

for the best. There is only one Maple White Plateau. Only one place that we can really see dinosaurs in their natural habitat left alive. I don't want to see anything happen to them. We were done and ready to go at 8:00, but the jeeps were late. Gil won't be going with us. I guess he has seen the top and he doesn't want to pay the ticket for a ride up and down. We pay only one fee for the whole trip so do not see how much of it goes for the trip up the plateau, but I take it the Brazilian government gets a hefty chunk of change for everyone who goes up to the plateau.

At about 8:20 the two jeeps pulled up and Gil packed three of us in the back of each. There is a seat next to the driver, but I guess they don't want to share the front with a tourist. Evelyn and I got one jeep and Jim joined us. One of the couples has to be split up for the trip. I guess Jim doesn't mind. Actually since I will be working on my log it wouldn't bother me too much to be split up from Evelyn. You might wonder how I can write in my log on these--I hate to use the word "road"--wet sand traps. With a palmtop the shaking doesn't stop my typing.

Anyway, I we have an Indian driving. We sit in the back. It is not really comfortable, but we didn't come to Brazil for comfort. I am going to see dinosaurs. Jeez. Just the thought of it. Actually it shouldn't be so hard to see them. I mean if the Brazil government would cooperate, they could clone them or something. Of course that would end their monopoly. I guess when you discover something like the Maple White Plateau in your own country you want to milk as much from it as you can. Brazil does not have that many big money-maker industries. I guess let them benefit as much as they can from the one thing they have that nobody else in the world has.

The drive through the jungle was long and hot and dull. It was about 10:15 when Evelyn tapped my leg. Just over the trees you could see the Maple White Plateau. It looked like a lot of rock and not much green at the top. I was hoping to see a pterodactyl or two flying over. No such luck. It just looked like a lot of rock. I have to try and find out why this rock is like this. I mean geologically. It all looked like it was one piece from here. Actually it was all one piece at one time in its past. The Summerlee Column broke off as cleavage at one point. It looks like the only place that the rock was climbable and it broke off. That was how Challenger got up. He climbed Summerlee Column and used a tree to cross over to the main part of the plateau. That was also how he got stuck up there. I guess it is kind of pointless looking for where the tree fell. Everything is just so big.

I asked the driver if we would be seeing "Curupuri." He thought that it was very funny that I used that word and he didn't tell me anything. Everybody back home knows the dinosaurs are called Curupuri and that is what the Indians call them. This guy had never even heard of the name. If the Indians don't call them Curupuri, who does? Where did we get that name for them? It is hard to know how much of this is publicity and how much is real. Anyway now the driver thinks that I am some sort of a jerk. Honestly, Curupuri is supposed to be the Indian name for the dinosaurs. I don't think the drivers think very much of the tourists.

[to be continued next week]

[-mrl]

BLADE RUNNER, Transliteration, Herodotus, and the Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society (letter of comment by John Hertz):

In response to [Mark's comments on BLADE RUNNER](#) in the 06/10/22 issue of the MT VOID, John Hertz writes:

In MT VOID 2227, Vol. 40, no. 50, 10 Jun 22, I concur in Mark's note on BLADE RUNNER (R. Scott dir., U.S. theatrical version 1982), "Scott ... seems to revel in unpleasant images."

In response to [Evelyn's comments on Herodotus](#) in the 06/17/22 issue, John writes:

In MT VOID 2228, Vol. 40, no. 51, 17 Jun 22, Evelyn may not be quite fair to Herodotus. He was of the school holding that, as Montaigne put it (ESSAYS Bl. 3 ch. 8 [1595]; J. M. Cohen tr. 1958; Penguin ed'n 1993 p. 310), "all good historians ... among matters of public interest [let] popular opinions and rumors have their place." Montaigne quotes Quintus Curtius IX:1, "Truly I write down more than I believe, for I can never affirm what I doubt, nor suppress what I have heard", and Livy I, preface, & VIII:vi, "It is not worth while either affirming or refuting these things. One must stick to the report." We now are not thus satisfied.

In response to [Evelyn's comments on transliteration](#) in the 07/01/22 issue, John writes:

Transliteration [MT VOID 2230, Vol. 41, no. 1, 1 Jul 22] is, in the old saying, an art, science, or mystery--even though "mystery" didn't mean then what it does today. A woman I used to know said, "A good transliteration is perfectly clear, and allows the reader to pronounce the transliterated expression without error or difficulty, if the reader already knows the language being transliterated."

And in a meta-comment, John writes:

Although that [07/01/22] issue of the MT VOID says, "we have dropped the 'Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society' from our header", the copy I received still shows it. I am reliably informed MT VOID 2231, Vol. 41, No. 2, 8 Jul 22 has it too--not that I mind. [-jh]

Evelyn responds:

I had dropped the 'Mt. Holz Science Fiction Society' in the template of the text version, but forgot to do so in the HTML (and hence PDF) versions until MT VOID 2233 (the 22 Jul 22 issue). [-ecl]

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

I caught up on the "No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency" series by Alexander McCall Smith with TO THE LAND OF LONG LOST

FRIENDS (Anchor, ISBN 978-0-525-56427-0) and HOW TO RAISE AN ELEPHANT (Anchor, ISBN 978-0-593-31095-3). McCall Smith is trying to be more in tune with present trends, but seems mildly uncomfortable with this. For example, in a discussion of men having many girlfriends, there is mention of men who don't like "ladies". (McCall Smith often has his characters speak of "ladies" rather than "women"--not surprising, given the name of the agency, I suppose.) Mma Makutsi thinks this is unfair of them because this means some women won't find men. The idea that some "ladies" don't like men apparently doesn't occur to her, and none of these men ever seem to be a character in one of the books. (In Botswana, homosexuality and homosexual acts are legal, as is gender-affirming treatment, and discrimination on the basis of either is prohibited.

(However, gay marriage and adoptions by gay partners are not recognized.)

There is perhaps less detection in these books than earlier ones, and more personal problems. There are also long passages about rain, and cattle, and whether men should cook, and how various interpersonal relationships should be handled. On the whole these repeat similar passages from earlier in the series, but this one spoken by a math teacher was new, and really resonated with Mark's experience:

"I like it when I get through to some of the kids. Maybe a child who has not been doing well ..., and then you show them that they can actually do mathematics rather well, and then you see their face light up and you know that you've gotten through to them That is a very special moment. ... I had a boy, fourteen, maybe fifteen; he was not doing very well in my mathematics class, an so I gave him some extra time in the afternoon. [description of how his problem was a father who kept telling him he was stupid, and how the teacher countered that] He started to do very well, ..Mma. He has gone off now to do a degree in mathematics. He wants to be an actuary."

(And speaking of current attitudes, "wokeness", and all that stuff, did you even notice that McCall Smith used the plural pronouns "they", "them", and "their" for a single individual?)

[-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

There's a fine line between a numerator and a denominator.
Only a fraction of people will find this funny.
--unknown

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