then with an extra special hug for Nanny, Peggy and Peter climbed the steel ladder into the rocket.

Professor Love clanged the metal door shut, and he hurried Nanny away from the danger of the blast-off.

Ten seconds later, the silver rocket lifted on a cushion of flame, hovered momentarily, and then shot upwards, into the sky, quicker than the eye could follow.

"Are you sure there is no air on the moon," said Nanny.

"Shut up, and kiss me quick," said the Professor. "There's no air at all. Now, one more kiss and let us hurry to Messrs. Bryce, Bryce, Bridges and Bryce, the lawyers."

"Are you sure the late Mrs. Love's trust fund for the children will now revert to us?"

"Stop fretting, Zelda, my dove. I'm as sure of it as I am sure of

the fact that Peggy and Peter will never return from the moon, nor the late Mrs. Love from Mars. No, not ever."

An hour later, the Professor's Rolls Royce drew up outside the offices of Bryce, Bryce, Bridges and Bryce, the lawyers.

"Now you pop along and get your manicure and cold perm, and don't forget to meet me at the Savoy for cucumber sandwiches and tea. We'll just have time before the flight leaves to Rio de Janeiro."

"Oh, professor," cried Zelda the ex-nanny, "what a wonderful life we'll have together, just you and I . . . at first! I mean, well, you do want children, don't you?"

"Of course," said the Professor.