

DOORS: Tina

The Urth list — 7 messages, 5 voices, 20 Jan 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3776>

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Roy C. Lackey — 20 Jan 2003, 07:50

I had the impression that dolls such as Tina were given primarily, if not exclusively, to boys. It also seemed to me that boys lost interest in them, or were made to give them up at some point, perhaps at puberty. At any rate, most men in the Otherworld do not seem to have retained them as adults. The shopkeeper in the doll hospital implied that dolls sent there for repair were not often picked up, and if they were, it was usually by the owner's mother. He said of Tina, "The boy who owned her's been dead now for about eight years. Malicapata." (10) Eight Otherworld years would be a lifetime ago in our world. Such a life-like doll as Tina was beyond the technical ability of our world fifteen years ago, yet in every other way the Otherworld seems decades behind ours in technology.

I don't recall any reference to Christianity in the Otherworld, and what would have been Christmas season was called Yule.

However, when Green rediscovered Tina in our world, everything changed. Tina claimed to have been "born" (i.e., first activated) on Christmas day. (251) She mentions Christmas presents and a pretty tree. She also refers to Green as her "god" and compares him to "a jealous god, like the one they talk about". That's an obvious Old Testament reference. So, both books of the Bible are known in the Otherworld. Yet the Goddess is a living reality and the society is matriarchal. I don't see how two such antithetical traditions could co-exist.

Further, Tina claims to have been the doll of a "goddess", who also got a kitten for Christmas that year. That goddess was a girl old enough to walk to school by herself, but young enough to be still making paper crowns for herself and her doll. Then "something bad" happened, and the next thing Tina knew was Green activating her again with his tears. (252) Tina is a programmed, mechanical doll without the ability to lie, and not much memory. But she can remember the "goddess" she first belonged to, and the day she was "born". She could remember Green "a little bit" (272) after her power source ran down, but she didn't know about the little boy who died eight Otherworld years before Green bought her, if he even existed.

Who was the little girl to whom Tina first belonged, and why would a girl have been given such a doll? For that matter, why give them to boys? Anatomically correct female dolls in the hands of boys is bound to stir sexual urges, especially as the boys mature. Orgasm seems to be fatal. How many would die from having a wet dream?

-Roy

Adam Stephanides — 21 Jan 2003, 14:52 · follows Roy C. Lackey

on 1/20/03 1:50 AM, Roy C. Lackey at rclackey at stic.net wrote:

However, when Green rediscovered Tina in our world, everything changed. Tina claimed to have been "born" (i.e., first activated) on Christmas day. (251) She mentions Christmas presents and a pretty tree. She also refers to Green as her "god" and compares him to "a jealous god, like the one they talk

about". That's an obvious Old Testament reference. So, both books of the Bible are known in the Otherworld. Yet the Goddess is a living reality and the society is matriarchal. I don't see how two such antithetical traditions could co-exist.

Both these things may not represent traditions indigenous to Otherworld, but bits of our culture that have "leaked" across. Otherworld could have adopted Christmas as a purely secular, gift-giving holiday, as Japan has. Similarly, they might know of Yahweh without believing in Him (though why Tina should have been programmed with that bit of knowledge I don't know).

But in general, I doubt that Wolfe's set-up can be made to work consistently. Roy's point about Tina is one example:

Such a life-like doll as Tina was beyond the technical ability of our world fifteen years ago, yet in every other way the Otherworld seems decades behind ours in technology.

It's beyond our abilities now; it's even beyond our abilities to build a robot with a much larger "brain" than Tina's which can function like a human as well as Tina, if I'm not mistaken. And Wolfe's bit about how a woman-dominated culture would worry more about children being lonely doesn't explain anything. For one thing, a major impetus for the development of computing technology has been war, which there's supposedly less of in Otherworld. For another, while our government and universities may not put much effort into relieving children's loneliness, they have put a great deal of effort into artificial intelligence. How much would the Defense Department give for artificial soldiers which can function as well, and be produced as inexpensively, as Tina?

Orgasm seems to be fatal. How many would die from having a wet dream?

We seem compelled to conclude that males in Otherworld don't have wet dreams, regardless of the stimulus.

--Adam

Michael Andre-Driussi — 21 Jan 2003, 17:24 · follows Adam Stephanides

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Such a life-like doll as Tina was beyond the technical ability of our world fifteen years ago, yet in every other way the Otherworld seems decades behind ours in technology.

Sure. But since I've been tracing the copper/electric/technology thread of Lara in TAD, it is perhaps too easy for me to say that Lara, the White Goddess, is also something of a goddess of technology. The artifact you cite as being a glaring exception to the otherwise lower-tech of Otherworld is, in fact, ta-da! a totem for worshipping Lara (like the ice-age Venus figurines).

As for a previous owner being a girl, I've always had the suspicion that Tina was Lara's doll, somehow, other than being modeled on Lara "the goddess at 16" (which is another paradox to roll over). (I also have some wonderment on Tina and Sherry Gold and ghoulas and buried treasure, too.)

I'm leaning more towards a time-tide between the worlds: this way there would be periods of greatest difference and periods of catch-up in between. So the O-time ratio would come down from 8.25 to 1 (time synchronization) and then into negative territory (the distortion would be reversed: 4 days on Earth would become 33 days on Otherworld).

Adam Stephanides quoted Roy and wrote:
Orgasm seems to be fatal. How
many would die from having a wet dream?

We seem compelled to conclude that males in Otherworld don't have wet
dreams, regardless of the stimulus.

To the contrary! We know that they can have such dreams and survive, since W.F. thinks that
Green has had such a dream when Green claims to have seen Lara at United. IIRC, W.F. tells
Green not to worry, these things happen.

The "death trigger" is not ejaculation/orgasm, I suppose, but a biochemical agent released by
the female when the zygotes have been successfully received in her holding tank. Then the
male's body starts to self destruct.

I thought it was implied that homosexuality was an option in addition to celibacy, with the
corollary that gays wouldn't die (of AIDS-like disease) like the heterosexual males.

=mantis=

Roy C. Lackey — 22 Jan 2003, 07:16 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis wrote:
As for a previous owner being a girl, I've always had the suspicion that
Tina was Lara's doll, somehow, other than being modeled on Lara "the
goddess at 16" (which is another paradox to roll over).

Paradox indeed. I don't see how Tina could ever have been Lara's doll. The timetable for
technological development aside, and ignoring effect preceding cause, the girl Tina belonged to
was elementary school age. The Goddess dates back, at least, to Captain Billy. She seems not
to age. Unless the Goddess is periodically reborn (for which there is no evidence in the text;
who was her daddy and did he die?), she could not possibly have been a child at a time when
dolls like Tina existed.

I'm leaning more towards a time-tide between the worlds: this way there
would be periods of greatest difference and periods of catch-up in between.
So the O-time ratio would come down from 8.25 to 1 (time synchronization)
and then into negative territory (the distortion would be reversed: 4 days
on Earth would become 33 days on Otherworld).

The time difference was even greater for those four months Green was gone from the
Otherworld; more like 14 to 1.

Adam Stephanides quoted Roy and wrote:

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many would die from having a wet dream?

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dreams, regardless of the stimulus.

To the contrary! We know that they can have such dreams and survive, since
W.F. thinks that Green has had such a dream when Green claims to have seen
Lara at United. IIRC, W.F. tells Green not to worry, these things happen.

I'm not convinced that W.F. thought Green had had a wet dream.

The "death trigger" is not ejaculation/orgasm, I suppose, but a biochemical
agent released by the female when the zygotes have been successfully
received in her holding tank. Then the male's body starts to self
destruct.

I disagree. If the "death trigger" mechanism were something that simple, some smart cookie would have made a fortune selling condoms and other barrier methods of birth control. Males in the Otherworld must have an innately weak libido for any such insectile biological reproductive system to work. And if that's the case, then they aren't men like us, and North's sexual revolution would never even have gotten off the ground.

BTW, pursuant to your theory of names and initials, what does W.F. stand for?

-Roy

StoneOx17 — 22 Jan 2003, 15:05 · follows Roy C. Lackey

mantis wrote:

As for a previous owner being a girl, I've always had the suspicion that Tina was Lara's doll, somehow, other than being modeled on Lara "the goddess at 16" (which is another paradox to roll over).

If the goddess can change the color of her hair and eyes at will, why not her age as well? If the previous owner was the goddess, this might explain the kitten. One of the attributes (is this the right word for goddesses, as opposed to saints?) of Cybele was a lion.

I'm leaning more towards a time-tide between the worlds: this way there would be periods of greatest difference and periods of catch-up in between. So the O-time ratio would come down from 8.25 to 1 (time synchronization) and then into negative territory (the distortion would be reversed: 4 days on Earth would become 33 days on Otherworld).

I think the 8.25 figure is wrong. It comes from Green's figuring of 33 days our world, 4 nights other world. But Green was only in the other world 3 nights. His reckoning is: "A night in the hospital, or perhaps two. Say two ..." But the book only describes one night in the hospital, and this is confirmed by W.F. -- on the morning Green escapes, W.F. says that he first saw Green the previous day, just before he went off shift. As I mentioned before, I think this corresponds to the 3 days that, according to some sources, Attis spent in the underworld before he was resurrected. This gives an 11 to 1 ratio, but I still can't make it match the 56 months to 4 months of his second visit.

There's another datapoint on time flow we haven't considered. North can't have been there more than 2 to 3 years Otherworld time, as he expects Nixon to still be president, and is confused about this until Green tells him Nixon resigned. He's been there at least 1.5 years, from the police files. And to me I calculate that the time in our world has to have been between 11 and 20 years, using generous margins.

--Stone Ox

Adam Stephanides — 24 Jan 2003, 15:08 · follows StoneOx17

on 1/21/03 11:24 AM, Michael Andre-Driussi at mantis at siriusfiction.com wrote:

Sure. But since I've been tracing the copper/electric/technology thread of Lara in TAD, it is perhaps too easy for me to say that Lara, the White Goddess, is also something of a goddess of technology. The artifact you cite as being a glaring exception to the otherwise lower-tech of Otherworld is, in fact, ta-da! a totem for worshipping Lara (like the ice-age Venus figurines).

On rereading the relevant passages, I'm inclined to agree with Roy that the dolls are more like toys for children. If Tina was meant to be worshipped, why would she call her owners gods and

goddesses? And while Tina's capacities are incredible for a doll, compared to a human she's pretty stupid. I don't see how giving Tina a brain of that caliber would make her more worship-worthy.

We seem compelled to conclude that males in Otherworld don't have wet dreams, regardless of the stimulus.

To the contrary! We know that they can have such dreams and survive, since W.F. thinks that Green has had such a dream when Green claims to have seen Lara at United. IIRC, W.F. tells Green not to worry, these things happen.

It seems to me that when W.F. tells Green "Lots of dudes have some dreams like that," (63, hc) he means visions of goddesses, not wet dreams: he speaks after Green has shown him Lara's photo attached to the roses. And why would W.F., when Green has told him merely that he saw a blond woman stepping into the hallway, conclude that Green had had a wet dream?

The "death trigger" is not ejaculation/orgasm, I suppose, but a biochemical agent released by the female when the zygotes have been successfully received in her holding tank. Then the male's body starts to self destruct.

In addition to Roy's objection to this, artificial insemination would seem to be an easy way for males to evade their "doom." (Of course, it's possible that some sort of biological mechanism makes it impossible for the sperm to be stored without natural intercourse, but I don't recall any evidence of this.)

--Adam

James Jordan — 24 Jan 2003, 15:17 · follows Adam Stephanides

I took it that ALL the dolls were images of the goddess, and that they were designed for children as a way of learning to interact with the goddess. That is, as idols of the goddess, training them in her religion.

Living idols, in a way. Idols in the Bible are attacked as "dumb," but "I'm Tina! I'm YOUR doll, AND I CAN TALK!"

I'll modify my first paragraph: The dolls are especially for boys, so that they fall in love with their dolls, and later with the goddess that they image.

Nutria