

# A MANGY LOVER

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the early amoebas. They had no small talk, they were flat broke, and they even lacked spines, arms, legs, teeth, and eyes. It was, of course, fortunate that the amoeba couldn't see, because if he had been able to take one look at his mate, the affair would have gone down the drain, and our earth would now be as empty as the head of the average teen-ager.

We will not devote much space to the Amoebolith Age, because the amoebas contributed nothing to the development of love—unless you want to consider that trivial song, "Amoeba Wrong, but I Think You're Wonderful."

It was not until the oyster, which came immediately after the amoeba and right before the soup, that a touch of refinement was given to the tender relationship between the sexes. The male



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oyster was born with an instinctive understanding of feminine nature. He knew that if you wanted to get anywhere with a lady oyster you had to bring her gifts. So he hit upon the idea of making pearls. This was not the only ingenious thing the oyster ever did, for even today oysters make excellent stew, cocktails, and soufflés.

Although the early oyster led a full life, he died out thousands of years ago. Why? Because the foolish oyster, idling away in his oyster bed, was an easy prey for more powerful living things. He had no protecting shell or armor to defend himself from (to name only one foe) the salmon, which was hostile and very cunning. The salmon, as you know, hides in tin cans and comes out only on Sunday evenings when your relatives pop in unexpectedly for dinner.

Fifty-two thousand years went by, and man had now acquired arms, legs, spines, and eyes. His chin had begun to recede along with his hairline, but a beard covered his face. But in spite of his beard, he had the mentality of a child, and it was only by instinct, rather than reason, that he could detect one sex from the other.

This primitive ignorance was very embarrassing to the *Homo Cavus* until one rather advanced brute—Emig Bik—made a discovery. As he stood in front of his cave watching people come and go, the explanation dawned on him. The ones wearing skirts were women; the ones wearing pants were men—except in Scotland.

From that time on, life was considerably sim-

pler. The cave man stopped walking on all fours because the same Emig Bik pointed out that if you walked on your feet you needed only one pair of sneakers instead of two. Thus the primitive genius who discovered women also invented economy—a logical and necessary sequence in those far-off times, as it is today.

Love was none too easy for the prehistoric man. It's no bargain now, either. The trouble with love is that many people confuse it with gastritis. After the ailment has been cured, they find out they're married to a girl they wouldn't be caught dead with.

Some of the earliest by-products of man's love were the beauty parlor, bicarbonate of soda, and the family. The family, as you probably know, is a social unit based on the instinctive grouping of all animals—such as your wife's mother, your wife's two sisters (who probably never will get a man), and your wife's brother, who hasn't worked in eight years.

You will notice that the group contains none of your family, only hers. It was that way in the prehistoric age, and it's that way now.

THE CAVE MAN, having no language, could talk only with his hands. When he wanted to tell his mate he loved her, he socked her on the chin. When he wanted to say, "I'm hungry," he socked her on the chin. Sometimes he socked her on the chin merely to see if she could take it, and all this was confusing to the silent little woman, for she seldom talked back. When she did, her husband would sock her on the chin again. This sort of conversation became known as "chinning."

It was obvious that the world needed a language. And, as history has shown us, necessity is the mother of invention, just as the last one over the fence is a nanny goat.

So, in a short time (a mere 1,000 years as the crow flies—or 500 if it's an eagle), the first crude language was being heard.

Language did much to make those long winter evenings bearable. Remember, brute-man couldn't take his woman to a theater or club. The best he could do was take a club to his woman, but that wasn't something that both of them could enjoy, so they stayed home and jabbered.

The man could tell his mate how he slew a tiger with his bare hands and how the boss had said, "J.B., that was as fine a job of tiger-slaying with bare hands as I've seen in months." And the little woman would say (there were times when the husband wished she hadn't learned to talk), "Well, then, why doesn't he pay you more? Joe Grant hasn't killed a tiger all season and he gets twice as much as you do!"

We now come to the Middle Ages, which were?—a period of slow progress. People just didn't care whether they invented anything or not. But that didn't affect love. It had already been invented. That is, the basic elements. The only thing needed was to clear up certain points.

Many a night, a crowd of minnesingers would gather around the great Yule log in the baronial hall and try to clear up some of these points. But what with the heat from the fire and the heat from the grog, it wasn't very long before they were all plastered and forgot what they were there for.

We now come to the Renaissance. It's probably hard for you to believe that such a long word had nothing to do with love. That's pretty absurd of you. Rheumatism is a fairly long word, and yet it has nothing to do with love. But don't get the idea that rheumatically inclined people aren't susceptible to love. In many cases, that's how they got that way.

In the Renaissance people once more dared to be happy just because they were alive. Love was going great guns. Women began to regain some of their freedom. No longer was it necessary for them to sneak around the corner for a vodka martini. Unashamedly, they began to assume their true role as man's mate and companion.

These were indeed glamorous days. Love had forged ahead so swiftly that in no time it had displaced agriculture as the leading industry of the period. To anyone who has tried both, this won't come as much of a surprise.

MEDIEVAL AUTHORITIES are now practically unanimous in saying that the sudden tremendous increase in population during this period was undoubtedly attributable to the revival of love. At this time, I personally want to thank the Renaissance women for the enthusiastic zeal with which they threw themselves into this movement.

The stories that Marco Polo (discoverer of the North Pole and South Pole) told about his travels aroused no little interest in the strange lands beyond the confines of Europe. In spite of this interest, exploration proceeded very slowly because the sea was still unpopular. There were many good reasons for this.

The compass was still a new instrument and had not yet been perfected. In those days, if you wanted to go north by northeast by east, you'd have to steer a course south by southwest. Naturally, this led to a great deal of confusion, and it got so that people just didn't care where they



"There is no question in my mind but that the earth is a perfect triangle," reports Groucho.

landed; that is, unless they had a fight and then they landed on each other.

An explorer would start out to discover India or Arabia, and he would wind up four miles north of Sandy Hook, N.J., with a bad cold.

About this time, there was much speculation concerning the shape of the earth. Of course, dear reader, it's not my place to expound theories of my own, and I wouldn't want anything I tell you to get around, but there is no question in my mind but that the earth's a perfect triangle.