

# FANTASTIC UNIVERSE

APRIL, 1956  
Vol. 5 No. 3

---

	The Lair of the Phoenix . . . . .	4
	<i>by Stanley Mullen</i>	
	Second Sight . . . . .	41
	<i>by Alan E. Nourse</i>	
	Meet Miss Solar System . . . . .	52
	<i>by Milton Lesser</i>	
<hr/>		
H. L. Herbert <i>President</i>	On the Average . . . . .	65
	<i>by Frank B. Bryning</i>	
<hr/>		
Leo Margulies <i>Publisher</i> <i>Editorial Director</i>	The Spectacles . . . . .	75
	<i>by Frank Belknap Long</i>	
<hr/>		
	Seed of Tomorrow . . . . .	77
	<i>by Sam Carson</i>	
	The Neurotic Rose . . . . .	86
	<i>by H. Nearing, Jr.</i>	
	The Ninety-Minute War . . . . .	98
	<i>by Richard E. Lowe</i>	
	Sole Solution . . . . .	109
	<i>by Eric Frank Russell</i>	
	The Blood-Stained God . . . . .	112
	<i>by R. E. Howard &amp; L. S. de Camp</i>	
Kelly Freas <i>Cover Design</i>	Universe in Books . . . . .	126
	<i>by Hans Stefan Santesson</i>	

---

seed  
of  
tomorrow

by . . . Sam Carson

**Ti-5 was a machine and Donn was a towering giant of a man. But one flaming purpose united them: "An Anarch of Gerek must wed!"**

DONN WAS rescued by Ti-5 from his state of suspended animation with surprising ease. The bearded red-headed giant tingled throughout all his being as the stimulating frequencies excited his muscles and brain, restoring him to full consciousness. Oddly enough, he wasn't at all pleased. "Durn it," he growled, "it was the best set of dreams I've encountered since we left the galaxy. There were women—fair and tall. And they were all mine. Why did you have to break that up?"

Ti-5 was Donn's sole companion. The creature was a machine-brain entity, encased in the protective framework of a serpentine craft, built of plastics and rare metal combinations from a hundred star systems.

"A carbohydrate planet lies directly ahead, Donn," a speaker explained. "It is in a solar system, grade three."

Donn stretched his arms, and frowned hugely. "We've been crossing the Tul galaxy for twelve full years, Ti," he complained. "What have we found? Life forms, yes—but what kind?" He strode to the tiny dining room at the far end of the corridor. There he tried

---

*A story which juggles the vicissitudes of wild space adventuring with the earthen-crockery magic of an Earth turned primitive is Sam Carson's gift to us here. And just to complete the spell—he adds an enchanting romance.*

---

to relax while servo-mechanisms attended him.

"The system is still too far away to tell us much, Donn," Ti-5 explained patiently. "But I have detected electronic frequencies indicating experience in conveying messages. And they have atomic power."

"Well," Donn muttered. "We've run into that before. Confound it, Ti, I'm convinced my race is a minority everywhere." He caught a disturbing glimpse of his face in a mirror. "For a hundred years I helped police Sus, remember? I'm an *ugly* man, Ti."

"By the standards of the people of Sus and the system of Gerex, that is indeed self-evident, Donn. But it is the policy of your anarchy to find a woman and beget a male."

"I know." Donn got up heavily. "With all the skill of our machine brains, Ti, why can't we breed females? Do you think I enjoy being compelled to chase across galaxy after galaxy in search of a woman meeting your requirements? How I detest that word *chase*."

"The planet I have located," Ti-5 said patiently, "is a sixth-class world. In the great distribution curve of a million years ago, the archives tell us, the small carbohydrate planets in the smaller solar systems were the first to be colonized."

"All right," Donn grunted. "Let's climb into hyper and pay them a visit. But I'll tell you this,

Ti. If we don't find a suitable woman on *this* trip, I'm going back to Sus and re-enter the police service."

"But your father is an anarchist. And his father before him was a leader. You must have a son."

"That's what you say, you infernal mechanical meddler!" Donn grinned, for actually he was quite fond of Ti-5. "Do you think I don't want a mate? It's just that I don't intend to waste the prime of my life chasing through space. I'd rather spend my time smashing intruding life forms bent on raiding the Geractic worlds. But anything is better, I suppose, than spending my best years in suspended animation." He chuckled. "If it wasn't for the dreams—man, oh man."

Across Tul, a loosely-knit spiral nebula vaster than Andromeda, they raced through hyper space toward a dazzling yellow sun with nine planets. And as Donn fretted, Ti-5 gave out hopeful bulletins. He continued to provide encouragement until the ship left hyper and it was safe to open the screens.

"Observe," he said. "Take careful note of the land mass near their equator."

"Their cities are magnificently laid out," Donn exclaimed. "There are vast networks of highways and canals."

"And *women*," Ti-5 said gently.

The screen flickered, became stable. There appeared on its opalescent convexity a landscape—with figures. A dozen men and women

reclined at ease on a golden beach. There were swimmers, and boats darting to and fro. There were machines gliding on the land, and through the air.

"Aerial transportation of a crude sort," Ti-5 confirmed.

"Really women—at last," Donn whispered. Excitement possessed him. "Ti, let's measure their atmosphere, their water supply—"

"That has been done already, Donn," Ti-5 assured him. "The gravity is seven-tenths that of our own world. They live in a slightly denser atmosphere. The lakes and rivers are like our own but the ocean is filled with a saline chemical. The salinity is of no importance, however, for the lake water is pure."

"Green continents," Donn said. "Ti, you have done well."

"I am your friend, Donn. Remember, your father rode with me after Ona, your dam."

"Yes, I know." Donn was more emotionally moved than he cared to reveal. He used the scanner with delight, studying the smaller cities, and landscapes dotted with farms. Here was a good type of civilization.

After a moment he turned from the screen which was now aglow with the lights of a public park. There was music, and amusement devices. There were lovers. Handsome young men. Girls who laughed, incredibly attractive girls.

He glanced at the single large mirror which had previously dis-

turbed him. "They wear no beards," he mused. "They are not ugly. But, by the twin suns of Gerex, none are better than I."

The screen blurred. A siren wailed briefly. Then a stern-faced man in uniform materialized, speaking rapidly.

"He is warning them," Ti said. "They have sighted us."

"The fool! Give them the space signal of friendship."

"Donn, you're forgetting that we have penetrated the Galaxy of Tul farther than any explorers before us. They have no knowledge of our signals or linguistics. I am trying to read their thought-patterns. I'm afraid they are hostile."

Ti-5's serpentine bulk was hovering just outside the atmosphere. Presently they saw tiny flames far below as rockets raced toward them. As Ti-5 set the deflectors Donn swore. Rocket after rocket, some of quite formidable dimensions, swerved away and vanished.

"Look, Ti," Donn exclaimed, "they've apparently got some sort of warning system that works on infra-frequencies. As long as we hang around they'll continue to waste their rockets."

"Do you have a plan?" Ti-5 inquired.

"Yes, I have. Let's check an uninhabited area carefully and enter the atmosphere. You'll hover until I make a landing in a lifeboat. Then you'll move out and wait."

"Excellent," Ti said. "A lifeboat would probably be superior in speed

to anything they possess. You'll have ample armament. But we'll have to be careful. I daresay their scanning devices could find me twenty thousand miles away."

"I'll work near their main city, Ti. Can you start your evaluation at twenty thousand?"

"It may be much slower work than you think, Donn. However, I can quickly classify eligible groups of females. The removal of your choice for my inspection—is our major problem, Donn."

Donn laughed softly. "It is a problem I welcome." He was tingling. He craved action—the more dangerous the better. No Gerekian had ever brought back a female of her own accord. And so, as Ti-5 deflected the rocket barrage, Donn climbed into the tiny lifeboat and drifted slowly into the atmosphere.

He and Ti-5 had invaded hostile worlds before, for every citizen of the anarchy served a voluntary enlistment in various dangerous capacities. Donn had even been in Element Survey—a service with a high mortality rating. He had learned the hard way how to sneak in and complete a mission while Ti-5 attracted and misled the defenders.

But this was an exceptionally difficult undertaking. Ti-5 would have to sift the entire group of cities, swiftly but painstakingly. Already the brain machine was analyzing myriads of thought waves, and classifying them for future reference, all in micro-seconds.

Ti-5 would eventually find a woman worth abducting. Meanwhile Donn, gliding down through the ever thickening atmosphere, was concerned more about his immediate physical comfort. The planet's mean temperature at the equator was high, and made itself felt even through his clothing of thin, porous fabric. And now he began to slow the craft, circling the cities. It was dark when he came to rest in open country, and promptly flashed a signal to Ti-5.

Almost as promptly Ti-5 unleashed a space call of distress.

Donn was testing the warm, outside air when he heard the call, which was transmitted not only by telar, but over the accello frequencies. Accello was the penultimate in space transit, for it would leap across thousands of light years in the matter of seconds. From all points in the Gerex System would come help. No organized fleet of the earlier Galactic Empires could have matched the self-discipline of anarchies like Gerex.

"Ti!" Donn shouted on all circuits. "What is it?"

"I—I am dying. They have lethal—lethal weapon—"

The words died out, and Donn saw a great, expanding gout of flame, many-hued, arch through the skies above him.

"Ti," Donn shouted, "Ti, get away as fast as you can! I'll make it. Just look to your own safety."

There was no answer. Donn bowed his head and wept. For once

he was helpless. Then a bitter anger grew within him. Vengeance would not be long delayed. The Gerex ships would come sweeping straight out from the Magellanic Clouds, past great suns, dwarfs, constellations, responding to the distress call Ti-5 had transmitted to a hundred buoys.

But first, he must save himself. He hurried into the small craft, and closed the ports. There was no way he could avoid the risk of overheating atmosphere friction in an immediate takeoff. He might be roasted alive, but he knew that a delay of only a few minutes was not to be countenanced.

Fortunately his fears proved groundless, and he succeeded in reaching the planet's stratosphere with only a slight roaring in his ears to distract him. He was twenty thousand miles out when he saw the Gerex ships closing on the planet, saw their beams raking the tortured perimeters of the cities far below. The very land glowed red, and clouds of steam arose.

For three days the attack continued, with a thousand ships in all delivering death blows. And Donn waited. Finally, as the attack waned, he knew it was time to make himself known.

He tried to signal, but nothing happened. The screens flickered, but no images came through. After hours of signalling he realized that the power failure involved more than just the screen. The surcharge of energy delivered in the ruthless

attack had reached and crippled his lifeboat.

In grim desperation he went into emergency drive. As the lifeboat drifted sluggishly he saw that all firing had ceased and that the Gerex ships were returning across space to their base.

The lifeboat spiraled slowly down toward the planet. Smoke covered the equatorial belt, but he could make out vast green areas divided by seas where there appeared to be no sign of catastrophe. He was glad that the destruction had been directed at the hostile civilization alone.

He came to a region of green plains and winding, silvery-flashing waterways a thousand miles north of the destroyed cities. There were a few isolated villages scattered about—chiefly palm-thatched huts surrounded by tiny fields. He armed himself, and climbed out.

A group of large, four-footed animals were grazing near a fast-moving stream less than forty feet away. Shepherding them, his long hair descending in braids to his shoulders, was a man clad only in the scantiest of garments. He was staring at Donn, and shouting loudly for aid.

Presently a dozen figures, all brandishing spears and carrying shields, emerged from a hut downstream, and came striding along the bank with their coarse garments flapping in the breeze.

Donn had no urge to kill. He undid the blaster from his belt and

aimed it at the soil just ahead of the oncoming barbarians. Flame and dirt rose. The barbarians stopped as Donn etched a trench. Then they wheeled, and fled, some dropping their spears.

"And yet," Donn mused, "they are human. They are far removed from the beasts of the field."

In his small craft Donn covered plains, and clusters of villages, with herds of cattle and farming to sustain them. But nowhere, beyond towering mountain ranges and across lakes and arms of the ocean, did he find a civilization.

Always to the south, a great pall, of smoke and dust, hung over the equatorial belt. Donn skirted the region cautiously, for he was firmly convinced that the entire blasted area would be radioactive. He altered his mind, however, when he climbed for altitude, and saw water where the cities had stood. He was puzzled. "Sus has no such weapon," he mused.

Now he raced across the turbulent sea, above areas which were still boiling. From two points lava erupted, and an ugly chain of islands came into view, their beaches sending up steam. Quickly Donn turned away, back toward country still green. He saw animals, and occasional towns. But there were no roads. The long, winding trails on the checkerboard vista below led to groups of huts and tents.

He did not think that he would ever see his home planet again and

he realized suddenly how desperately he needed the friendly reassurances and advice of Ti-5. But there was no way of reversing Time's tyranny and bringing a vanished friend back to life and if he was to survive at all he would have to depend on his own resources.

He chose an upland valley, where snow-mantled peaks still caught the sun, and piloted the lifeboat downward. It settled on the shoulder of a great peak. Nearby was a mile-long glacier, its summit ruby-red in the gathering dusk. Donn felt better, for the coolness of the mountain air was refreshing.

He was admiring the glacier when he saw the winged craft come up the valley. It circled the valley twice and then slowly glided to a landing near his lifeboat. Quickly he drew his blaster, and ducked down behind a massive, sheltering boulder.

A woman stepped from the air-car. She wore dark slacks and a fleecy jacket. Her platinum hair streamed in the breeze and she stood for an instant utterly motionless, staring straight at the boulder.

Donn emerged from cover. He holstered the weapon and strode uphill. *She must have belonged to the civilization they destroyed, he thought. She is not here for war, else she would not have emerged unarmed.*

As Donn approached the woman his astonishment mounted. She seemed completely unafraid. Without a word she undid a case hang-

ing from her shoulder, and put on what appeared to be a headset. Then she handed a similar helmeted device to Donn.

He knew instantly that the headsets were thought pattern equipment. Sus used them constantly in dealing with alien life forms. Often they worked. But just as frequently they failed, especially with insect and reptile types. Fortunately, with humanoids the success index was high. Without hesitation Donn put on the headset, noting the compact attachment. Slowly he thought, "I am Donn, from the other great galaxy."

"We are familiar with your world," came to him instantly. "I am Lyda. Why did you make war on us?" Her green eyes were hostile. "Earth is no invader. We have enough grievous trouble of our own. When your ship arrived two great armies were massed in Asia, another in the mountains north of our cities. They were warring on us when your ship attacked."

"Attacked?" Donn stared at her. "Listen to me. I was alone, with the brain machine Ti-5. We deflected your rockets, true. But we did so for the sole purpose of enabling me to land—alone. The ships which destroyed your cities came after you blasted Ti-5. He sent the space call of distress when he was dying."

She looked at the gilded peaks, her face impassive. "That was what my father told me, Donn. He was Orr, chief physicist of the Ten Cities. Unfortunately the military

refused to believe him. They trained on your ship the disintegrator which he had developed as a defensive weapon against the invading hordes."

"I am sorry," Donn said. "Even when Ti signaled that he was mortally injured I begged him not to send out the distress call. Our ships crossed the entire galaxy to join with us in exacting revenge. They abandoned me, believing I was dead."

She gestured toward the lifeboat. "I would like to examine that curious, small craft," she told him.

Donn led the way. Within, she noted the simple equipment, and the questions she asked amazed him.

"I was Orr's assistant," she said, smiling. "We had planned to build a far more elaborate space craft than this, using the energy developed in the disintegrator as a power drive."

"Then why—"

"There was a reason for our failure," she went on, her face sad. "For years the Ten Cities have been in the hands of men with a remorseless lust for power. They envisioned war as the solution to everything. The moment we defeated the Asiatics, our own power-hungry leaders would have fallen out."

"Your cities appeared peaceful enough on our screens," Donn said.

She leaned forward. "Why did you come so far, and alone? Why did you dare so greatly and risk



so much—if you were on a peaceful mission?"

"To find a mate," Donn answered her bluntly. For the first time she appeared startled. Then her eyes grew luminous with amazement.

"I still do not understand. Surely your own women—"

Donn told her the simple truth. She stared at him aghast. "You would have kidnapped a woman, taken her as a captive back to your Sus—"

"Look at me," Donn cut in harshly. "Do you think a man as ugly as myself could have persuaded an Earth woman to accompany him of her own free choice, in competition with the specimens I saw on our screens?"

"Your screens showed only our aristocrats, owners of slaves, proprietors of our factories. You saw them at play. My father was no aristocrat. He was a commoner. A genius, yes, but still a commoner.

"Donn," she added, her eyes no longer hostile, "your coming brought disaster. But you were merely an instrument of the tragedy and not its real cause."

Donn returned her stare incredulously. "Why do you say that? Your civilization is now on the floor of the sea. Before we struck—"

"Long before you struck the angry matrix of rock and metal beneath the thin crust of the continent threatened us, Donn. Orr believed, as did others before him, that the Ten Cities had been built on the most critical of Earth's surface. The

atomic-powered blasts from your ships triggered the actual convulsion. But Atlantis was doomed from the beginning."

"Atlantis!" Donn spoke the word aloud. "So that was the name of your civilization! In the archives at Sus there is frequent mention of Atlantis, and of a Gerex-born rebel who fled to your galaxy of Tul."

She nodded. "He was our ancestor, Donn. And that is why the Ten Cities of Atlantis have known nothing but war. We were unlike the original inhabitants, and they sensed our alienage."

She rose and went outside. Donn followed her and switched on a hand-lamp which glowed a soft green. "How many of you got away?" he inquired. "Was your father a survivor?"

She nodded. "We left together—after warning the military. They refused to believe us. Orr had his own ship, but he risked too much by returning for documents and equipment. He was planning to build a laboratory in these mountains.

"He fearlessly exposed himself to the radiations, putting his own safety last. He—he died last night," she added, her voice trembling. "And he asked me to find you."

Donn took her unresisting hand. It was cold. They walked past her aircar to a ledge a hundred feet above the glacier, resplendent now in the moonlight.

"You are very beautiful, Lyda,"

he said. "It would be a joy to help you build your laboratory, and serve you as a husband should. But I am a man of truth, Lyda. Ti-5 must have chosen you, the rascal—before we reached this solar system. He was good at keeping a secret."

Her fingers tightened, but only for a moment. "I am not a woman to be abducted, Donn. I accept you, but on my own terms. Serve me?" She laughed gently. "On Earth, when a man seeks a mate, he pays court."

"Pays court?" he asked, perplexed.

"It is an art you will quickly master," she said. "Right now, I have some small, practical matters

to attend to, my darling." She ran to an aircar.

Donn went to the lifeboat. Before entering, he lifted his head. The Gerex Galaxy was a single dot of light. The constellations of Tula—Monoceros, Cygnus, Aquarius, Orion, seemed to be pleading with him to stay. But a man cannot desert his own people forever. She was very lovely, and she tugged at his heartstrings. But—

"Goodbye," Donn whispered. "Some day, the children of Gerex will visit you. Some day. And I will be with them, looking for you."

He took off, knowing in his heart that if he dared greatly the small craft would take him home.