

April 30

Finished Robert Aragon's The Ringwraith Overlords. What a great book!

June 26

School's been out for some time and I've decided to read The Ringwraith Overlords again. I've never read another book like it. It means more to me than anything I've ever read!

June 28

I actually cried when I finished it. I've cried sometimes over music, but never like this over a book. I thought that now that I was reading it for the second time I'd know what to expect and wouldn't be moved so much. But I was! My god, this book has a strange power over me.

July 16

Loaned The Ringwraith Overlords to Donna. Know she'll love it.

August 20

Donna says she hasn't had time to read more than a couple of chapters. Strange. I read it the first time in a couple of days.

September 12

I leave for college tomorrow and am taking The Ringwraith Overlords with me. If Donna hasn't finished it by now, she never will, anyway.

October 17

No doubt about it, Professor Cohn is the sharpest guy I've ever met. I never realized how much I was suffering from intellectual starvation back home. Wonder if he's read The Ringwraith? I'd give anything to know what he thought of it.

October 23

Made a search in the catacombs of the library today and looked up all the old reviews of The Ringwraith. Seems that W. H. Auden thought it was the masterpiece of the 20th century while Edmund Wilson thought it was a lot of boring tripe. There's something wrong here. I wonder if they were talking about the same book. Most of the reviews, though, were highly favorable.

November 2

Well, I made an all-out effort to get over to Stu exactly what The Ringwraith Overlords meant to me. Sometimes I wonder how I can stand to room with such an ass. I read him the passage about where they "called upon the One and the world was changed" and he just thought it was pretentious and hyper-romantic. I admit it's romantic, in that it's a romantic epic and all, but it's anything but pretentious. Like a fool, though, I went on, and it seemed like the more enthusiasm I showed the more alienated he was from the book. Finally, he started making completely unjustified criticisms of it, without even having read it. Well, what can you expect from a guy who's lived in Brooklyn all his life?

November 13

I'm writing a paper on The Ringwraith Overlords for English 1.

November 19

Cohn finally left himself open today and I rushed right in. He said Homer's Iliad was, without compare, the greatest epic ever written. I agreed with him for the most part but I didn't like the "without compare" so I spoke to him after class.



about The Ringwraith and asked him if he'd read it. He said he hadn't but seemed quite interested so I offered to loan him my copy. Great!

November 20

Gave Cohn The Ringwraith to read today. We talked about it in his office for about half an hour. I guess I overbowed him a little with my enthusiasm; he said he didn't think any book could be quite that good. Well, he'll see.

November 21

Cohn had just read one chapter. Said it smacked of Anthony Trollope. Anthony Trollope! Said to give him more time to mull it over.

December 4

Cohn hadn't read any more. Was too busy grading papers, he said. I wonder if he'll like it as much reading it in spurts like this.

December 11

Cohn was still just in Chapter Three. Said to come back after Christmas vacation. I think maybe I should wait awhile; I get the impression I'm getting on his nerves.

December 27

What is it about The Ringwraith which fascinates me so much? Now that I'm home for Christmas I can see things a little more clearly. The environment in which I was brought up seems to have a lot to do with it. I sit here looking at that great painting on the wall over the piano and see now how much a part in my life that painting has played. A picture of the Black Forest at twilight -- very Wagnerian, terribly romantic. Has that painting been just a part of the whole of my environment in shaping my temperament? True enough, I seem to be a born romantic, but, if so, then perhaps my judgement of The Ringwraith isn't quite as objective as it should be. After all, shouldn't a work of art be judged completely objectively, with all possible autobiographical influences purged from the criticism? I think I'll read The Ringwraith again when I get back to school and see what I think of it now in light of this new knowledge.

January 10

Crap. Cohn wasn't able to get to The Ringwraith over the holidays and says he probably won't be finished till well after the next term begins.

March 5

Finally got the damn thing back from Cohn. He seemed to be happy to be through with it just so I'd stop pestering him. Said it had many good points but thought it was a bit too derivative.

March 13

Re-read The Ringwraith. It's amazing how eclectic Aragon is. There are bits and pieces from Milton, from Browning, from Cynewulf, from Rabelais, The Dream of the Rood, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight ... Good Lord, it has no end!

March 20

Went through the book thoroughly and made up a huge cross-index of all the possible influences I could find.

April 3

Writing my term paper for Cohn -- "The Eclecticism and Esotericism of Robert Aragon in Chapter III of his The Ringwraith Overlords."

-- Bill