

Wolfe apologetics

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 03 Nov 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1915>

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Ouroboros — 03 Nov 1999, 21:23

<<<<[Quantum tunneling being the theory behind Father Inire's mirrors and how Severian brings the New Sun]still leaves too much unexplained. How can QT explain the New Sun being attached to Severian, or being "birthed" by an act of intercourse?>>>>>

One of the things that brings me back to the New Sun books again and again is the conviction (based on my experience with the story til now) that Wolfe has a rational explanation for even the most miraculous happenings. If Severian **did** pull a butterfly out of a rainbow, you can bet Wolfe would have a rational explanation for it.

What I meant by QT being how Severian brings the New Sun is that that is how the Sun suddenly appears in the center of Urth's orbit out of wherever.

BTW: I don't think I mentioned before that QT could (theoretically) be used for time travel as surely as for interstellar travel and that's how Severian does it.

As for how the Sun is attached to Severian, I think I recall someone telling Severian (I can't place the quote) that the Conciliator does not just **bring** the New Sun, he **is** the New Sun. Here's a possible rationalization for Severian's connection to the Sun and and how Severian and Apheta making love could bring it:

Severian IS the fountain. Relative to the story, he hasn't become it yet, but he will. At the time Severian is getting it on, other things are happening in the Universe that tell Severian (now the New Sun) what the earlier Severian is doing and that now is the time to become the New Sun and go to Urth. Therefore Severian having sex "miraculously" brings the New Sun the same way that the Conciliator "miraculously" prophesies the future of Typhon and the future Autarchs.

Nice neat rationalization. Now all I have to do is
prove it.

<<<<the memories contained in a single cell certainly
doesn't have a scientific basis>>>>

I don't think this is how Wolfe said the alzado got
the memories. I don't think he explained it in detail
at all, but I never imagined that if the alzado had
bitten of Severian's hand he would have gotten all his
memories. I assumed it would have to eat the brain.
Now one can argue that such a beast or adaptation is
scientifically improbable, but the explanation is not
irrational.

Ok. There. Everything tidily explained. ;-)

- Ouroboros

Damien Broderick — 04 Nov 1999, 16:45 · follows Ouroboros

At 09:23 PM 3/11/99 -0800,Ouroboros wrote something hard to swallow:

Severian IS the fountain. Relative to the story, he
hasn't become it yet, but he will. At the time
Severian is getting it on, other things are happening
in the Universe that tell Severian (now the New Sun)
what the earlier Severian is doing and that now is the
time to become the New Sun and go to Urth.

Hmm. So Sev is a kind of eidolon or entelechy of the future cosmos entire, a sort of temporally
extended Tiplerian Omega Point deity. [I refer to Frank J. Tipler's outrageous skiffyoid
eschatology, now holed by the discovery that the universe is expanding faster rather than
slower.] Cute. I'll buy that.

Damien Broderick

(In fact - *blush* - I did it already in THE JUDAS MANDALA, in 1982.)

Jim Henley — 05 Nov 1999, 22:19 · follows Damien Broderick

-----Original Message-----

From: urth-errors at lists.best.com [mailto:urth-errors at lists.best.com]On
Behalf Of Ouroboros

<<<<the memories contained in a single cell certainly
doesn't have a scientific basis>>>>

I don't think this is how Wolfe said the alzado got
the memories.

Not a single cell. You needed "a mouthful," which is quite a lot of cells. And there was a time the
"memory RNA" concept was taken quite seriously. I gather from discussion here that it has
since been rejected, but at the time BOTNS was being written it was a plausible speculation. So
it was gobbledygook on Wolfe's part only if some of those Urth-style ripples in the ocean of time

happened to wash his way before they hit everyone else.

Best,

Jim

What if we only get what we deserve?

Somehow, I couldn't quite summon the nerve"

-- Costello/Bacharach