

Frank Black

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 01 Mar 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3004>

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Seth Lombardi — 01 Mar 2002, 21:30

Here's a possible GW pop music connection:

(on the subject of music from a few posts back)

Anyone listen to Frank Black? Former lead singer of the Pixies? This guy has a strong science fiction flavor: some of his songs paint melancholy post-apocalyptic or extraterrestrial landscapes with great skill. He also has an obsession with Ray Bradbury, even going as far as to name an album after him (The Cult of Ray). Anyway, I got his newest, Dog in Sand a few months back. I was dumbstruck by one song that, well. . . it reminds me a LOT of the BOTNS. Mainly because it has the word "pelagic" in it. It's hard to believe a sci-fi freak pop music star could pick that word randomly. Anyway, here are the lyrics. I had to find them on the web as I do not have the album of the liner notes with me, and it does not designate the chorus or which parts are repeated. I highly recommend you get this album or anything else by him.

You know, now that I think about it...tell me this isn't a love song to an Undine!! :)

The Swimmer

in the wake of his chariot
you swam toward the latitudes
leaving for happier times
florida far behind
trying your best you were
ignoring the rescuers
you'd gone so very long
you were so very strong
the scene was so tragic
but that was the magic
will you never drown?
will you learn to use
some forgotten part some forgotten part?
are you going down where the ballyhoos and the tritons are? you were so incredible finding all
the edible prize of the sea prize of the sea in the wake of his chariot he swam toward the
latitudes leaving for happier times florida far behind in the division pelagic you where choragic

William Ansley — 01 Mar 2002, 22:30 · follows Seth Lombardi

"Seth Lombardi" <sethlombardi at hotmail.com> wrote:

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[...]

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[...]

Frank Black certainly may be a Gene Wolfe fan, but even if he has never read Wolfe, his use of "pelagic" could hardly be considered random. The song you quote (I have omitted the lyrics from my quote of your message, above) refers to the mid-ocean. To quote Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, pelagic means:

"of, relating to, or living or occurring in the open sea : OCEANIC"

So Frank Black was merely using an uncommon word appropriately. Since Gene Wolfe has practically made a career out of this, Black may have been imitating him, but I find it far from certain, especially since the rest of the song doesn't seem, to me at least, to have much resonance with TBotNS.

William Ansley