



**THE
IRON
GIANT**

DRINK TANK

Troubled Waters by Taral Wayne

Sailor, my last remaining cat, gave me a lot of grief last night. She peed on the bed. Nor was it the first time – it's a foul surprise she's given me a few times before, but fortunately at intervals months apart.

The first time Sailor peed my bed was simply a shock. I had come back from a trip to find a standing puddle of reeking urine in the middle of my bed. Since I had been away a number of days for the Reno Worldcon, I'd left Sailor in the care of Miriam, a lady down the hall. Although Miriam plainly hadn't neglected her charge, Sailor may have been distressed by my absence.



As they say, forewarned is forearmed. My previous cat, Amber, was in the habit of showing her distress by inappropriate wetting, so before leaving for Reno I prepared for the possibility by placing a sheet of plastic cut under the bedcover. As a result, only the lightweight cover had to be

washed. So I wrote the incident off.

The second time Sailor peed my the bed disturbed me more, however – because there was no reason for it. I worried that Sailor had become senile at last, and there would be no alternative but to have her put under. She had

also been overshooting her litter box, forcing me to mop the floor about every other day. I grieved over her prematurely, though. There was no repeat of the bed incident. And thinking rather than grieving worked out a solution to the problem with the box.

Hitching a ride from a friend, I bought an enormous plastic storage box from Wal-Mart. It was about 22 inches long and 18 wide, and should give all the room even an arthritic cat needed to enter and turn around. Indeed, it

seemed to help – though Sailor still overshot, it was not nearly as often, and a stiff plastic tray under the front of the box caught her urine whenever her business end still wasn't inboard. Whenever Sailor misses, I lift the tray and empty the piss into the toilet, then rinse it off under

hot water.

So things were shipshape for another long while. Then Sailor both pissed and pooped on the bed. I stripped the bed down and laundered the sheets over the next couple of days. The mattress was protected by its rubberized cover, thank goodness, and only needed washing with soapy rags, rinsing, then given time to dry.

But then Sailor did it again, this time at an even shorter interval between acts of incontinence. I had the fire drill down pat – remove the sheets and launder immediately, wash the protective mattress with soapy water, dry it with hair dryer. It wasn't fun, but by having a routine at least it was quickly done.

Then, just before I went to bed that night, I discovered she had gone again, this time in a new spot! Twice in one day was an ominous first.

There were no sheets to wash this time – they were still drying from their soaking that morning. I washed the mattress cover again with soapy water again and played the hair dryer over it until it seemed dry ... only, whenever I pressed down on the dry surface, it became damp again ... as though something underneath was soaking through. This wasn't supposed to happen. The cover was rubberized inside, remember?

On a hunch, I unzipped the cover and peeled it back, only to discover that the rubber had begun to decay and laid the middle of my mattress wide open to a soaking. The mattress was disfigured with a huge, yellow, wet stain that my finger came away wet from!

Shit! Well... cat piss, anyway. This was exactly the disaster I had felt protected from.

I spent the next three hours washing the

hideous yellow spot from the mattress and then drying it. I never succeeded in completely eradicating the moisture, or the smell – especially the smell – but I was exhausted by that time, and had to get some sleep. Ironically, I threw one of Sailor's old blankets over the damp spot before bedding down.

Next morning, the smell of cat pee still lingered faintly in the air, so I stripped back the cover again, and allowed the mattress to air out all that day. As if all that weren't enough motivation to strangle the cat, the first thing I discovered when I got up was that she had peed again during the night – this time on the office chair at my computer! Fortunately, I pamper my butt with a cheap pillow, that had absorbed most of the pee. It wasn't too hard to wash it in the sink. A small spot on the chair itself I tackled with soapy water and a rag, and the results were at least livable.

Alas, even after the passing of a second night, I can't say the same for the bed. Despite spraying the spot repeatedly – emptying the better part of an aerosol can of Lysol onto it – it still stinks. I can only hope the lingering odour fades with time. Fresh sheets will probably help mask the stink, too.

The strange thing is that Sailor seems healthy, active, alert, happy and not distressed in any way, so I can only chalk it up to age and a weak bladder. She is in her 17th year, after all, and that's pretty old for a cat. Still, I can't spend hours every day cleaning my bed and furnishings – I'm getting rather old myself, and tire easily! And so, for the next 24 hours, I kept my bedroom door closed and Sailor under observation to see if she'd gotten over her sudden bout

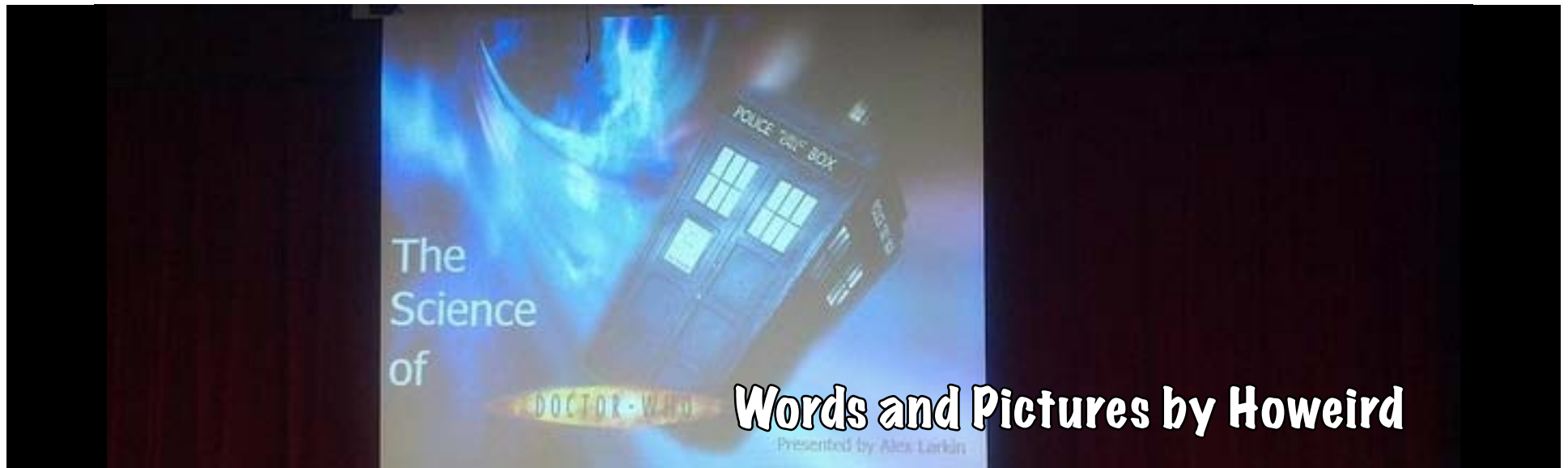
of the "floods." If she had not... I realized there might be no happy ending to this story.

The 24 hours have passed uneventfully, and the situation with Sailor seems, for the time being, stable. I found a piece of board that's she's too old to jump over to put across the door. This turned out to be a better solution than keeping the door closed – airing the room out will bring the day closer when every breath won't remind me why we flush toilets. That two-foot high board wouldn't have stopped Sailor for a moment when she was younger, of course. I shouldn't have any trouble stepping over it myself, either ... Except that I'm older too. *Sigh* At least the board is easy to move.

In the meantime, Sailor hasn't wet anything else. Maybe she just had a Bad Fur Day. So, if there can be no happy ending in the long run, with luck there's still a chapter or two left to her story.

Or, as Mehitabel the Cat might say, maybe "there's a dance in the old dame yet."





“Everyone should have a white paper strip with a sticky end”, said the tall, lanky young man in front of the room. His face was multi-colored – he was standing between the projector and the screen.

“Take the sticky end and make a loop. Now draw a line along the outside of the loop. I see we need more pens.”

The young man is Matthew Rowley, a Stanford Graduate Student in Particle Physics at SLAC and he is half of the duo who are explaining some of The Science of Doctor Who to more than 100 students, parents and teachers in the performing arts center of Christa McAuliffe school in Saratoga. The presentation was given October 15, and was sponsored by The McAuliffe Upper Grade Committee and the SLAC (Stanford Linear Accelerator) Association for Student Seminars.

“You can see that the line stays on the outside of the loop, it never crosses the plane. Now take the loop apart, give the paper a half twist, and re-attach it. That’s a Möbius strip.” Everyone tried drawing a line again, but this time it covered both sides of the paper, crossing the plane.

This, Matthew explained, is one way a wormhole might be created, with a twist in space. He had a couple of slides to show what a wormhole might look like, one which went from a lab in Germany to a beach in Southern France.

Next, he called up a volunteer from the audience. Only a hundred hands went up. The lucky girl who was chosen was given a pair of scissors, and asked to cut the Möbius strip in half lengthwise. Now it had two twists. What would the pen do this time? Well, it stayed on the same side of the paper again.

Earlier in the presentation, Alex Larkin had shown a few slides of a chameleon and how the TARDIS might use refraction to camouflage itself. In early Doctor Who episodes, she noted, the TARDIS had a working chameleon circuit, and could be made to look like almost anything: A rock, even a whale. Several kids shouted out that the circuit had become stuck on a 1960’s London police box. There’s a whole new generation of Whovians out there!

Alex is a Research Associate at the Stanford Medical Center, the other half of the duo and the main presenter for the evening. To demonstrate the refraction technique, she had two glasses filled with liquid, and two glass rods (stirrers?). When she placed the first rod in the first glass, and passed it around the room, we could see that rod looked bent where it went into the liquid. When she placed the second rod in the



second glass, it disappeared at the top of the liquid, it could not be seen at all inside the glass. She explained (with some simple math and slides) that the liquid in the second glass was at the same refraction level as the rod. Oooh, aaah.

One slide which Alex showed started the whole room talking. On it were some of the alien life forms from Doctor Who: some of the Adipose, a pair of Slitheen, a Silurian, a Dalek and a group of Cybermen. Was there also an Angel? I don't remember, I must have blinked. Most of the students in the room knew most of the monsters, and when Alex asked, they could even tell a bit about them.

The slide for the topic of regeneration was a clever "visible man" drawing with two hearts. Alex said she thinks the hearts would have to beat "in tandem". One of the first questions from the audience was "what's 'tandem?'". Her answer was not very clear – I'd have mentioned a tandem bicycle, I've seen a few around Saratoga – but she eventually got her point across that hearts not beating together might be fighting each other. Regeneration was a hot topic for the audience. One young woman said she thought regeneration was voluntary, and pointed out that The Master had chosen to not regenerate. Another young woman countered that deciding to regenerate is like deciding to continue breathing – implying The Master committed suicide. There was a lot of back and forth about how many regenerations were possible. Alex claimed that the number possible now stands at 11, and we're currently on the 11th Doctor. "But the scriptwriters are being very flexible about this" she said.

This didn't jive with what I thought I knew from the pre-Wales series, so I looked it up on Wikipedia:

It is first stated in *The Deadly Assassin* (1976) that a Time Lord can regenerate twelve times before dying (thirteen incarnations in all).

But:

The BBC's Series 4 FAQ suggests that now the Time Lord social order has been destroyed, the Doctor may be able to circumvent the limit on regenerations; it says: "Now that his people are gone, who knows? Time Lords used to have 13 lives." In *Death of the Doctor* (a 2010 *The Sarah Jane Adventures* serial), the Eleventh Doctor responds to a ques-



tion from Clyde Langer by saying he can regenerate “507” times.

So I guess all bets are off. No wonder there was so much controversy at the presentation. One slide I would have liked to have seen in this section was one showing the 11 Doctors.

Another topic the duo tackled was the one about how the TARDIS is bigger on the inside than on the outside. Matthew pointed out that we live in four, not three, dimensions. Time is the 4th. I don’t think most of the children quite grocked it. It might have been easier for them if he had just said the same word five times, and asked what the difference was between the words. He’s standing in the same place, but each word was said in a different time.

And for us creatures living in 4 dimensions, he said, it’s hard to see the 5th. Or maybe he was also proposing that some of the TARDIS insides existed in different times? I’m not sure.

The Q&A period was illustrated by a clever hack of that famous Japanese print of a tidal wave, with a TARDIS in its grasp. “Great



Wave off the Coast of Kanagawa, by Hokusai”, according to my sources.

The questions were fast and furious, and I was amazed at the breadth and depth of Doctor Who knowledge these grade school and middle school kids possessed. Some of them were completely off the wall, but Alex fielded every one of them as a legitimate question, and sometimes surprised me by showing how my “off the wall” was actually a distinct possibility.

Many parents and students stayed after to come up front and talk with Alex and Mat-

thew while others helped stack the 50+ chairs which had been brought in to accommodate a surge of last minute arrivals.

As I left the building, I noticed that the first door I had passed was labeled “McAuliffe Science Lab”, and thought what a fitting tribute to her this evening had been. §

§The first and last Teacher In Space, killed when the shuttle Challenger blew up a few seconds after launch in 1986.

The Lazarus Machine and A Red Sun Also Rises reviewed by Diane Osborne

Two books full of thrills and chills to delight fans. Two very different works of art. Both are well written, present well thought out characters, good plot development, incredible imagination, etc. Both elicit very different responses from this reader.

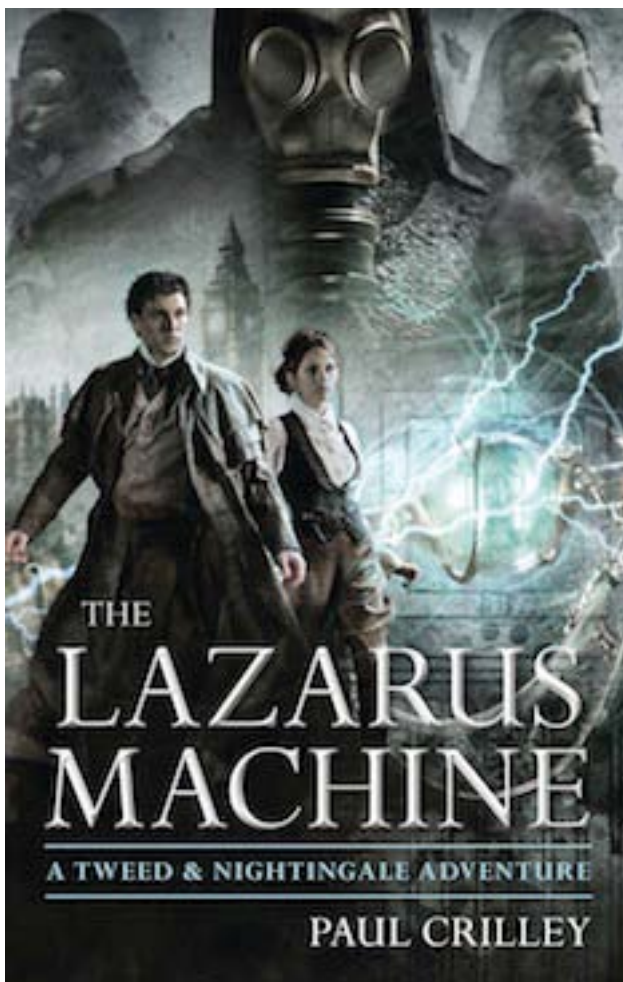
Mark Hoder's *A Red Sun Also Rises* is touted as a tale of good and evil where nothing is what it seems. Interesting story line, Aiden, the bookish priest without faith, befriends Clarissa, a crippled but erudite hunchback, and together they end up on a journey where they learn Many Important Things About Themselves. Whether by intent or by accident, the writing is reminiscent of the thankfully out-dated moral tales. It achieves that kind of effect, making me want to toss the book aside and read anything else. Being stubborn, I slogged through the sometimes stilted prose over the three few days and enjoyed the sheer depth of the story.

Hoder shows a definite ability to craft a good story. I hope to see more books by this author, but not because I enjoyed this one. I wanted to enjoy *A Red Sun Also Rises* more, the story wanted to be more enjoyable, the author wanted to make it enthralling and enjoyable. If this were a meal, I would say it needs a better recipe or cook. Might be improved by having someone run through the storyline and figure out what effect they are going for. On the TMJ scale, I rate this a -2. Too much work to chew through it all to get to the gist of the tale.

Paul Crilley's *The Lazarus Machine* is an extremely well crafted story - effortlessly, joyously, giddily enjoyable. This is the first of the

Tweed & Nightingale Adventures. I want more. I want more NOW. REALLY. RIGHT NOW!!! Pretty please?

To put this in perspective, while I am an insatiable reader, I have felt little urge to devour any and everything in the Steampunk genre. Like any genre, there are great books, good books, ho-hum ones and truly horrid ones. Simply hadn't felt it worth becoming familiar enough



with the genre to learn which authors are worth their weight in Babbage machinery.

Crilley changed that. In Paul Crilley's hands, the standard tropes of Steampunk - alternate past, alternate steam engine era technology, lots of leather and gadgets, etc. - are part of an exquisite backdrop for a very interesting mystery. Crilley's skill with the pen brings this to life in 360 degrees of incredible, almost holographic imagery. Tweed and Olivia, Jenny and Carter, Barnaby and myriad of supporting players are unbelievably well crafted. I could see Crilley lifting any one of the bit players out of the cast and spinning an entirely separate series based on that person's back story, i.e. Torchwood to Dr. Who.

After reading Paul Crilley's *Lazarus Machine*, I am itching to immerse myself in the world of Steampunk. Bring on the brown leather and mechanical parts - adventures await!

On the TMJ scale, *The Lazarus Machine* rates a 7+, dimples aching from smiles and the joy of a spine-tingling adventure.

On the Gourmand's Scale of Comparative Literature, *The Lazarus Machine* was a dinner of prime Kobe beef, accompanied by farm fresh baby fingerling potatoes and vegetables, a smooth yet subtle creme brulee and glass of fine wine [or milk, if you drink the strong stuff like me]. Thank you, Crilley, for cleansing my palate of Hoder's tasty but heavy to digest meatloaf, *A Red Sun Also Rises*. Both books show attention to ingredients and a skill honed over time with great care, albeit with distinct results.

Shh, It's a Secret by Dan Kimmel - Reviewed by Chris Garcia

I like movies. This is probably obvious. I also enjoy science fiction. That is probably even more obvious. I have a fondness for books, which may be obvious by the number of them that are currently crowding my home. So, a science fiction book about movies would be right up my alley, no?

Yes... yes it would be.

Shh, It's a Secret by Dan Kimmel is his first novel. It's also a damn fun read.

I should have started by saying that technically, the book is called "Shh, It's a Secret: a novel about Aliens, Hollywood & The Bartender's Guide." That title alone seems to sing my name. I love Aliens! I love Hollywood! I've worked my way through the Bartender's Guide (1980s edition), so what's not for me to love?

The story is a relatively simple one: aliens arrive at Earth, and make themselves beloved with an appearance at the United Nations. a medium-sized Hollywood studio, always looking for ways to cash in, decides that what America needs is a movie starring one of the Brogardis aliens, Abi Gezunt. Jake Berman, a studio pressman, is charged with keeping it under wraps until the debut. This leads to a lot of fun and frolic, from Berman bringing his blue-skinned work home with him, to all forms of alien relations, to a strange alien obsession with The Bartender's Guide. I

What is so great about this story is that it is so very science fiction, but at the same time, the film geek within me absolutely loved it. This

is a story of the excesses of the Hollywood mindset, of the lengths they'll go to get the story, to corner the market, and how it effects the real people who are involved in making it happen. The power of Dan's story isn't that these far-out aliens are here on our groovy blue-green planet, but that they're so much like us, while living lives that are so far removed from ours. It's a classic study in cultural misunderstandings, reshaping the logic of situations based on new, foreign information, and ultimately, it's about how all people, aliens and humans, are based on a set of assumptions that are not necessarily based on the reality of any other person or thing. It is a story about understanding, or lack thereof.

And, a huge plus, it's exceptionally funny! Dan's a funny, funny guy, and here he's at his full-power. The prose maintains a kind of Catkills humor, which ties in nicely with the fact that's where the aliens first land! The writing is humorous, but the characters are realistic. Too often, comedy writers will go over the top, turning every character into an Adam Sandler, but Kimmel knows exactly how to play it, and it works so brilliantly.

My only critique is it wraps up a little fast, as we're careening around turns and twists, and then we hit the end of the line with a bit of a jarring stop. That's only a minor consideration, because everything else is pretty damned spectacular and I wasn't able to put it down. It's a great read and one that is ultimately rewarding!

So, get to reading it! This is the funniest

book of the year and one of the best debut SF novels in ages!





52 Weeks to Science Fiction Film Literacy - The Iron Giant

This is the second of these pieces for a film that I actively hate. I mean, I DESPISE The Iron Giant. I mean, I hate it, it's the kind of film that brings bile to the back of my throat. Yes, I understand that it's a significant film, I get that people connect with it, but I left the theatre going "why do people love this simpering, whining, no fun movie?"

Which is also weird, because I love Brad Bird, his work for Pixar and on The Simpsons has been awesome. He's also been to my museum! Before I get into the bile raising and all that, let's look at the movie somewhat objectively. A giant robot (who, inexplicably is the only computer-animated portion of the film) lands in Maine in the 1950s, but has had his memory wiped. Hog-

arth (stupidest name for a child in a movie ever!) is the child of a single mother who works hard at a diner, and one night when she's working late, he follows a path of destruction and comes across said robot. The two become friends. Of course they do. Then, in a scene that has literally annoyed me every time I've thought of this film, the Giant rips a portion of train track up and Hogarth panics, telling him that he has to put it back because a train's coming. Now, you might think 'Yeah, Hogarth's right, he had to fix it' but every time I watch, I just see how hard they tried to make this scene into something that felt important. Of course, there's a government man who is investigating the strange occurrences around the town, but no one back in Washing-

ton believes him. The Government angle ties it in with another of my most hated movies: E.T.. The pair have fun hiding from the Government man, then walking around and bonding, having fun. They go to a junkyard, and since the Giant eats metal it's like a buffet, and in one of the lamest bits in history, one of the cars he chomps on has the horn activated and that leads to just the lamest segment ever.

Believe it or not, this is me being objective.

Hogarth ends up teaming up with a local, the Beatnik of the Junkyard. He's voiced by Harry Connick Jr.. I have to admit, that character in both character design and story role isn't a bad one, but Hogarth and the Giant's relation-

ship is so weak that it can't save the movie. Hogarth pawns the Giant off on the Beatnik, who makes metal art.

Eventually, the Giant gets discovered after saving a couple of kids. That leads to an attack on the robot and eventually he's destroyed when the Government man commands the Giant to be hit with a Nuke and he flies up to meet it and it explodes in the sky (causing centu-



ries of radioactive dust), but the family is closer, the beatnik and Hogarth's mom end up as a couple and the one piece of the Giant the kid saved ends up activated (since the robot can repair itself) and then we can see that several pieces, including the head, have survived and it'll be back like Frosty after he melts.

That section was difficult to write.

OK, so the first problem I had was with the look of the picture. I understand, we were at an interesting time in the history of animated film. This was one of the last traditionally animated films to get the greenlight. Toy Story had happened in 1995 (I believe that The Iron Giant as a project was started about 1994), and that changed the world of animation. Look at Disney. They tried a couple of traditionally animated features, but they didn't really take off to the level

that the computer animated films of the time did. Pixar is to blame for this, of course. Well, that and the fact that films like Quest for Camelot bombed so thoroughly. The style of most of it is very 1990s Warner Brothers, which was never my favorite. It reminds me of that Disney style from the early 1980s, maybe even the late 1970s (The Rescuers?), and that's not a favorite. The computer animation done for The Giant wasn't ideal, it was certainly a step down from what we were seeing from both DreamWorks and from Pixar (and a bit from Disney's traditional animation department, which was doing bits and pieces of all of their films using computer animation) and maybe it's just me, but it felt like television animation more than movie.

But enough about that. It was an interesting time.

The music is hit or miss, but I understand that is not fully the case. Brad Bird apparently did a scratch score for the thing that used themes from 1950s SF film, which is EXACTLY the kind of score that a film like this deserves. I found the score that Michael Kamen did to be rather flat for much of the film, then when there is emotion that can be wrung, to be excessively wringing. There are some highlights, including the segment where we discover that the Giant can fly. There is a tradition of flight music being impressive, John Williams is probably the king of flying music, but Kamen does a pretty good job with it. Still, it's a bit over-wrought.

And then there's the voice acting. Some of it is really good. Jennifer Aniston and Connick have chops when it comes to voice acting, but the real problem for me is the voicing of Man-



when he flips out at the beginning. The idea that we're having violently pushed at us the entire movie long is that this is a robot who has forgotten everything about himself, but apparently he now has a soul (which they say over and over) and when he thinks that Hogarth is dead, that's what triggers him. If he has a soul, why can't he over-come his programming. If he can't over-come his pro-

sley, the Government man, that really bothered me. His voice was provided by CHris McDonald, probably best known for his work in Requiem for a Dream as the guy in the Infomercial, or as the villain in Happy Gilmore. I don't know why, but the voice doesn't work. It may have been some choice in engineering, but it just doesn't work. I remember thinking that they'd completely wasted one of the best villainous actors in America the first time I saw it, and I had that feeling when I rewatched it. The rest of the voices are pretty good, and Hogarth sounds like a kid, but the McDonald problem I'll never understand.

Now, there's the script. It's obviously a script that was written by a guy with Daddy issues. I've never read the book that it was based on, The Iron Man by Mr. Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes. I've never read it, I don't think, but I understand that it's more of an influence than a direct screen

translation.

Here's the other thing: the message. It's not a message that I dislike: guns are bad, m'kay? That's one of my big issues, but the way it's presented here bugs the hell out of me. Whenever he is shown a weapon, his defense techniques kick and in. The weird thing is, the way that the character reacts is wrong. At first, he sees a gun dropped by a hunter, but while his eyes go all red, he doesn't react, but when he sees Hogarth's (GOD! I hate having to type that idiotic name!) he goes all blaster, but then, THEN!, at the end, when he thinks that Hogarth is dead, he unleashes his weapons against the army. Now, if he was simply living with programming that required these reactions, then he should have gone all zap-gun when he first saw the gun. The blastering when he sees the raygun doesn't make sense, and it especially doesn't make sense

programming, does he really have a soul? The trope of an otherwise peaceful character becoming a madman is way over-played, and here it's particularly grating.

Now, reading about the various concepts for the film, this could have been so cool. The team was basically given free reign because the executive that was assigned to them was fired after the disaster that was Quest for Camelot. They had incredible amounts of freedom for a team working at a big studio. The sad thing is that this also meant they had no way of making it marketable. That led to it not being a big money-maker, but it did OK. Better than it deserved as far as I'm concerned, but others might disagree. They didn't have a lot of tie-ins, and that's a real key to making money. Without the executive over-sight of a studio suit, they could do things cheaper, and faster, and that ended up helping

it turn a profit. Another problem, and one that bugged me, is that this is a PG-style film. There are a few mild swears, it's nothing particularly violent, but it's an adult movie. DO kids like it? I know Evelyn did, but it might be a bit intense for young kids.

There's another thing that annoys me: Superman. This was Warner Brothers, who own the DC marks, and can use them any way they like, so they shoehorn him in here. This was the down-time for Superman in film. Superman Returns was in pre-production, I think, and the comics weren't in a hot period as they had been earlier in the 1990s or like they would be a little later. It felt like they added the Superman stuff just because they owned the property and I didn't feel like it worked. They obviously added it to the point where the Giant sacrifices himself (saying "I'm Superman") and it just felt forced. Maybe that, more than anything, made me feel like this was a manipulative movie. I connect deeply with Superman (my entire generation does!) and the invocation of him in this one completely rubbed me the wrong way.

Meh!

Has there been a period of success for Family SF? Sure. Disney specialized in them during the 1960s through the late 1970s. The Kurt Russell films like *The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes* (which I wrote about earlier in the series) and *The Strongest Kid in the World*, and films like *The Cat from Outer Space* were certainly SF films, but most importantly, the *Herbie* series, which I grew up loving. You could argue that most of the animated science fiction of the last century would qualify, with exceptions like *Heavy Metal* and the works of Mr. Ralph Bakshi,

but still, most of it.

So, if I hate it so much, if it's so flawed, why is it here. Because this is a rare moment in the history of film, and one that is important to document in a project like this. This was the switch from traditional animation to computer, and here you saw the halfway point. This is a lot like the films that were popped out in the 1929-1931 period where they'd often take films that were produced as silents and turn them into talkies. The computer animation looks like computer animation, it's nearly as clean as those in the Disney films, but it's also of a different type. It's almost all character stuff while Disney always focused on backgrounds, though I believe much of the flying carpet from *Aladin* was Computer Animated. Here, there's another important thing: science fiction for kids. While I had the problem of inconsistency in the expected tone, it is obviously built as a film for kids, or at least pre-teens and up. It works as an adult film, for those who aren't looking at it the way I do, but it does not insult their intelligence. The big problem for me is that even if they are taking the idea of a script that holds up for kids and adults, they're still doing stuff like having the bomb go-off in the atmosphere which would actually be a more deadly event than if it went off at lower altitude. But the film appeals to many, including everyone I know with significant daddy issues. The idea of science fiction for families is a good one, and here the results just aren't my cup of tea, but the idea worked. It did get hammered, until it came out on DVD, but it did draw a wide family demographic.

But, more importantly, so many animators, so many writers loved it and used it as a

basis for the future of their films. The Pixar of today is filled with folks who worked on *The Iron Giant* (Bird had hired a bunch of kids from CalArts to do the animation, including, I think, my high school classmate Scott Morse)

The one thing I have to give a listen to someday is the Pete Townsend concept album *The Iron Man*, which is a direct musical translation of the Hughes. They even made a musical play version. I hope I can see that, because there is no way it would annoy me anywhere near as much as *The Iron Giant*.

