

Pennington Covers; Suzanne Delage; Recommendations

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 09 May 1998

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David_Lebling — 09 May 1998, 12:02

Covers:

The Pennington covers made me think of The Dying Earth.

Suzanne Delage:

I was prompted to reread this one, and I like the "universe conspiring against them" explanation, though immortality and vampirism are fun, too.

The "extraordinary thing" is that he has no memory of ever meeting this woman whose life is parallel to his, yet it's beyond the realm of possibility that he never saw her or met her. When he merely glimpses her daughter, who looks just like her, he's bowled over. He must have seen and been bowled over by Suzanne at some point in his earlier life.

You could erect an edifice of supposition much like that whereby Severian¹ is transformed into Severian²; who has kept these star-crossed lovers apart for their entire lives? What eventuality does their non-meeting prevent? Is their never-to-be-born child a new Hitler, an Anti-Christ?

This, I think, is the Borgesian reading of the story.

Or maybe she's just a vampire...

Recommendations:

I heartily agree on The Circus of Dr. Lao; the affinity of the Green Man with Apollonius and the Hound of the Hedges is obvious in retrospect. Apollonius's fortune-telling is great.

I'd like to add Keith Roberts' Pavane and The Chalk Giants. Roberts has done other stuff, but these two seem to me to be the ones Wolfe fans will appreciate the most.

Christopher Priest's The Inverted World is an interesting counterpoint to "Tracking Song."

Not just Riddley Walker, but anything by Russell Hoban is worth reading. Most of his stuff is "for children," but The Mouse and His Child and La Corona and the Tin Frog are good reading for any age. If you have children, and you don't already know the "Frances" books, run, do not walk, to the nearest library or bookstore and get them. They are nearly perfect.

--viz

(david_lebling at avid.com)

Peter Westlake — 10 May 1998, 23:21 · follows David_Lebling

At 12:02 1998/05/09 -0400, David_Lebling at avid.com wrote:

Recommendations:

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Kaeti and Company is interesting too. It's several stories, in which leading characters are played by a kind of metacharacter, Kaeti, who discusses them with the author between stories.

Also

Molly Zero requires careful reading, though more for nuances of character than to understand the plot.

Christopher Priest's The Inverted World is an interesting counterpoint to "Tracking Song."

Hey, I could read that again, after developing my literary detective skills by reading Wolfe, and see if I understand the ending! Not that one is meant to, I suspect.

Not just Riddley Walker, but anything by Russell Hoban is worth reading. Most of his stuff is "for children," but The Mouse and His Child and La Corona and the Tin Frog are good reading for any age.

A caveat: The Mouse and his Child might be frightening for young children. It is quite frank about animals eating each other, and there are some moments of sudden violence as a result. Save it till they're old enough to appreciate that it's one of the best books of all time. Well, one of *my* favourites, anyway.

I'd like to add a recommendation: In Limbo, by Christopher Evans.

Peter.