

# The redhead

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 10 May 2001

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Roy C. Lackey — 10 May 2001, 01:45

Matthew and Jeff Wilson wrote, respectively:

Where does it say that a Presidential term is only four years in *that* universe?

Indeed. Perhaps the NP is himself a replacement from another timeline where he was a junior politico. References to disasters and unrest that we don't see could be pointing to events there.

There are no justifications within the story to indicate that it takes place in a world much, if any, different from our own. And the NP seems to have obtained his position in the usual way: "He murmured comforting words, his friendship with Boone and Marsha, the great contribution Boone had made to his administration. After a time that seemed long, the silent TV showed him with Boone, with Boone and Marsha, with Boone at the convention." and: "I had been working hard. Not only after my inauguration, but for more than a year before it. Working twelve or thirteen hours every day without a break." Plus, he has concerns for the next election.

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BTW, before it gets repeated any more, unless there's another one I don't know about, Spokane is in the state of Washington, not Idaho. <g>

Rostrum wrote:

Although I'm not sure how (if?) it fits with the creation narratives in Genesis, the Lilith myth seems to take place before the Fall. There is a tradition that before the Fall, humanity and all of nature were different, more glorious. This accounts for Adam's godlike appearance, his authority to condemn Lilith, and for the weirdness of the place where the new President ends up; he's in the unfallen Eden where the trees sing and the ram's horns make music.

Could be, now that the snakes have been exchanged.

To expand on the Lilith angle: each person mentioned in the story is named, *\*except\** the two "boys" (Cain and Abel), the president's wife ("First Lady"="first woman"=Eve), the president (by logical extension the "first man"=Adam), and "Jane Doe". Wolfe deliberately doesn't name them because to do so would give his game away too easily. However the theologians care to fit Lilith into the creation story, she, as you indicated, popularly is presented as Adam's first mate, necessarily before Eve, who herself antedates the Fall; therefore Lilith, too, existed before the Fall. Whether sexual coupling before the Fall was regarded as innocent recreation, no more sinful than that of the animals, or not, by the creators of the myth, Lilith wasn't added to the Genesis story because of her culinary skills. In any event, the woman in Wolfe's story is SEX, big time, the snake in the grass, so to speak, who brings havoc and discord wherever she goes. How Wolfe thought to work her into the Cain and Abel story, I don't know, but her complicity makes at least as much sense as the Genesis account, and, as he has done with other mythological material (e.g., the Sidhe story in PEACE), he doesn't let the "facts" get in his way when he wants to incorporate such material into his work.

Lilith is shepherded in the story by Karen (= "Purity"), a hopeless task, which is why the NP says to her "You're beat," and sends her off to sleep in his wife's bed--he hopes, the hypocrite. Besides, he couldn't help himself; like Sev and Horn before him, the woman tempted him. And everyone knows Lilith was a redhead. <g>

Dan'I writes:

Dunno. I've seen "to grouse," a verb for a kind of habitual complaining, but I've never heard or seen a nominal form.

MW on line only lists (as noun) the bird and "a complaint."<<

The definition I gave is from \_Webster's New World Dictionary Of The American Language\_, College Edition, 1966. "n. [Slang], 1. a complaint. 2. a person who habitually complains."

But why, I wonder, doesn't the "glorious" naked man speak with a similar accent...?<<

Because he's not a snake. Snakes are known to talk funny. <g>

... when Lilith grabbed the Changer and pressed the button, \*she\* exchanged the NP for the old Adam she disdained, who "grunted" over her, who is the very tall man at the end of the story. And he is a man, not God; Wolfe conflates the biblical passages alluded to so that it is the new Adam who does both the cursing and who "shall crush your head under my heel."

Umm... is it maybe both? You put the words there: "the new Adam."

Who, in Pauline terms, is Christ, is the God-and-Man, and in fact the one who crushes the serpent's head underneath His heel.<<

Could be, but that's not what I intended. I had it right the first time; she wound up with the old Adam she didn't like, and the "glorious" man is only the newest incarnation of him. But if Wolfe intended his appearance to be the advent of the Second Coming, then he's whistling up a theological tempest that a whole rowboat full of Augustines wouldn't put to sea in.

-Roy

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Michael Straight — 10 May 2001, 08:49 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On Thu, 10 May 2001, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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fit Lilith into the creation story, she, as you indicated, popularly is presented as Adam's first mate, necessarily before Eve, who herself antedates the Fall; therefore Lilith, too, existed before the Fall.

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thought to work her into the Cain and Abel story, I don't know, but her complicity makes at least as much sense as the Genesis account, and, as he has done with other mythological material (e.g., the Sidhe story in PEACE), he doesn't let the "facts" get in his way when he wants to incorporate such material into his work.

Still, that's a big problem - Cain and Abel, and murder particularly, are definitely post-Fall, so it's hard to see how Adam (and Eden) could still be glorified and unfallen if Cain has already killed Abel.

I suppose it's possible that Lilith is referring to the Cain and Abel of the new President's

timeline/universe/dimension/whatever, and marvelling over what it led to. Or maybe the Adam that gets grabbed by the changer (and the Eden the new Pres gets changed to) are from a third timeline, before the Fall. But neither of those explanations seem very elegant.

Btw, what do you see as the incongruity in the Sidhe story in PEACE?

-Rostrum