

REVIEW OF *THE TYRANT BARU CORMORANT*

To us a soul is not a great ineffable mystery. People are, after all, not very mysterious. A soul is simply the text of a person's inner law, and a mind is the act of reading that law into the world.¹

If you had to summarize your behavior—your real behavior, not what you aspire to—as a set of written principles, what would they be?

Earlier in the series, this might have been an easy exercise for the protagonist Baru. In this book, she's more muddled. She seems to have learned *something* from her confrontations with Tain Shir, but it's not clear what. Her character arc begins at *manipulative mastermind willing to do anything to achieve her goals* and ends at *manipulative mastermind willing to do **almost** anything to achieve her goals*, without making her newfound boundaries particularly precise. The series continues to play with interesting ideas around individual responsibility vs systemic forces, but doesn't tie the threads together as much as I'd hoped. I think this book was too long for how little the plot really resolved. Admittedly, impatience with very long stories is part of why I don't read fantasy very often.

¹Seth Dickinson, *The Tyrant Baru Cormorant*, First edition, The Masquerade (New York: Tor, 2020), 174.