

1-2-3-for-me

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 12 Jan 2000

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Nicholas Gevers — 12 Jan 2000, 21:54

Pertaining to the comments by Alex and Jonathan:

I agree with Alex that ST has a theme of societal collapse, which, BTW, may explain certain omissions from the collection, of stories that didn't fit the theme. I think that ST also presents Wolfe's solution to the problem, but will refrain from mentioning it further, as I need it to remain original for my FOUNDATION review of ST.

FWIW, Jonathan, I reached my conclusions about 1-2-3 before reading "And When They Appear". That the humans are always under some sort of bot supervision I infer from "you could see a lot more stars than the machines ever show you". And wherever the campfire is (it's not on Earth, or Jak wouldn't call Earth "the old one"), it is located in an artificially primitive environment. So: the old human society collapsed, for reasons of which the humans of Jak's time seem ignorant; they are kept in ignorance by bots and machines about the number of the stars; my conclusion: the machines desire that humans not show hubris (conquer the stars) or despair in consequence of that denial of pride (take euthanasic drugs). So humans are kept primitive, existing generally in the sort of heedless innocence shown by Jo An. And it may be that the bots let her keep the phone so that just such a cautionary tale as Jak tells could be formulated.

I think the fall of the one ancient culture is intended by Wolfe to be representative of the fall of the rest.

IN GREEN'S JUNGLES is scheduled for August 2000 release (read late July).

Nick.