



A Very Strange Trip

L. Ron Hubbard , Dave Wolverton

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Caught by police with moonshine in the trunk of his uncle's car, Everett Dumphee is faced with the decision to spend ten years in prison or enlist in the US Army. He opts for what he thinks is freedom-a hitch in the Army.

Due to bureaucratic negligence, Dumphee-incorrectly labeled as the fastest bootleg driver in West Virginia-is issued the occupational specialty designation of Expert Truck Driver. Subsequently, he is selected for a top-secret assignment in a newly designed and state-of-the-art All Terrain Vehicle.

While transporting a contraband Russian time machine and developmental weaponry from Trenton Arsenal in New Jersey to the Experimental Weapons Battalion in Denver, Colorado, Dumphee finds himself cast into new settings when the device suddenly activates. What follows are fantastic high-tech experiences that might be called the "ultimate off-road adventure."

For the determined Dumphee-narrowly escaping with his life and three beautiful women-it is not necessarily a matter of will he make it to his destination, but when. These four vivid characters trek through this fun and fast-moving journey like there's no tomorrow. Whenever that may be.

A Very Strange Trip Details

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Ann says

This is one of the funniest books I've read. And if you can listen to the audiobook, you'll like it even better because the narrators do such a good job (I believe there are 8 readers). The book is so entertaining that it is a fast read, even though it is a rather large book.

Just recently Audible added the audiobook to its library. I heard it years ago when I checked it out from the library. Now I own both the hardback and the audiobook. This book would make a great gift. It is not only a very strange trip, but a totally entertaining one.

Wes Bartlett says

The author states in the perface that he had always wanted to write a science fiction work with some humor in it and that is what I found in this book. The action is good but I found the humor to be a little too unbelievable and even kind of slap stick which detracted me as I read.

E. Buck says

I picked this book up because L Ron Hubbard is listed as author. The author is Dave Wolverton, messing up an L Ron Hubbard story. It was supposed to be humor but was purely absurd.

Roy says

I thought it would be a lark to read an old timey SF novel. I gather that Hubbard may have written this one somewhat later and it may have been touched up by someone else, but still expected it to be fun. The beginning was fun. I listened to the story instead of reading and the presentation with multiple voices was enjoyable. Unfortunately, it really didn't deliver. It seemed to drift on and even for a short book the story seemed too long for the premise. While I am not a Hubbard fan (forget Battlefield Earth, please!) I did enjoy his pre-Dianetics SF stories in the classic mold. Not this one so much.

John says

This was like reading a story a 4th grader had written. I wanted to terminate before halfway through but I like to finish what I start. This book is a waste of one's intelligence.

vivian bryant says

Interesting. Traveling back through history.

Anyone interested in history should read this for a laugh. If you know history you will connect. Don't try to make too much of it.

Scott Gregory says

This is a very creative story and the audio book is very well done. I loved the various predicaments the hero got into, and of course, got out of. Well worth your time!

Frank says

L. Ron Hubbard wrote many screenplays, working with up and coming authors to convert them to novels and full blown productions. Dave Wolverton is one of those authors and has novelized the humorous tale: A Very Strange Trip. Private Everett Dumphree, an enlistee under duress, is assigned to a transport division and given the task of transporting Russian technology to a southeastern location. Unfortunately, one of the devices, a time machine activates, sending him on a journey through time. Along the way, he picks up some passengers--three beautiful women--who make his life very complicated. The trip is a wild ride as the private learns a few lessons in life while jumping from one dangerous situation to another. With a time machine what can go wrong? The characters are a bit thin and stereotyped, but that is a minor distraction.

The Galaxy Press audiobook version is outstanding, with the cast being extremely professional and the music and sound effects being very well done. A good addition to the Galaxy Press audio library.

Stewart says

Oh holy G-d give me my five hours back.

I've been a fan of L. Ron Hubbard's science fiction since I was a teenager. His Mission Earth series and Battlefield Earth are great, if long, reads. The folks at Galaxy Press have done a lovely job reissuing much of his older fiction, which is of varying quality, in print and full-cast audio form, which I wholeheartedly appreciate. To the Stars, in particular, is an exceptional book and audio performance that I really should get a review done on.

All of that said, this collaboration between Hubbard and Dave Wolverton is an abomination, and one that I actually paid for at Downpour.com! (The Galaxy Press folks are very generous at librarian conventions.)

The intro to the novel implies that it's supposed to be some sort of comic, time-traveling romp. In execution, it's a horrid, racist, senseless tale that fails on every level, including on what little science is actually in the book. I literally cannot believe they were able to find narrators for this nonsense. I can only hope there are regretful, expletive-laden outtakes ending in the cutting of larger checks for pain and suffering.

Avoid this book at all costs. I've already deleted the mp3s to protect my sons in case they want to raid my audiobook collection someday.

Ruth says

i am not a scientologist but this book was wonderful. It was a book that i couldnt put because it sucked you in with its captivating detail and imaginative words.

Craig says

This is a novelization by Dave Wolverton of an unproduced screenplay written by Hubbard. It involves West Virginian moonshiners, a time machine, and lots of madcap chasing about. It's perhaps a bit longer than it needs to be, but it's a very humorous and engaging light romp.

Kelley says

This book was meant for prepubescent boys (not to adhere to stereotypes, but literally it's a young guy who's a bit of a rebel, unjustly accused and sentenced to be in the army, activates a time machine, gains 3 wives and has a foursome with them, and travels around seeing dinosaurs, mastodons, Mayans, Indians, and other assorted semi historically accurate time periods).

Entertaining, but not terribly substantive (does have occasional moments of larger themes and internal conflict, but mostly it's an adventure book)

Jamie says

Recommended by a friend a while back and finally circled around to it. A quick read and very enjoyable. A very strange trip indeed or rather a series of trips. I very much enjoyed the back and forth perspective of both the main character and his commanding officer, one tripping through time, the other, trying to track him through anomalies in his timeline.

Glen Stott says

LRH was one of the premier science fiction writers of the twentieth century. This is how good he was. He wrote a detailed piece of science fiction about a huge group of beings called, thetans. They lost a war and were banned by Xenu, leader of the Galactic Federation, to a planet where they are being held as prisoners. They exist in a spiritual realm, but are born on the planet as physical beings where they live and die and then reincarnate to live and die again and again. The memories of their previous existence and the war have been wiped clean. Then an incredible thetan figures it all out and formulates a plan for a huge prison break that will free thetans who follow his teachings and become high-level Operating Thetans (OTs).

That doesn't sound so special; I think he has written better stuff, but here's the deal; instead of publishing the story as a novel, he told people it was a true story. The prison is Earth and the thetans are the people living here. He got hundreds then thousands to believe the story. LRH called this particular piece of science fiction, Scientology. Now there are millions who dedicate their time and money to further the cause of the prison break – hoping they will be included with those who are freed.

“A Very Strange Trip” couldn't be further from the quality of science fiction I expect from LRH. Perhaps it is because it was rewritten after LRH's death. (He didn't actually die. He chose to leave his body so he could go ahead of the OTs to make preparations on that side for the big prison break.) Dave Wolverton is responsible for the rewrite of “A Very Strange Trip” – so I guess I'll blame him.

It is a time travel story that appears to have been written for the knowledge and intellectual level of children who believe a fat, bearded man spends all year making toys with his elves, which he delivers to children all over the world on one night in a sleigh pulled through the air by eight tiny reindeer. It would have been an ok book if it had stayed in that age group, but it didn't. It is much longer than typical books for that age group, but worse, it keeps jumping out. The vocabulary is too advanced in many places. The whole sexual insinuation between Dumphee and the squaws would probably be understood by teenagers, but why would they subject themselves to the painfully unsophisticated rest of the book? There are other parts that are above the level of the main book, too numerous to detail.

LRH would be spinning in his grave to see Wolverton's version of the story. Oops! LRH isn't in his grave. He is too busy working on the prison break to think about this story. I wonder how long it will take him to get things ready? Maybe Xenu snagged him and the preparations are on hold.

After all that, I found the ending of “The Very Strange Trip” to be interesting, so I gave it a star.

Bruce Deming says

An enjoyable larky funny story of time machine travel. My second reading of it after 15 years or so with other sci fi in between made me appreciate this more.

I remember other fun movies I have seen like Jurassic Park and or Back to the Future. The characters are totally different but I liked them and they visit the dinosaurs and the Mayans and the old West.

This story was lighter or less intense than Hubbard's stories Battlefield Earth or Mission Earth as it didn't have the fate of the entire population of earth involved but just the small group of Dumphee and his three squaws and a time machine that isn't totally controllable.

Good entertainment some smart comical time-cultural juxtapositions that make such stories fun.
