

TWK - Why Able?

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 09 Jun 2005

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4441>

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thapaguru — 09 Jun 2005, 07:47

Hello all,

I've recently joined this organization and have been reading through the older often excellent posts. I've been a Wolfe reader for the last year or so, since picking up BotNS and have just finished the Wizard Knight. My impression - Wolfe can do no wrong.

To be succinct, my questions:

- 1) Since the good guys are outnumbered and possibly outgunned, I recognize the need for reserves from lower dimensions. But why does Michael want Able? Wouldn't he be better satisfied with a presumably wiser and strong Overcyn?
- 2) I came out with the impression that Baki did indeed stab Gilling the first time (like Uri said) and that Garvaon finished the job the second time. Am I wrong?
- 3) I'm not of a Christian background (Hindu rather) and I was wondering if I was correct in assuming that Able falling down twice after giving blood to Disiri refers to the pre-crucifixion trip Christ made.

Thank for your time.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 09 Jun 2005, 09:17 · in reply to thapaguru

Hi, and welcome to the mailinglist.

- 1) Since the good guys are outnumbered and possibly outgunned, I recognize the need for reserves from lower dimensions. But why does Michael want Able? Wouldn't he be better satisfied with a presumably wiser and strong Overcyn?

Able seems to be King Arthur in some form. There are clues to this all throughout, but the clincher is the last two words of the story - he signs the lengthy letter (that is the novel) by his Earth name, "Art Ormsby." "Ormsby" can be translated "of the worm." Thus, his name is a form of "Arthur Pendragon."

- 2) I came out with the impression that Baki did indeed stab Gilling the first time (like Uri said) and that

Garvaon finished the job the second time. Am I wrong?

I'm sure that Baki did stab Gilling; I'm not as sure about Garvaon.

3) I'm not of a Christian background (Hindu rather) and I was wondering if I was correct in assuming that Able falling down twice after giving blood to Disiri refers to the pre-crucifixion trip Christ made.

That would certainly be one possible interpretation. Wolfe definitely uses a lot of Christian imagery in his novels, most blatantly (in my opinion) in the eucharistic scenes in the Book of the Short Sun.

--Dan'l

I do not fear Satan half so much as I fear those who fear him.

-- St Teresa of Avila

<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

James Wynn — 09 Jun 2005, 09:43 · in reply to thapaguru

Welcome, Thapaguru!

1) Since the good guys are outnumbered and possibly outgunned, I recognize the need for reserves from lower dimensions. But why does Michael want Able? Wouldn't he be better satisfied with a presumably wiser and strong Overcyn?

Well, Able is an Overcyn, right? Are you saying "why not Valfather?" Well, I gathered that Michael reckons things 4th dimensionally differently from people of the other levels. After his first meeting with Able, he tells him that he is going to search for "that great and famous knight, Sir Able of the High Heart". The meaning is: The Able at that point in the book was not the Able Michael sought.

Able himself seems to see things in this way. He recognizes that he became a knight by wanting to be one, taking the title, bearing the responsibilities. Only later did he receive the accolade from Disiri and do knightly deeds.

I'd say that the fact that Michael sought Able out meant that at the end of the story he was already a greater Overcyn than Valfather.

2) I came out with the impression that Baki did indeed stab Gilling the first time (like Uri said) and that Garvaon finished the job the second time. Am I wrong?

I'm sure that Baki did stab Gilling; I'm not as sure about Garvaon.

IIRC The text explicitly denies that Baki stabbed Gilling. But then again, frequently I also accept Wolfe's textual denials as confirmations, so I'm not gainsaying it. I am definite that Garvaon did the deed the second time (I presume the first) since Able is unwilling name the assailant to protect the honor of his name. I don't think he would worry about that for Baki.

3) I'm not of a Christian background (Hindu rather) and I was wondering if I was correct in assuming that Able falling down twice after giving blood to Disiri refers to the pre-crucifixion trip Christ made.

Hmmm I didn't even think of this. According to Catholic tradition, Christ fell THREE times on the Via Dolorosa. Maybe you missed one? (I don't have access to my books)

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15569a.htm>