

Random Thoughts as We Slouch Towards Bethlehem

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 19 Nov 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1965>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Dave Lebling — 19 Nov 1999, 11:03

1) What is the Christian take on the fact that in tBotNS, it's apparently hundreds of thousands, if not millions of years in the future, and the Second Coming hasn't happened yet? Somehow this just popped into my head as I was the reading the posts on whether or not Sev's apocalypse is the true Second Coming. It reminds me of _The Restaurant at the End of the Universe_, where Zarquon still hasn't appeared at the last moments of the Big Crunch.

2) Sev's ice-bound future may have occurred in the past, several times! According to a recent publication in _The New Scientist_ (I think) the entire Earth may have been covered by ice several times in the distant past. It happens when most of the continents have drifted to near the equator. We got out of it due to carbon dioxide released by vulcanism. Of course, Wolfe points out that the core is cold in Sev's time, so they would have no way out.

3) I read Paul J. McAuley's _Child of the River_ recently, and wanted to add my recommendation (I know that one of the sages here previously mentioned it, but now it's out in paperback). A very Wolfean feel, almost, one thinks, an _hommage_. It's the first volume of a (mumble)ology, and so far there aren't quite as many mysteries and wheels-within-wheels, but there is much more to come, so who can say for certain? To summarize very briefly, a child, Yama, of mysterious origins, lives in a civilization that clings to the banks of a world-river on an extra-galactic Big Dumb Object in the far, far future. Most "people" appear to be genetically engineered animals-made-human, but Yama appears to be a true human. He grows to manhood in a decaying city near a huge necropolis near a larger even-more-decaying city. A Destiny Awaits Him, and he begins a journey of apprenticeship in this volume.

The second volume, _Ancients of Days_, is out in hardcover.

4) I too am unsure why this list is booming and the Whorl list is quiet. Perhaps we are all waiting for the next installment. I know I've read the thing (that is, _On Blue's Waters_) three times already, and am increasingly awestruck each time. The degree of control Wolfe exhibits is astonishing. If he continues at this level for the remaining two volumes, _Short Sun_ could be his masterpiece. Consider this a push for those of you who haven't yet taken the plunge to do so immediately. You'll be glad you did. (And then you'll be impatient for the rest to come out).

Dave Lebling
(aka vizcacha)