

"Tracking Song" bits and pieces

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 03 Mar 1998

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David_Lebling — 03 Mar 1998, 12:44

I found time last night re-read most of "Tracking Song," and I found some interesting stuff.

* Does anyone else agree that the locale may not be Earth (or even Urth)? It's a world with two moons and trees that are very non-earthlike (unless I'm misreading Wolfe's description). The narrator thinks they are odd, as well. If it isn't Mars it's a world with two moons orbiting another star than the Sun, or perhaps a very far-future Earth, I concede. (If Larry Niven can make the Earth a moon of Jupiter, I suppose Wolfe can add a moon).

* Cim Glowing, who had a fairly close-up experience with the people of the Great Sleigh, initially believes the narrator to be one of them, but then is unsure. She thinks maybe he's one of the Wiggikki (she says he looks like them) who has stolen the clothing of a sleigher. Dogs look a lot like wolves. (Of course, the Wiggikki think he may be a Ketin, because he has a hairy face).

* Mantru remarks that the Min kidnapped Cim Glowing because they are no longer very good at distinguishing the "animals" from the "humans." The implication is that the animals are getting more and more human as time goes on. I think the narrator is a dog-man who is human enough to "pass" the tests given by the Min and by Roller and the other robots.

* There's less of the narrator eating processed food than I remembered. He eats a bite of Lenizee doe, a snow monkey, and other meat. The Lenizee is the only "animal" he eats, however, and he does so reluctantly. I'm nearly done with a re-reading and all he's eaten of processed food is some bouillon cubes.

* The world where the action takes place is either coming out of a glacial period, or being terraformed. In either case, the people on the Great Sleigh know what's going on, and are trying to educate the "animals" so that they will respond correctly.

I can't say yet how any of this stuff impacts my theory, but hey...

In the previous discussion, someone said that the scene where the Wiggikki take down Nashhwonk is based on a similar scene (in Jack London?) where a pack of wolves take down an elk. True? If so, which Jack London? I wonder if the whole skeleton of the story is similar to that of some story of London's? In many respects it reminds me of the typical lost-dog story, though it isn't The Call of the Wild.

Also, what do you make of the epigraph? The quote is from the Aeneid, and refers to the long wanderings of the Trojan survivors before reaching Italy and founding Rome (recall that Romulus and Remus were raised by wolves). Who is doing the long and frustrating wandering here? The sleighers? No. I think it's the "animals" who are becoming human.

-- viz

(david_lebling at avid.com)