



Friday

Robert A. Heinlein

Download now

Read Online [➔](#)

Friday

Robert A. Heinlein

Friday Robert A. Heinlein

Friday is a secret courier. She is employed by a man known to her only as "Boss." Operating from and over a near-future Earth, in which North America has become Balkanized into dozens of independent states, where culture has become bizarrely vulgarized and chaos is the happy norm, she finds herself on shuttlecock assignment at Boss' seemingly whimsical behest. From New Zealand to Canada, from one to another of the new states of America's disunion, she keeps her balance nimbly with quick, expeditious solutions to one calamity and scrape after another.

Friday Details

Date : Published June 17th 1997 by Del Rey (first published August 3rd 1982)

ISBN : 9780345414007

Author : Robert A. Heinlein

Format : Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Fiction

 [Download Friday ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Friday ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Friday Robert A. Heinlein

From Reader Review Friday for online ebook

LittleAsian Sweatshop says

I admit it. I'm a Heinlein junkie. I'm not sure if there is a rehab or a self-help group out there for me, but even if there was one, I'm not sure if I would even want to go to it. It's Heinlein after all! I've read everything from his lesser-known earlier works like "Orphans in the Sky", to his Juveniles like "The Moon is a Harsh Mistress", to his Lazarus Long series, even his famous "Stranger in a Strange Land", to even his non-fiction work. And although I love them all, I must say, that Friday is undisputedly my favorite.

What makes Friday so alluring? It is a tale of acceptance and belonging and what is the human soul. It is a story of an "artificial person", Friday Jones, whose "mother was a test tube, and her father a knife". She is a professional courier (that is to say, she is a carrier pigeon for top-secret documents and important information), who seems to be normal and well adjusted in every way. However, underneath her cheerful and charming exterior lays a frightened little girl who seeks acceptance in the most desperate ways, but fails in her quest to find a family. During these chronicles, she discovers many things about herself. Small, personal bits of information, a strength and resourcefulness that she never knew she had. Eventually, she finds a family and as she says, she finally "belongs".

The story is quite simple, so why is this story so spellbinding?

Besides the beautiful blend of technology, history, and characterization, there is also a cohesive story line as well as a thrilling plot. Friday asks the age-old question, what is a soul? What makes a human, a person? Although she is beautiful, accomplished and talented, once she reveals that she is an AP, she is outcast and sneered at. She is considered less than a human, because she was not born, but created.

This question has undoubtedly been raised in the works of the Grand Masters of science fiction. Asimov took a mechanical point of view in "The Bicentennial Man". Phillip Dick echoed Friday, and the concept of APs in "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep" with the plight of the Replicates. So why does Friday tug at me so?

Because it is told from the human point of view. With the exception of Friday's superhuman speed and strength, she could be very well be anyone. She has the same fears and desires, and her childlike charm and insecurity makes her all the more human.

Her quest to find a family and for acceptance is a long and winding one. She is not on a crusade to change the world, nor to battle the great evil of prejudice and racism, but to find her niche in the world. Her caring and nurturing nature is juxtaposed with her lethal skills, giving her the dimension that is necessary for us to follow her story.

Friday makes us care about her trials, and her hurts become ours. And as a result, makes us ask ourselves what defines us as human, and feel the anguish at discrimination.

It is the ability to not only inflame, but also to soothe, that makes Friday so memorable.

Lafcadio says

I have my suspicions about Heinlein's women. Friday seems the embodiment of them all.

Tom Tresansky says

Heinlein, in his later years was a major perv.

I had first read this many years ago, and remember it as an adventurous romp about a Balkanized Earth (and beyond) featuring plenty of sexytimes starring his nympho-with-a-brain super agent. I remembered Friday as being a kind of female James Bond. What I couldn't remember was any specifics of the villains' plot, etc.

After rereading, I know why that is...because THERE ISN'T ONE.

Starting with a ambush capture scene, the book seemed perfectly setup to deliver a standard action revenge plot. But it doesn't. Ever. Oh, we get a few abortive, very poor excuses at a couple of points down the road, but nothing that ever coalesces, up until literally the final 50 pages. At that point it feels as if R.A.H. realized he needed to provide something to justify readers' expectations, and tacked it on, right along with the utterly saccharine and at odds with what little theme the novel attempts ending. Seriously, there is nothing to this book, it's a prolonged sketch of what I can only assume is Heinlein's dream girl.

It's an interesting world, it's not littered with his usual sock puppet sermonizing, and Friday is actually an interesting character. Who, despite super speed, strength, etc., always seems to solve her few problems by being super sexy. The biggest problem is she's NEVER tested, which is weird to claim when the book opens with a gang rape, but I doubt any reader would contradict it. I think if a present day feminist read this their head might explode.

CD says

I am naming this an all time favorite as it is Heinlein's own response to all those misguided self-righteous 'literary critics' and college lit professors who needed a scapegoat in popular fiction for a twenty year period of time.

There are reviews here at Goodreads that obviously have been written by those readers so tainted by the 'legend' of Heinlein and his misanthropic misogyny, jingoism, and racism that they fail to recognize or can only grudgingly admit there is much more else to RH and the knocks on his character are mostly unwarranted. Heinlein was either ahead of his time or just out of sync with the contemporaneous version of Political Correctness (years before that term was widespread) or some other zeitgeist.

A very well written storied view of the near future of a world ruled by corporations. Indeed, the the corporations are the form of government and their security and espionage arms battle for small to large gains. All this is backdrop for technology run rampant to the extent that some humans are cloned/engineered/manufactured to one extent or another. Friday is such a girl. Her purpose in life is to 'serve' one of these intelligence/espionage entities and she accepts her lower class/caste state with a certain equanimity that becomes fundamental to the story when she thinks she's overcome this prejudice.

Violence and terror permeate this story in a way that makes one wonder if a glimpse into a crystal ball was granted to Heinlein of the beginning of the twenty-first century. Everything that has been ascribed to being 'wrong' with the author as a human being is pretty much addressed by him via this story. He leaves no doubt as to his stance on what the true evils of the world his era faced and what was coming nearer in the world we dwell in today. Racial and gender equality are obviously important to Heinlein and that and any other form of bigotry is reviled by this author in a clever and demonstrative story. Other ills of the 20th century political and social get a similar damning treatment, much of it subtly and as part of the fabric of the novel.

Should you not be a fan of speculative/science fiction, futurism, or other 'fantasy' type writing, don't worry, read this one book anyway!

Monica says

Todo escritor de largo recorrido tiene una evolución y varias etapas. En Viernes nos encontramos a un Heinlein muy maduro, CON SUS TEMAS (más recurrentes, sus obsesiones) MARCA DE LA CASA LLEVADOS AL EXTREMO. Y AUNQUE NO ES LA MEJOR OBRA DE ÉSTE MAGNIFICO AUTOR, NO ES NI MUCHO MENOS MALA. ES UNA NOVELA ENTRETENIDA, POR MOMENTOS DIVERTIDA, ÁGIL, VARIOPINTA EN CUANTO A TEMÁTICA SE REFIERE (cómo en todas las obras del autor) y CON MÁS DE UNA LECTURA. Algo así cómo UNA OBRA DE AVENTURAS Y DENUNCIA PROTAGONIZADAS POR UNA MUJER ARTIFICIAL, EN UN MARCO FUTURISTA CAÓTICO, PLAGADO DE CONSPIRACIONES, ESPIONAJE INDUSTRIAL Y GOLPES DE ESTADO. INNOVADORA NO SÓLO EN CUANTO AL PUNTO DE VISTA PERSONAL DE LOS IA (SUS SENTIMIENTOS, PENSAMIENTOS Y COMPRESIÓN DEL MUNDO), SINO AL INTRODUCIR NOVELA SEMI ERÓTICA DENTRO DE LA SCI FI CLÁSICA (PRECURSOR DEL CIBERPUNK, TAMBIÉN?)

Pero cómo siempre voy allá con el argumento y demás aspectos de la obra a resaltar...

Viernes es una mujer artificial de última generación, que trabaja cómo espía –correo para un grupo de asesinos / espías semi militar, liderada por El jefe. El ambiente en la tierra es caótico (denostada y desvalorizada), peligroso, plagado de corrupción y golpes de estado, todo ello dividido en estados territoriales (independientes) y corporativos, las personas hacen la suya sin importar el mañana . Tras un terrible y violento incidente sufrido en una misión, que además conlleva la pérdida de la base central de operaciones del jefe: ‘ la granja’, Viernes, coge un permiso de refresco (antes de volver a su trabajo para ser re entrenada en otros aspectos)y acude a visitar a su familia (bueno, sus maridos y parientes postizos) en Nueva Zelanda. A partir de aquí , les espera un viaje (exterior e interior) de un lugar a otro que la hará pasar por muchas situaciones y preguntarse el porqué de su condición, sus anhelos, encontrar el significado de su existencia y las claves del porqué de ello.

Serán MUCHAS LAS SITUACIONES EN LAS QUE SE ENCUENTRE NUESTRA PROTAGONISTA Y EL LECTOR, desde misiones de correo – espía, marco dramático – familiar, encuentro de amistad y acogida en el Canadá británico, aborto de un intento de asesinato por parte del presidente de la confederaciones, golpes de estados reclutamiento cómo mercenaria, aventura agrícola en Arkansas, hasta llegar a un última aventura espacial, pasando por estados de duelo, etc.....TODO ELLO BIEN PLAGADO DE ESCENAS Y DIÁLOGOS, PRE, EN Y POST SEXUALES, sin por ello DEJAR DE LADO LOS DOS PRINCIPALES OBJETIVOS DE LA OBRA: LA VIDA DE VIERNES Y SU INTENTO DE ADAPTACIÓN AL MUNDO Y LA CRITICA / DENUNCIA ACERCA DE CIERTOS ASPECTOS Y ENTORNO DE LOS SERES

HUMANOS.

La narración es en primera persona y altamente detallada. Ella lo explica con su razonamiento entre analítico- frío y sentimental, todo ello para nosotros, ES ALGO ASÍ CÓMO UN DIARIO PERSONAL DE SU VIDA.

El personaje principal está bien definido, es fuerte, resolutiva, segura de acción y liberal. Opera a su gusto aunque siempre cómo preferencia tiene la disciplina de un militar entrenado y las ordenes de el jefe, su tutor y prácticamente su única familia desde su toma de conocimiento en éste mundo. Por otro lado, Viernes tiene sus temores, dudas y conflictos existenciales, en parte dados por su entorno y experiencia, cosa que a pesar de todo no le quita del placer de vivir el momento. En cuanto a nivel físico, es una mujer espectacular, que atrae a todo el mundo. En resumen, fuerte aunque sensible, inteligente, resoluta y espectacular, UNA FÉMINA DE HEINLEIN EN TODA REGLA...pero con un halo MENOS 'CONSERVADOR Y PROTOCOLARIO' Y ALGO MÁS DESENFADADO y POR MOMENTOS ALOCADO QUE LOS ANTERIORES PERSONAJES FEMENINOS DEL AUTOR.

En cuanto a el Jefe, comentar que es otro personaje muy en la línea del escritor. Fuerte resolutivo, duro si es preciso, pero sentimental, nostálgico en cierto modo e idealista a pesar de las circunstancias humanas. MUY PARECIDO AL JEFE DE 'AMO DE TÍTERES', PERO CON SALVEDADES MUY VISIBLES.

El resto de secundarios, más o menos presentes y todo ellos representativos para la acción y denuncia de la obra, son de carácter determinado, directo, sagaz..UNA TÍPICA CORAL HEINLEIANA CON PERSONALIDAD (ERRADA O NO).

HEINLEIN ANTIGUO VS NUEVO

He decidido introducir en la reseña éste apartado para comentar LOS ASPECTOS DETERMINANTES QUE INTRODUCE HEINLEIN EN SUS OBRAS, SU CRÍTICAS Y DEBILIDADES, Y SU EVOLUCIÓN, DESDE SUS PRIMERAS ETAPAS HASTA SU ÚLTIMA. Un apartado PARA ENTENDER UN POCO MÁS ÉSTA NOVELA, Y AL AUTOR EN GENERAL Y EL PORQUÉ DE SU DESENBARCADURA

Debilidades / Obsesiones:

1/ Gatos:

Es bien sabido que Heinlein es un amante de los felinos, de hecho CASI LOS AMA MÁS QUE A LOS HUMANOS, LES SACA MÁS CUALIDADES.

En cuanto al 'antiguo vs nuevo' no hay variación: gatos en la obra, apego por ellos y correspondencia con ellos. Metáforas gatunas, también.

2/ Debilidad por la figura femenina / nudismo:

Otro tema que no varía en su aspecto central, pero respecto al antiguo vs nuevo, sus obras anteriores lo mencionaban, AQUÍ ES MUCHO MÁS EXPLÍCITO, REPETIDO Y DETALLADO...el porqué es debido al ser escrita a principios de los ochenta, por lo cual ve lícito resaltar éstos aspectos, sobretodo en lo tocante a la anatomía femenina. Heinlein admiraba a las mujeres y su belleza.

3/ Sensualidad vs sexualidad (sexo libre / hogar dulce hogar):

Todas las obras de él, contiene una importante carga sensual y sexual en ocasiones, con diálogos picarones / picantones de los personajes principales de la obra, LE OTORGA MUCHA Y A LA VEZ POCA IMPORTANCIA AL SEXO Y LA ATRACCIÓN, PUES PARA HEINLEIN ES ALGO TAN PRIMORDIAL Y BÁSICO CÓMO COMER Y RESPIRAR, ALGO NECESARIO PARA LAS

RELACIONES HUMANAS.

No obstante, y respecto a sus antiguos libros, AQUÍ HAY MUCHAS MÁS ESCENAS PRE, EN Y POST SEXUALES, que aunque no entren muy en detalle, sorprenden por introducirlas en el género y POR SER NARRADAS CON MUCHO DESENFADO. Respecto a los diálogos, Y RESPECTO AL HEINLEIN ANTIGUO, QUE PASABA POR LA SENSUALIDAD METAFÓRICA CON CIERTAS LICENCIAS (AMOS DE TÍTERES, LA LUNA ES UNA CRUEL AMANTE), AQUÍ DIRECTAMENTE SON DE PELI 'S' (los mayores me entendéis), cosa que la verdad, a mí me han hecho reírme...pero no de ello, sino por: SER MUY SINCEROS EN ALGUNOS ASPECTOS DE LA PSIQUE HUMANA (SOBRETUDO MASCULINA), DENUNCIAR CIERTAS CONDUCTAS Y DAR UN PASO MÁS EN SU IDEAL DE AMOR Y RELACIONES (OTRA VEZ ADELANTADO A SU ÉPOCA Y CREO QUE LO SIGUE), PUES LA ACTITUD DE LA PROTAGONISTA, QUE SE PERMITE PASAR POR DIVERSAS CAMAS, Y RELACIONES (PAREJA, HARÉN, MATRIMONIO POLIMAGO: ESTO YA SE TOCÓ EN 'La luna es una cruel amante', CON AMBOS SEXOS, ANUQUE SU PREFERENCIA ES HETEROSEXUAL...CÓMO EL QUE DICE: VAMOS A TOMAR UN CAFÉ?..EN FIN, SEÑOR HEINLEIN...TODAVÍA, PIENSO, HA DE LLEGAR ÉSE DÍA)

Cabe añadir, que todo ello es por la búsqueda de la felicidad, no importa experimentar o relacionarse sexualmente por pura amistad / afinidad con la persona y no hay que darle más vueltas al asunto, sin con ello, encuentras una / as relaciones que te satisfagan personalmente (NOTA: estoy pensando cómo Heinlein) . Además. A quién le amarga un dulce?? . MUY LIBERAL LA SEÑORITA VIERNES, DECIDIDAMENTE SÍ.

Y LO DE LA FELICIDAD, Y AUNQUE PUEDA SER CONTRARIO A LO ANTERIORMENTE MENCIONADO, ESTÁ EN EL CALOR Y LA AFECTIVIDAD DE UN HOGAR, UN NÚCLEO DE PERSONAS (Y GATOS, CLARO) QUE TE QUIERAN Y RESPETEN, con su sensación de confort y realización que ello trae. AUNQUE SEA UN NÚCLEO LIBERTINO (Cómo su oda hippie en 'Forastero en tierra extraña').

4/ El poder de la mujer y su fuerza (autoridad):

En todos los libros del escritor LAS MUJERES SON FUERTES DE PERSONALIDAD, CONSCIENTES DE SUS DONES Y DOTES, Y LA MAYORÍA DE VECES MUEVEN LOS HILOS, unas de manera más o menos visible y evidente.

No varía mucho en cuanto a sus primeras obras, todas son líderes natas y manejan a los hombres, muchas veces amas del núcleo familiar y sabedoras de sus poder sexual con los hombres.

5/ La debilidad del macho y su obsesión por el sexo:

Punto que viene en relación a los dos anteriores. Según el autor, EL HOMBRE TIENE SIEMPRE EL SEXO EN LA CABEZA Y ES UNA DE SUS MAYORES DEBILIDADES, VANIDOSOS E INFIELES POR NATURALEZA (Y OTRA PERLITA MAYOR QUE ME RESERVO PARA UN APARTADO MÁS ADELANTE) CUANDO ESTÁN EN PRESENCIA DE UNA MUJER. Bueno, no hierra mucho la dirección...en lo del sexo en la cabeza..jeje (no quiero que se sienta ofendido ningún amigo de la web, pero es una evidencia).

6/ La mujer y su realización cómo madre y casera:

Bueno, no es precisamente un tema que comparta con el bueno de Robert, pero él viene a decir que al final del canino, no importa tu vida hasta entonces ni tus experiencias, tu verdadera realización de fémica es la de tener un hogar que llevar y unos hijos que cuidar, para realizarte completamente (ojo, en el caso del hombre también). Todos los personajes precisan del ropaje afectivo de compañía hogareña, si bien de manera muy 'comunera' y hippie cómo comenté en otro punto anterior). Bien...qué decir, siempre es bonito tener alguien al final del día, pero cada persona es un mundo. Amén.

7/ Crítica y denuncia a la sociedad y política:

Éste tema es frecuente en casi todas las obras del autor. Y más o menos, no varía en demasía, excepto en que a partir de la segunda etapa del escritor (La luna es una cruel amante y post), tiene a ser su discurso claramente liberal, de izquierda algo radical, y especialmente en ésta obra, su discurso ya no es metafórico (Amo de titeres, La luna es una cruel amante) sino plenamente directo. Aquí algunos de los aspectos que denuncia:

- Crítica de la burocracia
- Crítica acerca del 'perfecto' régimen demócrata(¿?), ejemplo de ello es California (tema recurrente, el estar en contra de sus compatriotas), su corrupción a nivel político y electoral
- Crítica de las leyes y su imposición de clasificarlo todo
- Crítica a las corporaciones y su política, toda clase de uniones y asociaciones (aquí visualizado y centrado bajo las multinacionales), en una palabra, DENUNCIA DEL MONOPOLIO QUE OPRIME Y DERROCA A LOS DEMÁS.
- Por tanto, pro favor del independentismo y el discurrir libremente de las personas
- Crítica a los seres humanos, su falta de comprensión, su racismo, sus prejuicios
- Denuncia de la manipulación informativa (e informática).
- Crítica del maltrato animal
- Crítica a la economía y sus dudosas vías
- Crítica del fanatismo religioso
- Y guiños a sus colegas de profesión (en ésta ocasión, le toca nuevamente a Asimov, haciendo alusión de su poca practicidad con la teoría robótica)

El polémico episodio de agresión sexual:

Para comenzar, QUIERO ACLARAR QUE CUALQUIER ACTO DE FUERZA CONTRA LA VOLUNTAD DE ALGUIEN ME PARECE REPULSIVO E INACEPTABLE. Dicho esto, voy a intentar sacar luz a éste trozo tan polémico (VIENE PEQUEÑO SPOILER)

Viernes, es violada por tres o cuatro tipos al principio de la novela. El incidente, AUNQUE ALGO GRATUITO PUES ELLA ES MUY FUERTE Y PUDO HABERLO EVITADO, puede resultar PAUSIBLE EN UNA NOVELA DE ESPIONAJE(cómo viene siendo al caso, pues toca ése género también). Éste tema tan delicado está tratado y contado mediante LAS SENSACIONES Y PENSAMIENTOS DE VIERNES DURANTE SU AGRESIÓN, analizando a cada uno de sus agresores y intentando recopilar la máxima información posible, para saber cómo operan, además de, intentar imponerse a ellos psicológicamente mediante la 'aparente' sumisión, para así aplacarles el deseo (vaya, tela...pero hemos de pensar en que es una espía y una IA...y ficción...POR DESCONTADO!!). Pero realmente, el PROPÓSITO PRINCIPAL DE TAL ESCENA, ADEMÁS DE LA POLÉMICA QUE CONLLEVE, ES LA DE TILDAR A LOS HOMBRE DE 'VIOLADORES POTENCIALES'. Vaya, creo que salen peor parados los de su género, sin dudas...

Así pues, Viernes es UNA OBRA DISTRAÍDA Y A LA VEZ QUE IMPREVISIBLE, QUE RESULTANDO CASI LA MÁS INVEROSÍMIL DEL AUTOR (EN CIERTOS ASPECTOS Y CONCLUSIÓN), NO HACE SINO REFORZARME EN LA IDEA DE LA MAESTRÍA DE SU ESCRITURA, QUE CONSIGUE DAR RUMBO Y ANCLAJE A UNA ALOCADA ODISEA PERSONAL DE DENUNCIA Y CIENCIA FICCIÓN A TRAVÉS DE LOS PERSONALÍSIMOS OJOS DE VIERNES JONES, UNA HEROÍNA RARA y casi única EN ÉSTE GÉNERO.

A pesar de todo lo comentado, he de SER COHERENTE CON MI EXPERIENCIA CON SU OBRA, Y POR TANTO LE OTORGO UN 2.5.

James says

This book is an old friend of mine. I originally picked it up after seeing the cover art and reading the description in Michael Whelan's "Worlds of Wonder" - a book of his art. It was the first Heinlein I'd read.

When I first read this book, Friday was among the first female action heroines I'd run across. She was smart. She was sexy (er... almost to excess), she was tough, and, I thought, still feminine. Subsequent readings dimmed that a bit. Friday is a good attempt to create a believable female character, but she's not very successful, and the excuse that she's an artificial person and not normally socialized only goes so far. Heinlein is often accused of making "men with breasts" for his female characters, and Friday often strays into this territory. There's also the matter of a rape, and Friday's (lack of) reaction to it really strains believability to the breaking point.

Still. The book was hugely influential for me for several reasons. First, Friday is cyberpunk. It has all the usual trappings - dystopian, dysfunctional future, corporate mastership of pretty much everything, main characters frequently operating outside the limits of the law. The only thing missing is that Friday herself is only minimally an anti-hero.

Second, of course, Friday is female. And an action hero(ine). It's a breath of fresh air in fiction that the action heroes don't all have to be male, that toughness doesn't have to come from masculinity, and so on. I found this absolutely compelling.

Third, of course, is Heinlein's storytelling. The man could spin a good yarn, with interesting plotlines, interesting people, often witty dialogue. I don't think he was going for absolute realism with Friday, and with that caveat, the story pulled - and still pulls - me in.

I still have that old copy with the Whelan cover art. Despite the flaws I can see in it now, it's still an old friend, and a fun ride to reread. 4 stars.

Rachel says

(written 5-05)

Yyyyyyyeah! Loved it. Heinlein sure knows how to write a good story, even if his female characters are always bi-curious sex maniacs in favor of free love with multiple partners. For an artificial person, Friday seems pretty damn human. I liked the mystery in the plot and just how bad-ass she was.

"I did not offer to pay the Hunters. There are human people who have very little but are rich in dignity and self-respect. Their hospitality is not for sale, nor is their charity." 178

"A religion is sometimes a source of happiness and I would not deprive anyone of happiness. But it is a comfort appropriate for the weak, not for the strong - and you are strong. The great trouble with religion - *any* religion is that a religionist, having accepted certain propositions by faith, cannot thereafter judge those propositions by evidence. One may bask at the warm fire of faith or choose to live in the bleak uncertainty of

Stephen says

Robert Anson Heinlein...**shame on you, sir**. W...T...ever**womanhating**...F were you thinking when you wrote this drivel?

Friday is, in my irritated opinion, the **most offensive** and childishly ridiculous female protagonist since **Russ Meyer** and **Roger Corman** teamed up to co-direct *Planet of the Nympho Bimbos Part II: Attack of the Soapy Breast Monsters*.**

** *Not a real film, so don't bother searching Amazon for it.*

Pardon my soap boxing, but this is a **despicable** pile of **misogynistic** shit that should have been dropped, wiped away and **flushed** from the literary world before it ever plopped on the printing press. Sorry for the dysphemism, but "I really didn't like it" just doesn't adequately express my **loathe-on** for this book.

Previously, I'd read and enjoyed a handful of Robert Heinlein's novels and many of his short stories and considered myself a fan of his work. I have also read some reviews where people took issue with his attitudes on sex and women, but hadn't personally come across anything I found excessively off-putting...**UNTIL NOW**. This noxious crap pissed me off the roof of the RAH Fan club and had me losing respect for the man all the way down.

Before I get to my major problems with the book, let me pause, slow my heart rate and give you a quick run down of the plot:

PLOT SUMMARY

Set in the future on a balkanized Earth that has splintered into a collection of rival city-states, corporate fiefdoms and criminal enclaves, Friday Baldwin is an artificial person (AP) who works as a combat courier for a mysterious employer. Her job is making deliveries and pick ups to sensitive to be entrusted to normal channels. As an AP, she is stronger, faster and **supposedly** more intelligent than normal humans though she hides her true nature because APs are held in contempt by society (similar to Robots in Asimov's much better Robot novels).

Early on in the book Friday finds herself out of a job and then travels from situation to situation acting as the reader's eyes and ears for Heinlein to share with us his vision of a dystopic future and expound on his political views.

Of the almost 400 pages in the book, there's about 100 or so that are decent, Heinlein world building.

MY PROBLEMS WITH THIS BOOK

For all of her strength, speed and deadly fighting ability, Friday is nothing more than an insecure, bubble-headed skank who thinks that SEX is the only valuable commodity she has to offer in this world. Countless times in the book, she either sleeps with, or tells the reader she would be willing to sleep with, someone as nothing more than a courteous "thank you" for being nice.

Don't get me wrong, sexual independence and equality...fine by me. But I got no inkling in Heinlein's prose of sex being an uninhibited display of physicality between equals free to express themselves. Nope, didn't see it. I saw tawdry, lowbrow objectification grounded in atavistic chauvinism rather than new age "free loveism."

Granted, most of the sex Friday has in the book is consensual and she's a willing participant. I say "most" because there's an instance at the beginning of the book when Friday is kidnapped and gang-raped by 4 guys (I'm not kidding folks). Of course, Friday, for the most part, doesn't hold a grudge against the rapists as she believes they are just "softening" her up for interrogation which she completely understands. Whoa...full stop...major HUH? Moment ahead.

Excuse me while I bang my head against the wall in frustration.

As a proud:

1. Father of two brilliant, happy and outgoing little girls,
2. Husband of a smart, confident, self-motivated woman,
3. Younger brother of two well-educated, independent sisters, and
4. Youngest son of an intelligent, successful businesswoman (and mom of 5)...

...I just wanted to **bitch-slap** Heinlein until I knocked the skeevy right out of him. Please don't interpret this as some indulgent display of gender enlightenment by the PC police as I am about as opposed to militant PCness as I am about this book. Hell, the women I know can more than take care of themselves without my blundering around getting in the way. However, this book is horrible. It's crap and I don't want to avoid calling it what it is simply at the risk of appearing to pander.

There were dozens of instances in the book where I wanted to throw the book (with Heinlein attached) against the wall, but I'm going to mention just three of them to give you an idea of our protagonist.

1. A young man offers Friday his seat on a crowded passenger train. She accepts and then proceeds to lean forward as he stands next to her so as to allow him to look down her shirt. She does this as a gesture of thanks.
2. Friday explains her belief that it is inappropriate for her to allow someone to buy her a meal unless she is willing to give them a legitimate shot at sleeping with her. Now that's class.
3. I don't want to give away a spoiler so let me just tease you by saying that one of the 4 rapists from the beginning of the book reappears later in the novel and Friday's interaction with him will cause you to fume, spit blood and hack up bile....TRUST ME ON THIS.

This is not some strong, independent woman who isn't afraid of her sexuality and explores it with confidence and on her own terms. This is a timid, naïve woman with a massive inferiority complex who feels she "owes" a guy the opportunity of getting her into her pants because he offered her his seat on a passenger train. Are you F@#KING kidding me?

This book was a big, hairy Neanderthal of a novel with its knuckles dragging along the floor and had more in common with the soft-core porn of John Norman's Gor novels than the previous work I've read by ~~Mr.~~ Heinlein.

A horrible, massive disappointment and it will be a while before I give one of his books my time. For now, Mr. Heinlein, let me just say:

Gary Foss says

For my entire adult life, and a bit back before becoming an adult, I have walked to the “Science Fiction” section of the book store and seen this book lurking there. The cover with the unzipped jumpsuit, “Ooh, silly me, is that my right breast?” has always vaguely piqued my attention, but never quite enough to inspire me to actually purchase the thing. There are, after all, Boris Vellejo covers not too far away, and those are going to draw my eye and empty my wallet faster when I’m looking for something “light” to read. Thinking that it would form a contrast with some of the other fair I’ve been doling out to myself, at long last I pulled the trigger on this one.

I am very, very sorry that I did.

This book is the worst reading experience I have had in over a decade. It’s a shameful piece of work that really should be acknowledged as a culminating nail in the coffin to a literary midget masquerading as a giant. Aside from the reprehensible themes, childish logic, an outright vile representation of women, politics and culture, the language is flabby, the plot meandering, the dialogue reads like a poorly scripted soap opera, and the characters are motivated by a perverse sense of the author’s sexual depravities and megalomania. Reading this book is like watching a Hentai version of *The Turner Diaries* written by a poor man’s John Galt.

I’ve read maybe six or eight other Heinlein novels in my time. *Starship Troopers*, *Strangers in a Strange Land*, *Job: A Comedy of Justice*, etc. Enough to have certain expectations about the content, both positive and negative. That is, I did not have particularly high expectations. Unfortunately, in this book, Heinlein fails to achieve even the least effective of his writing strengths while diving headlong into his deficits of character and embracing them as if they were virtues. It’s a despicable, masturbatory indulgence in which Heinlein presents his fantasy of femininity and social status wrapped up in obvious and poorly executed straw man caricatures of those whose political and social beliefs he opposes. I’m not kidding. They are literal caricatures. He puts an Indian headdress on the “chief of California.” That’s the level of humor and sophistication in this book. Notoriously lefty and democratic California in Heinlein’s imagination leads to a leadership that confuses “chief executive” with “chief of the tribe” and puts a feathered hat on the head of their government leader.

What’s worse than any of the outright obnoxiousness of this book is that it manages to commit the worst crime of science fiction entertainment: it’s BORING. BORING with a capital “What-the-Hell-are-you-talking-about?” There are seemingly unending dialogues about the particulars of credit cards in Heinlein’s dystopia (which he might suggest is a utopia.) Can I use my card here? Yes, I can. No, I can’t? Sorry, I thought I could. Will this card work now that the border is closed? What about your card? Let’s use this stolen card, but you’ll have to do it because it’s got a man’s name on it, so I can only do electronic transactions on it. Let’s use your card this time, the stolen card next time, and then my card when we get to the next city. What forms do I have to fill out to get a card in this country? Can we talk about this card but using the specie of another country?

Who could possibly care? This kind of thing may be entertaining to some CPA who dreams of one day committing credit card fraud in a dangerous time, but for the rest of us it is abject boredom at 21% APR. How Heinlein managed to put his own shopping around for a better rate on his credit cards into fiction and people read it like it is entertainment is utterly beyond me. And, you know what? It's not science fiction. It's not speculative science fiction. It's not social science fiction. It's just tortuous fictionalization of accounting and arbitrage. There are pages and pages of this. It goes on interminably as if it weren't rambling filler from an author long past his own expiration date. It's just sad.

...and then: the lottery. The main character wins the lottery after negotiating the price of the ticket from a street vendor. Now, what is the point in an author presenting a laissez faire society as a merit and then having his main character win a lottery as a plot point? Wish fulfillment?

Now, I'm going to get into something that I've been avoiding because, frankly, it's just too disgusting and pathetic to merit a whole heck of a lot of thought... but I'd be remiss not to mention the way Heinlein presents sex, sexuality and women in this book.

Here's some prose from the opening after the main character has been ambushed and captured by unknown assailants:

But why waste time by raping me? This whole operation had amateurish touches. No professional group uses either beating or rape before interrogation today; there is no profit in it; any professional is trained to cope with either or both.

So, we get treated to a rape scene. What's worse is Heinlein's handling of the subject:

For rape she (or he—I hear it's worse for males) can either detach the mind and wait for it to be over, or (advanced training) emulate the ancient Chinese adage. Or, in place of method A or B, or combined with B if the agent's histrionic ability is up to it, the victim can treat rape as an opportunity to gain an edge over her captors. I'm no great shakes as an actress but I try and, while it has never enabled me to turn the tables on unfriendlies, at least once it kept me alive.

And:

After he became flaccid he said, "Mac, we're wasting our time. This slut enjoys it." "So get out of the way and give the kid another chance. He's ready." "Not yet. I'm going to slap her around, make her take us seriously." He let me have a big one, left side of my face. I yelped.

Now, the existence of a violent, sexual, or in this case sexually violent scene in a book does not, of course, mean anything in and of itself. The author's treatment of the subject, however, is vitally important. In this case, Heinlein's premise is that a violent gang rape is something that a woman (or a man, apparently) should not only be able to shrug off psychologically, but should ideally turn into situation where the victim can gain a tactical advantage. It's a matter of training. (Fortunately, he leaves the details of that training unaddressed.) Later, the main character has no emotional problems that result from the assault and objects mostly to the physical hygiene of one her rapists (the one who slapped her) as the most unpleasant aspect of the event. Within days she's off engaging in partner swapping sexual escapades as if nothing untoward had happened.

Quite simply, this premise is the product of a deeply flawed mind. The intellect that developed and presented such a concept as an ideal is someone with a serious lack of empathy or even basic human decency. It's a repugnant premise, and one that not only should be recognized for what it is, but should color the reputation

of the author and his legacy permanently.

Through the rest of the book we get Heinlein's view of free love. His main character pursues her sexuality vigorously... but only in response to someone pressing her first. Her sexuality is presented as being open and free, but if examined carefully, she responds to sexual advances with deference and submission rather than a frank and open sex drive. Throughout the book her sexuality is at the service of those around her.

Heinlein does have a dynamic that could be used to rationalize his characterization in that his main character is an artificial person, one whose genetic profile has been "upgraded" in various ways from the human standard. Though it is not described as part of that upgrading, those enhancements could, in theory, include a sort of psychological or neurological change. While we do get information about her physical changes on more than one occasion, there is no content about any such changes to her mentality other than the circumstances of being raised in a crèche for similar "artificial" people. So, if one were inclined to give Heinlein the benefit of the doubt, it would have to be based on something outside the actual text.

What's worse, it is here that we run into one of the other flaws of Heinlein's clearly retrograde character and writing. One of the themes of this book is the rights of "artificial persons" in his future world. They are considered second class citizens, and often denied basic rights. His lead character often faces prejudices based on her status as an AP. Heinlein borrows or references any number of racial and social struggles in drawing upon this aspect of his novel.

However, if a reader is inclined to give Heinlein an out on the issue of rape and the sexuality of his main character based on the fact that she has been genetically altered to acclimate things like rape and the sublimation of her sexuality to the will of others then... she's not human. She is a living sex toy. Her desires and behavior are the product of her design. In short, she has no human rights because she actually isn't human. The ire that Heinlein presents at the prejudice against artificial people is, in fact, supported by his portrayal. It's a wildly hypocritical plot device that appears to have completely escaped the author. Maybe it was simply beyond him intellectually, but it doesn't read that way. It reads as a man unable to grasp how fallacious his logic is in the pursuit of weakly considered straw man argument.

The book is filled with such fallacies. In fact, I only made it through the whole thing because I was hoping that there would be some indication that it was a subversive exploration of such fallacies in science fiction literature. I hoped that in the end, even with its stunningly dull rambling sections on politics and finances, the book would wind up being an elaborate parody or satire of the themes that it presented. Sadly, no such reveal ever came up. The book is exactly what it purports to be.

So, on the whole, I'm going to have to give this book a single star, but only because there is no negative star capacity on Goodreads. I can only recommend this book to someone with an academic interest in the decline of an author whose reputation is overblown, his importance over-estimated, and whose work has clearly caught up to a sadly lacking intellect.

Kathryn Flatt says

I read "Friday" many years ago, and only because I forgot to send back the monthly card for the book club I was in and this was a default selection! Yet it stays in a level of memory that is easily retrievable. The main character, Friday, is the kind of heroine that always captures me--strong, resourceful, brave--the kind of

woman protagonist I strive to create in my own books.

The thing that continues to amaze me is how prophetic it is, considering it was published in 1982. The world is a different place in this book. The United States of America has given way to a number of territories run by corporations. In one passage (and I don't think this is really a spoiler), Friday is in the Big Bear Territory (formerly California) and stops at a lottery kiosk. There are dozens of different lottery ticket selections, which seemed rather preposterous when I first read it but has since become part of everyday life. Another premise-turned-fact is what Heinlein calls "S-groups" where individuals build a sort of family without marriage entering into it. Like civil unions, maybe?

"Friday" is a fast-paced read, challenging the reader to keep up with rapid-fire changes in scenery and situation, but isn't a challenge a lot more fun?

Mario says

[was a little weak for my taste, but it was otherwise consistent with the story. Just because I want all of the loose threads to tie together doesn't mean that they should, so while the ending was a bit of a letdown, it was completely appropriate for the story, so I guess it (hide spoiler)]

Malum says

This is one of the most Heinlein books ever Heinleined. Nearly all of his tropes are here: Open relationships/shared partners, promiscuous sex being no big deal and as taboo as shaking hands, shady corporations, war, people fighting for personal freedoms, people hiding from crooked authority figures who are on their trail, noble older men, an emphasis on scholarship and learning, people getting rich by luck and/or tricky shenanigans, anti-bigot sentiments, anti-organized religion sentiments...I could probably go on but you get the idea. It's like he took themes from his greatest hits and smashed them all together here and, if you are a Heinlein fan, you will probably have a pretty good time because you can almost feel him winking at you at you every time he whips out something that he knows you will recognize.

You might not have a GREAT time, though, because this book is not without its problems. The main problem is that the book is just so unfocused. This might be because Heinlein tried to cram so much of his personal philosophy in here, but the plot is almost an after thought. Friday aimlessly goes from one situation to another just to set up set pieces for Heinlein to riff off of.

Another issue is that some people might go into this book thinking that it is full of action. The very beginning of the novel doesn't help dispel this idea, either. But, the further you get into the book, the more you realize that this is most definitely not an action novel. It moves at its own pace and, even though Friday can tear just about anyone to shreds in two seconds, we rarely get to see any of this potential. Mostly we just follow Friday around as she gets into (and out of) relationships and travels around from place to place. Again, if you like Heinlein's body of work this probably won't be a very big deal to you. If you are new to Heinlein, however, I strongly suggest starting with a different novel.

Manny says

Not as good as *Saturday*.

The most memorable passage in *Friday* occurs on page 1. I quote it here in full:

This book is dedicated to Ann, Anne, Barbie, Betsy, Bubbles, Carolyn, Catherine, Dian, Diane, Eleanor, Elinor, Gay, Jeanne, Joan, Judy-Lynn, Karen, Kathleen, Marilyn, Nichelle, Patricia, Pepper, Polly, Roberta, Tamea, Rebel, Ursula, Verna, Vivian, Vonda, Yumiko, and always – semper toujours! – to Ginny. R.A.H.

Ever since reading the book in 1982, I have wondered who these women were, and whether we should think that Heinlein had slept with all of them. This morning, I finally got around to doing some research on the subject. A little googling led me to the astonishingly comprehensive Heinlein Dedications Page, which gives the following key:

Ann = Ann Nourse, wife of Alan Nourse (see Farnham's Freehold dedication).

Anne = Anne Passovoy, a fan and filksinger (from L'Envoi list).

Barbie = Barbara Stine (see Have Space Suit - Will Travel dedication).

Betsy = Betsy Curtis, nurse and correspondent of Heinlein's.

Bubbles = Mildred (Bubbles) Broxon.

Carolyn = a niece, now married to Douglas Ayer.

Catherine = Catherine Sprague de Camp (see Assignment in Eternity dedication).

Dian = Dian Crayne, science fiction author, aka Dian Girard.

Diane = Diane Russell (see The Star Beast dedication).

Eleanor = Eleanor Wood, Heinlein's agent, now agent for the estate.

Elinor = Elinor Busby, wife of F. M. Busby. Co-editor of the fanzine Cry of the Nameless. See also the dedication of The Cat Who Walked Through Walls.

Gay = Gay Haldeman, wife of science fiction writer Joe Haldeman.

Jeanne = Jeanne Robinson, science fiction writer, wife of SF author Spider Robinson (1948 –).

Joan = Joan D. Vinge (1948 –), science fiction author.

Judy-Lynn = Judy Lynn Benjamin Del Rey (1943 – 1986), wife of Lester Del Rey (1915 – 1993).

Karen = Karen Anderson, wife of Poul Anderson (see Podkayne of Mars dedication).

Kathleen = Kathleen Heinlein, Heinlein's brother Rex's wife (see I Will Fear No Evil dedication).

Marilyn = Marilyn Niven, aka "Fuzzy Pink." Wife of Larry Niven (1938 –).

Nichelle = Nichelle Nichols, Star Trek actress, possible model for the President character in "The Happy Days Ahead," which was published in Expanded Universe.

Patricia = Pat Cadigan.

Pepper = Pepper Sorrell, a friend of Heinlein's.

Polly = Polly Freas, wife of Frank Kelly Freas.

Roberta = Roberta Pournelle, wife of Jerry Pournelle (1933 –), himself a dedicatee of The Cat Who Walked Through Walls.

Rebel = Mrs. Albert Trottier.

Tamea = Tamea Dula, a lawyer, who is married to Art Dula, Virginia Heinlein's lawyer.

Ursula= Ursula Le Guin (1929 –), science fiction author.

Verna= Verna Trestrail Smith, daughter of E.E. 'Doc' Smith (see Methuselah's Children dedication).

Vivian = Vivian Markham, married to Robert Markham. They are mentioned in Tramp Royale as they were passengers on the 'Gulf Shipper' at the start of the trip, and the Heinleins stayed with them in Hawaii when they returned to the U.S.

Vonda = Vonda McIntyre (1948 –), science fiction author. Listed as a source of help in Heinlein's article, "Are You A Rare Blood?", and described as a biologist in his notes on that article.

Yumiko = President of Japanese fan club for Heinlein. She is the daughter of Tetsu Yano, Heinlein's Japanese translator and a science fiction writer, who gave a short, but moving, speech at the awarding of the NASA Medal for Distinguished Public Service to Heinlein [Kondo, 309].

Ginny = Virginia Heinlein

Well, if "Ursula" is Ursula K. Le Guin, then I will assume that the answer to my second question is no. I positively refuse to consider other alternatives.

Alex says

I read this book several times as a teenager, because it had sex scenes. I may still have a thing for short-haired women in high-collared jumpsuits. (May. I don't actually know, since that doesn't exist.)

So I dug it back then, even though I realized at the time that it had both storytelling and philosophical problems. But now I'm 40, and this book is terrible.

It has zero plot, first of all. Just no plot at all. It's, like, here's a superspy and she has a bunch of sex, and that's it. Which you can see why that appealed to 13-year-old me, but at this point, y'know, I've been a superspy for years now and I'm over the casual sex. (See, 13-year-old me? Dreams come true!)

Heinlein was some sort of libertarian Ayn Rand fan, so you know how that goes. (It goes stupidly.) People like to say his politics were "complicated," which means "shitty" when it describes politics or relationships. He was militaristic, pro-free love, fascistish, anti-racism. He was one of those dudes who thinks he's a feminist because he's figured out what women should hurry up and act like.

But anyway, let's talk about the elephant in the room. The rape elephant! *Friday* opens with a gang rape, during which our heroine's superspy training allows her to relax and enjoy parts of it, while commenting on each assailant's sexual prowess, and...what? Wow, you just got really mad! You seem incensed! What's the problem? She's a *superspy*. It's not like Heinlein is claiming that *all* women should relax and enjoy being gang raped. Just this one in this book that he imagined and then wrote down and had published. And it's all okay anyway; want a spoiler? (view spoiler) So...see? All good.

Listen, Heinlein is a shitty writer with shitty ideas. If you're thirteen and you want some smut, drop me a comment and I'll suggest some books for you. You can do better than this.

Owen says

The first few pages had me thinking "Wow, when the old goat isn't preaching his agenda of communal polygamist living and actually TELLS A STORY, he makes you remember how good he is at it!" Then he promptly settles in for about 100 pages of agenda and leaves most of the potential that this character had to fizzle. Even though *Friday* is just another incarnation of Heinlein's typical horny-bimbo-with-a-Ph.D. dream girl (and there's nothing wrong with that), her artificial person status, ninja-like ass-kicking skills and glamourously dangerous job should have made for a much more interesting read. When the major political events finally kick in, they seem to serve no purpose other than to provide a subject for endless witty breakfast table conversation after a long night of getting her synthetic freak on with large groups of blandly similar attractive geniuses. I've pretty much lost interest in the story itself and become distracted by a recurring mental image of ol' geriatric Bob as he was typing the manuscript while singing the following version of "My Favorite Things" in the voice of Herbert from *Family Guy*:

*Bimbos with rayguns on top secret missions
omelettes and showers and fun new positions
corporate assassins and pilots who swing
these are a few of my faaay-vorite things!*

Now that I've got that out of my system I would suggest that you go track down one of the books in Arthur Clarke's Venus Prime series - similar concept and much better execution.

Jake Mosely says

Heinlein's age really shows in this one. The most noticeable things about Heinlein's later works are his twin obsessions with free love and breakfast. This book features several pointless sexual encounters and equally pointless detailed descriptions of breakfasts. While the sexuality can come off a bit "creepy old dude" the breakfasts are entertaining, well described slices of an old man's true joys extrapolated into his story. I really would only recommend this one for those with previous Heinlein experience or folks wanting help planning breakfasts.

R.S. Carter says

A friend of mine slipped me this soft cover at my book club. He thought I would enjoy it. He was right.

While the exploits of our genetically-engineered superhuman in love, sex and war are fun to read about, Heinlein's futuristic milieu's are always the front runner. The world is broken and the worst of the extremes have begun vying for power. What side would you rather be on? The fascist socialists who kill anyone with a savings account or the theocracy hell bent on removing rights from everyone except white men?

At least sex isn't an issue, and there's plenty of it. Similar to *Stranger in a Strange Land*, Heinlein has created a world with open, free love, communal sex groups, and perfectly acceptable one-night stands. It's all about the love. Friday manages to bed nearly every single character she meets, male or female - if she doesn't kill him/her first.

Sigh - I love the way Heinlein thinks. So much of this book seems be relevant to today - at least regarding the current political and extreme polarization. Too bad Heinlein's sexually liberated future isn't reflected today. Oh, what fun that would be!

Lyn says

Two months before the 1982 Ridley Scott film *Blade Runner* was released, Robert A. Heinlein first published *Friday*.

Blade Runner was the film adaption of Philip K. Dicks' 1968 novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* but Heinlein may also have been influenced by PKD, in that *Friday* concerns the creation of "enhanced" humans.

Both works also feature and highlight a strong female lead character. *Friday* for Heinlein and Priss in *Blade Runner* have created in speculative fiction an archetypal female: inhumanly strong, sexually active and dancing to the beat of a different drummer. This archetype may be seen in other later works like *Neuromancer* and *Snow Crash*.

Heinlein readers will not be shocked to read page after page of sexual discussions, sex talk and long dissertations of sexual freedoms. What was edgy and fresh in *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress* and *Stranger in a Strange Land* in the 60s had become less so by the early 80s. This was still better than the studied creepiness Heinlein had devolved to in other of his later works.

Like many of his works, this is also a vehicle whereby RAH can explore and comment upon many of his ubiquitous themes like family structures, government (particularly a libertarian aversion) and social mores. This is also like *Snow Crash* in that Heinlein has described a balkanized, anarcho-capitalistic world order. Fans will also be glad to see much mention of Heinlein's Past History universe and in style and pace this is also reminiscent of his work *The Cat Who Walks Through Walls*.

Fast moving and fun, *Friday* is a shining light in his later canon.

Mike says

Not my favorite Heinlein book, and not his best, but certainly not the worst. After *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*, much of his works started becoming a little redundant in their characterizations ('good' women are always super smart and sexy and love to fuck, 'good' men are always brave and strong, both have frontier ideals and want a free society of people just like them who all fuck each other without jealousy and live in group marriages) and a little slower in their plot machinations (they spend more time on characterizations of people that, if you've read Heinlein of this period, you're already familiar with).

That said, I don't find any of it sexist at all (quite the opposite), and I don't see how you can see it like that. He was also one of the first to recognize that computers will become conscious with emotions, and to develop a comprehensive future history. But if you're unfamiliar with him, read his 50's and 60's novels first (esp *The Moon is a Harsh Mistress*, *Podkayne of Mars*, *Starship Troopers*, and _then_ *Stranger in a Strange Land*, and maybe some juveniles after that). He is definitely great though and I intend to read all his books someday, and btw, I did enjoy this one. :)

Terence says

[which reduces the eponymous *Friday* to a barefoot-and-pregnant housewife of one of the men who raped her in the first chapter (hide spoiler)]
