



though I have not heard back from them. I am not sure what is taking so long since with a name like Naval Academy Press you would think they would have the self-discipline to respond sooner. At first I thought they were just waiting for the Persian Gulf War to get over. I thought I could speed things with a follow-up letter

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reminding them of how many of the sailor-boys would be disappointed they did not get promotions after the war and how useful they might find my book. I guess they are still just deliberating. (If I don't hear from them soon, I will remove the dedication to John Paul Jones. And it'll serve them right!)

Now I have been hearing how a lot of you are disappointed with the book S\_c\_a\_r\_l\_e\_t\_t that tells the further adventures of Katie Scarlett O'Hara. The problem is that Scarlett just ran out of Civil War. You and I both know that the last hour of G\_o\_n\_e\_w\_i\_t\_h\_t\_h\_e\_W\_i\_n\_d: T\_h\_e\_M\_o\_t\_i\_o\_n\_P\_i\_c\_t\_u\_r\_e is a total bore. It's got that boring stuff with the little kid on the pony. Gag me with a julep. Nobody cares about all that because there is no war going on in the background. That's boring. Who cares about Scarlett after the Civil War!

What you don't find out in G\_o\_n\_e\_w\_i\_t\_h\_t\_h\_e\_W\_i\_n\_d is about the o\_t\_h\_e\_r Katie O'Hara! Yup. The Belle of Charleston, South Carolina, before the War was Scarlett's cousin, Katie Chartreuss O'Hara. My C\_h\_a\_r\_t\_r\_e\_u\_s\_s tells of her life on the plantation before the War and of her exciting adventures during the Civil War. It is also the story of handsome, mysterious Brett Chamberlain, part patriot, part scalawag, and his fiery love affair with Chartreuss. I've already got ten pages written and I can tell you that nothing like this has been written before. And when published, the cover of the book will say, "Guarantee: This novel contains positively no boring post-Civil War sequences or you can return it to get double the purchase price back."

2. Bill Higgins (a.k.a. "Beam Jockey") writes in response to Mark Leeper's recent review of S\_t\_a\_r\_T\_r\_e\_k\_V\_I: T\_h\_e\_U\_n\_d\_i\_s\_c\_o\_v\_e\_r\_e\_d\_C\_o\_u\_n\_t\_r\_y:

Just read your review of S.T.V.I. I should remind you that Shakespeare-slinging has always been a hallmark of S\_t\_a\_r\_T\_r\_e\_k\_C\_l\_a\_s\_s\_i\_c, especially in episode titles. S\_t\_a\_r\_T\_r\_e\_k\_L\_i\_t\_e does

considerably less, and also recognizes other literary influences on occasion. I found myself wondering, "Gee, don't the Klingons have any playwrights of their own?" I don't usually indulge in Trek commentary, but...

You say, "Other touches were irritating, like repeated allusions to both Shakespeare and Sherlock Holmes. It is a strange and unlikely touch that Klingons revere William Shakespeare and even claim him as a Klingon." This bothered me until I began to think about it. What did the Klingon general mean by "reading Shakespeare in the original Klingonese?" I guess he was just joking. But what if he wasn't?

Could Shakespeare have written his plays in Klingonese secretly, then translated them into English? But how would he know the language? He lived centuries before humans invented interstellar flight.

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But when did Klingons invent interstellar flight?

Possibly it was long before humans did. Possibly Klingons landed on Earth in Shakespeare's time, and the Bard had a chance to meet them and learn their language? Maybe a scoutship returned the Zeroth Folios to the Klingon Empire long before the plays were mounted on the boards of the Globe?

Or was Klingonese Shakespeare's n\_a\_t\_i\_v\_e tongue? He does have kind of a high forehead, in all the pictures of him I've seen...

Which suggests the following scenario: Will leaves Klingon, passes himself off as an Englishman, and goes into showbiz. He is familiar with millenia of Klingonese literature; selecting the very best of the classics, he translates them into English and passes them off as his own work.

(Connoisseurs will recognize a twist on a plot that often occurs in time-travel stories, where a guy from the future brings back inventions or works of art or literature and makes his fortune in the present. In fact, S\_t\_a\_r\_T\_r\_e\_k\_L\_i\_t\_e used a variation on this plot just the other week.)

So perhaps Shakespeare really \_d\_i\_d\_n'\_t author the plays of Shakespeare, but only cribbed them from an alien culture. Ancient Astronauts ride again!

[-Bill Higgins]

Mark Leeper  
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We are convinced that sooner or later capitalism will perish, just as feudalism perished earlier. ... All the world will come to Communism. History does not ask you whether you want it or not.

-- Nikita Khrushchev

Eventually that's all it asks.

-- Mark R. Leeper

THE WORLD NEXT DOOR by Brad Ferguson  
Tor, 1990, ISBN 0-812-53795-5, \$3.95.  
A book review by Evelyn C. Leeper  
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As the book begins we are shown what is clearly a post-holocaust town in upstate New York. And, like so many poorly written post-holocaust novels, this one has everything too easy--

lots of stuff to scavenge, no residual radiation, no real damage to the area. But this i\_s\_n't poorly written, because in T\_h\_e\_W\_o\_r\_l\_d\_N\_e\_x\_t\_D\_o\_o\_r, it i\_s "the world next door"--a world in which the atomic war came in 1962, when such a fortuitous outcome was still possible.

But life is not entirely idyllic for the people of the town of McAndrew. For one thing, they're all starting to have strange dreams, dreams that the reader recognizes immediately as being of our timeline, dreams of what the dreamers would have been doing had "Kingdom Come" not come. And other strange things are happening. Songbirds are returning, and deer, ... and then cats and dogs--not wild cats and dogs, but animals obviously well fed and cared for. Just what is going on?

This would seem to me to be a sufficient story, but Ferguson adds more. There is an attempt by the armyEMor what passes itself off as the army--to take over the town. There are other, more distant government pressures. There is a whole subplot of romantic entanglements and conflicts. I found the love story an awkward intrusion on the rest of the story, and the resolution of the political aspects a little too facile and unconvincing. Either of these plotlines alone might not have grated, but using both of them is like piling Ossa on Pelion. (Or perhaps more accurately, Pelion on Ossa, with Olympus as the dream plot. The former reference is Virgil's G\_e\_o\_r\_g\_i\_c\_s I:281; the latter is Homer's O\_d\_y\_s\_s\_e\_y XI:315.) But the dreams, and what they mean, and what they lead up to, did keep me interested through all this. On the whole, T\_h\_e\_W\_o\_r\_l\_d\_N\_e\_x\_t\_D\_o\_o\_r is a worthwhile book with one too many subplots.

(This novel is an expansion of Ferguson's short story "The World Next Door," which appeared in the September 1987 I\_s\_a\_a\_c\_A\_s\_i\_m\_o\_v's\_S\_c\_i\_e\_n\_c\_e\_F\_i\_c\_t\_i\_o\_n\_M\_a\_g\_a\_z\_i\_n\_e and T\_h\_e\_r\_e\_W\_i\_l\_l\_B\_e\_W\_a\_r\_V\_I\_I\_I: A\_r\_m\_a\_g\_e\_d\_d\_o\_n! edited by Pournelle and Carr.)

FATHER OF THE BRIDE  
A film review by Mark R. Leeper  
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Capsule review: Mix two parts wedding-planning comedy, two parts sweet sentiment, and one part slapstick comedy, and you get a sugary, light holiday confection. Steve Martin gives away his daughter and a lot of money at the same time. An enjoyable family film. Rating: +1 (-4 to +4).

Steve Martin, who showed us the hopes and fears of being a father of younger children in P\_a\_r\_e\_n\_t\_h\_o\_o\_d is continuing on that theme with an older daughter in his update of 1950's F\_a\_t\_h\_e\_r\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e\_B\_r\_i\_d\_e. He has inherited Spencer Tracy's philosophizing but little of Tracy's dignity. This is a film that pulls in at least three different directions at once as if it just was not sure what it wanted to be when it grew up. It tries first and foremost to be a touching sentimental story of a father coming to terms with the loss to another man of a daughter whom he loves very much. At the same time it wants to be a sort of M\_r.\_B\_l\_a\_n\_d\_i\_n\_g\_s\_B\_u\_i\_l\_d\_s\_H\_i\_s\_D\_r\_e\_a\_m\_H\_o\_u\_s\_e for weddings--a film about a simple man discovering how complex and expensive it is today to put together a wedding. Then Steve Martin's roots are in physical and slapstick comedy, so this comedy pulls in that direction also. The film simply does not work as all three and the physical comedy is certainly what should have been cut.

The story is simple enough to be called trite. George Banks (played by Steve Martin) talking to the camera tells about his daughter's wedding which has just taken place and about the five months since his daughter (played by Kimberly Williams) returned from Rome and announced she had fallen in love and intended to get married. Martin reacts with anger and with distrust of his daughter's choice (played by George Newbern). We follow the parents to their first meeting with their daughter's future in-laws. George turns this meeting into an embarrassment big enough to last a lifetime.

Then there are the wedding arrangements themselves. All arrangements are made through the services of Franck (played by Martin Short), a somewhat swishy European with an impenetrable accent. (I rather hope this film does not get shown in China. The average Chinese does not earn enough in eight months to pay the per-guest cost of this wedding.) There are hassles over cost; there is the obligatory lovers' tiff. There are wedding preparations. Then the wedding begins and the film loses almost all of its humor and turns to sentiment so thick you can cut it with a knife.

Between F\_a\_t\_h\_e\_r\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e\_B\_r\_i\_d\_e and B\_e\_a\_u\_t\_y\_a\_n\_d\_t\_h\_e\_B\_e\_a\_s\_t, it seems that Disney is banking very heavily on sentiment this Christmas-time. But the characters in F\_a\_t\_h\_e\_r\_o\_f\_t\_h\_e\_B\_r\_i\_d\_e are cartoonish and two-dimensional. The real humanity is in the characters in B\_e\_a\_u\_t\_y\_a\_n\_d\_t\_h\_e\_B\_e\_a\_s\_t. Steve Martin and Diane Keaton make a likable married couple in the live-action film, but they do not have much human complexity. Kimberly Williams, as their daughter, is certainly attractive and is as sensual playing basketball as Nastassia Kinski is dancing. But this Christmas film is like a chocolate Easter egg. It is sugary sweet around the outside and very light because it is really hollow. It is worth seeing once. I rate it a +1 on the -4 to +4 scale.

