Marble's prophecy

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 19 Mar 2002

https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3052

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maa32 — 19 Mar 2002, 05:19

Has a prophecy ever failed to have two meanings in Wolfe? Someone pointed out that the beast with three horns is instantly discredited by the narrator. I have two words for you:

UNRELIABLE NARRATOR

The dude doesn't even know who he is for sure, nor the name of his kids with any consistency. Just because he thinks the prophecy has already been fulfilled means nothing - you still have to account for the special treatment that Hoof receives from Babbie at the astral scene in Chapter 17/19 or Return to the whorl. First Babbie is mad at everyone, then when he hears the name Hoof he gets all happy and hugs him and picks him up and comforts him after he gets wounded. Hoof is another UNRELIABLE NARRATOR because he doesn't question why Babbie would treat him that way. And the narrator does seem to be Babbie for a second at the end of On Blue's Waters. You should try to account for this rather than stating that the narrator's discredit to the prophecy is enough.

I have determined that Wolfe never writes with Occam in mind - let's face it, he likes to complicate things. ... and isn't that picture of the frog from my previous post pretty cool? Now that I look at it again, I see the one one the left is 2N, the one on the right is 4N. Note that the front limbs of the frog also have three little digits that should be one (like three psuedo-hands or something) If you click on the arrows at the bottom of that page of the presentation, you can see the whole 31 slides. There are other hybrid species produced through polyploidy, including lizards and flies. The flies also have a doubling of the hind legs that is pretty interesting if you advance a few slides.

Marc Aramini

Jerry Friedman — 19 Mar 2002, 17:41 · follows maa32

> --- maa32 <maa32 at dana.ucc.nau.edu> wrote:
> Has a prophecy ever failed to have two meanings in Wolfe?

That's a reasonable point (though I think the answer is probably "yes").

> Someone pointed out
> that the beast with three horns is instantly discredited by the
> narrator.

...

I think you misunderstood.

> I have determined that Wolfe never writes with Occam in mind - let's
> face it,
> he likes to complicate things. ...

Actually, you should be in favor of the literal Occam's razor--that entities shouldn't be multiplied unnecessarily--because in your theory there are fewer entities (two planets instead of four, one large female submarine creature instead of two, etc.). However, I think that your theory involves more explanations than the other.

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> few slides.

Thanks for the information about polyploid animals! I learned something already today.

However, on the subject of multiple limbs, I think you're misinterpreting. The tetraploid _Xenopus laevis_ has a big hind foot with a translucent web connecting four toes--not four separate legs. You can see the four toes at <http://www.ahsc.arizona.edu/uac/iacuc/xenopus/xenopus.shtml>. Note that the web can look transparent or opaque depending on the lighting. As for the front legs, they have four digits in the picture of the diploid _X. tropicalis_ at <http://www.xlaevis.com/>, which also shows that the anatomy of _X. laevis_ and _X. tropicalis_ is much the same. Finally, <http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/Vines/4966/info.html> has a lot of information about _X. laevis_ from a pet owner's point of view, but nothing about doubled limbs.

The flies in that lecture weren't hybrids or polyploid; they were an example of speciation in progress caused by recent ecological change (the introduction of apples in North America). They didn't have extra limbs, either. I think you must have been interpreting marks on the wings as legs. The left hind leg of the fly in the picture (there's only one picture, repeated in several slides) is visible between the wing and the abdomen. It's just as thin as the other legs, not thick like the wing markings. The right hind leg is hidden or missing.

So all the polyploid animals I've seen so far have normal anatomies, with the normal number of limbs.

Jerry Friedman

Dan Meliza — 21 Mar 2002, 17:40 · follows Jerry Friedman

Hi Marc,

I haven't had a chance to look at the pics (qualifying exams, alas), but Xenopus laevis is naturally polyploid (making it difficult to make transgenic animals, for anyone who cares), and N varies greatly between species in the genus (something like 12N for one of those buggers). I think it might be a little spurious to claim that simply doubling the number of chromosomes would double limb count. Development is a lot more complex than that.

best,

dan

-----Original Message-----
From: maa32 [mailto:maa32 at dana.ucc.nau.edu]
Sent: Monday, March 18, 2002 9:19 PM
To: urth at urth.net
Subject: (urth) Marble's prophecy

[snip]

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Marc Aramini

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