

In Glory Like Their Star, initial reading

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 19 Sep 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/2825>

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Joshua A. Solomon — 19 Sep 2001, 10:04

'skun' This seems to be the only made-up word in the story. Why? I do not know.

'(The natives) speak for a long time when they have begun' and the narrator is also 'unable to control (his own) loquacity.' This implies similarity on another level. See below for my idea with respect to this other level.

Everything but the desert appeared to vanish as the narrator approached. On one level, this merely implies that the narrator's journey took a long time. On another level, it might mean that material things *effectively* disappeared for the narrator. He clearly seems to be on some spiritual quest. He says 'who would labor to gain knowledge [to build a ship]? It is the interior change that suffices, the transformation that rewards.' He also said 'Was it for truth's sake that I rode across the desert?...Inarguably.'

The narrator's quest is (at least to some extent) successful. He finds his scout, becomes ecstatic and grows 'so much' (in his own estimation). Note that the quest is a success only because of the desert man's sacrifice. Obvious Christian symbolism here. Note the narrator actually takes the desert man's 'body fluid,' a la Catholicism's drinking the blood of Christ.

OTOH, the narrator is not completely successful. He cannot reward the desert man, who 'died swiftly and in glory like their star.' Note that, since 'their' world is called 'Earth,' their star must be the Sun. Sun = Son (of God)? Perhaps. The implication is that the Sun is dead. This is consistent with the sentence, 'They will be primitive, perhaps, when sunlight reaches them on this place.' I guess a new Sun (Son?) must be on the way.

The narrator's incomplete success suggests to me that, like the natives, he requires further spiritual development. Perhaps (just as in TBOTNS) a new sun is required for this and that is why the (old) sun had to die.

bee

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James Jordan — 19 Sep 2001, 10:00 · follows Joshua A. Solomon

This looks promising. Only two notes:

At 11:04 AM 9/19/2001 +0100, Joshua wrote:

'skun' This seems to be the only made-up word in the story. Why?

A variant of 'sun'? Somehow?

'(The natives) speak for a long time when they have begun' and the narrator is also 'unable to control (his own) loquacity.' This implies similarity on another level. See below for my idea with respect to this other level.

I took the loquacity of the natives to indicate ritual. They approach this "god" with a continual stream of repeated phrases. Also, from what I recall, their repeated phrases were requests for gifts, which resembles pagan religion: bring your gifts/bribes and feed your gods and ask them over and over for benefits. The Biblical or Judeo-Christian notion of sacrifice is rather different: self-killing by proxy as a confession of guilt and a plea for mercy. Requests for benefits come afterwards, and Jesus said not to be overly repetitious, and the psalms are quite unrepetitious in form. Thus, I took it that a kind of pagan religion was being pictured by Wolfe.

Nutria