

The Release

BY KURT NEWTON

ILLUSTRATED BY TOM SCHMUCKER

IN WHICH A
MARITAL PROBLEM
IS REALLY BUGGING
FITZ... OH, HOW
IT STINGS

“N ow can I have release?”
“Not yet, dear.”

Fitz had asked the question so many times, the words had begun to lose meaning. There was a time he thought he could forget his painful urges, that his duty would at last overcome his need. But his duty only served to remind him how much he had sacrificed himself for her, how deeply his love had penetrated his every joint and muscle, to the bottom of his spurs, to the ends of his wingtips. He lived for her. He ate for her. He breathed for her. And, now, nothing mattered but release. He wanted release. He needed release.

“You missed a spot.” Delia rolled over onto her side. The sound reverberated like a thousand tin cans crushing in the hollow bedroom chamber. Fitz scurried out of the way until she came to rest once again, then he hurriedly polished the length of her long smooth carapace. He knew what she liked most, where she liked it, and for how long. And when he was done polishing her back, he knew there would be another chore, another duty to perform. He had reached a point where he would do anything for release.

“Yes, right there. Don’t stop.”

He rubbed against her, deriving no pleasure but the pleasure in knowing that his time was quickening, his moment of actual resolve now minutes closer than before. He knew if he persisted and did as he was told, there was a chance she would finally give him what he wanted.

“Can you watch the children today?”

His body tensed, but his feet did not break their rhythm. “Of course,” he told her.

He felt the room heave as she sighed and fell into a relaxed slumber. She was pleased. It really wasn’t a question, only a matter of courtesy. Still, his feet worked diligently until he could see his reflection in the smooth surface of her carapace. He no longer recognized the face that stared back at him.

THE CHILDREN ARRIVED home hungry and wanting to play. They swarmed around Fitz. The youngest ones merely clung to his legs and rode him, while the older ones roughhoused. When he tried to break them up, they nipped at him and broke tiny pieces from his aging wings. They were getting too big for him. Or was he getting too old? Playtime wasn’t what it used to be.

“Please keep it down, your mother’s sleeping,” he told them.

At this, they laughed, knowing full well they wouldn’t be the one in trouble if their mother woke before her scheduled wakeup call.

For the next three hours, he fluttered and fretted, cleaning up behind the children as fast as they could make a mess, giving in to their every demand just to keep them quiet. His oldest son huddled in the corner, adopting a look of unblinking resentment. But Fitz was too preoccupied with wanting release to understand why.

“NOW CAN I HAVE RELEASE?”

“Not yet, dear.”

Three more months had passed and his patience had worn thin. But he would not let her see his frustration. It would only encourage her to withhold release from him even longer.

“But I have a surprise for you,” she said.

He was tiring of this game. She knew what he wanted, but she appeared to derive pleasure from making him wait.

“What kind of surprise?”

Her eyes swiveled in his direction. A frown creased her gelatinous brow. “If I told you, it wouldn’t be a surprise.”

He chewed the last of her meal and swallowed. Moments later, he regurgitated a large glob of nutrient-rich cellulose. He spooned it into her waiting orifice using the hollow tip of his antenna.

“Then can I have release?”

She savored the moment, allowing the food to dissolve in her mouth. “We’ll see,” she said, eyes closed, content.

On the days the children attended classes, Fitz was left alone. The urge was always strongest when he was alone. He needed release. The urge to provide it for himself was nearly overwhelming, but he wasn’t raised that way. Delia needed to be the one. The urge was strong, but his commitment was even stronger.

As he dwelled on the moment she would give him release, a rumble shook the walls of his study. He heard laughter. In a flash, he flew to the bedroom chamber to investigate.

He found her rolling from side to side, a stranger tickling the nodes of massive segments. A syrupy goo slipped from her eyes and made thick puddles on the floor.

“What’s going on here?”

“Oh, Honey,” she giggled, attempting to right herself. “Robbe, please, stop,” she told the stranger as he hovered over her, his spurs still vibrating. The stranger returned to the chamber floor. She at last composed herself. “Surprise! I thought you could use a helper. This is Robbe. Robbe, this is Fitz, my husband.”

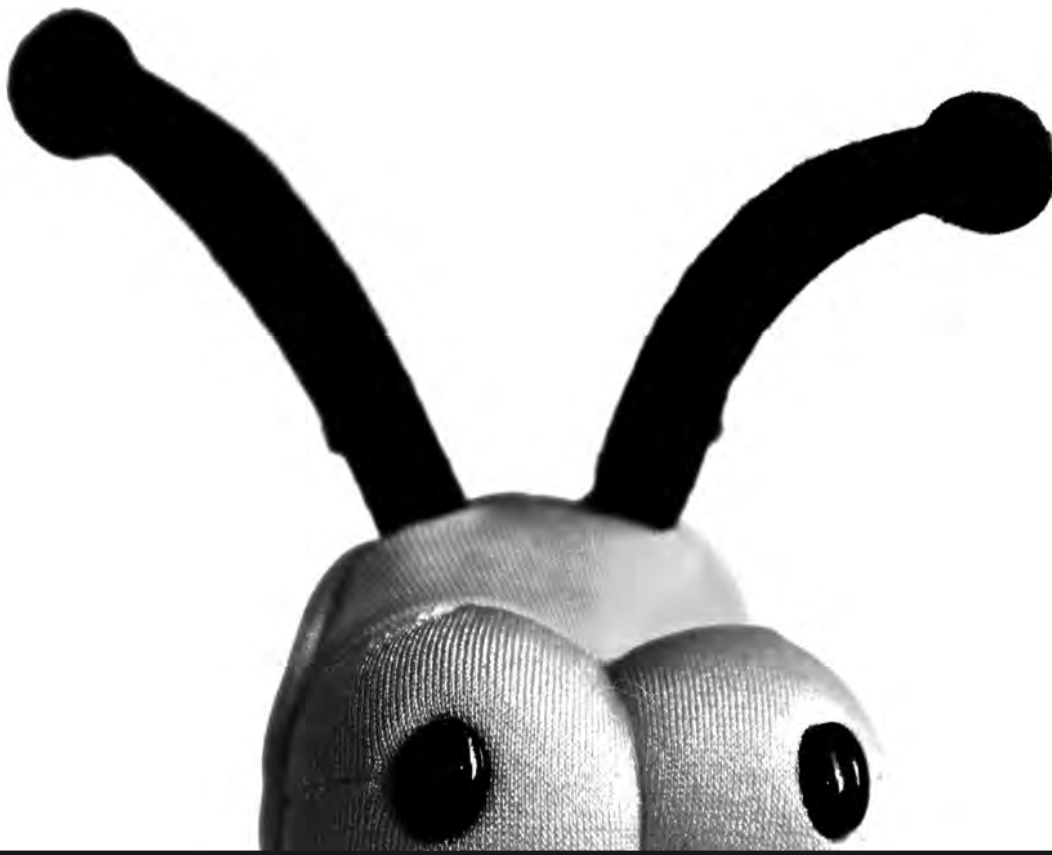
“Pleased to meet you,” said Robbe.

Fitz stared at his wife, his mandible twitching.

Robbe was a younger, more muscular version of himself. A twinge of jealousy ran through him, but he was careful not to give in to it. He knew the kind of game she was playing. One slip and he would kiss his release good-bye.

“Of course, what a surprise. Thank you, dear. Welcome, Robbe.” Robbe nodded, displaying his full round abdomen proudly. It didn’t help that Robbe’s stinger was much larger than his.

WHEN IT CAME to polishing Delia’s carapace, the two of them worked in tandem. The job should have been done in half the time but Fitz found him-



self paying extra attention to the places she liked most. To his dismay Robbe learned quickly and was soon equal to the task.

As for the children, it was no contest. The younger children rode the younger, more muscular Robbe like a mechanical bull. Robbe didn't tire or complain, as if some great reward awaited him at the end of the day. Perhaps Robbe didn't look at it as duty, Fitz thought, watching the display with contempt.

Fitz's oldest son no longer attended these babysitting sessions. Perhaps his son had found a girl and spent his time instead at one of the many adolescent gathering places. Fitz tried to remember what that was like. It was so long ago all he could extract from the memory was a blur of movement as if being swept along on a steady windstream. Perhaps his son had found his mother's new friend as unnecessary and inappropriate as he did.

"Go see your father."

Fitz's youngest crawled over to him, embarrassed and reeking of sour cellulose.

Robbe glanced over at Fitz with a rub-your-nose-in-it smile.

Fitz simply smiled back not giving an inch.

He let the child crawl up into his lap. He brushed her small antennae away from her face. "It's okay, Sweetie, it will all be over soon."

He wished he could have meant it for her, that this imbalance would right itself and her life would be as happy and sunny and steady as a hot summer's day, but he was speaking solely for himself.

THE DAY FINALLY CAME.

Fitz waited until the children were at class and Robbe was on duty helping in the bedroom chamber when no real help was needed. He waited until the expected rumble shook the walls of his study and the sickening sounds of their laughter spilled through the chambers of the house, staining and corrupting everything he had built. He waited until he could wait no more.

Unseen, he entered the bedroom and hid behind a pile of bedsheet-sized candy wrappers. He watched his wife roll from side to side, Robbe hovering close enough for his wingtips to tickle the places she enjoyed best. Robbe then swooped down, dipping his feet in the excess goo than ran from her

eyes and massaged it into her body. He skated across her segments, stopping here and there to lubricate places she never allowed Fitz to touch. Her laughter soon became subdued, a sign of arousal. The bedroom chamber filled with her cloying scent. Robbe tiptoed toward the source of the scent, his claspers protruding. Like a slow ocean wave she rolled onto her stomach, her eyelids heavy. That's when Fitz realized she had spotted him.

Her eyes widened, but a smile greeted her lips. Robbe had positioned himself behind her and, though Fitz could not see, apparently had found her pleasure spot with little trouble.

Delia kept her eyes fixed on Fitz while Robbe labored to please her. Her heavy breathing created a moist current that circulated about the bedroom chamber, ruffling curtains and tipping lampshades. Her groans shook the floor. Fitz was sickened by what he saw, more so because of his own arousal, an arousal he knew she was fully aware of. Her game had reached a new level of perversion, and Fitz could only blame himself for indulging in her every whim. It had gone on for too long. It was time for it to stop.

But there was something more at work here that he didn't quite understand. As he stood witness to Robbe's intrusion, a low-level rage simmered in his abdomen; it quickly moved up into his thorax; building at last until instinct took over.

In between Delia's deepening breaths and deafening groans, Robbe failed to hear the buzz of Fitz's wings as he circled around behind him. Fitz hovered up high near the chamber's ceiling before plunging downward in a mad rush. He struck Robbe with such force his stinger entered the back of Robbe's head and came through the other side.

Robbe's death was instantaneous, the sudden rupture of his suboesophageal ganglion causing him to involuntarily ejaculate. As a result, Delia was thrown into an orgasmic frenzy the likes of which Fitz had never seen.

Delia thrashed from side to side, knocking over furniture and nearly pinning Fitz against the chamber wall. Now was moment of truth. Fitz had waited for this, had planned this, for so long. He hurried to be in the right place at the right time, but he was too late.

Delia whipped her head back and her mouth latched onto Robbe's body. Fitz had never seen her move so fast. In fact, the sudden turbulence it cre-

ated blew him backward. He landed on the floor stunned and, with a different kind of jealousy, could only watch Robbe steal what should have been his final moment.

Delia gorged herself, beginning with Robbe's head, which disappeared in one quick bite. Arms and legs followed like toothpicks snapping, the crack of the thorax, the gush of the abdomen -- all of it masticated in a frenzy of ecstasy and hunger. Fitz didn't stay to witness the rest: the look of contentment; the loving, snuggling deviousness that would be present in Delia's eyes as the waves of her internal contractions at last dissipated and was replaced by sleep. Instead, he left the cloying atmosphere of the bedroom chamber and returned to his study.

A year passed. Fitz's oldest son was now gone, leaving home months ago, but several new faces had taken his place, two boys and a girl, arriving just in time for the holidays.

Fitz hurried to put them all to sleep, making sure each was comfortable in their beds. Afterwards, he made his way into his own bedroom chamber where Delia laid waiting for him. After applying a thin layer of overnight cream on the dry spots on her carapace, kneading her neck the way she liked and, finally, spooning a late night snack into her waiting orifice, he asked the inevitable question.

"Now can I have release?"

She rolled her head to the side and offered him a teasing smile.

"In time, dear. In time." ☺

Kurt Newton's writings have appeared all over the literary map. One second he's kissing a baby, the next second he's flaying it alive. There are medical terms for his condition. Just be glad he chose writing as a means of self-expression.