

TWK: Thou Art god

The Urth list — 10 messages, 7 voices, 27 Nov 2005

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4518>

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Roy C. Lackey — 27 Nov 2005, 08:24

When Art made his vow to defend that pass, he was an overgrown kid. What complicates matters is the fact that when he actually undertook the defenses he was twenty years older, had the aid of a magic steed, and was a *god*. In fact, in all of his battles in the second book, after he came back from Skai, he was a god. That hardly seems fair. What had a god to fear in his contests with mere men? Death? He had already died and gone to Skai. What were the natural parameters of his powers as a god? Exclusive of the clearly supernatural powers he used when he broke his vow at the end of the story, how much stronger was he as a god than a mere man, and how much did that influence his prowess as a warrior?

When Overcyn Able bent his knee to Queen Idnn or King Arnthor, a Mythgarthr god was bowing to his supposed worshipers, a blasphemy of sorts, a reversal of the natural order of proper homage in the cosmology of TWK. I thought that was what got the Aelf in trouble.

And when Art the god stooped to dally with Disiri, he was twice removed from her, in terms of holiness. He was farther above Disiri near the end of the story than Michael or Parka was above him.

-Roy

David DiGiacomo — 27 Nov 2005, 08:52 · follows Roy C. Lackey

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Able visited Skai and gained certain powers, but is it stated that he became an Overcyn? I thought it was necessary to be born into Skai for that. After all, the dragons and Aelf who ascended to Mythgarthr did not become human.

transient — 27 Nov 2005, 17:21 · in reply to David DiGiacomo

On Nov 27 2005, at 3:52 AM, David DiGiacomo wrote:
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I am pretty sure there was some close-to-explicit mention that he was, in fact, an Overcyn, but I can't find it now. ;P

I believe he said "we Overcyns" at some point...

James Wynn — 27 Nov 2005, 19:29 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

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I feel some embarrassment at piling on against Roy for the crime stirring the most interesting discussion on TWK in a while, however, here I go anyway:

Instead of defending a pass as he was tasked, he rescued the King's sister from a dragon: dying in the endeavor. Holding a remote pass was only of incidental value to the realm. It was primarily a punishment. By the time he fulfills his promise, defending a pass in the name of a mere King of Mythgarthr humiliating whereas before he probably considered it somewhat glorious.

Roy C. Lackey — 27 Nov 2005, 20:21 · follows James Wynn

Cliff quoted and wrote:
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From the same page I cited earlier: (W, 386)

"Oh, you Overcyns! Get up, please. I didn't mean to keep you kneeling in the snow. Rise."

I did, and her soft hand found mine. "I feel you're my friend. That you truly are. I've forty knights, and not one real friend among them. Did the Valfather send you?"

"Yes, Your Majesty. Or at least, he let me come."

She stared. "You're serious."

"Entirely, Your Majesty. When I talk to others, I try to conceal it. But I won't lie to you or the king. I won't even tell half truths, something I do much too often."

Shortly afterwards (W, 397), Able lectured the king about the cosmology of the seven worlds, pointedly neglecting to mention where he had spent the last twenty years and the fact that he was an Overcyn, which fact, had he revealed it, would have lent weight to his long-undelivered

message. That smells like a half truth to me. But, had he revealed his status as an Overcyn, that would have cheapened his victory in the Trial by Arms, thereby calling into question the innocence of the queen. At least, that's the only reason I can think of not to have told him the whole truth. In any event, his word to the queen was soon broken.

-Roy

David DiGiacomo — 27 Nov 2005, 21:13 · follows Roy C. Lackey

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So you are saying that because Able didn't contradict the queen's offhand remark here, he is an Overcyn? I'm not sure that's conclusive evidence. I still think of him as being a human with some Skai powers added.

Chris — 27 Nov 2005, 21:42 · in reply to David DiGiacomo

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It seems like all he directly admitted to there was that the Valfather let him come. But the fact that the Valfather let him come back is not something I recall him concealing much. Which implies that he's also admitting to being an Overcyn, because what else is there that he would be trying to conceal there?

thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 28 Nov 2005, 01:17 · follows Chris

On Sun, 27 Nov 2005 13:42:01 -0800 Chris <rasputin_ at hotmail.com> wrote:

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Doesn't he tell Toug he's now an Overcyn, more or less directly, at the start of Wizard? But Toug isn't to worship him, unless Able tells him to.

Roy C. Lackey — 28 Nov 2005, 08:50 · follows thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

Andrew wrote:
Doesn't he tell Toug he's now an Overcyn, more or less directly, at
the start of Wizard? But Toug isn't to worship him, unless Able
tells him to.

Correct. Page 56. He also says that his "authority" is now of Skai, not Mythgarthr.

-Roy

Andy Robertson — 28 Nov 2005, 08:58 · in reply to David DiGiacomo

David DiGiacomo writes:

So you are saying that because Able didn't contradict the queen's offhand
remark here, he is an Overcyn? I'm not sure that's conclusive evidence.
I still think of him as being a human with some Skai powers added.

Abel is (specifically) one of the Einherjar, the chosen slain, who are gathered in Valhalla (or the Lady's hall Forsetti) ready for the last fight at Ragnarok.

This status and this state are part of long-established Odinic theology: it is not something Wolfe made up. Abel acts in exactly the way I would, er, expect such a being to act.

It doesn't make him a god, but it does make him an Overcyn.

hartshorn, the rather nerdy Odinit