

Free Live Free

The SF-Lovers list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 09 Jan 1987

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fernando gouvea — 09 Jan 1987, 00:57

matt at inuxg.UUCP writes:

Now, does anyone want to discuss [...] why it's so difficult trying to get through "Free Live Free" even though it's written in the most accessible language Gene Wolfe has ever produced?

Funny you should mention this. I bought Free Live Free a couple of weeks ago and after four nights of struggle set it aside. And this is from someone who LOVED TBOTNS series (I have read it four times). Wolfe seems to draw up an interesting bunch of characters in FLF but they (the characters) don't go anywhere, and they are going nowhere _very_ slowly.

Maybe I was expecting something more like Soldier of the Mist in that not only are the characters interesting but the situations themselves are interesting and layered in complexity.

I guess I'm strange, but I liked it quite a bit. I really liked the way Wolfe took these character stereotypes (all four main characters are types we've all seen before) and brought them to life. I found the book funny, and light, and pleasant to read. The first time through, I was a little frustrated by the convoluted ending, but the second time, when I was no longer worried about figuring out what was going on, I enjoyed the book a lot.

To be sure, this is minor Wolfe, but I found it quite readable. I agree that Soldier of the Mist is something far more substantial, but I'm surprised people are having trouble finishing Free Live Free. Maybe it's just that I like Wolfe and his writing so much that I don't see the problems you all see. Those out there reading this, I vote you give FLF a try.

Fernando