

Ziggurat

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 30 Jan 2000

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Alex David Groce — 30 Jan 2000, 11:09

I don't agree with Robert's theory, but it sounds more plausible to me than Max. Del. If Wolfe intended Max. Del., I think he signally failed to put in enough hints for us to parse it--unless, as Nutria says, we come to the story with strong suspicions that "things MUST not be as they seem to be here." It strikes me (I think this was partly the motivation in Kessel's case) as an attempt to "rescue" Wolfe from having written this (quoting the criticism mentioned by Dozois) "sexist asshole" Emory into being.

And Robert, we actually have a healthy divide--Rat, Alga, me on one side, you (fundamentally) standing fairly close to us, if edging away from Emory, and Mantis and Swanwick across the room.

One point: The appearance of the shouting Brownie strikes me as possible evidence that the Ziggurat is a Brownie-ship, not a static time-shifting structure that belongs in the lake (much as I actually like this idea).

Another point: Emory's emotional "deadness" at Brook's death seems to me to be an intentional "parody" (by making it more human and more real) of the Charles Broson-typical-male response to murder: coldness and grabbing all the weapons he can find in order to exact revenge.

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

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Josh Levitan — 05 Feb 2000, 04:42 · follows Alex David Groce

Alga wrote, re: "The Ziggurat":

When I referred to Tiptree and Russ, I was thinking of this story, but even more centrally of Tiptree's "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" and Russ's "When It Changed."

Ziggurat reminded me very much of "Houston, Houston." It seems almost like a reversal of that story, with female astronauts coming into the past on Earth, the primitive male killing most of them, and a "happy" ending where the female is left to the mercies of the man. It's interesting that Wolfe uses the Tiptree reference in the previous story, not in this one, which recalled her much more.

Narwhal