

Handle this, Messiah.

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 19 Nov 1999

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Tony Ellis — 19 Nov 1999, 13:26

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

In the Christian tradition Jesus suffered and died to save mankind. Severian the messiah destroyed mankind, then got to go sit on the beach drinking margaritas and watching the girls go by, writing his memoirs and basking in his new-found godhead. I just don't see any meaningful comparison, in or out of a religious context.

"The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." Revelation 14:10-11.

Alex David Groce wrote:

<snip
an awful lot
/snip>

When he writes that he lies to himself, the reader is given warning that all that he relates cannot be trusted to be true...

This is true, but I think it's just about as true of David Copperfield, Ishmael, the nameless narrator of THE BROTHER KARAMAZOV, the old "authorial persona as narrator," and Huckleberry Finn as it is of Severian.

And Pip, and Holden Caulfield, and Graves' Claudius, and... Yes. We take it as read, surely, that whatever a first-person narrator tells us is filtered through his own perceptions and prejudices. It's a game the author plays with the reader.

If this is all you mean by Severian "lying to us", then I say again, I'm on your side, Roy. But that's not what I personally would call it, and I don't understand why you're singling-out Severian for something every first-person narrator does.