

Ex-lurker

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 06 Apr 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1487>

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Roy C. Lackey — 06 Apr 1999, 04:02

On 4-5-99 Tony A West wrote:

Roy--- I really enjoyed your points. However, I disagree with you a bit on what you considered to be the most glaringly obvious paradox (or at least it brought up more questions):<<

<snip>

--- this, in my estimation, can be attributed to the fact that the outcome of Sev's trial was yet to be determined... and in response to that we might ask how things like Apu-Punchau, the Claw, and the "legend" of the Conciliator were there (in Sev's past/coming of age) and the white fountain was not. All of these things could have been locked in place (in the "absolute time" past / Sev's "relative" future) by nothing more than Severian simply getting on Tzadkiel's ship. Once on, it seems to me that one is then privy to endless possibilities in time. But the white fountain might, indeed, have been the one thing that was not predetermined...

And what of the "pre-Sev" (absolute time) incidents actually hinge on Severian being the bringer of the white fountain?

Hope this doesn't sound too sophomoric!!! Been lurking for far too long, pondering the rather esoteric goings-on here.... <<

Welcome Tony A. West!

Feel free to disagree; I think it's a requirement for posting here. And a healthy dose of scleroderma helps. <g>

BTW, you should turn off the html feature when you post here--plain text only--to avoid all that html garbage taking up Ranjit's valuable web space.

As for the logic of what came when; in a circular, time-travel story, one point on the circumference is about as good as another. If the circle is broken at any point, the whole thing collapses. I don't have a better answer than that; I don't know that there is one. If there is one, it may be related to Wolfe's views on predestination. I don't know whether or not the views expressed by Silk could be taken as Wolfe's, but on the second page of chapter V of Nightside he has Silk thinking:

"...the Outsider had assured him that his regard for him was eternal and perfect, never to be changed by any act of his, no matter how iniquitous or how meritorious."

Now that is predestination, pure and simple. FWIW

Roy

Alex David Groce — 06 Apr 1999, 10:34 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On Apr 6, 4:02am, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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Maybe. But notice the word "eternal"--which would imply the solution of St. Augustine, that "predestination" means that God's knowledge is outside time, which is a creation, and therefore perfect foreknowledge doesn't mean compulsion. And "regard" is a tricky point too--as far as I'm aware, orthodox theology of most varieties has God loving everybody always and perfectly--but people can reject the love. I would, given Wolfe's Catholicism and general emphasis on an almost existential freedom, be surprised if he believes in a Calvinist or similar form of predestination--I'd suspect he falls heavily, even within the Catholic schools of thought, into the free-will camp.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." - John 8:32

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Michael Straight — 06 Apr 1999, 11:13 · follows Alex David Groce

On Tue, 6 Apr 1999, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

"...the Outsider had assured him that his regard for him was eternal and perfect, never to be changed by any act of his, no matter how iniquitous or how meritorious."

Now *that* is predestination, pure and simple. FWIW

Predestination? It sounds to me more like a promise. The Outsider doesn't say, "I've seen the future and I know you're not going to do anything bad enough to make me stop loving you," but "I'll love you no matter what you do."

-Rostrum

Kevin J. Maroney — 12 Apr 1999, 19:39 · follows Michael Straight

At 04:02 AM 4/6/99 -0500, Roy wrote:

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views expressed by Silk could be taken as Wolfe's, but on the second page of chapter V of *Nightside* he has Silk thinking:

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Now *that* is predestination, pure and simple. FWIW

That's not predestination. That's a statement about the unchanging and unending love which god has for its creations. The Outsider might not know what Silk will do--though he probably does, given his role in the story--but no matter what Silk does, it cannot damage god's love for him.

Wombat, a.k.a. Kevin Maroney [kmaroney at crossover.com](mailto:kmaroney@crossover.com) Kitchen Staff Supervisor, New York Review of Science Fiction <http://ebbs.english.vt.edu/olp/nyrsf/nyrsf.html>