

Latin Inscription

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 25 Nov 1998

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1276>

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Nigel Price — 25 Nov 1998, 18:50

Greetings, fellow Lupines...

Mantis comments...

Here's a Latin inscription that seems to be from a building facing roughly south or west, in the general Hyde Park area (or an alternate reality Hyde Park area):

IAM*REDIT*ET*VIRGO*REDEUNT*SATURNIA*REGNA

As you all know, I don't understand Latin. After some study, this line looks to me to be something like "Now [blank] and Virgin they return the reign of Juno."

But "redit" can mean "the matter comes up again," making the line "Now the matter comes up again and the Girl/Maiden they return to the throne of Juno" (Girl Power! <g>).

If this inscription is real, I'd like to know about the building/monument it adorns. In any event, I encourage those who know Latin to tell me what it says!

OK, I'm new to the list, so I've no idea what might be the connection between all this and Gene Wolfe, but the inscription is taken from Virgil's fourth Eclogue and means:

"Now the Virgin returns; now Saturn is king again"

The Virgin in the quotation is probably Astraea, the goddess of justice who fled from the earth to the heavens (where she became the constellation Virgo) at the end of the Golden Age, which was of course ruled over by Saturn.

Lots of argument about the exact interpretation of this eclogue, and the mysterious baby whose birth is supposed to bring the return of the Golden Age, but the general consensus is that it is a prophecy of a coming age of prosperity for the Roman Emperor under the rule of an Augustinian offspring.

Mediaeval scholars interpreted the whole thing as a prophecy of the coming of Christ, who was of course born during the reign of Augustus. This led to a bizarre belief amongst some that Virgil was a sort of paraChristian prophet, which in turn led to the common use of the Aeneid for sortilege - pick a passage at random, and it somehow held the key to your future, provided you could interpret it correctly.

I'm still getting the measure of this group, but I hope to ask all sorts of Lupine questions in due course. Meanwhile, can anyone tell me more about "Castle of the Otter"? For instance... How long is it? How much explanation of the BotNS does Wolfe give? Is it in print?

Good grief... I've just looked at Mantis' message again...

Mantis, are you the author of the wonderful "Lexicon Urthus"?

If you are, then let me congratulate you, and tell you that your work has been a great source of joy and pleasure to me.

(And even if you're not the author, I still think it's a great book!)

Nigel Price
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England