

Castaway, Doors, and the Ancient Mariner

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 10 Feb 2003

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StoneOx17 — 10 Feb 2003, 14:59

I think Charles Reed is absolutely right when he sees echoes of the Ancient Mariner in Castaway. I just want to comment that the Ancient Mariner is also referenced a couple of times in TAD, as well. First, at the Grand Hotel, when Green sees a ship motionless, fighting a headwind, this makes him think of a poem: "A teacher had read it to him in school: 'As idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean.'" Second, when he is thinking about streetcars, he thinks "They had been cheap, energy efficient, and nonpolluting. Yet they had been done away with, and a hundred harmful gadgets had been allowed to stay." To my ear, this echoes Coleridge: The many men, so beautiful! / And they all dead did lie: And a thousand thousand slimy things / lived on; and so did I.

One thematic parallel of The Ancient Mariner to TAD seems fairly clear: Green's life is going nowhere until he finds religion/meaning/Lara. I don't see any further connections of the poem to There Are Doors, but they may just be more deeply hidden.

--Stone Ox