

underwear watching T_h_e_H_o_n_e_y_m_o_o_n_e_r_s in this life, but in a previous life, I was an Egyptian Pharaoh. Or was it a King of Spain?" You never hear anyone who says, "I have had eight lives before and the closest I ever got to royalty was shoveling manure in Louis XIV's stables." I think there are more people who were royalty in

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previous lives than there ever was royalty in history. You get the impression if you really are royalty you can't get reincarnated until you find a body that believes in reincarnation. Well, I do not personally believe in reincarnation, but just in case it's true and any of you run into me in a later life, PLEASE, pretend you don't know me and I don't know you. And for gosh sakes, don't remind me of this life. I'm going to be doing everything I can do to forget this life and all you bozos. Who knows, I may have already succeeded in forgetting you from the last time around.

2. On Monday, September 5 (Labor Day), WBAI (99.5 FM) will have the world broadcast premiere of VALIS, an opera based on the Philip K. Dick novel. It will run from 11:30 PM until 1 AM and is being presented by Jim Freund, the host of WBAI's regular science fiction show, "Hour of the Wolf" (which is actually two hours long--go figure!).

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MINDS, MACHINES & EVOLUTION by James P. Hogan
Bantam, 1988, 0-553-27288-8, \$4.50.
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper
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This is James P. Hogan's first collection of his shorter works, though he has had ten novels published. (Chalker just had his first collection published and he has probably twice that many novels published, so this must be the year for collections.) Of the twenty-five items, 14 are fiction and 11 are non-fiction, the latter being in general more interesting.

Without reviewing each piece individually, let me just touch on a few. The lead story, "Silver Shoes for a Princess" is okay, but nothing spectacular and perhaps a disappointing lead-in for the book (in a collection, one usually expects the first piece to be the best). "The Pacifist" has an interesting twist, but isn't rewarding enough to warrant its length. I also seem to recall similar twists in other stories, so it's not a brand-new idea either. "Till Death Do Us Part" is a wonderful story, though somewhat predictable in a Collieresque sort

of way. (To those who have read John Collier's short stories, this will mean something. To those who haven't, why are you sitting here reading this--go read Collier!) "Neander-Tale" is a "let's write a story for the sole purpose of making some current political/religious/environmental/whatever statement" sort of story. It is a companion piece to the non-fiction work that follows it, "Know Nukes." Just as Spider Robinson's "In the Olden Days" was used in L-5 Society (now National Space Society) literature to make a point about space, "Neander-Tale" will probably be seen in the literature of groups advocating a particular stand on nuclear power. (I won't tell you which stand--read it for yourself.)

"Making Light" is possibly the best story in the book--a vision of the Creation as it might have been if Heaven had the same governmental bureaucracy that we have here. Its companion piece, "The Revealed Word of God," is an essay on what constitutes a scientific theory. While it is well-written and clear, the content is nothing new over what other essayists have written. Of the remainder of the items, there is nothing particularly notable. The autobiographical pieces do help provide background and insight into Hogan's fiction. On the whole, M_i_n_d_s_a_n_d M_a_c_h_i_n_e_s is an average collection with a couple of above average pieces.

CLEAN AND SOBER

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

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Capsule review: Overly long story of an embezzler, alcoholic, and drug addict who is half-heatedly trying to get his life together. A hard-hitting film on this subject is needed, but this film only occasionally has

what it would take. Rating: +1.

Back in 1962 Jack Lemmon had a reputation as a comic actor and surprised audiences by playing a dramatic role and being v_e_r_y good at it. The film was D_a_y_s_o_f_W_i_n_e_a_n_d_R_o_s_e_s. The story was of a young couple with everything going for them whose lives are ripped apart by an alcoholism problem. Somehow to audiences who had seen Lemmon in a humorous context, his serious role seemed all the more serious. Well, times have changed since D_a_y_s_o_f_W_i_n_e_a_n_d_R_o_s_e_s, and while alcoholism is no less a problem drug addiction is much more of a problem today so, perhaps even inspired by W_i_n_e_a_n_d_R_o_s_e_s, comedy actor Michael Keaton is currently starring in the serious C_l_e_a_n_a_n_d_S_o_b_e_r.

While D_a_y_s_o_f_W_i_n_e_a_n_d_R_o_s_e_s concentrated on why a successful young man would get an alcohol problem, it is clear from early on that Daryl Poynter (played by Keaton) is a jerk who deserves the worst that his alcoholism and drug problem will bring him, so the film wastes none of its 124 minutes on how he got into this state. Instead, the film starts with the incident that finally causes Keaton to check himself into a detoxification clinic and tells how even there he tries to sidestep his problem rather than confronting it. Most of the film covers Keaton trying very hard to relapse into being once again the addict who embezzled \$92,000 to support his habit. The real heroes are ex-addicts Craig (played by Morgan Freeman) and Richard (played by M. Emmet Walsh), who take no nonsense in trying to straighten out Poynter against his will. Craig runs the rehabilitation clinic; Richard heads up the local chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Where C_l_e_a_n_a_n_d_S_o_b_e_r goes most astray is in Poynter's romantic attachment to fellow clinic attendee Charlie Standers (played by Kathy Baker). In spite of the fact that both are addicts, Poynter's attempts to get involved in Standers's life are something of a diversion and a distraction from the central theme. It is through his relationship with Standers that Keaton will eventually get serious about his own problem, but the screentime spent on that aspect of the plot is excessive in a film that is overly long anyway. That screentime could have been more effectively used in telling the story of Poynter's problem. It is good to see a serious film, well-acted, on the problem of substance abuse, but a better film than C_l_e_a_n_a_n_d_S_o_b_e_r really is needed. Rate it a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.

MARRIED TO THE MOB
A film review by Mark R. Leeper
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Capsule review: Dull, unfunny comedy about the families of mobsters without a single believable characterization or situation. I was not fond of Demme's S_o_m_e_t_h_i_n_g_W_i_l_d, but it was four times the film this is.
Rating: low 0.

I guess it is really hard to describe what makes something funny or not funny. There is something about delivery where the same joke told by two different people will be funny told by only one and perhaps one person will find it funny and one will not. I can see that a lot of the humor in M_a_r_r_i_e_d_t_o_t_h_e_M_o_b was supposed to be funny but I cannot remember a single joke that was actually funny in the entire film. You just have a film with a lot of silly situations and none of them make it to being funny. Jonathan Demme has a real ear for how people don't talk and a real feeling for how people don't behave.

Angela De Marco (Michelle Pfeiffer) is a CLAP (that's a Crime Lord American Princess) who likes her luxurious lifestyle but does not like the thought that it was provided entirely by crime. When her husband is murdered and a big Mafiosi--Tony ("The Tiger") Russo, played by Dean Stockwell)--tries to make her his mistress, she gives her entire house and its contents to charity and goes penniless with her son to live in New York City and start a new life. Ah, but the ties to the old life are harder to cut than that. The FBI wants to use DeMarco to catch Russo. Part of the task goes to Agent Mike Downey (Matthew Modine playing the part looking and behaving like a high school student pretending to be an FBI agent). Downey incompetently not only gets spotted by DeMarco, but starts dating her.

Now all of this could have been a funny set of circumstances. There are a lot of odd scenes, but none ever get even near to funny. Or Demme's film could have been whimsical if he had given some real depth to his characters. that was the approach of John Huston's P_r_i_z_z_i'_s_H_o_n_o_r. But there characters are all flat stereotypes of little intrinsic warmth or interest. They are mostly hoods with room temperature IQs; rich, spoiled, screaming wives of hoods; and FBI agents whom you would not trust to be crossing guards. This is a flat, uninteresting, totally insight-free look behind the headlines at the families of crime figures. The characters are better forgotten; the humor is not forgettable because it is almost impossible to find in the first place. This film is to P_r_i_z_z_i'_s_H_o_n_o_r what H_o_g_a_n's_H_e_r_o_e_s is to S_t_a_l_a_g_1_7. Rate M_a_r_r_i_e_d_t_o_t_h_e_M_o_b a low 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.

STEALING HOME

A film review by Mark R. Leeper

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Capsule review: Can spoiled rich kid Billy Wyatt take only a half-step in downward mobility by playing minor league baseball, or will he spend the rest of his life living with cocktail waitresses in motels. Can he decide what to do with the ashes of the only woman who ever really meant anything to him? Does anyone really care? Nicely photographed, well edited, but diffuse.

Rating: 0.

S_t_e_a_l_i_n_g_H_o_m_e is the story of Billy Wyatt at three times in his life. Billy remembers the story in a set of flashbacks as he remembers the woman who was his best friend and his greatest inspiration. She is Katie Chandler (played by Jodie Foster) who back when Billy was ten was his 16-year-old babysitter. The intermixed flashbacks, moving forward and backward in time, follow his memories of his learning of her suicide six months earlier and of her bewildering request that it be him who decides what to do with her ashes. That established, Billy starts thinking about his whole relationship with Katie. We see Billy as a boy, as a teenager, and as a man as he pieces together his history with her, culminating in the all-important decision(?) of where to sprinkle her oxidized remains. Of course, the decision of whether he will live all this life off his wealthy mother's money--do you believe Blair Brown of A_l_t_e_r_e_d_S_t_a_t_e_s and C_o_n_t_i_n_e_n_t_a_l_D_i_v_i_d_e is already playing a mother with a grown son?--or whether he grow up and make something of himself by playing minor league baseball is also important.

I cannot say this film has a whole lot of anything. For the teenage-Billy scenes, S_t_e_a_l_i_n_g_H_o_m_e tastes a little like S_u_m_m_e_r_o_f'_4_2 concentrate. It seems that Billy's best friend is infatuated with a woman he sees on the beach and, under cover of dark each night, he goes to stare in her bedroom window. It is not really clear what all this has to do with Billy's relationship with Katie, but then Billy's reminiscences do not seem to be coming from a well-ordered mind and if they didn't get off the subject there would not be enough material here

to fill a full-length film.

Just as the story is a bit diffuse, so are Mark Harmon's and William McNamara's performances as Billy, man and boy. Trying to play a sort of worldly teen and woman, Jodie Foster is not going to be impressing anyone. This is a film that is as soft and sweet as a bowl of Maypo. Recommended to nostalgiphiles only. Rate it a 0 on the -4 to +4 scale.