

Copperhead again

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 20 May 2001

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Roy C. Lackey — 20 May 2001, 04:50

Adam wrote:

[snip]

Besides, when Lilith was with Adam, they were still in Eden; what would he have to "groose" about?<<

[snip]

So while Lilith is a seducer of men, she does so in order to engender demons, which Jane Doe has no interest in; conversely, we apparently never see Lilith using her sexuality to stir up discord.<<

[snip]

But that Lilith (the one in Eden) couldn't! There weren't any other people around; not even Eve had been invented yet! <g>

[snip]

Incidentally, Lilith left Adam not because she wouldn't have sex with him, but because she wouldn't have sex with him on top: "You will not never grunt over me" indeed!<<

[snip]

The minute I read that, I was sure I had read that assertion before, that someone (alga, I think) had posted it before, in another context. But when I tried to use Ranjit's search engine to find it just now, it wasn't giving any hits for *anything*, so I can't be certain. If the "who's-on-top" assertion is valid, then the "grunt over me" comment cements the Jane Doe-is-Lilith theory. It also doesn't hurt the idea that "Dhoss bhoyes" are Cain and Abel.

I don't believe that if NP had been in office over a year, he would still be referred to as a "new President," even if he had been elected for the first time four months ago.<<

Agreed, which was what I was trying to point out in my first post on this story. Regardless of exactly when or how he came to the office, he has been president a minimum of six months, because there's no getting around the fact that he was already president when he went up that hill the previous autumn. There just aren't any good real-world arguments for referring to him as "new" after that much time in office, yet Wolfe went out of his way to do it. The best argument I have seen so far for calling him "new" is Nutria's, which is thematic:

Nutria wrote:

It seems clear enough that the gadget switched an earthly copperhead with a parallel-universe Lilith, and then the NEW president with a NEW and unfallen Adam. Still president of the Garden, and the very image of God, this unfallen Adam pronounces a divine curse upon Lilith.<<

Nutria:

[snip]

The New President knows that Boone's note will say both that he murdered the man (which has been covered up by Rance -- implied) and also will tell about Jane Doe, so the note must be suppressed.<<

I don't think Rance covered it up, which is why the NP said to him: "I'm going to stay here, George, until this blows over a little. First the murder, then this. Washington will be a zoo." Also, if Lilith was connected to the murder, then the victim almost certainly had to be someone close to the NP, therefor too prominent for their death to be kept from the press. This also casts doubt on the idea that Boone was the murderer, otherwise why wasn't he in jail, which he obviously wasn't?

I note some significant language on p. 3:

Rance says, "Find who, Mr. President?"

"Who the HELL do you think?"

"Jane Doe?"

"You're watching her, or you're DAMNED well supposed to be."

"We are." Rance said.

"A HELL of a lot of good it did...."

I think that's all the profanity in the story, which makes its presence here significant.<<

There's more: "I was President, goddamnit, and he was trying to give me orders." and "By God, this President stuff can be fun once in a while.", but I'm not sure of your meaning. Please elucidate.

Chronology: The spring trip back to the West, and the fall trip back to the West to watch football (p. 7) happened during the year of campaigning, not after the NP was inaugurated, yet that the NP was already president in the fall when he met with General Martens.<<

The NP specifically states: "I had been working hard. Not only *after my inauguration*, but for more than a year before it. . . . Spring came and my wife and I came back here; . . ."

But I don't think we have to imagine a parallel world or a disaster in the US. People burning things in Spokane is nothing more than the Los Angeles riots or the activities of environmentalists in Seattle -- nothing apocalyptic.<<

That was my impression. I don't know when Wolfe wrote the story, but if it was recent (say, this year), he may have had in mind the recent demonstrations in Seattle you mention, but shifted them to Spokane to make an awful pun: "Spoke Cain".

More: I don't see any reason to believe General Martens pushed any buttons before he gave the gadget to the NP. He found it right away, phoned the NP immediately, and the NP told him to bring it to him immediately.<<

The crash was in August. It was autumn when they went up on the hill, so it was at least two months after the crash before the NP had the Changer.

-Roy

James Jordan — 21 May 2001, 08:18 · follows Roy C. Lackey

I wrote:

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Roy wrote:

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Oh, I just think it associates Jane Doe with hell and damnation, anticipating what is shortly revealed about her. The quotation you added links being President with God, which again seems significant in that the NP is the equivalent of Adam, the Image of God. Obviously, sometimes writers put profanity into the mouths of characters simply to provide characterization; but sometimes they use it more thematically and symbolically. (Think of the use of "God damn" and "God damned world" in the film "Network," where the profanity is deliberate and virtually the theme of the movie.) It appears to me that Wolfe is using it deliberately and thematically in this story.

Jim Jordan