

"Eschatology and Genesis"

The Urth list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 29 Mar 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1453>

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Roy C. Lackey — 29 Mar 1999, 04:13

When, in chapter XXXVII of *_Urth_*, Herena, Declan, the mate, and the cook visit Sev in his cell and ask him to relate to them how old Urth will fare when the New Sun comes, he knows scarcely more than they. He therefore draws upon his knowledge of Dr. Talos's play for the information. Dr. Talos's play, many centuries later, is based upon the myths and legends extant from the time of the Conciliator, that is, from Sev himself as he relates it in his cell. Never mind Canog, who also wrote the story down; he was just a scribe.

My question is this: Whence the story? What is its genesis? Who was the original author in this chain of story tellers?

Roy

Tony Ellis — 29 Mar 1999, 12:25 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy wrote:

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Well, like the note the protagonist gives to himself in "The Technicolour Time Machine", or the poems of William Ashbless in "The Anubis Gates", the joke here may be that no one quite originates the story, that it's a closed loop.

But the "original" author is Severian himself. He's the one who actually witnesses the end of Urth and lives to write about it. Sev witnesses Urth's last day, Sev writes about it, Sev presumably casts his narrative into the seas of Time. (I say "presumably" because I can't remember if he ever actually says he is going to do this or not - but surely the implication is there.) If you can accept that Severian's narrative constitutes, either wholly or in part, the "lost" Book of the New Sun on which Dr Talos says his play is based, rather than Canog's text, then no paradox exists.

Tony Ellis — 29 Mar 1999, 12:52 · follows Tony Ellis

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