

those high fliers

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 05 Aug 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1733>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 05 Aug 1999, 17:12

Eep!

I hope my joke didn't misfire so completely that umbrage occurred. I'm too fond of that phrase, "Everything you know is wrong," but not in the put-down way, rather in the way of the snake-oil salesman pitch.

Anywho, since Wolfe was so anti-antigravity in 5HC, I personally find myself less concerned with the motive force of the fliers (as I wrote before, I first or second thought of magnetic monopoles, especially in light of "magnetic sails" [which are like solar sails but they respond to magnetic forces rather than photons; and might be used for planetary liftoff if the flipping over part can be controlled], and then picked up "legitimate" antigravity notions from Forward, which in turn makes me laugh) than I am concerned with _the anchor ropes that tether the fliers to the ground_.

But every reader finds some different angle or detail to worry about, this is a given.

. . . like, if Urth receives barely enough solar insolation to maintain habitability, then how does Verthandi manage to survive with even _less_ insolation? With a Barsoomian brand atmosphere plant, naturally.

=mantis=

Mitchell A. Bailey — 11 Aug 1999, 08:51 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

Michael Andre-Driussi wrote:

Eep!

I hope my joke didn't misfire so completely that umbrage occurred. I'm too fond of that phrase, "Everything you know is wrong," but not in the put-down way, rather in the way of the snake-oil salesman pitch.

Mantis, if that was the worst thing anyone ever said to, or about, me, I'd be a happy man indeed!<g>

Anywho, since Wolfe was so anti-antigravity in 5HC, I personally find myself less concerned with the motive force of the fliers (as I wrote before, I first or second thought of magnetic monopoles, ...

..but wouldn't monopoles tend to accelerate away from the "like" planetary pole toward the "unlike" pole? If the Autarch's flier was full of "south" monopoles, wouldn't it be forever straining to dash northward across Ascia into the dark icy seas said to lie in the uttermost north of Ascia? And how do we reconcile that with the Autarch's statement that his flier contained "the antimaterial equivalent of iron"?

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Yeah, now THAT was interesting. Would "negative matter" be expected to annihilate with positive matter, a concern the Autarch had? Remember, he said "antimaterial", not "negative". And would negative iron have reversed magnetic properties such that it would be repelled by magnets? I have been trying to find out more about this "negative matter", with limited success. I've heard of a concept of "negative energy"; could negative matter be its equivalent? $-E = -mc^2$? (That sound you heard from the Saltus mine is Einstein spinning in his grave!)

. . . like, if Urth receives barely enough solar insolation to maintain habitability, then how does Verthandi manage to survive with even _less_ insolation? With a Barsoomian brand atmosphere plant, naturally.

Dunno. Are we sure Verthandi even DOES survive? It appears Verthandi, Skuld, and even Lune are pretty much totally out of contact with Urth by Sev's time. There's no insystem space flight other than that provided by the Hierodules for their own purposes. You would think that if the Commonwealth still had access to even Edwardian radio technology they could still at least communicate, but I don't see much indication that such a thing takes place. Then again, what would they talk about?

I guess any surviving Verthandians and Lunatics must be huddled in their lifesystems eking out a living with farms under pressurized domes and decrepit old tokamaks supplementing the fading solar power grid. On the other hand, Skuld is probably pretty balmy now. Major industry: postcards that say "Hello from sunny Skuld. I'm here and you're not. Pththpbb!"

(The Barsoomian air plants, located in the pyramids of Elysium, were restarted and depleted, you may recall, when AHHHnold cranked them up in the climax of _Total Recall_)