

Fee Fi Ho Hum: Wolfe's Wizard

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 05 Nov 2004

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4247>

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mournings glory — 05 Nov 2004, 16:24

As long as others are doing so, will now weigh in with my own early and spoiler-free review.

After rather enjoying *_The Knight_*, I found myself pretty much slogging my way through its followup, with my biggest problem being the endless stretches of uninteresting dialogue. What, pray tell, ever happened to the Wolfe who could craft dialogue in service of his characters? Isn't he, after all, the writer who created (to pick the first three examples that come to mind) the beautiful iambic lilt of the Hierodules or the crazy quantum poetry of Hethor or the rough-and-ready cant of Hildegryn the Badger? Now instead he ascribes either ordinary, dull, plainspeak to his characters or worse yet, attempts to render dialect or phonetic variations of impaired speech. I almost stopped reading *_Wizard_* when I came to the chapter with the broken-nosed knight and every time Uns opened his mouth (mercifully, such occasions were few and far between) I skipped ahead. Ditto for the too-frequent turgid stretches of the book, which I also skimmed, waiting for something--*anything*--to happen, and by the time I finished page 477 I was more exhausted than exhilarated. Maybe I'm just too girly a reader to enjoy a book written about young men (and a plethora of interchangeable squires) seeking knighthood and their quest for honor. Dunno. Else it's just one of those mileage-may-vary-things, depending on who's driving.

But also, like Mr. Arimani, I found myself hoping to spend more time with the Overcyns (it seems to me they exert a larger presence in the introductory list of characters than they do in the actual narrative) and I was especially disappointed that the Lady, who seems to loom large in the background, does not grace us with anything substantial. As for Wolfe's use of the you-are-what-eat Osterlings, thank heavens the inhumis similar attributes weren't that underexploited.

My husband, seeing the book's small print and long page count, opined that it seemed like Tor was trying to cram two books into one, and while I'm grateful to the publisher for the savings to my pocketbook, I think my readerly interests would have been better served if WK had been released in three or four books, the same way the various sun series were. In fact, if I ever get around to picking up Sir Able's narrative again (I'm hoping the list's imminent discussion of the book will repique my interest), this is how I'll tackle it--in four discrete chunks, with a few days in between each segment.

Lastly, among the encomiums on the back cover, I believe there's one, though it's uncredited, by our own Mr. Blattid. If so, sir, congratulations; it's too bad Tor couldn't have worked your name in somehow, given how personal your testimony is. (Reading the NYRSF entry, who, we're left to wonder, is this oft-repeated "I"?)

(And while we're on the subject of encomiums, is or is not Neil Gaiman's blurb about as lame as possible. I mean, I know he's a superstar and everything, but it's almost as if he were too dispirited after reading the book to come up with anything pithy or clever. On the bright side, however, at least he didn't spell it *kewl* <gr>)

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