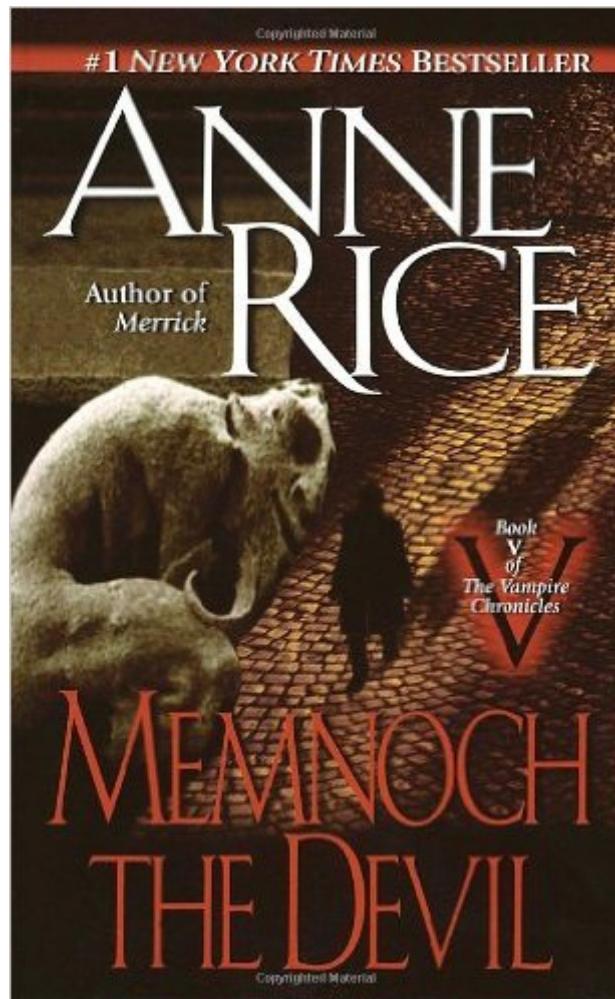


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Memnoch The Devil (Vampire Chronicles)



Synopsis

"STARTLING . . . FIENDISH . . . MEMNOCH'S TALE IS COMPELLING."--New York Daily News"Like Interview with the Vampire, Memnoch has a half-maddened, fever-pitch intensity. . . . Narrated by Rice's most cherished character, the vampire Lestat, Memnoch tells a tale as old as Scripture's legends and as modern as today's religious strife."--Rolling Stone"SENSUAL . . . BOLD, FAST-PACED."--USA Today"Rice has penned an ambitious close to this long-running series. . . . Fans will no doubt devour this."--The Washington Post Book World"MEMNOCH THE DEVIL OFFERS PASSAGES OF POETIC BRILLIANCE."--Playboy"[MEMNOCH] is one of Rice's most intriguing and sympathetic characters to date. . . . Rice ups the ante, taking Lestat where few writers have ventured: into heaven and hell itself. She carries it off in top form."--The Seattle Times

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have purchased this book over 10 times throughout my lifetime. The reason for this was I wanted to give it to others so they can understand why it captured me so. This book made me question a lot of things when I first read it about 15 years ago. It challenged what I thought I knew about religion, life, and everything anyone has ever told me was true. It led me down a path of spiritual enlightenment, questioning and self reflection that ultimately led me to a place where I finally feel at peace with such things. I feel this is much like Anne Rice herself has done throughout her life. If you are looking for a typical vampire novel, this isn't what you want. This is something much different and

unexpectedly placed withing the vampire chronicles. The character of Lestat is the perfect creature to meet with the devil and go through this adventure however, and his unique lavish selfishness, and the depictions of hell and Memnoch's story about "the truth behind the devil" really conflict with Lestat at this point in the story. After the events of the Queen of the damned, where the main characters face creatures of unbelievable power and cruelty Memnoch the Devil offers readers another confrontation with the all powerful, and one that not only deeply affects the character, but the reader as well. Not for the weak of will.

Just when I thought that this series couldn't get any deeper, MEMNOCH THE DEVIL became the next book to read in this incredibly deep, rich and complex vampire mythology. I had previously heard from some reviewers that the previous book in this series, THE TALE OF THE BODY THEIF, is where the series begins to take a turn for the worse and that this book is where it all bottomed out and became virtually unreadable and to those reviewers I ask: "Did we read the same books?" If those reviewers were looking for a straight up vampire novel, then yes, they were most likely disappointed then for that aspect. If the highly religious read this book and are the type that can't separate their personal beliefs from reading a work of fiction, then yes, they were also probably highly offended by this book and would in turn not find any kind of enjoyment out of it either. MEMNOCH THE DEVIL is a controversial work, without question, as it takes us on an examination of the Christian religion, with Lestat being the central character that is faced with his grandest moment yet of self reflection and questioning of everything he ever thought true in his 200+ years of existence as the Devil himself takes him through the story of God, Jesus, Heaven, Hell and creation. Do I agree with the views in this book? Do I think this book is a revelation of what is REALLY going on in the spiritual world? The answer to both of those questions would be no. I do however think that Anne Rice wrote an extraordinarily deep work of fiction, so deep that if one finds themselves open-minded enough, it may in fact place some imaginative wonder into your thinking about just how little we really know of the afterlife, creation, how we got here etc; the likes of which you may have never pondered before. And to me, stories like that, are the very best written works you can possibly read! To those doubting this book just read it! You may find yourself being very impressed like I was. I enjoyed this book immensely, so much in fact that it may be my favorite one of the series so far!

Question: Why on earth should Rice (or any author) be expected to limit herself to writing one type of novel, in one style, on one note? For that seems to be what the negative reviews here seem to be

insisting she do. A sampling of these would turn up such words and phrases as "it's boring," "this isn't a vampire novel," "this isn't Lestat," "it's out of character," "offensive," and many other such (let's be polite here) well-intentioned chidings...all of which sound rather put out, and many of which miss the point entirely. First, let's take the notions that this isn't a vampire novel, that it isn't Lestat, and that his behavior is out of character, and dispense with them right off. One: It seems to me that this is a vampire novel, as it does have its share of vampires haunting the pages. Two: If you study the overall arc of Lestat's character, from Interview through to Memnoch, the overall effect is a softening of Lestat's hard, conscienceless demeanor -- The Tale of the Body Thief really brings this to the fore, in fact; read it again and see if I'm wrong. Memnoch's characterization of Lestat in my mind is perfectly in keeping with what's gone before. As to the idea that the characters do not act in keeping with their usual presentations in Rice's previous vampire novels, well, ask yourself this: If you met, in the span of a few hours, both God and Satan, and had your mind blown by both Heaven and Hell, AND had your entire belief system turned upside-rightside-inside-out, how rationally would YOU act? My guess is not very, and that was part of the point Rice was trying to make: we're far too comfortable in our various faiths, and that kind of complacency is very dangerous. We need to question more, Rice is saying. We need to ask hard questions -- even if we don't like the answers. Which brings us nicely to addressing what a lot of people say about this novel: That it's offensive, that it portrays God as a bumbling incompetent and Lucifer as the wronged party...and worse, that he's attractive to boot. Well, let me just say this about that: This is a work of FICTION, folks. A novel. A big fat lie, told to amuse and amaze you in your unoccupied moments, nothing more. If you're offended by the notion of a fictional vampire sinking his teeth into the fictional neck of a fictional Christ on the cross (note that Lestat makes no appearances in the Bible!), then maybe your faith isn't as strong as you think it is. At the very least you need to get out more often. And so Memnoch is handsome, attractive and persuasive. So what? Isn't that what makes evil such a siren call -- that so much of the time it is attractive, tempting, seductive? Would Eve ever have been tempted if the serpent hadn't used honeyed words and gentle persuasion? Finally, God is not presented as a bumbler here so much as he is cold and indifferent to his own creation -- and haven't many of us suffered from that suspicion in our darkest moments? "Where were you when I made the world?" God asks Job when Job questions him -- in other words, I have a plan and you don't know the half of it, pal. The thought that God knows what he's doing, but doesn't trust us enough to let us know too, has driven plenty of people to question, even doubt, their own faith. (And I'll fill you in on a little secret, too. It's all right to question and doubt. I'm sure God has his doubts about us sometimes. It's when you let those doubts drive you from God that you become endangered.) Okay,

what's next? Is Memnoch boring? Well, maybe -- if you have the attention span of a gnat. (Thought I was going to be polite here; oh well...) If you go into this novel expecting typical Lestat-type adventures, you will be disappointed. If, however, you pry that cover open without any expectations other than reading a well-told, intelligently-thought-out tale, you may just be in for a treat. Yes, it is a tale that's been told before, notably by Milton in Paradise Lost ("It is better to reign in Hell than to serve in Heaven"), but Rice comes up with a few wrinkles even Milton never thought of. This is not your average chapter of the Vampire chronicles (thank goodness)...which brings me back around to my original question. If Rice had written a more typical Lestat adventure, I'd be willing to bet that the reviews on this page would be even more scathing: "We've read this before! How about something new? It's the same thing over and over again!" etc. It's easy -- far too easy -- to tell the same story over and over again, as witness the novels of Sidney Sheldon, Jackie Collins, and (God save us and preserve us) Barbara Cartland. Rice could make a comfortable living doing that -- but instead she comes at us (or at the very least tries to) with a different perspective nearly every time, with a different story to tell. This is how writers become better at the craft: they try new things, explore new ideas, stake out new territory in their lives and minds. This, by the way, is also how people expand their horizons, by leaving behind the old and familiar for the new and uncharted. I'm proud to say my horizons were expanded by Anne Rice's bold, daring departure from her usual fare, and hope for more of the same in the future.P.S.: You want to read a really boring novel? Try something by Sheldon & co. I guarantee a fast cure for insomnia. Remain In Light -- Phrodoe.

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