

DOORS: keyed Visitors

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 09 Feb 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3839>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 09 Feb 2003, 03:54

Roy Lackey wrote:

In an earlier post you thought North wanted to kill Lara. (He had his chance, btw, in the locker room before the big boxing match. He was armed.)

Yes, I did think North was trying to kill Lara, and it is still a possibility. The problem was this: North seems so "political" in his action, and I could not see much point in North killing Klamm (a presidential advisor), whereas I could see a point in North killing the President (part of a coup d'etat) . . . recognizing that Lara is not (identified in the text as being also) the president, still, if North realizes she is the goddess it seems to me that he might rather take a shot at her to destabilize Otherworld.

(According to Graves this does not happen with Thunder-children. First they eliminate the rival twins, then they marry the goddess, and then much much later they suppress the goddess with an all-male line up, which lasts for a while until she bubbles up again. So technically, North trying to kill the goddess would be the action of a power-crazed anarchist working outside of the usual White Goddess framework; North trying to kill Klamm-as-rival fits perfectly, but only if North is a lover/candidate for "the next level," whatever that is.)

But granted, this all grows out of the fact that shooting Klamm seems silly as a political act. Unless North had superiors who ordered it (this fits very well with WILL, fwiw: Libby is ready to assassinate on command), but we see no sign of North's superiors (heh-heh), he seems like a loose cannon (i.e., the way that G. Gordon Libby was portrayed).

Rivals in such mythological struggles usually battle one another for the affection/possession of the goddess. I don't get the impression that North was interested in Lara, one way or the other.

Here's a quote from the text:

'North whirled on him. "So--you know her. Are you working for her?" 'He nodded. "I'd do anything in the world for her." 'North's hand drew back . . . ' (ch 34, p. 286)

This suggests to me that North is interested in Lara, one way or another. At the hospital, North gave Green some key info about the goddess, so he is definitely up on that. True, he might not be aware that Lara is the goddess, he may be just labeling Lara Nomos as a member of the "other side" and his rage at Green might be the whole "loyalty" thing.

Liddy, and by extension North, may be off-center ideologically, but he is intelligent and practical. Reaching the summit of political power would not alter biological fact. Men may have the _cojones_ in Otherworld, but if they use them they die. This is the emasculation ritual of the priests of Attis writ large.

I'm not following this part. Are you saying that North would create/cement his Otherworld power-base with an official eunuch corps? (This finds an unexpected ring with the starship finale of Spinrad's THE IRON DREAM, fwiw. Neat, because that book is an sf novel written by Hitler in a

alternate history world where he emigrated to America and more-or-less founded sf.) Or that the O-male politicians we see are openly eunuchs? This would, indeed, be a "priests of Attis" construct. But the Otherworld biology (with drones who die) does not seem to be Attis-like at all to me.

Regarding my wondering about Visitors (all invited or some accidental), Roy

wrote:

Green's first passage seemed accidental to me; he didn't know he had done it, and Lara certainly didn't invite him. His second, brief, crossover (in the arcade) was accidental. I don't think Lara invited any of her lovers to Otherworld, for the reasons she gave Green at lunch. The secret government policy of institutionalizing Visitors seems to indicate they were undesirable aliens.

Here is a tangle!

First of all, while I grant that Green didn't mean to enter the door (and thus it was accidental for his intentions), still, Lara's conversation with him and the farewell note point out the dangers to him because they have been so close. That is to say, iirc, that Green is now "keyed" (with "Lara pollen," if you will) and doors will open to him which would not open to mere mortals. She urges him to back out immediately if it happens.

As for Lara inviting them, aside from the pollen that marks them as keys. Right, part of this phrasing is my fault: Lara's "White Goddess" mode means that she is basically running away into the maze and saying it is perilously dangerous to follow her. It is like a game of tag with serious complications and physical danger. When I wrote "inviting" I probably should have written "advising" or warning or whatever. My sense is that she didn't give the real Attis enough "advising," she just left, and this is part of what caused so much trouble for Attis later: he had only a garbled notion of what Otherworld biology was all about and tried to make a sacrifice that he thought she would like.

The "maze" that I'm talking about is not one of Lara's making, or at least it is not entirely of her making. The maze is peopled by agents who are trying to help Green to follow his dream and agents who are trying to hinder him (and save his life/restore his sanity). Early on the doctor tries to tell Green that "Lara" is probably an escaped convict who did something terrible as a child:

"If she had committed a serious offense in her teens -- a murder, perhaps, or if she'd had some complicity in a murder -- she would have been sent to a girls' correctional center until she was of age, and then transferred to a woman's prison to complete her sentence. Thus she might easily have spent the last ten or twelve years in one or the other, Mr. Green" (6).

(This, in turn, finds strange corroboration with Tina's memories of belonging to a girl/goddess who had some trauma. Could it possibly be that the crime was what happened to Attis?)

But my main point in bringing it up is to show Lara as a hunted and/or imprisoned goddess, very much like Kypris of LS series (and other Love goddesses that we won't mention right now). We know about Kypris's situation in LS: she was the Isis-like lover to Osiris-like Pas. We know hardly anything about Lara's predicament -- in fact, my even suggesting that she has one may be an over-reaching on my part.

North is a problem either way. If he had been Lara's lover, I find no hint of it from either of them. If he had loved the Goddess, why would he have been tempted by an ice queen as he claimed? Why would he have feared sex with an Otherworld woman if he had survived sex with Lara?

I wonder if he was worried about how he would be treated if he did have sex with her: they would treat him as a dead man, take him to a hospice or something, which would mess up his political/virile ambitions. He would be recognized for the wrong thing -- he wants to be recognized, all right, but at the time of his choosing and for the thing of his choosing.

If North was an accidental visitor, how did it happen? Did he just happen to pass through the same 'door' as another man who had been close to Lara (as almost happened to Fanny at Mama's)?

Right, it might be possible, but it seems more likely that Visitors are "keyed" with Lara pollen.

If Klamm is somehow Kissinger, and North is Liddy, was there more hanky-panky going on at the Watergate than political shenanigans, and North just went through the wrong door at the right time?

While I'm delighted that alga is (or seems to be) agreeing with my Kissinger/Klamm connection, I don't think that either one of us is saying that Klamm is Kissinger himself nor a panalog (personal analog) of Kissinger (I mean, he cannot be a panalog since he is a Visitor!). Nor is North meant as Libby himself, but as a man like Libby.

Then again, I do like your Watergate Hotel notion as a likely site for the door. Yikes! There were those, er, prostitutes operating at the hotel, iirc, and nothing screams Love goddess like that does.

=mantis=

Roy C. Lackey — 09 Feb 2003, 09:14 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis quoted me and wrote:
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Men

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No, I wasn't thinking of eunuchs. I meant it metaphorically. The book specifically links Lara to Attis, so we have no choice but to see her as Cybele, though we both agree that she seems more like Aphrodite. We all know what happened to Attis. The Goddess apparently gets her kicks by 'loving 'em and leaving 'em', sort of an Olympian version of one-night stands. She may think fondly of her discarded lovers, but not fondly enough; when she goes she's gone, and she doesn't look back. Having loved a goddess, her former lovers are ruined for life; mere mortal women can't compare. Witness Green's complete lack of interest in sex with other women, even when openly pursued. That's not natural.

Otherworld's matriarchal society and peculiar reproductive system mimic the Cybele-Attis model in that men are reduced to one-night stands, a means to an end. The very act that the

Goddess sought out men for is the one act that guarantees Otherworld men will, like Attis, die in consequence. Certain death is as potent a check on the essence of masculinity as there is. Not being native to Otherworld may have confused Attis, so that he mistook her admonishments against sex too literally. Men in Otherworld suffer no such illusions. They have been, in effect, biologically and socially emasculated, so that they are not men as men are in our world. That's why the Goddess hunts her prey in greener lands.

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(This, in turn, finds strange corroboration with Tina's memories of belonging to a girl/goddess who had some trauma. Could it possibly be that the crime was what happened to Attis?)

Too many years between Attis and Green for the doctor's comments to be literally true. I dismissed the doctor's comments, just as I did those Freudian utterances of the hospital staff in FREE LIVE FREE. I thought Wolfe was just, again, poking fun at the psychobabble establishment spinning elaborate, fanciful webs out of so little real knowledge. Unless the doctor was privy to the fact that her receptionist was more than she appeared to be, i.e., a goddess, there's no way for the doctor to have known any such thing. And if the doctor didn't know that Green's Lara was the same person as her receptionist, then she had even less to go on.

But your theory does bring up another point: was Lara a Visitor herself? Was she not native to Otherworld?

But my main point in bringing it up is to show Lara as a hunted and/or imprisoned goddess, very much like Kypris of LS series (and other Love goddesses that we won't mention right now). We know about Kypris's situation in LS: she was the Isis-like lover to Osirus-like Pas. We know hardly anything about Lara's predicament -- in fact, my even suggesting that she has one may be an over-reaching on my part.

And we all know what the one part of her dismembered lover that Isis couldn't find was, don't we? <g>

-Roy