
Subject: Zelazny, Brust

Posted by [stever](#) on Wed, 12 Jun 1985 12:46:15 GMT

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Article-I.D.: topaz.2267

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From: stever@cit-vax (Steve Rabin)

First off, LoL is not Zelazny at his best. Just because a book has an opinion on everything does not make it good. For Zelazny at his best try "Doorway in the Sand", "Isle of the Dead" or "To Die in Italbar" (more of the recurring pantheon in all RZs books...). I can only explain this with the hypothesis that RZ was a devout Hindu in a prior life.

Having just finished "Trumps" (which I liked a lot), I conclude that RZ cannot deal with computers and should exclude them from future plots. Coils sucked (S's fault?). Changeling was weak. On the other hand "My Name is Legion" (the short story, in the collection of the same name) is the best short I've ever read, but it deals with robot hardware rather than computer software, and I think the hand waving about software is where RZ falls down.

I also have stylistic problems with RZ. When I read a book like Tanith Lee's "To Kill The Dead", I see a power of characterization RZ cannot touch. Maybe RZs so busy making statements on things (remember Tokyo Bay?) he has no time for Dick-ian trips. When is the last time you've been surprised by RZ, the way Wolfe, Rucker or Brust (more later) surprises? Has RZ ever had a truly morbid character? (Shadowjack sought vengeance which is a quite different thing) Can he write about love? Of his last dozen books I'd say half have been lemons.

Brust, ahm yes. Your style seems derivative of RZ's, and shares the same weaknesses. On the other hand the names you choose for places and characters are indeed inspired. I enjoyed Jhereg and Yendi. You are willing and able to undercut my response to your prose - and seem quite sensitive to my mood. One passage had me chuckling for half an hour. I started in on TRiH, but it was less gripping, and I've not yet found time to finish it or to review Jhereg/Yendi. I hope you can turn your talent to deeper issues and meaning without losing humor and narrative.

You said audience participation was what ruined Rocky Horror. Well isn't audience participation the big draw at Dead Shows? (btw I trade concert tapes..) While I agree with you that RHPS is in ruins, RHPS had nothing going for it even before audience participation. RHPS was ruined in conception.

-s

Subject: Re: Zelazny, Brust
Posted by [blklly](#) on Fri, 21 Jun 1985 22:15:44 GMT
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Article-I.D.: uwmacc.1238
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References:
Reply-To: blklly@uwmacc.UUCP (Bill Kelly)
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In article stever@cit-vax writes:

>I also have stylistic problems with RZ. When I read a book like
>Tanith Lee's "To Kill The Dead", I see a power of characterization
>RZ cannot touch.
>...Has RZ ever had a truly morbid character?
>(Shadowjack sought vengeance which is a quite different thing)

Speaking as a Zelazny fan, I think most of his protagonists are pretty much the same character, a male loner, sardonic, somewhat of a rebel, in books like Doorways in the Sand, Amber series (Corwin) and Trumps (Merlin), Roadways(? I have trouble remembering the titles), Changeling(?), The Dying Land, even short stories like the unicorn/chess one in the Unicorn Variation collection. Even Jack of Shadows is a variation on the same theme, though more of a variation than usual.

I just happen to like reading about this character!

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Bi|| {allegra, ihnp4, seismo}!uwvax!uwmacc!blklly
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