

# MT VOID 10/27/23 -- Vol. 42, No. 17, Whole Number 2299



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## Table of Contents

[Middletown \(NJ\) Science Fiction Discussion Groups \(NJ\)](#)

[Mark's Picks for Turner Classic Movies for October](#)

by Mark R. Leeper and Evelyn C. Leeper)

[THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU by Silvia Moreno-Garcia](#)

(audio book review by Joe Karpierz)

[The Holmdel Horn, 42, Cryptocurrency, Math and LLMs](#)

[Hugo Award Winners](#)

[Anything I Touch Is Mine Forever](#) (comments by Evelyn C. Leeper)

[This Week's Reading](#) (RAYMOND CHANDLER SPEAKING, THE BEST OF S. J. PERELMAN) (book comments by Evelyn C. Leeper)

[Quote of the Week](#)

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An index with links to the issues of the MT VOID since 1986 is at [http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back\\_issues.htm](http://leepers.us/mtvoid/back_issues.htm).

## Middletown (NJ) Science Fiction Discussion Groups (NJ):

The only local meetings left are in Middletown, and they are in-person. The best way to get the latest information is to be on the mailing list for it.

Nov 2, 2023: THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS (1981 TV mini-series) & novel by John Wyndham

[Note: The Nov 2 meeting will start earlier: 5:00pm.]

<https://tinyurl.com/Triffs-Wyndham>

Dec 7 SLEEPER (1973) & novel "The Sleeper Awakes" by H.G. Wells

<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/12163>

## Mark's Picks for Turner Classic Movies for October by Mark R. Leeper and Evelyn C. Leeper):

There are quite a number of films that catch me unaware of what a strong impact on me they will have by the last scene. OF MICE AND MEN is the story of two field workers who travel the dusty Depression-era roads and why they stay together. You would have to look a long way to find such a powerful statement of humanism in so compact a form. John Steinbeck is one of the greatest American writers and this is one of his very best. Several film versions have been made of this classic. The 1939 film version, which Turner Classic Movies is showing in November, stars Burgess Meredith and Lon Chaney, Jr.; the 1992 version stars Gary Sinise and John Malkovich. The latter is available on several streaming services, including Hoopla and Kanopy, which may be offered free through your public library. There are also two made-for-television versions, one from 1968 (George Segal and Nicol Williamson) and one from 1981 (Robert Blake and Randy Quaid) that don't show up at all these days, though they are sometimes available on eBay. And there are several versions made in other countries as well. [-mrl]

[OF MICE AND MEN (1939), Monday, November 27, 4:30 PM]

And some comments on some other films:

THE HEART IS A LONELY HUNTER (1968); WAIT UNTIL DARK (1967); THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING, THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING (1966) ; POPI (1969); THE IN-LAWS (1979): For all you Alan Arkin fans, TCM is celebrating his career on November 6 into November 7.

HAIRSPRAY (1988), POLYESTER (1981), CRY BABY (1990): A John Waters festival on November 9, followed by ...

THE LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (1960), A BUCKET OF BLOOD (1959), CREATURE FROM THE HAUNTED SEA (1961): ...a Roger Corman festival early November 10.

A KID FOR TWO FARTHINGS (1956): A film based in a Jewish neighborhood about a goat with one horn that a young child believes to be a magical unicorn.

Suspense and mystery films from the 1920s through 1940s: Nine films from that classic era (see below) on November 15.

Ghost stories from the 1930s through 1950s: Nine ghost stories from that era (see below) on November 24.

IL BIDONE (1955): A little-seen Fellini film.

Ten Tarzan films: Swing with Turner and Johnny Weissmuller on November 28.

[-ecl]

Other films of interest include:

WEDNESDAY, November 1:

6:15 AM Eye of the Devil (1966)

FRIDAY, November 3

10:00 AM Forbidden Planet (1956)

8:00 PM Duck Soup (1933)

9:15 PM The Fearless Vampire Killers; or, Pardon Me But Your  
Teeth Are in My Neck (1966)

SUNDAY, November 5

6:00 AM From the Earth to the Moon (1958)

8:00 AM Things to Come (1936)

MONDAY, November 6

8:00 PM The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter (1968)

10:15 PM Wait Until Dark (1967)

TUESDAY, November 7

12:15 AM The Russians Are Coming, the Russians Are Coming (1966)

2:30 AM Popi (1969)

4:30 AM The In-Laws (1979)

WEDNESDAY, November 8

9:15 AM Attack of the 50 Foot Woman (1958)

11:00 AM Trog (1970)

12:45 PM Indestructible Man (1956)

2:00 PM The Power (1968)  
 4:00 PM The Illustrated Man (1969)  
 6:00 PM The Terminal Man (1974)

THURSDAY, November 9  
 6:15 AM The Plague of the Zombies (1966)  
 10:15 AM Hold That Hypnotist (1957)  
 12:45 PM The Disembodied (1957)  
 2:00 PM The Devil's Own (1966)  
 3:45 PM Bewitched (1945)  
 6:30 PM I Married a Witch (1942)  
 8:00 PM Hairspray (1988)  
 10:00 PM Cry Baby (1990)  
 11:45 PM Polyester (1981)

FRIDAY, November 10  
 1:30 AM The Little Shop of Horrors (1960)  
 3:00 AM A Bucket of Blood (1959)  
 4:15 AM Creature From the Haunted Sea (1961)

SATURDAY, November 11  
 2:00 AM Night on Earth (1991)

SUNDAY, November 12  
 5:45 PM Being There (1979)

MONDAY, November 13  
 3:15 AM A Kid for Two Farthings (1956)

WEDNESDAY, November 15  
 6:00 AM Before Dawn (1933)  
 7:15 AM The Unholy Night (1929)  
 9:00 AM The Monster (1925)  
 10:30 AM Seven Keys to Baldpate (1929)  
 12:00 PM The Phantom of Crestwood (1933)  
 1:30 PM You'll Find Out (1940)  
 3:15 PM The Hidden Hand (1942)  
 4:30 PM Seven Keys to Baldpate (1947)  
 5:45 PM Mystery House (1938)

THURSDAY, November 16  
 8:00 PM Creature from the Black Lagoon (1954)  
 9:40 PM The Blob (1958)  
 11:00 PM Gojira (1954)

FRIDAY, November 17  
 1:00 AM It Came from Beneath the Sea (1955)  
 2:30 AM The Wolf Man (1941)  
 4:00 AM King Kong (1933)

SATURDAY, November 18  
 6:00 AM Green Mansions (1959)  
 1:45 PM Westworld (1973)  
 6:30 PM The Invisible Man (1933)

SUNDAY, November 19  
 1:45 AM Dressed To Kill (1980)  
 4:00 AM Sisters (1972)  
 10:00 PM The World, the Flesh and the Devil (1959)

MONDAY, November 20  
 6:15 AM Queen of Outer Space (1958)

TUESDAY, November 21  
 6:15 PM Slither (1973)

WEDNESDAY, November 22  
 2:00 PM Around the World in 80 Days (1956)  
 12:00 AM Being There (1979)

THURSDAY, November 23

6:00 AM Jack and the Beanstalk (1952)  
 7:30 AM Tom Thumb (1958)  
 9:15 AM The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm (1962)  
 11:45 AM The Phantom Tollbooth (1970)  
 5:15 PM Chitty Chitty Bang Bang (1968)

## FRIDAY, November 24

6:00 AM Their Big Moment (1934)  
 7:15 AM Ghost Chasers (1951)  
 8:30 AM Gildersleeve's Ghost (1944)  
 9:45 AM The Canterville Ghost (1944)  
 11:30 AM A Guy Named Joe (1943)  
 1:45 PM On Borrowed Time (1939)  
 3:30 PM The Ghost Goes West (1935)  
 5:00 PM Outward Bound (1930)  
 6:30 PM Beyond Tomorrow (1940)  
 8:00 PM Wait Until Dark (1967)

## SATURDAY, November 25

2:00 AM Night of the Living Dead (1968)  
 4:00 AM House on Haunted Hill (1958)  
 2:30 PM Mighty Joe Young (1949)

## SUNDAY, November 26

1:45 PM The Glass Slipper (1955)  
 8:00 PM Friedkin Uncut (2018)  
 10:00 PM The Exorcist (1973)

## MONDAY, November 27

11:15 AM Il bidone (1955)  
 6:30 PM The Triumph of Sherlock Holmes (1935)

## TUESDAY, November 28

6:00 AM Tarzan Escapes (1936)  
 7:30 AM Tarzan Finds a Son! (1939)  
 9:15 AM Tarzan's Secret Treasure (1941)  
 10:45 AM Tarzan's New York Adventure (1942)  
 12:00 PM Tarzan Triumphs (1943)  
 1:30 PM Tarzan's Desert Mystery (1943)  
 2:45 PM Tarzan and the Amazons (1945)  
 4:15 PM Tarzan and the Leopard Woman (1946)  
 5:30 PM Tarzan and the Huntress (1947)  
 6:45 PM Tarzan and the Mermaids (1948)

## WEDNESDAY, November 29

8:00 PM For All Mankind (1989)  
 9:25 PM A Trip to the Moon (1902)  
 10:00 PM Marooned (1969)

## THURSDAY, November 30

12:15 AM Destination Moon (1950)  
 2:00 AM Solaris (1972)

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**THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU** by **Silvia Moreno-Garcia** (copyright 2022, Random House Audio, 11 hours and 39 minutes, ASIN: B09QXWTT5N, narrated by Gisela Chipe) (audio book review by Joe Karpierz):

While I know of Silvia Moreno-Garcia, up until **THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU** I have not read anything she has written. While I know of H.G. Wells' **THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR MOREAU**, I have neither read the novel nor seen any of the film adaptations of it. I think this last fact was an advantage for me as I read **THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU**. Too often a reader can be influenced by source material that was used as a basis for the novel that is being read. In fact, I've only read two of Wells' novels: **THE TIME MACHINE** and **THE WAR OF THE WORLDS**. That last fact is probably irrelevant here, but I note it because now I'm thinking that I might like to read more of his work, including **THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR MOREAU**.

The story begins in the early 1870s on the peninsula of Yucatan. Carlota lives with her scientist father, the titular Doctor Moreau, in the very idyllic setting of Yaxaktun. She loves it there. We first encounter Carlota as a young girl, who has an illness that requires weekly treatments by her father. The doctor is working for the Izalde family, trying to create workers for Hernando, the patriarch of the Izalde family, to exploit as slave labor. The work has resulted in a collection of hybrids, generally intelligent creatures that are a cross

between humans and animals. Carlota has befriended many of these hybrids, particularly Cachito and Lupe, who will become important characters as the story progresses. The other major character is the majordomo Montgomery Laughton, an on again off again drinker who spends much of his time not only being the caretaker of Yaxaktun but also watching out for the safety of Carlota.

Moreau is in some serious financial straits. His work with the hybrids is not producing the results that Hernando is looking for, and the funds are drying up. One day, Hernando's son Eduardo and Eduardo's cousin Isidro arrive at Yaxaktun, and Eduardo becomes smitten with Carlota. Montgomery does not like Eduardo, likely due to the first impression he made when he arrived at the compound. Montgomery makes life miserable for Carlota and Eduardo while he's visiting, thwarting the young couple's attempts to be alone without supervision. Eventually Eduardo leaves, but promises to return. He does just that, and things begin to escalate between Montgomery and Eduardo, who has had his proposal of marriage to Carlota accepted.

The other story taking place is that of the fate of the hybrids, who are being bred to be slaves but want to be free and out on their own. The question of ownership of the hybrids arises, with Hernando being adamant that they are his to do with as he pleases, and with Carlota and Montgomery trying to do what they can to keep the hybrids free. As the reader might guess, this leads to an inevitable conflict between Carlota and Hernando, and we eventually learn of Carlota's true nature.

THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU is a very complex novel. It is a love story, a romance, but the question is who is really in love with Carlota--Montgomery or Eduardo? But it's so much more than that. Moreau is a religious man, who holds a weekly service in Yaxaktun. Carlota knows the Bible well, and is often asked to recite passages that are relevant to the situation at hand. But at the same time, the question is whether his work with the hybrids creates a moral dilemma, for he is messing with God's work, Who really is the one true Creator. There is a racism here too, as Hernando casually throws around racist terms for groups of people that he would like to hire to do his work for him, but he thinks they are lazy and unreliable. There is also a conflict between the British and the natives of Yucatan (a conflict that was very real and occurred during the time of the novel) that comes to a violent head near the end of the novel. We also witness Carlota coming into her own as a woman, realizing that she can indeed make decisions for herself even though everyone and everything around her is trying to stop her from doing just that.

THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU is one of the best novels published in 2022 that I've read. It is complex and engaging, with deeply developed, conflicted characters. Unlike so many other novels that I read from 2022, I had no idea where this story was going and how it was going to get there. The conclusion was satisfying and complete. And like so many other novels that I've read by authors I've never read before, Silvia Moreno-Garcia is another one that I'd like to read more of. And oh yes, now I also want to read THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR MOREAU.

Based on her performance of THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU, my opinion is that Gisela Chipe is an outstanding narrator. Too many audio books can be made or broken by a narrator. It's likely that my opinion of THE DAUGHTER OF DOCTOR MOREAU was influenced by Chipe's narration--but that's fine. While I'm aware that Hugo finalists are present on the ballot based on the printed word and not an audio narration, it's clear to me that this book is the best of the Hugo finalists for Best Novel. [-jak]

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### **The Holmdel Horn, 42, Cryptocurrency, Math and LLMs:**

For all those following the status of the Holmdel Horn: On Thursday, October 12th, the Holmdel Township Committee announced its decision to purchase a 35-acre portion of Crawford Hill that contains the Horn Antenna with the intention of preserving it as a public park.

"42 really is the answer to these 5 fundamental questions":

<https://bigthink.com/starts-with-a-bang/42-answer-fundamental-questions/>

Cory Doctorow's column on why cryptocurrency is moneylike:

<https://locusmag.com/2022/09/cory-doctorow-moneylike/>

Math is hard--for LLMs:

<https://garymarcus.substack.com/p/math-is-hard-if-you-are-an-llm-and>

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### **Hugo Award Winners:**

Best Novel: NETTLE & BONE, by T. Kingfisher (Tor Books)  
 Best Novella: "Where the Drowned Girls Go", by Seanan McGuire (Tordotcom)  
 Best Novelette: "The Space-Time Painter", by Hai Ya (Galaxy's Edge, April 2022)  
 Best Short Story: "Rabbit Test", by Samantha Mills (Uncanny Magazine, November-December 2022)  
 Best Series: Children of Time Series, by Adrian Tchaikovsky (Pan Macmillan/Orbit)  
 Best Graphic Story or Comic: CYBERPUNK 2077: BIG CITY DREAMS, by Bartosz Szttybor, Filipe Andrade, Alessio Fioriniello, Roman Titov, Krzysztof Ostrowski (Dark Horse Books)  
 Best Related Work: TERRY PRATCHETT: A LIFE WITH FOOTNOTES, by Rob Wilkins (Doubleday)  
 Best Dramatic Presentation, Long Form: EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE (IAC Films / Gozie AGBO)  
 Best Dramatic Presentation, Short Form: The Expanse: "Babylon's Ashes" (Alcon Entertainment)  
 Best Editor, Short Form: Neil Clarke  
 Best Editor, Long Form: Lindsey Hall  
 Best Professional Artist: Enzhe Zhao  
 Best Semiprozine: Uncanny Magazine  
 Best Fanzine: Zero Gravity Newspaper, by RiverFlow and Ling Shizhen  
 Best Fancast: Hugo, Girl!, by Haley Zapal, Amy Salley, Lori Anderson, and Kevin Anderson  
 Best Fan Writer: Chris M. Barkley  
 Best Fan Artist: Richard Man  
 Lodestar Award for Best Young Adult Book (not a Hugo): AKATA WOMAN (THE NSIBIDI SCRIPTS), by Nnedi Okorafor (Viking Books for Young Readers)  
 Astounding Award for Best New Writer (not a Hugo) (presented by Dell Magazines): Travis Baldree (1st year of eligibility)

### **Anything I Touch Is Mine Forever** (comments by Evelyn C. Leeper):

I just watched a BBC documentary about Van Eyck's painting "The Annunciation". Van Eyck was Belgian, but the painting was sold to the King of the Netherlands and eventually to the Tsar of Russia. After the Revolution, Stalin needed cash so he sold it to Andrew Mellon. The BBC interviewed a current official in the Hermitage, who decried the sale, saying they never should have sold off the cultural heritage of the nation. Let's see, painted by a Belgian, owned by the Dutch, and then by Imperial Russia, and sold by the USSR. Just which nation was this the cultural heritage of?

This explains a lot about the Russia-Ukraine War. [-ecl]

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

RAYMOND CHANDLER SPEAKING by Raymond Chandler (edited by Dorothy Gardiner and Katherine Sorley Walker) (Books for Libraries Press, ISBN 0-8369-5622-2) is a collection of some of Chandler's letters (and a few articles) on various topics, including the mystery novel, writing, the film world, publishing, cats, famous crimes, his own writing, and himself. Not everything he says is accurate (in 1949 he said that science fiction was a flash in the pan), but it is all worth reading--well, except maybe for the cat chapter.

A lot of the letters are only a paragraph or so. You do find out that a lot of the novels had several title changes before Chandler and his publishers settled on the final title. (In the case of THE HIGH WINDOW, in the United States the film reverted to an earlier working title of THE BRASHER DOUBLOON, though it stayed as THE HIGH WINDOW in the UK.) As I noted a few weeks ago, it is very convenient that the Raymond Chandler "Philip Marlowe" novels were published in alphabetical order, but this was clearly accidental.

Some of the key essays are the eight-page "Casual Notes on the Mystery Novel" and the eight-page "Writers in Hollywood", and one of the key letters is a five-page description of Philip Marlowe--his background and his personality (the sort of thing that for a television series would be in the "Bible").

Every once in a while, things break for me instead of against me. A typical sequence is that I keep something for fifty years without ever using it, decide to get rid of it (and do so), and a month later discover I want it for some reason. One example would be the ancient-Greek-themed necklace I had since high school and discarded right before we decided to go on a trip to Greece and I could

have worn it. This time, though, we had a copy of THE BEST OF S. J. PERELMAN (Modern Library, no ISBN) for decades, but pulled in in the latest book purge and took it to the used book store last month. But the store turned it down and while it was sitting in the garage, And then I ran across a reference in RAYMOND CHANDLER SPEAKING to a parody of a Raymond Chandler story which was included in it. Bingo!

[-ecl]

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Quote of the Week:

When you are courting a nice girl an hour seems like  
a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder a second  
seems like an hour. That's relativity.  
--Albert Einstein

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