

MT VOID 10/13/23 -- Vol. 42, No. 15, Whole Number 2297



10/13/23 -- Vol. 42, No. 15, Whole Number 2297

Table of Contents

- [Mini Reviews, Part 7](#) (film reviews by Mark R. Leeper and Evelyn C. Leeper)
- [AI Dangers, Lester Del Rey, Pythagorean Theorem](#)
- [This Week's Reading](#) (ONLY TO SLEEP) (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper)
- [Quote of the Week](#)

Co-Editor: Mark Leeper, mleeper@optonline.net
 Co-Editor: Evelyn Leeper, eleeper@optonline.net
 Sending Address: evelynchimisleeper@gmail.com
 All material is copyrighted by author unless otherwise noted.
 All comments sent or posted will be assumed authorized for inclusion unless otherwise noted.

To subscribe or unsubscribe, send mail to eleeper@optonline.net
 The latest issue is at <http://www.leepers.us/mtvoid/latest.htm>.
 An index with links to the issues of the MT VOID since 1986 is at http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back_issues.htm.

Mini Reviews, Part 7 (film reviews by Mark R. Leeper and Evelyn C. Leeper):

This is the seventh batch of mini-reviews for this season, two action films.

MAFIA MAMMA (2023): We watched MAFIA MAMMA primarily because Toni Colette is the lead actress, and we think she is great as a comedy actress. And this film doesn't disappoint in that regard. Colette plays a woman in a boring job who suddenly inherits a Mafia empire (and a vineyard) from a grandfather she never met. Some elements of the film may remind one of TUCKER & DALE VS. EVIL, but with a twist. [-ecl]

Released theatrically 14 April 2023. Rating: +2 (-4 to +4), or 7/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13923456/reference>

What others are saying: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/mafia_mamma

WHO KILLED CAPTAIN ALEX? (2010): WHO KILLED CAPTAIN ALEX? was recommended as a "hidden cinematic gem" by Australian podcaster Terry Frost ("Terry Talks Movies"). Is it a gem? I don't know, but it is certainly ... Different. It is a Ugandan action film shot on a production budget of (*checks Wikipedia*) US\$85. No, there are no missing zeroes. Nabwana I.G.G. wrote, produced, directed, shot, and edited this film on a computer and camera equipment assembled from old parts. Actors supplied their

own costumes. Nabwana never expected anyone outside of Uganda to see the movie and shot it in the Luganda language.

So far, it has sold 10,000 DVDs in Uganda, and been uploaded to YouTube and "Wakaliwood"'s YouTube channel, where it has gotten almost 13 million views. We saw it on Tubi, so total views is more than that.

The biggest problem is that the original got wiped from Nabwana's computer when he needed it for his next film, and all that survived was a poor DVD copy. The versions available on-line all have English subtitles and "VJ" ("Video Joker") Emmie provided comedic narration (sometimes making up new dialogue) and commentary. There is a Bluray release that makes this commentary optional, and also provides subtitles in eleven languages.

And the film itself? There is a certain "Ed Wood" vibe to it all, production-wise, though the script and much of the acting is better than those of Wood's films. (Some of the special effects reminded me of those in the Timothy Hines film THE WAR OF THE WORLDS (2005).)

None of this really justifies the 7.9/10 WHO KILLED CAPTAIN ALEX? gets in the IMDB (the same rating as SPARTACUS (!)). However, as an example of what one can do with no money but a lot of enthusiasm, there is something to be said for this. I would love to have seen it sans VJ, but I couldn't really justify buying the Bluray. [-ecl]

Released streaming 1 March 2015. Rating: +1 (-4 to +4), or 6/10.

Film Credits: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1813757/reference>

What others are saying: https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/who_killed_captain_alex

AI Dangers, Lester Del Rey, Pythagorean Theorem:

"How a chatbot encouraged a man who wanted to kill the Queen"

<https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-67012224>

"Amazon's Alexa has been claiming the 2020 election was stolen"

<https://wapo.st/48DsM13> [no paywall]

"The Man Who Invented Fantasy: All those wizards, ogres, and barely-clad elf queens in the bookstore? You have Lester del Rey to thank."

<https://slate.com/culture/2023/10/lester-del-rey-invention-fantasy-book-publishing.html>

"Pythagorean Theorem Found On Clay Tablet 1,000 Years Older Than Pythagoras"

<https://www.iflscience.com/pythagorean-theorem-found-on-clay-tablet-1000-years-older-than-pythagoras-70934>

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

Last week I commented on THE ANNOTATED BIG SLEEP and Raymond Chandler, so it's only fair to continue with another Philip Marlowe novel, albeit not by Raymond Chandler.

ONLY TO SLEEP by Lawrence Osborne (Hogarth, ISBN 978-1-5247-5961-2) is an authorized Philip Marlowe novel, the third to be written by an author than Raymond Chandler (in English--Hiber Conteris wrote EL DIEZ POR CIENTO DE VIA, which was later translated into English by Deborah Bergmann as TEN PERCENT OF LIFE). There was also a volume of short stories for Chandler's centennial. And I count POODLE SPRINGS as a Chandler novel, though it was finished by Robert B. Parker.

Alas, Lawrence Osborne is no Raymond Chandler.

Chandler is known for his similes and metaphors. Osborne's fall flat; "It was a movement as leisurely as that of a conga line at the end of a party" cannot compete with "the great fat solid Pacific trudging into shore like a scrubwoman going home..." Chandler is known

for his gritty Los Angeles setting (as well as Bay City). Osborne sets his novel in a series of small towns in Mexico. Chandler's Philip Marlowe is between 23 and 36 years old. Osborne's is 72. The one thing Osborne seemed to carry over was that Marlowe discovers a body.

ONLY TO SLEEP is okay as a mystery novel, I suppose, but it is not a Philip Marlowe novel.

(Oddly, most of the reviews I've read like the prose, but think the plot is weak.) [-ecl]

Quote of the Week:

Roses are red, violets are blue, I'm schizophrenic,
and so am I.

--Oscar Levant

Go to [our home page](#) THE MT VOID