

me; from now on I dine in the morning on scones and wedges of toast. No more sitting in my underwear in the evening scratching my armpit. Nope, I am going to take up fox hunting. Pip, pip! Also tally ho.

THE MT VOID

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What changed my life? Well, I got a piece of mail this evening. It said, "A remarkable new book about the Leepers is about to be published--and you, Mark Leeper, are in it." The letter came from David S. Leeper. Catchy name, "Leeper." The letter says, "I have exciting news for you and fellow Leepers. As you may already know, extensive work has been done throughout the world on a project relating to our Leeper family name. Now our new book, T_h_e_W_o_r_l_d_B_o_o_k_o_f_L_e_e_p_e_r_s, is about to be published and it includes individual Leepers who immigrated to the New World between the 16th and early 20th century. The first Leeper we found came to North Carolina in 1748. [Well, I guess that's sort of 16th century-ish. In the same way that Schenectady was sort of part of the Roman Empire.] He was Robart. Like thousands of others, he sought a better life for himself in this land of opportunity. Robart, or any of the other Leepers who are documented in this new book, may be the sole reason you and I are here today."

Wow! Robart Leeper was here before the Revolution. Seeking a better life, not unlike Ralph Loebster, who came to America about 1906. Ralph was a barber--"Fiddler-on-the-Roof" sort of Ukrainian stock. Ralph was escaping the pogroms of the Ukraine and came to the United States, only to have American kids call him "Lobster." So Ralph Loebster redubbed himself Ralph Leeper. Of course, that does not mean old Robart is not part of my family, but I suspect he is from the branch who went off looking for greener pastures around the time of Australopithecus.

But you should see the envelope this thing came with. Two beautiful crests in the upper corners. One corner has the majestic Leeper Coat of Arms with a helmet, plumes, and a shield. Beneath it is the legend "Leeper." Uh, the "Leeper" is printed off-center and to the left, as if they intended that longer names could also be printed. Almost as if they were going to use the same Coat of Arms with different families. But, wow, so old Ralph now has a

coat of arms. I bet the real Ralph was lucky to have a coat of patches. The right upper corner of the envelope shows a majestic eagle and a shield. Beneath it is the legend "Bulk Rate USA"--nicely centered. Clearly they found a whole bunch of us supposed descendents of old Robart if they get bulk rate. I am sure most of the extensive world-wide work relating to the Leeper family name was done by clerks compiling data for phone books. All this is made possible, no doubt, by computers and databases seeking out all the Leepers they can find. Just what I wanted, a book with the addresses of everybody named Leeper in America, related or not. They probably don't even know which are still alive. Well, so much for nobility.

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2. ALADDIN edited by Mike Resnick and Martin H. Greenberg (DAW, ISBN 0-88677-545-0, 1992, \$4.99) (a book review by Evelyn C. Leeper):

This anthology contains forty-three original stories on the theme of Aladdin or the genie in the lamp. Those of you who are familiar with my reviews of other anthologies will be pleased to hear that I do not intend to review each story individually. There are limits, even for me.

Many of the author's names in here will be familiar from previous Resnick anthologies--not surprising, as I believe his original anthologies are generally by invitation only. I found this one on the whole less satisfying than his previous ones, due in large part to the subject matter. To me, at least, Aladdin and the whole magic lamp/three wishes bit is not as interesting as a good alternate history. It was entertaining, yes, and there were a half dozen or so notable stories, but nothing you could really sink your teeth into.

Among the notable stories was Pat Cadigan's "New Life for Old"--we all know that youth is wasted on the young, but Cadigan takes the

next logical step (or "asks the next question," as Ted Sturgeon would say). Maybe not quite Hugo material (and too late for that anyway, since it was a 1992 story), but close. Michelle Sagara's "Gifted" is an example of why Sagara was nominated for the John W. Campbell Award; it's about the last genie and the human he loved and who loved him. Kate Daniels' "GENIE, Inc." tells the story from the point of view of a genie--and being a genie is not as easy a job as it looks: there's entropy and conservation of energy and "The Three Thieves" by Lois Tilton takes an old idea and develops it perfectly into a delightful little tale. "The Lamp of Many Thieves" by Mel White is perhaps a bit too much of a polemic, but it does examine what might happen if a genie took _ a _ l _ l someone's wishes seriously. And Maureen McHugh's "Human Nature" explains once and for all not only why we believe legends, but why we believe anything--and where that can lead. It is not so much a story about Aladdin and the magic lamp as a story that uses that story to illustrate a point. (I realize this sounds convoluted. After you read the story, it will make more sense.)

The other stories vary from entertaining to only so-so. As I said before, this is not as intellectually engrossing as some of Resnick's other anthologies, but it is enjoyable and recommended on that basis.

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