



Chapters 13 - 22 in THE MERCENARY by Jerry Pournelle  
"Without a Thought" in BERSERKER by Fred Saberhagen

During the meeting Evelyn will be giving a demonstration of the correct and incorrect ways to eat succotash. Yum!

THE MT VOID

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Mark Leeper  
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VAMPIRES EN HABANA  
A film review by Mark R. Leeper  
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Capsule review: The watchable Cuban feature-cartoon was made for the international market. It is pure fluff with no more political comment than M\_a\_n\_i\_n\_t\_h\_e\_W\_h\_i\_t\_e\_S\_u\_i\_t, which it occasionally resembles.

After a short history of vampirism and the discovery of a drug to protect vampires from the sunlight that irritates their skin and reduces them to a pile of ashes, the scene is Havana in 1933. Professor Von Dracula and his nephew Joseph Amadeus have become the focus of a war between a Chicago-based gang of vampires and another gang from Dusseldorf. One gang wants to control the "Vampisol" drug; the other wants to open beaches protected from the sun and will be put out of business if Vampisol protects vampires from sunlight.

V\_a\_m\_p\_i\_r\_e\_s\_e\_n\_H\_a\_b\_a\_n\_a (V\_a\_m\_p\_i\_r\_e\_s\_i\_n\_H\_a\_v\_a\_n\_a) is a 80-minute cartoon from Cuba that lampoons vampire movies, gangster movies, Cuban entertainment, James Bond films, Cuban history, and anything else within reach. In many ways it resembles Japan's "Lupin III" cartoons with a little more humor and a little less logic to the action. In it we discover that vampirism is a wide-spread sub-culture with its own radio stations, its

own version of the Mafia--the Capa Nostra--its own mad scientists, and its own set of problems. There are many kinds of vampire--one always appears in a bubble, like Glinda the Good Witch--but Joseph Amadeus is a new kind. Thanks to a monthly quaff of Vampisol, he has so few symptoms of vampirism that he has grown up never knowing that he is a vampire.

The pace of V\_a\_m\_p\_i\_r\_e\_s\_e\_n\_H\_a\_b\_a\_n\_a is breakneck, but the animation is rather poor. The artwork is unexceptional and includes racial stereotypes that we reactionary capitalist lackeys would never dare to put into a film. It is enjoyable but not very deep. Writer-director Juan Padron makes his film almost devoid of political comment or any other kind of comment. Rate it a 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.

The Revolution Fad  
Comments by Mark R. Leeper  
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I was walking around Washington Square in New York City and saw a brightly colored sign on a store that was called "Revolution," with the "O" painted as a peace symbol. I suspect that the sign was actually meant to evoke a sense of nostalgia and at the same time indicate that the clothing sold there was unconventional. On closer examination I saw that the windows were painted over and the store was empty.

In some ways, I guess that says something, makes a sort of symbolic statement that the time of revolution is passed. It is reminiscent of a news story I heard of a high school that was having some sort of event in which the students were supposed to dress as hippies. It may have been for a dance. At any rate, the decoration committee was supposed to make a giant peace symbol. What they built instead, however, was a giant Mercedes-Benz symbol, which no doubt says more about students today than when hippie-dom was in flower.

But seeing the store made me wonder how many countries have popular boutiques named for plans to overthrow the government. Lots of things are named for "the Revolution" in Mexico City, but that revolution was successful and put the forerunners of the current government into power. This proposed revolution, the one they used to talk about when I was in school, was the product of upper-middle-class college kids and was one of the more peculiar idiocies of those strange times. It came out of a very sensible uneasiness about the draft and the possibility that these kids or their friends might be fed to a meat-grinder war.

But I knew, and I assume a lot of the proponents of the revolution realized, that in spite of the fact these self-styled rebels tacked up pictures of Che Guevara and Ho-Chi Minh--real revolutionaries--that of the people whose pictures they tacked up would only be amused at these would-be revolutionists.

Firstly, the college kids who sat around talking about the coming revolution always assumed that as proponents they would achieve some sort of "friends of the revolution" state that would have protected them while their nasty old parents got what was coming to them. It was a time of great fantasy.

The great coming revolution may well have had the greatest word-to-action ratio of any proposed revolution in history. Far more was said about the proposed revolution of the late '60s and early '70s than about the American Revolution at its time. Popular singers--mostly millionaires--made even more money singing about a revolution that it, if it ever came, would have redistributed those millions.

Most of the kids who talked about a revolution that would have brought down its wrath on their own parents went into business and became their parents. Every once in a while you hear what became of them; most became things like insurance salesmen and stockbrokers. Some opened pretty boutiques named for the revolution, but they closed because the time of the revolution seems to have passed.

A couple of years ago I got a chance to walk down Berkeley's Telegraph Avenue, which used to be a chaotic center for political activity. Oh, it is still chaotic, but these days it's covered with

people selling things apolitical. The goals have gone from bringing the revolution to merchandising. The goals have gone from stupid but unselfish to sensible and avaricious. I don't know which is better.

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### THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS

==>A film review by Lawrence D. Beshear<==

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I recently read Mark's review of the latest James Bond film and his subsequent critique of previous films, and I must admit that I disagree with some of his comments. Personally, I liked L\_i\_v\_e\_a\_n\_d\_L\_e\_t\_D\_i\_e and I even enjoyed the theme song (that includes all the uses of the preposition "in"). Also, I found F\_o\_r\_Y\_o\_u\_r\_E\_y\_e\_s\_O\_n\_l\_y very dry and basically after the first third of the film, very boring (I do agree that the heroine was excellent). Apparently, I like the action sequences and he likes the intrigue of the plot--that accounts for the fact that he likes George Lazenby, a Bond with no personality that even Albert R.~Broccoli admits he made a mistake in picking.

I did enjoy T\_h\_e\_L\_i\_v\_i\_n\_g\_D\_a\_y\_l\_i\_g\_h\_t\_s and I think that Dalton will revive the realistic (i.e.~rough-and-tough) image of Bond. I had my doubts until I saw the film, but he made a believer of me even if he was a little "stiff" at times. Oh yeah, he's right about Money Penny (Lois Maxwell). She did become a little too matronly although she will always be my favorite for the role.

MEMORIES by Mike McQuay  
Bantam Spectra, 1987, ISBN 0-553-25888-5, \$3.95.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper  
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There are some ideas that are around as stereotypes or cliches for ages before someone looks at them lopsided and says, "What if?" Certainly the traditional inmate of a mental institution who believes he is Napoleon is a familiar character. But not until now has anyone taken that idea and said, "What if he really w\_e\_r\_e Napoleon?"

Well, Mike McQuay has done so. M\_e\_m\_o\_r\_i\_e\_s is set in the same future that McQuay used in his first novel, L\_i\_f\_e\_k\_e\_e\_p\_e\_r. That novel was basically a re-telling of B\_r\_a\_v\_e\_N\_e\_w\_W\_o\_r\_l\_d, but in M\_e\_m\_o\_r\_i\_e\_s McQuay breaks new ground. Individually, the ideas are not new: consciousnesses traveling in time and inhabiting other bodies, the sorts of personalities that an ultra-regimented future will develop, the grandfather paradox. But McQuay combines them to make something new. It's not entirely successful; I felt that the love story tended to get in the way of the rest of the plot, and some of the co-incidences were too d\_e\_u\_s\_e\_x\_m\_a\_c\_h\_i\_n\_a. But on the whole M\_e\_m\_o\_r\_i\_e\_s gives us some interesting views of how characters from different backgrounds would react to the power to travel through time and (possibly) affect history.

This novel, to some extent, follows the pre-destination theory of time travel; that is, whatever you do in the past was already done. In one sub-plot (and there are several) one character does what he did because he had done what he did. (I am being purposely obscure here to avoid giving any spoilers.) Unfortunately, part of the impact of that sub-plot revolves not only around the character not knowing history very well (which is believable) but, more importantly, around the reader not knowing history very well either. The reader may very well react with a "Well, of course that's what would happen!" when the light finally dawns on the characters.

On the other hand, I found much of the main plot and other sub-plots not as obvious, and I believe that the interplay of the characters was much more the point of the novel than the plot. In the aforementioned subplot, the character's feelings are far more important than the actual events that transpire, the reasons for the actions more important than the actions themselves. There is much of the child's wish "Please make that it didn't happen" in this novel. Yet, just as in real life, people who think they can make things better often actually make them worse. All revolutionaries think they are making things better; some succeed, but many are trading the frying pan for the fire. In M\_e\_m\_o\_r\_i\_e\_s, many of the characters are trying to make things better. To the extent the results are pre-ordained, the results of their actions are often the exact opposite of their intent. Think of it as "conservation of effort": whatever effort is put forth, whether for or

against a goal, will help to bring about the inevitable outcome. This conservation of effort is not so obvious as the T\_w\_i\_l\_i\_g\_h\_t\_Z\_o\_n\_e episode in which a man goes back in time to prevent an accident and ends up by causing it through the actions he takes to stop it. But it is there.

As a time-travel story, M\_e\_m\_o\_r\_i\_e\_s has more than the usual number of ideas floating around in it. The characters are real, and their predicaments are real. Though I was not impressed by McQuay's L\_i\_f\_e\_k\_e\_e\_p\_e\_r, I would recommend M\_e\_m\_o\_r\_i\_e\_s.

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#### JOB: A COMEDY OF JUSTICE

==>A book review by Lawrence D. Beshear<==

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When I bought this book, I expected a comedy about one man's (and one woman's) random travels through alternate universes (histories of Earth). What I got was a slow-paced story of a man who worries constantly about whether his mistress will be "saved" before the biblical end of the world (or the TRUMP and SHOUT as our hero calls it). Perhaps a little more background information is in order.

The story starts out with Alexander Hergensheimer (our hero--I believe I spelled it right) attending a native ritual that includes a test of faith, fire-walking. During this ceremony, he is goaded into doing it himself (as part of a bet with three of the other tour ship passengers). Much to his surprise, he successfully walks the length of the fire unscathed and promptly faints. When he awakens, he is recognized by everyone else as a man named Alec Graham. While he masquerades as Graham, he meets Margrethe, his cabin maid with whom he/Alec is apparently having an affair with. Together they later end up in a series of alternate histories (usually without clothes) where they tell their tragic story to a lot of people who don't think they're crazy.

To make a long story short, they convince themselves that

predicament they're in is an early sign of the days before the Second Coming. This causes Alexander/Alec much grief since he must convert Margrethe from her Odinistic beliefs to Christianity before the dead and the living who have been saved are called to heaven. I'm not the religious sort and I found his predicament (not to mention the book) a little too hung up on this religion thing. The last few chapters were however entertaining since some fun was poked at the Supreme Being and His Brothers. Personally, I did not find this book too fulfilling, and I cannot recommend it to anyone who is not into stories with religious overtones.

THE UPLIFT WAR by David Brin  
Bantam Spectra, 1987, ISBN 0-553-25121-X, \$4.50.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper  
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This is the third in Brin's series of books set in the "Uplift" universe, the first two being S\_u\_n\_d\_i\_v\_e\_r and S\_t\_a\_r\_t\_i\_d\_e R\_i\_s\_i\_n\_g. For those who are unfamiliar with this universe, Earth has discovered/been discovered by other intelligences, much to their surprise (and probably ours, but that's not the issue here). They are surprised because we have made it to the stars on our own. All other races have been "uplifted," brought from pre-sentience to sentience and space travel by patron races and held in indentured servant status for 100,000 years as payment. Only humans have managed to uplift themselves. Not only that, but humans have already uplifted chimpanzees and dolphins and freed them. All this makes the rest of the universe very uneasy. It strikes them as sacrilegious. After all, the Progenitors uplifted themselves, but for another race to do so seems somehow blasphemous. So the position of the humans in the galactic brotherhood is shaky, to say the least.

T\_h\_e\_U\_p\_l\_i\_f\_t\_W\_a\_r is set on Garth. The Bururalli, a recently uplifted race, had been allowed to lease Garth, and had promptly reverted and destroyed its ecological balance. Now humans have been given the lease, and they, along with the neo-chimps and the help of the Tymbrimi, are trying to develop Garth. But there may be more on Garth than anyone



expects, and the Gubru, a hostile avian race, are out to get it--and more.

TheUpliftWar is the story of this conflict, but it is also a coming-of-age story, with Athaclena, the daughter of Tymbrimi ambassador, and Robert Oneagle, son of the Planetary Coordinator forced to stand on their own and lead the underground against the Gubru. Of course, they have help from the neo-chimps, who are well portrayed as intelligent beings without being carbon copies of humans. While they may occasionally seem less advanced than we, Brin does manage to show their differences as differences rather than deficiencies. Any rough edges may be attributed to the neo-chimps' short history--and the humans have their rough edges too. My only complaint is with the Gubru, whom I found totally uninteresting and unconvincing. All the other major races Brin portrays are human-like (even the neo-dolphins, who appear in the other two novels, but remain off-stage in this one), which is probably not likely, but makes it easier to have characters the (human) reader can empathize with.

Brin does give a glossary, and a fair amount of background material is written into the story, so the reader who hasn't read the other two novels shouldn't have any problems starting with this one. In many ways it's the best of the three, having more of an action story to move it along. Those who have read the other novels will know whether they want to read this one; readers new to the "Uplift" universe will find this a good start.

BACK TO THE BEACH  
A film review by Mark R. Leeper  
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Capsule review: Nostalgic but uneven comedy brings Frankie and Annette back to the beach they used to party on. Some of the ideas work; some don't. Overall, nothing special.

Twenty-five to twenty years ago, American International Pictures had targeted a teen-age audience and was churning out cheap films for a ready market. Their main staples were quickly-thrown-together horror films and their "Beach Party" series. That series included BeachParty

(1963), *Muscle Beach Party* (1964), *Bikini Beach* (1964), *Pajama Party* (1964), *Beach Blanket Bingo* (1965), *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* (1965), and *Girls on the Beach* (1966). Annette Funicello starred in

the first six and Frankie Avalon in the first five. (Only Harvey Lembeck as Eric Von Zipper was in all seven.) Inspired, perhaps, by the trend to take 50s and 60s TV programs and do 80s sequels, Paramount is this year telling the story of what happened after Annette and Frankie grew up and got married. They are a generation older and returning to the haunts of their youth.

Today, Annette is a perky peanut-butter pusher and Frankie owns a Ford dealership in Ohio. They take their would-be punk son to visit their daughter on the old beach in California. Their daughter (played by Lori Loughlin, who seems to be the only one in the film who knows how to act) is shacking up with a fiance about whom she has not told her parents, and Frankie reacts just like any of the fathers in the old series. Also along for the ride is Connie Stevens as Annette's "bad girl" rival in the earlier films. This is something of a trick on the audience, of course. Connie Stevens never appeared in the original series.

*Bach to the Beach* is enjoyable for about half an hour. Then the premise starts wearing thin and the comedy gets very uneven. The producers have assembled a dozen or so TV characters from the 50s and 60s plus a somewhat out-of-place Pee-Wee Herman. The best line of the film, delivered by an aging Bob Denver, is a wry comment on the logic of

*Girls on the Beach* is better than might have been expected, but it is still only a high 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.