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THE BEDLAM FILES

With Adam Groves

“It is sometimes an appropriate response to reality to go insane.”

— Philip K. Dick

Streaming Now



1. **BLADE RUNNER: THE FINAL CUT**

You can't argue with **BLADE RUNNER**, which remains **THE** post 1980 science fiction film. Countless subsequent movies have tried (and failed) to imitate it but the film remains *sui generis*, and all the more impressive for overcoming a hodgepodge of a script that largely bowdlerizes its Philip K. Dick source novel. Plus, the "Final Cut" currently showing on Netflix is, unlike most updated versions of old movies (such as **STAR WARS** and **E.T.**), a sizable improvement over **BLADE RUNNER'S**

Adam's Picks



1. **DUNE, THE DAVID LYNCH FILES: VOLUME 2** By **KENNETH GEORGE GODWIN**

With a new **DUNE** movie upon us I say it's a good time to revisit David Lynch's calamitous 1984 filming of Frank Herbert's iconic novel, if for no other reason than to see just how badly the material can turn out. This diary of the Mexico City based production provides an excellent documentation of what went wrong, with poor leadership leading to plummeting crew morale and shoddy workmanship. The author is to be commended for not watering down the observations of his younger self,

original theatrical version and its 1992 director's cut. **NETFLIX**



2. TOTAL RECALL

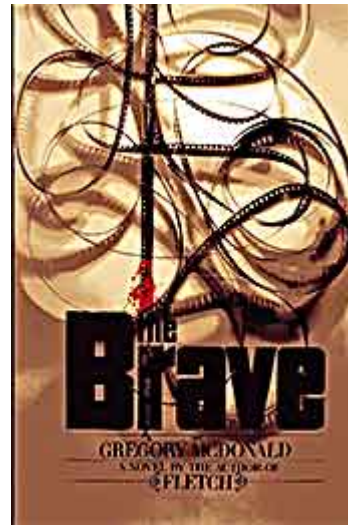
Another new-to-Netflix Philip K. Dick adaptation that's been nearly as influential as *BLADE RUNNER* (it's certainly no coincidence that since *TOTAL RECALL*'S 1990 release nearly every PDK adaptation has been action-oriented). For the most part it still holds up, having been conceived as the sci fi-action blowout to end 'em all, and very nearly surpassing that ambition. It's also authentically Phil Dickian in its non-ironic inference that the final two thirds may be an extended hallucination. **NETFLIX**



3. LABYRINTH

This George Lucas produced, Jim Henson directed spectacle from 1986 is neither the abomination it was

presenting his early 1980s recounting (which include swipes at producer Raffaella de Laurentiis, child actress Alicia Witt and Lynch himself) in appropriately unvarnished form. **BOOK**



2. THE BRAVE by GREGORY McDONALD

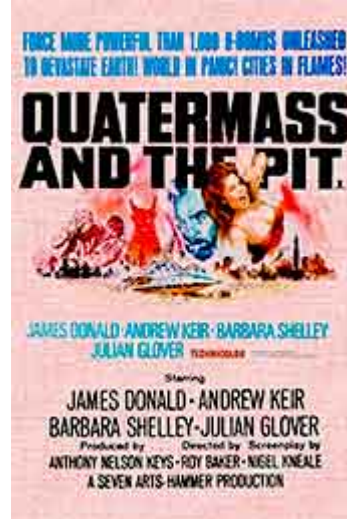
Surely one of the greatest horror novels of the nineties, a now thirty year old waking nightmare of a book whose story, about an unemployable young man who agrees to be tortured to death in a snuff film for money that (he hopes) will be paid to his family, is more relevant today than it was in 1991. One of *THE BRAVE*'S most striking qualities is that not a whole lot actually *happens* in its 216 pages (which conclude before the scheduled killing occurs), yet its effect on the reader is profound and long-lasting. **BOOK**

initially made out to be nor the “fantasy masterpiece” it’s since been proclaimed. Henson was admittedly never much of a director (as is evident here in the stilted non-puppet performances and pedestrian staging), but LABYRINTH is certainly the only movie you’ll see that mixes Maurice Sendek, M.C. Escher, Franz Kafka (THE CASTLE in particular) and Monty Python (in the form of screenwriter Terry Jones) into a unique, and uniquely imaginative, whole. **NETFLIX**



4. **BLUDGEON**

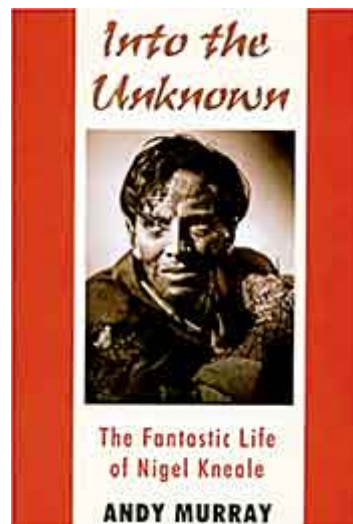
Here’s something different: an audio drama that purports to depict a man’s descent into madness after he deliberately runs down a pedestrian. As intoned by Dominic Francisco (a.k.a. “Bound Unto Root”), the wordage is decidedly overripe, with lines like “I’ll reach down with him to a merciful drawer and pull out the proper cutlery for our picnic of misconception” predominating in what can be viewed as a profound glimpse into the heart of darkness or a fevered Ed Woodian indulgence, either of which constitutes a strong recommendation from me. **YOUTUBE**



3. **QUATERMASS AND THE PIT**

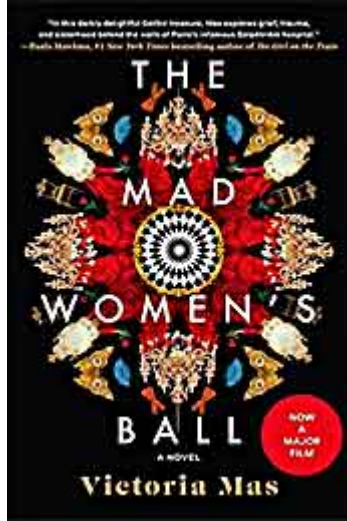
Q: What does this 1967 movie have to do, politically or culturally, with our current situation?

A: Absolutely nothing. It is, however, a damn fine piece of work, a brainy and provocative piece of English accented science fiction as only the late British scribe **Nigel Kneale** (1922–2006) could do it, albeit with B movie production values. In short, a blast! **FILM**



4. **INTO THE UNKNOWN: THE FANTASTIC LIFE OF NIGEL KNEALE** by **ANDY MURRAY**

The one and only biography of the abovementioned Nigel Kneale. Author Andy Murray does a fine job guiding us through his subject’s life and accomplishments, complete with testimonials from luminaries like Grant Morrison, Ramsey Campbell, Dan O’Bannon and Kim Newman

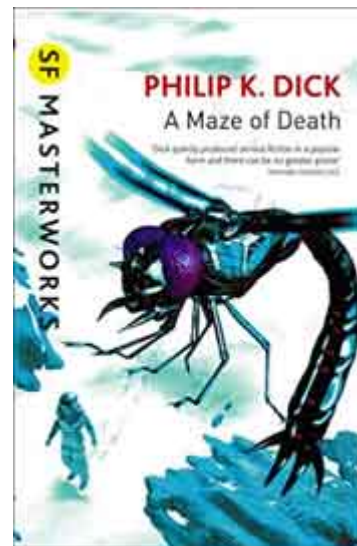


5. THE MAD WOMEN'S BALL (LE BAL DES FOLLES)

A reasonably potent French-made addition to the innocent-woman-unjustly-incarcerated-in-an-insane-asylum subgenre (others include THE SNAKE PIT and FRANCIS). In fairness, the woman in question (Lou de Laâge), living in the late 19th Century, does act authentically nutty, claiming she can speak with ghosts and comparing herself to Joan of Arc. The film is well directed by actress Mélanie Laurent, who also plays (and gives herself too much screen time as) a gruff but sympathetic nurse who comes to believe Laâge's claims.

AMAZON

about Kneale's continued influence. Where Murray doesn't quite succeed is in explaining Kneale's highly contradictory personality, although at this point I doubt *anyone* will ever do so. **BOOK**



5. A MAZE OF DEATH By PHILIP K. DICK

In which the immortal Mr. Dick pushed his patented displaced reality conception to its farthest possible limits, and in the process invented a new religion. Concerning 14 cosmonauts stationed on a distant planet, with each of them having his or her own subjective take on what's occurring, A MAZE OF DEATH should please Dick fans, but if you're a PKD novice you're better off reading something else. **BOOK**

Also NEW on the Site!

- **Yours Cruelly, Elvira Mistress of the Dark**
- **Prey**
- **TV Flashback: The Boy with Two Heads**
- **Not Bad for a Human: Lance Henrikson**
- **The Ship of Monsters**



- **Bucket of Blood**
- **Big Bad John: The John Milius Interviews**
- **And Much More!**

Insider Info

I feel we can all use a few laughs right now, so I'll be reprinting three gags from the "joke corner" of the late **Gore Gazette**. **That much missed zine's editor Rick Sullivan was a mighty funny fellow**; in fact, I'd say Sullivan's sense of humor was a greater point in his favor than his knowledge of all things horrific (which was extensive). That wit was evident even in the *GG's* final issues, during which Sullivan self-destructed quite dramatically, exposing himself, picking fights with fellow zine editors and recklessly libeling his enemies, one of whom was allegedly responsible for alerting the FBI to Sullivan's more unsavory activities and getting him arrested, which marked the permanent end of the *Gore Gazette*.

The Sullivan saga, it so happens, directly anticipated today's online posting scene, whose authors seem to be perpetually at war with each other. That scene doubtlessly reached some kind of depraved apex last month, when the popular internet personality **Chris Chan was arrested for incest**. That arrest, eagerly livestreamed by one of Chan's online "friends," was but the latest episode of a profoundly sordid saga in which I'm honestly not sure who comes off worse: Chan or the legions of trolls who dedicated their lives to taunting and/or egging on this motherfucker (*sorry, couldn't resist!*).

Onto the jokes, which are a bit on the twisted side (and so a perfect accompaniment to a posting about Chris Chan):

Q: What do you call E.T.'s third ball?

A: The extra-testicle!



Q: What did one cannibal say to the other as they were eating a priest?

A: This is fun. I'm having a ball!!!

And finally...

Q: What did Jeffrey Dahmer say to Lorena Bobbitt?

A: Are you going to eat that?

I'm done reading. To the website!

The Bedlam Files

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