

tease me?

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 24 Dec 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3719>

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maa32 — 24 Dec 2002, 18:11

Just a brief comment.

It is obvious that Wolfe is teasing either myself or the member of the list who confirmed that his statement was a jest. We can't say with any certainty who Wolfe would be more likely to tease. Let's define my correspondence with Wolfe in terms of how we speak to one another. I have not asked him any questions about Short Sun since last January, when he declined to answer a whole slew of them. I haven't talked about my interpretations to him since then, because he says he doesn't like tromping out the definitive answer because it kills discussion and the magic of the work. I haven't mentioned my questions for about a year. I sent him a Christmas card this year with a Spruce tree and a man with a staff. I drew a little smiley face on the staff, and I put teeth in the trees. Then I put a PS that said I liked the card because of the spruce and the staff. Then I asked in my PPS if the narrator traveled through the short sun so that blue could be Urth. As far as I know, that's all Mr. Wolfe knows of my theories. I don't bombard him like I do the list. His reply: "I like the spruce and the staff, TOO". On the back of the card: "No, No, NO! Green is Urth."

The question - does he remember my conjecture from, no joke, a year ago? Why would he tease me about it? Mostly we talk about books we've read in common and the daily grind of life - not his work, except for my copious praise of his genius (and therefore I vicariously praise my own appreciative genius for having the sublime intellect to savor his work).

Marc Aramini

matthew.malthouse — 27 Dec 2002, 10:59 · follows maa32

On 24/12/2002 18:11:10 maa32 wrote:

His reply: "I like the spruce and the staff, TOO". On the back of the card:

"No, No, NO! Green is Urth."

But Urth is not Ushas.

Matthew

Adam Stephanides — 28 Dec 2002, 21:06 · follows matthew.malthouse

on 12/24/02 6:11 PM, maa32 at maa32 at dana.ucc.nau.edu wrote:

Just a brief comment.

It is obvious that Wolfe is teasing either myself or the member of the list who confirmed that his statement was a jest. We can't say with any certainty who Wolfe would be more likely to tease.

[snip]

On the back of the card:

"No, No, NO! Green is Urth."

I have no access to Wolfe's motives, of course, but my money is on Wolfe's original comment to you being the joke, for several reasons:

1) While I don't believe Blue is Urth, I'll admit that there are several correspondences between Blue-Green and Urth-Lune which give the theory a certain coloring of plausibility: the pair of a blue and a green planet, the green planet being lighter than the blue planet, the underwater city on Blue, the Scylla-Mother relationship. If the pairings are switched, none of these correspondences apply, and the "evidence" you gave for Green being Urth seems quite weak to me.

2) Conversely, all the objections to Blue = Urth apply just as well to Green = Urth. I realize you aren't convinced by any of them, but I for one find at least Wolfe's interview statement very hard to explain away.

3) As you say, Wolfe doesn't like "tromping out the definitive answer," so it would be uncharacteristic of him to do so in this case. It seems more likely to me that he would have assumed his answer was an obvious joke when it wasn't.

4) If Wolfe is your friend, that makes it all the more likely that he would "tease" you a bit, and all the less likely that he would destroy your theory with a one-sentence, minimally informative answer. And to follow up by telling a third party that he'd deceived you when he actually hadn't would be a deliberate act of malice at the expense of both you and the third party.

The question - does he remember my conjecture from, no joke, a year ago? Why would he tease me about it?

He wouldn't need to remember your whole elaborate conjecture. Your question made it clear that you thought Blue was Urth (which may have reminded him of the relevant portions of your earlier questions). And he's no doubt aware that there are other people who think that Blue is Urth

--Adam

Michael Straight — 28 Dec 2002, 22:41 · follows Adam Stephanides

On Tue, 24 Dec 2002, maa32 wrote (Quoting Mean Gene):

"No, No, NO! Green is Urth."

I think this most likely means:

1. A joke. Like if Tolkien, tired of being asked for the umpteenth time whether The Ring represents The Bomb had replied, "No, no, NO! Gollum represents the Atom Bomb."

or

2. Wolfe is saying that, of the two planets, Green, with its decaying cities and ancient horrors is more like Urth than Blue is. Like one might say, if asked whether Severian is Aragorn, "No, no, NO! Severian is Gollum."

-Rostrum