

SPECULATIVE FICTION REVIEW by Stephanie Young

TITLE *Mendoza in Hollywood*
AUTHOR Kage Baker
PUBLISHER Tor
COPYRIGHT 2000
PRINTING 2006
COVER ART Paul Youll

This is the third book in "The Company" series and continues the unique voice that Baker has brought to this series. The Company is a creation of Dr. Zeus who, in the 24th century has discovered time travel and the ability to build cyborgs. The catch is that you cannot travel forward in time except to return to your origin if you have gone back. You also cannot bring anything forward in time.

This requires the Company to create places where items of value can be stored and then taken care as time goes forward. Mendoza is an operative for the company. She is a botanist and this book takes place shortly after *Sky Coyote*, leaving our heroine in California at the time of the gold rush. The opening is an interview about what happened and how Mendoza came to be involved in the death of several mortals; a no-no for operatives. The rest of the book relates the events leading up to this in the first person of Mendoza.

The first half of the story is somewhat dry with a whole bunch of Los Angeles and Southern California history tossed in, especially Hollywood film history, which I am sure Baker had fun researching. It is interesting but I found it bit overdone. Once the big conspiracy involving the Canadians, British and the Confederacy is unveiled, it gets interesting - especially when an old character returns to Mendoza's life (sort of). The action picks up, and the emotional strength of story takes over to lead to a compelling ending and the wonder of what the next story will be.

I like the quirky and snappy writing in this series and it may not be for everyone but I enjoy it. This book is easily as good as the first two and I recommend you read *In the Garden of Eden* before reading this. I am looking forward to reading the next book in the series.

Rating  ⭐⭐⭐⭐⭐