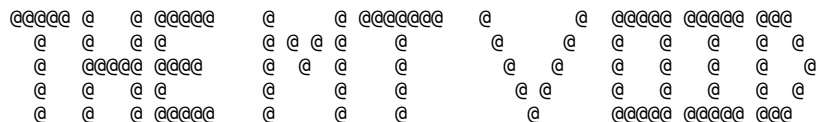


# MT VOID 12/17/21 -- Vol. 40, No. 25, Whole Number 2202



Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society  
12/17/21 -- Vol. 40, No. 25, Whole Number 2202

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[http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back\\_issues.htm](http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back_issues.htm).

**Mini Reviews, Part 4** (film reviews by Mark R. Leeper and Evelyn C. Leeper):

Here is the fourth batch of mini-reviews, more science fiction and fantasy films.

**WEREWOLVES WITHIN:** This is apparently based on a video game in which werewolves attack a small town. The town, Beaverfield, is full of quirky people, and the film is basically a satire of a werewolf film. It has some deft comedy but eventually runs out of steam in its major strengths, and while the main female character does have some comedic scenes, her talent is used up by the end. At times, the songs are the best feature.

Released on various streaming services 07/02/21. Rating: high +1 (-4 to +4), or 6/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt9288692/reference>

What others are saying: [https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/werewolves\\_within](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/werewolves_within)

**THE FEAST (GWLEDD):** This could be described as "a game of knives and poisons." We take an instant dislike to the hostess of the dinner party when she infantilizes Cadi (who is helping to prepare a feast for the family) by adjusting Cadi's clothing for her. And the more we see the other family members and (most of) the guests, the more we dislike them. The house is decorated with modern art paintings, and its whole focus is on the modern; the hostess says that she saved a lot of old family items, but they just don't fit into this house they built. Cadi herself is disturbing. Her hair is straggly, and at one point, the tablecloth is dirty, but Cadi's hands are shown to be clean. Then later when she runs them along a wall, dirt appears on the wall. The pacing is very slow and scenes seem to drag on interminably, but we get hints throughout of unease and danger--various people injure themselves, and there is talk of a local legend that may be dangerous. One by one the guests (and family) succumb to what is killing them.

Warning: There are graphic butchering scenes in this film.

Released theatrically and on AppleTV 11/19/21. Rating: +1 (-4 to +4) or 6/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt10738906/reference>

What others are saying: [https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the\\_feast\\_2021](https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/the_feast_2021)

CRYPTOZOO: CRYPTOZOO is animated, but it is definitely not a children's film. The animation is of a style reminiscent of that used in FANTASTIC PLANET, although the visuals are sometimes incoherent. The film's premise is that the world is full of magical creatures which stay hidden, some inspired by Russian folklore, some by Greek, some by Japanese, and so on. [The "pliny", by the way, is from the Blemmyae in Pliny the Elder's "Natural History".] The main character is an Army brat in Okinawa visited by a dream-eating baku. The United States military wants to use the baku to remove the dreams of the counter-culture, and has set up a whole prison for them and other creatures is hidden behind a fence. Opposing them is someone who wants to set up a sanctuary for the creatures, but it needs to be "tourist-friendly" to pay for itself. The setting ends up looking like a Disneyworld for cryptids and non-cryptids. The viewer is given instructions. For example, we should remember that it is not only the attractive creatures that are intelligent, "the Bambis can't defend themselves but wolves ... wolves know the deal", and "utopias never work out."

Released theatrically 08/20/21; available on various streaming services. Rating: +1 (-4 to +4), or 6/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13622118/reference>

What others are saying: <https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/cryptozoo>

[-mrl/ecl]

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**Tetley Tea:** (letters of comment by Paul Dormer, Jeff Urs, and Kevin R):

In response to [Evelyn's review of THE PAST IS RED](#) in the 12/10/21 issue of the MT VOID, Paul Dormer writes:

Are Tetley teabags known in the US? (Or Tetley beer, although that brewery no longer exists?) [-pd]

Jeff Urs replies:

Tetley teabags, certainly. They sell them in our small-town Kentucky Walmart. [-ju]

Kevin R writes:

My folks bought Tetley Tea most of the time. I'll buy it if the shop I get tea from is out of Barry's.

<https://www.instacart.com/shoprite/tetley-tea-bags>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YFfEbWqjuYU>

[-kr]

And Tim Merrigan also writes:

The teabags are, I've never heard of the beer. [-tm]

Mark adds:

Tetley used to be a brand of tea which was sold here in the 1950s. I think Lipton has surpassed it in sales. [-mrl]

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**This Week's Reading** (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

I am generally not a fan of ebooks, but they have their advantages. I can annotate them without feeling like I am \*writing in a book\*. I can boost the font size for my ageing eyes. They are a lot easier to carry with me, especially on a long trip. And they are more easily available from libraries than traditional inter-library loans. The latter is why I was finally able to read DESIGNER GENES: TALES OF THE BIOTECH REVOLUTION by Brian Stableford (Borgo Press/Wildside Press, ISBN 978-1-4794-0001-0), which has been on my want list since it was first published in 2004. Initially in a small press (and relatively expensive) edition, it came out about ten years later in a cheaper edition that I missed, and by that point I was trying to avoid buying more books anyway.

Anyway, I was pleased to finally get a chance to read these stories from one of the leading authors of biology- an biotech-based science fiction, including the "Emortality" and "Genesys" series. And I wasn't disappointed.

The stories cover a wide range within biotech. "What Can Chloe Want?" is about organ transplants. "The Invisible Worm" looks at what happens when we rely on technology that has not been adequately vetted. "The Age of Innocence" covers some of the same territory as the "Emortality" series and a lot of other stories about extended lifetimes or even immortality. "Snowball in Hell" gets at the very question of what it means to be human. "The Last Supper" is about a restaurant that goes even further than GM (genetically modified) foods. (I get the impression that GM foods are a bigger issue in Britain than in the United States.) "The Facts of Life" has a child playing with the biological equivalent of Legos, but the notion of such a thing does not seem well thought out. "Hot Blood", about a pig farmer, is a bit more humorous than most of the stories. For some reason, I just couldn't connect to "The House of Mourning", and didn't finish it. "Another Branch of the Family Tree" has some valuable perceptions about twins, but the underlying premise was similar to that of a bad film (THE MUTATIONS) that happened to be running on cable, which somewhat made the story seem less likely. "The Milk of Human Kindness" reminded me of Greg Egan's "Reasons to Be Cheerful" with its idea of using

chemicals to direct one's emotional states, although Egan's characters act on their own and can change their decisions, while Stableford's have their decisions made for them by their parents, and the results are permanent. "The Pipes of Pan" is a sort of flip side to "The Age of Innocence", looking at life- extending techniques applied to the young rather than to the old. All in all, highly recommended. [-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

The secret to staying young is to live honestly,  
eat slowly, and lie about your age.  
--Lucille Ball

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