



The Big Jump

Leigh Brackett

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Second Ace printing (first as a single volume). All signs pointed to the fact that no human could come back alive from Barnard's Star. Something elusive, beyond comprehension, existed out there; something that was a perpetual bait, a perpetual trap. But Arch Comyn knew he had to join the second fated mission. For somewhere beyond the veil of the Transuranae lay the answer to the question that was more important than life to him.

The Big Jump Details

Date : Published 1967 by Ace Books (first published 1955)

ISBN : 9780441076833

Author : Leigh Brackett

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From Reader Review The Big Jump for online ebook

Deborah Canaday says

Film Noir meets Science Fiction. Great book. Makes me want to read other works by the author.

bluetyson says

The Big Jump by Leigh Brackett (1955)

Kamas Kirian says

It reminds me of a cross between Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer, Alfred Bester's The Stars My Destination and the movie Event Horizon, with maybe a little bit of the Walking Dead thrown in for atmosphere. And, for some reason, I keep visualizing Charlize Theron as Sydna. One thing that really dated the writing was the use of "gay", "fey" and "queer" in their original context rather than as slurs. Otherwise, the concepts didn't seem all that dated, just the style of writing.

Some of the text wrapped oddly in the eBook version, but that may be a consequence of not being able to change font size.

Pedro says

Amusing mix of noir and 50s SF. A bit too fast, and not so well aged, so it's *** for me.

Mark says

Proof positive that detective noir and 50s Sci-Fi shouldn't mix. The thing that disappointed me most was the main character Arch Comyn was such an unlikable character that showed little regard for his fellow man, and more than a little selfishness when trying to get his own way, including steam-rolling over anyone who had a differing opinion and putting everyone's lives in danger to achieve his goals.

M.H. Smith says

Fantastic read, Leigh Brackett might be my favorite female author!

Mike Franklin says

Great action packed pulp sf adventure but let down by some sloppy writing early on (random head hopping, dialogue clearly attributed to the wrong person etc.). Also much of the motivation and execution (particularly early on) was rather implausible. So rather mixed feeling on that one.

Jody says

This was not great science fiction.

It is never really explained what "the big jump" is -- you just have to guess it implies going to a star and back. Creatures encountered are not well described either.

Pete says

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A ship has just returned from the first interstellar voyage, but with only one su

This Is Not The Michael You're Looking For says

A fairly short book, it is a bit of a noir-style science fiction novel, with respect to characterization and description, if not actual plot, making the book feel rather dated.

Kate says

Interesting novella about interstellar travel, inhibition, and the quest for power. The slightly noir feel of the first half is abandoned once the interstellar voyage begins, which is too bad - that was my favourite part of the novella.

Stuart says

Compelling protagonist with a unique and interesting "threat" to motivate the plot. Brackett's writing is probably the absolute tightest of her generation of Sci-Fi and fantasy novelists, it's a pity she isn't appreciated as much as she should be.

Christopher says

Following a rumor that a survivor has returned from the first expedition to another star by jump drive, the story's hero gets mixed up in the pulp equivalent of a bad *Dallas* episode for 75 pages or so, after which a semi-decent but very ordinary SF story unfolds about what kept most of the expedition members from returning.

Kassandra Gilbert says

One of my favourite sci-fi books. It is hard for me to describe the issues mentioned in this book, but some of it mentions how we can live without violence. It was very confusing but I recommend it to those who like books with a strange conspiracy fueling a man's desire to find out what happened to his friend who went on a scientific mission and didn't really come back.

Bryan says

This book works best in the way it builds up a sense of foreboding and dread, so although undeniably science fiction, I added a "horror" tag to it as well.

While not frightening or terrifying, it does build up quite palpable suspense and tension. The plot's premise is that something went awry on the first interstellar space voyage, and while one survivor returned, none of the rest of the crew made it back home... and the lone survivor is terribly poisoned.

In fact, in one small scene, there's even a hint of zombification, and a modern reader would certainly expect this to be expanded upon. (Zombies... in space!)

So while I was largely expecting something along the line of the *Alien* movie franchise, in the end the author instead served up some more standard classic SF fare. While the sense of dread remains taut right up to the climax and beyond, the culminating action and resolution of the plot is a bit of a damp squib mainly because the story hasn't aged well in this modern times of Hollywood sci-fi horror.

3 stars for successfully building a foreboding tone, but the disjointed narrative (is this a detective mystery or a sci-fi horror) takes away some of its charm. Also, most of the motives of the characters are largely unconvincing. I'd like to be able to give this book 2.5 stars if possible, but a score of 2 is too low.

A short novella that's worth a look, but realize that it hasn't aged that well, and thus don't expect it to fit neatly in with today's genre patterns.
