

Bleak House - Why I love it so

Friday, 18 August 2006

After watching the TV series a second time, an explanation as to why I beg you to read the novel.

First, John Jarndyce is a trukly wonderful character. Generous, honest, prepared to sacrifice his love of one kind for one of another. I've tried to model my life on his example. And Dennis Lawson gave a brilliant performance in a very, very difficult role.

For a second, Esther - my favourite literary heroine; she, like John, is willing to do her duty and sacrifice one love for another. Her reward is - she gets both.

Thirdly - the wonderful and accurate view of the legal system and the judiciary. I've experienced this first hand. At one point in HMP Elmley, reading Bleak House for the umpteenth time, I actually recognised VHOLES as my ex lawyer.

Fourth, noble Lady Dedlock (superbly portrayed in the TV series by Gillian Anderson, 8 million times better than in her X Files).

And a dozen of lesser but wonderful people; Little Joe the crossings sweeper, magnificent flawed Guppy; fabulous Bucket (I adore Alun Armstrong, with Jim Broadbent one of my favourite British actors); noble Sergeant George; dippy Miss Flite; Tulkinghorn; I could go on forever. But my very favourite; when Spontaneous Combustion takes off Krook; and the wonderful Smallweeds (Shake Me Up Judy)...

Oh what a wonderful novel!
The best ever in our language.