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The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 15 Apr 2001

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akt — 15 Apr 2001, 19:36

Quoth William Ansley:

I have just finished listening to a series of taped lectures called `_The Life and Writings of Geoffrey Chaucer_*`. Somewhere in this series, the lecturer talks about how Chaucer inserts himself as a character, the narrator, in `_The Canterbury Tales_`. He questions how much we should believe the narrator and says, "Chaucer may be the first unreliable narrator in English literature." This gave me quite a start.

Well, well. Wolfe has an even longer and more distinguished literary legacy than I realized.

It is important to distinguish between the unreliable narrator, a creature of the author, and the unreliable author. In Chaucer's case, the lecturer may well be correct. (It's been quite a while since I've read!) But the fascinating thing, for the few of us who have been following John Crowley's Aegypt series, is that the `*author*`, especially in `-Daemonomania-`, appears to be unreliable, in a `*third-person*` narration. Unreliable does not mean careless--I have been complaining about carelessness in RttW and I don't want the two confused--unreliability in a narrator or an author is deliberate. But different.

-alga

Adam Stephanides — 19 Apr 2001, 09:56 · follows akt

on 4/15/01 6:36 PM, akt at attglobal.net at akt at attglobal.net wrote:
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Since Ranjit has given us permission to discuss Crowley here, could you tell us what you're referring to?

--Adam