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BUG!

The Comics & Graphic Novel Bulletin of Lexington Public Library
Reading Is Just the Beginning!
I’d forgotten that Jack “King” Kirby had drawn Deadman. But yeah, he did, slapping that astral avenger smack dab in the middle of the Forever People. Said quintet of space hippies were the junior partners in Kirby’s Fourth World saga. Published by DC in the early 1970s, it was an epic that sprawled across four titles. In those comics, Kirby’s indefatigable imagination spun off one amazing character after another. The least of these was Forager. Introduced in New Gods #9 June-July 1972 (below) Forager was a Bug. Semi-human insectoids who scavenge a sorry life from the scraps of New Genesis, home of the New Gods, the Bugs were Kirby’s way of showing that even Utopia isn’t perfect. Such was the power of the King’s ideas that characters like Bug which failed in their day have led second lives thanks to later generations of fans turned pro. His loopy Sandman of the Seventies inspired Neil Gaiman’s genre-busting Vertigo series. The Manhunter that appeared only once in 1st Issue Special became an essential part of the Green Lantern mythos. Even Forager had his star moment in Cosmic Odyssey. Now the Bug is back! He’s scrambling across realities with a ghost girl and a talking teddy bear, meeting his fellow Kirby Kreations on the way. From the weird war of the Losers to the ancient realm of Atlas to the fear-fraught future of OMAC, Forager follows the dominos as they fall. Fresh from his run on Dan Slott’s zany Silver Surfer, Michael Allred’s playful lay-outs and circus poster graphics are perfect. Wife Laura’s candy-coated colors pop, all fireball reds and jawbreaker yellows. Even her olive drab glows! And brother Lee’s script walks a fine line between irony and adulation in this homage to the King of Comics, Jack Kirby. Get it now from Beaumont, Central or Northside!
Meanwhile

sixth and seventh issues of Graphite. Available from Beaumont and Eastside, this lovely paperback magazine gives pro tips on “concept drawing / illustration / urban sketching.” Though the “illustration” part leans a little heavy on the phantasy, the articles on drawing from life keep things down to earth. With advice on everything from free-style sketching on the subway to how to design a manticore, Graphite reveals the wondrous variety of contemporary graphic arts. But then, variety is the spice of life. That’s what was great about anthology comics like Boris Karloff Tales of Mystery and From Beyond the Unknown. You got lots of different artists and different styles. But anthologies have fallen on

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