

New Sun references in pop music

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 05 Mar 1998

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Ranjit Bhatnagar — 05 Mar 1998, 10:25

I wrote this in 1995. The article's entirely tongue-in-cheek, but the coincidences are uncanny!

By the way, it's a good album even outside of the eerie New Sun connections.

I was listening to k.d. lang's album "Ingenue" when I realized that the first side of the album is clearly taken from the _Book of the New Sun._ (Caution: spoilers!)

Let's examine the evidence, song by song:

1. SAVE ME

Save me
Save me from you
But pave me
The way to you
Lead me upon the captive free...

What could that be but Thecla wheedling Severian?

2. THE MIND OF LOVE

...Where is your head, Kathryn?
Where is your head?

The Feast of Holy Katherine. Do I have to draw a picture?

3. MISS CHATELAINE

...I can't explain why I've become
Miss Chatelaine

4. WASH ME CLEAN

You swim
Swim through my veins...

Severian takes the alzabo with the flesh of Chatelaine
Thecla and absorbs her memories and personality, leading to
confusion and identity crisis as she is in effect
reincarnated in his body.

5. SO IT SHALL BE

Shadows
Now curtain the moon
But faith swears
It will shine again soon
Shine with love
You've been hiding from me...

Severian harbors a false hope that Thecla still lives, and

is waiting for him, somewhere, just out of sight.

...Like daylight chasing the dark...

(Notice the sun/moon/shadow symbolism that recurs throughout the Book of the New Sun.)

I can exist being caught by your kiss
Willingly
Or grant you control
Of my body and soul
Ask it and so it shall be

Eventually he must accept that if she lives at all, it is only within him.

lang clearly is not trying to recapitulate the entire _Book of the New Sun_; rather, she's focusing on one particular storyline of interest to her. I have probably missed many of the significant details, and I don't know what the second half of the album is about. I welcome your comments.

Ranjit