

(FWD) Re: (urth) The Wizard - questions -- answers (spoiler)

The Urth list — 7 messages, 5 voices, 04 Jan 2005

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4290>

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harlekin at earthlink.net — 04 Jan 2005, 11:58

"I'm not sure that Garvaon's sacrifice would have been appreciated by Idnn had she known of it. In fact, I'm pretty confident she would find it reprehensible and offensive."

That's the point. Garvaon gets no benefit from his action. It's a sacrifice of honor on his part. Thus it is selfish and selfless at the same time. Garvaon's death is a gift to him so he won't have to live with his shame, not an act of redemption. His place is skai was assured, IMO.

Don

stilskin — 04 Jan 2005, 12:03 · in reply to harlekin at earthlink.net

I think you're ascribing far too much nobility to Garvaon and this action. Otherwise he would not attempt to hide what he had done. But I think Wolfe leaves room for careful readers to disagree on this and many other points.

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 04 Jan 2005, 12:08 · in reply to stilskin

Stilskin,

I disagree. Garvaon _had_ to hide what he had done, or it would have had far worse consequences than the ones he was hoping to avoid - if the Angrborn had known that one of the "hotlanders" (and one of the "honorable" knights no less) had murdered their king, they would have slaughtered all the knights and the men-at-arms, and enslaved the rest, including Idnn, so she would have wound up in the same position (so to speak) except with someone other than Gilling, and probably-possibly not even the new king but just some random Angrborn freeholder who bought her at auction.

On Tue, 4 Jan 2005 12:03:29 -0800 (PST), stilskin <acronus at yahoo.com> wrote:

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stilskin — 04 Jan 2005, 12:31 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

That's a convincing argument for keeping it a secret, but not for his doing it in the first place. I could certainly be wrong about Garvaon's actions here; it wouldn't be the first time I'd misinterpreted Wolfe! But so far I'm unconvinced that we are meant to find Garvaon's actions noble.

Paul

--- Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:
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Nathan Spears — 04 Jan 2005, 12:34 · in reply to stilskin

Yeah, I think the killing was motivated mainly by bitterness; Idnn was marrying an unworthy soulless creature for her father's political gain; Garvaon was unaware of the true nature of the 'gift' to King Gilling until the arrival in Utgard; Idnn never loved Garvaon, and in fact never knew of his love for her. I wouldn't say it was a petty bitterness, but bubbled up from something bordering on anguish. I wouldn't even say it was an ignoble deed. Before the first stabbing, King Gilling had just murdered a man with his fist, and had ordered what he thought would be the murders of two knights for his court's amusement. The final blow was probably less hot-blooded but no less justified. The humans were trying to make peace with the giants because they couldn't kill them all.

But it still wasn't a knightly deed, and one that Idnn would have reviled him for. Garvaon looked at Able as he died and said something like, "You knew," because Able was the only one Garvaon had confided in about his love for Idnn, and the only one would understand all the forces pressuring him to commit such a deed. It was a departure from his nature, not an indicator of it; his death wasn't a redemption but a sign that Garvaon was still a true knight.

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Don

stilskin — 04 Jan 2005, 12:42 · in reply to Nathan Spears

That's a beautiful interpretation, and one that I can't disagree with.

Paul

--- Nathan Spears <spearofsolomon at yahoo.com> wrote:

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James Wynn — 05 Jan 2005, 10:25 · in reply to Nathan Spears

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Although I agree with much that Nathan says on this subject, I think this statement goes too far.

Garvaon seems to see Idnn's marriage in the same way Idnn saw it as they were approaching Utgard. (In the same way Adam Stephanides described on this list IIRC). I don't think he saw it as any different from rescuing a "fair maiden" from a dragon. Killing such a creature in that circumstance would be knightly in any circumstance...even if it were asleep. Humans and Giants are not the same and the same rules of knightly killing do not apply. Able doesn't refuse to rescue Idnn earlier because the act would be "unknightly". He does it because the act would be impractical for both he *and* Idnn. Able refers to it as equivalent to 'running away to live in Fairyland'. Although it appears that he eventually does that, it does not seem that at the time he saw that as easily within his grasp.

Garvaon on the other hand seems to have seen Idnn the way Able saw Disiri. Able would have committed any murder for her sake (and offers to). Was that unknightly behavior? Not as I recall the requirements of medieval "courtly love".

It is true that Idnn would not have thanked Garvaon for his act, but that is because she saw things differently after her marriage. She seems to see marriage -- even one to King Gilling -- as more than a formality. Idnn's and Garvaon's separate viewpoints on this are simply among the paradoxes of the knightly code.

~ Crush