

alga's experiences with 5HC

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 14 Apr 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3146>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 14 Apr 2002, 01:11

Alga wrote:

In my own case, I fell for 5H because of its perversity and cruelty. I think (I really don't recall) that I first read only the first novella, which I found (and find) dazzling, a model of what science fiction could do if it grew up. (Does that mean I consider perversity and cruelty to be grown up?)

Well iirc you don't like (Harold Bloom's favorite) A VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS enough to re-read it because it is too much in the perversity and cruelty dept. So maybe the 5HC novella marks the practical limit for your tastes? Terminus est, as it were.

I don't

think it was till after I was hooked by the New Sun that I read the second and third novellas, which take some patience, but when I did and put them together in my mind--well, it's quite an achievement.

This is the bit that still surprises me! Because you were so enthused about "Tracking Song," I find it hard to remember that you don't like "'A Story' by John V. Marsch." I always expect that this would be your =favorite= of the three novellas in 5HC, because, in my mind, at least, I tend to think: "A Story" is like "Tracking Song" and "The Tale of the Boy Called Frog."

You don't have to explain or anything, alga! I'm just saying that it surprises me, which in turn shows my shaky grasp on things.

I can see differences between "A Story" and "Tracking Song" and "Boy Called Frog," and among them, or maybe among the differences I can't see, must loom a . . . well, a world of difference in your eyes.

=mantis=

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Alice K. Turner — 14 Apr 2002, 14:07 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

From: "Michael Andre-Driussi" <mantis at siriusfiction.com>

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Not fair: Arcturus is crude beside 5H, and the violence is cartoonish and nasty (though not nearly so dumb as in Bloom's own book, Lucifer). 5H's violence is subtle and dreadful; if you recall I also loved "Shayol" for the sheer ingenuity (and perversity) of its cruelty. New Sun has some of the same flavor. especially in the first book. To admit the dreadful truth, I even liked the Elric books when they first started coming out--of course I was pretty young then. So I guess I'm sort of attracted to cruelty, but totally repelled by coarseness and crude violence. Come to think of it, I like J.M. Coetzee for some of the same reasons, though there is (for me) more pathos in his writing (the good books--Ratty, you would like some of Coetzee; if he's not a Christian, he does a good imitation of one).

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You have far too good a memory! I myself don't recall not liking that story...er, may I say as gracefully as possible that I have changed my mind? I love that story. In fact maybe I'll read it again today.

You don't have to explain or anything, alga! I'm just saying that it surprises me, which in turn shows my shaky grasp on things.

Oh yes I do! And you're the least shaky of us. I have just proved my own shakiness.

-alga