

Father Inire

The Urth list — 34 messages, 10 voices, 25 May 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4616>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

b sharp — 25 May 2006, 04:44

On first reading of the BotNS I thought Father Inire (suggesting INRI King of the Jews?) made only one cameo appearance as the cowed servitor who guides Severian to the Green Room.

Robert Borski convinced me that he also appears as the old, twisted, masked jungle guide (who looks like Isangoma). This guy was rumored to be a shaman (therian) who could assume the form of a tiger (oops wrong animal). He carried a bent stick with a monkey head on it (hm. okay then). Inire's appearance there makes a lot of plot sense. He can ensure that the old autarch and Severian both survive and perform the memory transfer. He can extract information from Agia, etc. Okay, so he is Father Inire too.

Well, I can be content with the one standard cameo appearance by the director, but if there are two then it is time to start looking for more. Borski does this by seeking out father figures and characters with hidden eyes and using cryptonyms and trying to make them fit. He comes up with Ossipago, Palaemon, Paeon and Ceryx as versions of Inire. I think these are all very challengable and perhaps that can happen at a later time.

My own preference is to look first for physical clues. Perhaps in hope that Wolfe is using the engineering side of his brain first, before the literary side. The multiple physical descriptions of Inire mark him as old, short, bent, twisted, looking like a monkey, with no more nose than an alouatte (black howler monkey <http://www.painetworks.com/photos/dv/dv0881.JPG>). With that as a starting guide, here is my list of Inire cameo appearances:

1. Uakari- Back in a June 1999 post, Mitchell A. Bailey felt the uakari watching Severian from a tree as he was escaping the House Absolute grounds after the play performance was really Inire. An alouatte was mentioned earlier so why an uakari here? With its bald head the uakari really looks like an old man(<http://www.brazilianfauna.com/images/reduakari.jpg>) and I can't blame Mitchell at all for thinking that an old man who looks like a monkey might disguise himself as a monkey who looks like an old man.

2. Baboon- when Severian wakes in a lazaret after his avorn battle, "An ape with the head of a dog ran down the aisle, paused at my bed to look at me, then ran on." Baboons are large, ape-like monkeys often referred to as "dog-faced" (<http://www.cwaf.org/images/main-image-baboon.jpg>).

3. Isangoma- He is old though being short, bent or twisted is not mentioned. But Wolfe explicitly notes his resemblance to the shape-shifting jungle guide with the monkey head pole. He is found in one of Father Inire's main haunts, The Botanic Gardens. He isn't said to look like a monkey but he mentions monkeys in a story and invokes baby uakaris in his cant. When we meet him, Marie is reading a Bibilcal passage to him- God's curse on Moses, the shepherd of the Chosen People, to never see the Promised Land himself. This could suggest Inire's role in BotNS.

4. Rudesind- He is old and bent. We don't know how tall he is because he is usually on a ladder.

He inhabits Father Inire's portion of the House Absolute and is familiar enough with the Secret House to trick Severian into falling into it and to move easily from The Citadel to the House Absolute. He carries the letter of Father Inire to Severian. We are told he is Inire's servant which should explain all the above.

But, we have also been told that the old Autarch, Appian, is himself several of the minor officials of his court. I think Father Inire uses the same ploy. The most telling clue is when Rudesind first comes down from the ladder "like an aged monkey, seeming all arms and legs and wrinkled neck; his hands were as long as my feet, the crooked fingers lined with blue veins". Why would Wolfe use almost all the physical descriptions of Father Inire for Rudesind unless he really was him? He also notes that Rudesind's nose and chin almost touch (proboscis monkey? <http://www.mikekaplan.com/nss-folder/pictures/proboscis%20monkey.JPG>).

Rudesind tells Severian, at different times, two interesting things: that his wife died and that he is the advocate for the dead, giving a speech about doing right by them. These two facts tie Rudesind to our next Inire cameo.

5. Dorcas' husband- this guy is never named, though he and Dorcas are given ample opportunity to do it. He also spends lots of time in the Botanic Gardens poling his skiff, has a dead wife and seems like an advocate for the dead. Severian describes him as "bowed and shrunk by age (he appeared older even than Master Palaemon) until he could hardly have weighed more than a boy of ten".

This man tells Severian, "Father Inire had the gardeners plant the avenirs. I was here and saw it. Just a little man he is, with a wry neck and bow legs". If the man IS Father Inire, no false statements there. And no thought or comment from Severian on how this man himself fits Inire's description. And Severian is ALWAYS making comparisons.

How could Dorcas be married to Father Inire?, you might ask. Two bits of circumstantial evidence: Dorcas seems to have been a young teen when she wed. Through Lewis Carroll allusions and the Domnina scene we are informed that Father Inire has an attraction to girls of this age. Moreover, if his beloved wife Dorcas had died years ago, wouldn't Father Inire manipulate the ONE person in the universe who could reanimate her, into doing so? Severian accidentally finds his own dead grandmother in a lake with ten thousand other dead bodies? Please.

Now, it might be noted that Rudesind also mentions his wife dying soon after having two daughters. If his wife is really Dorcas, how could this be? I think it suggests that Severian's accepted family tree needs some serious restructuring. The Dorcas -> Ouen-> Severian scheme always seemed too easy and spoon-fed to me, given the difficulty of the other puzzles in this book.

An even more serious objection might be noting that, leaving the Samru, Severian sees Dorcas with her dead husband and then later sees Rudesind in the Citadel. Well, there are some very strange things about that Dorcas scene. Severian goes to shore because he sees a flower in a little boat, newly built, at an ancient pier. He finds her kneeling "the body of the old man who had poled the skiff there lay on a bier before her, his back so straight, his face, in death, so youthful, that I hardly knew him".

Can we be sure it IS the old man from the skiff? Why would he look so much younger in death? Could Severian be once again mistaken about who a family member really is? Again, I think Severian's family tree may need major revamping.

Final note, the flower on the boat from this scene is a wilted white poppy and Severian sees Dorcas has replaced it in her hair with a fresh arum. There was a great post in here a while back on the meanings of flowers. White poppy means "dormant affection". Arum means "ardor". There are many previous hints in the text that Dorcas has some deeper issues. But these are all part of a new puzzle.

-bsharp

Roy C. Lackey — 25 May 2006, 06:03 · follows b sharp

Hrmmp. I ain't buyin' all of it, and some of it has been said before, but it's easily your most cogent post to date. Well done!

What about Becan on the Rudesind/Fechin angle? And you do know that Dorcas' husband was present when Severian was saved from drowning at the beginning of SHADOW? I never did trust that girl.

Am I helping, or giving you more rope? <g>

-Roy

thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 25 May 2006, 06:33 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On Thu, 25 May 2006 14:44:02 +1000 b sharp
<bsharporflat at hotmail.com> wrote:
On first reading of the BotNS I thought Father Inire (suggesting
INRI King
of the Jews?) made only one cameo apperance as the cowled servitor
who
guides Severian to the Green Room.

I've wondered whether the "cynocephalous ape" Sev sees in the barracks when he awakes after the avern combat mightn't also be Inire, come to check out the new guy.

don doggett — 25 May 2006, 06:59 · in reply to b sharp

--- b sharp <bsharporflat at hotmail.com> wrote:

I

think it suggests that Severian's accepted family
tree needs some serious
restructuring. The Dorcas -> Ouen-> Severian scheme
always seemed too easy
and spoon-fed to me, given the difficulty of the
other puzzles in this book.

Could Severian be once again

mistaken about who a family
member really is? Again, I think Severian's family
tree may need major
revamping.

Thank you for this, I agree 110 percent. My ideas and
yours about Sev's family tree aren't the same, but we
both agree the accepted version just doesn't seem to

work thematically. By the way, thanks for your interesting posts, I don't agree with them all, but they're definitely well thought out and argued, and the list hasn't seen this much life in a while. I remember when I first found this list. It was a relief just to be able to express the thoughts bouncing around in my head. One thing everyone on this list seems to agree on (maybe the only thing) is that there's something special about Wolfe's major works that make them worth talking about. over. and. over. and again. :)

Don

don doggett — 25 May 2006, 07:07 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

--- "Roy C. Lackey" <rlackey at stic.net> wrote:

And

you do know that Dorcas'
husband was present when Severian was saved from
drowning at the beginning
of SHADOW? I never did trust that girl.

Don, reverting to his southern vernacular: "Do what?" (say again?) I don't have my books, Roy (never never never loan out your books) so can you do me a kindness and quote or paraphrase that one? This is the first I've heard of it.

Roy C. Lackey — 25 May 2006, 08:40 · follows don doggett

Don Doggett quoted and wrote:

And

you do know that Dorcas'

husband was present when Severian was saved from
drowning at the beginning
of SHADOW? I never did trust that girl.

Don, reverting to his southern vernacular: "Do what?"
(say again?)

I don't have my books, Roy (never never never loan out
your books) so can you do me a kindness and quote or
paraphrase that one? This is the first I've heard of it.

I thought 'most everyone knew that. The last page of chapter II.

I said, "I saw Malrubius."

An old man, a boatman from his tar-stained clothes, took Roche by the shoulder. "Who's that?"

"Used to be Master of Apprentices. He's dead."

"Not a woman?" The old man was holding Roche but looking at me.

"No, no," Roche told him. "There are no women in our guild."

-Roy

b sharp — 25 May 2006, 11:37 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy says:

Hrmmp. I ain't buyin' all of it, and some of it has been said before, but it's easily your most >cogent post to date.

Roy you are so parsimonious! Care to elaborate on which parts of my post are wrong, which are old hat and which are cogent?

Roy also says:

What about Becan on the Rudesind/Fechin angle?

At some later date I'll post on my ideas about Severian's family tree. And Casdove's family will surely play a part in that post. As the new guy, I will admit it is still a work in progress.

More Roy:

And you do know that Dorcas' husband was present when Severian was saved from drowning at >the beginning of SHADOW? I never did trust that girl.

"An old man, a boatman from his tar-stained clothes, took Roche by the shoulder. "Who's that?"

"Used to be Master of Apprentices. He's dead."

"Not a woman?" The old man was holding Roche but looking at me."

Are you sure the old man is Dorcas' husband? The tar marks him as a sailor and the "not a woman" comment as someone familiar with undines. These clues call first to my mind Maxellindis' uncle who sails up and down the Gyll where the scene takes place. Dorcas' husband has a very small boat on a lake but no mention of him being a sailor. Only of him previously being a shopkeeper and hauling artwork and currently living in the loft of a friend's House. He does mention manatees. Now, Maxellindis' uncle is also unnamed, he hangs out with a young teenage girl.....Which girl don't you trust Roy? ;-).

Was Father Inire ever a sailor? Probably, but not that kind, on urth's water. Of course we know that water and space sailors share similar skills and mannerisms. That's what the cap'n said watching the Popeye on Pluto show. Sindbad on Saturn? oh never mind.

-bsharp

mournings glory — 25 May 2006, 19:16 · in reply to b sharp

Plunking on the honkytonk of his brain, bsharp improvises the following cadenza about the pansimianess of Father Inire:

<The most telling clue is when Rudesind first comes down from the ladder "like an aged monkey, seeming all arms and legs and wrinkled neck; his hands were as long as my feet, the crooked fingers lined with blue veins". Why would Wolfe use almost all the physical descriptions of Father Inire for Rudesind unless he really was him?>

In his essay on the onomastics of the New Sun, Gene Wolfe writes, "In this piece I'd like to go into names a bit more deeply, beginning with the rule of naming I used: Everything is just what it says it is."

Rudesind, of course, is a saint's name, a convention used over and over again by the author to differentiate humans from Other -- a rule however bsharp violates in favor of ape's blood and gerontica. Moreover, there is in Rudesind an exquisite pun, because it derives from the Latin word, 'rudis,' which comes about as close as you can say in that antiquated language, to "paint

by numbers." This is because Rudesind is one of those failed artist types who is perhaps best exemplified by the Shawian dictate, "Those who can, do; those who can't, curate." Hence his endless starf*cking prattle about Fechin, as well as his own artistic ambitions as a youth. This is not extensive deep cover by an alien operative; it's gall by someone who's never fully accepted his own mediocrity. (Interestingly, as Rudesind conducts Severian through a narrower corridor of the House Absolute's gallery, the torturer-critic opines of the pictures there, "From what I could see of them, they appeared very bad--more daubs." This may well be because he's in Rudesind's personal wing.)

This does not, however, mean that Rudesind hasn't been used by Father Inire as a factotum. As Severian tells the curator at the end of *_Citadel_*, "We know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeon is another such, though perhaps you did not know that. We even know that your master was with us in the jungles of the north, where he tried until it was too late to rescue my predecessor."

So let me attempt a summation: Rudesind, as the root of his name suggests, is "unskilled, not improved by art." He's a dripper and spitter manqué-- not an eater of fleas in the Hierodule zoo.

MsGhee

Roy C. Lackey — 25 May 2006, 19:39 · follows mournings glory

bsharp wrote:

4. Rudesind- He is old and bent. We don't know how tall he is because he is usually on a ladder. He inhabits Father Inire's portion of the House Absolute and is familiar enough with the Secret House to trick Severian into falling into it and to move easily from The Citadel to the House Absolute. He carries the letter of Father Inire to Severian.

I could object that Inire said in the letter that he would not reach the Citadel for two more days, but you could counter by asking how the letter reached the Citadel in the first place.

An even more serious objection might be noting that, leaving the Samru, Severian sees Dorcas with her dead husband and then later sees Rudesind in the Citadel. Well, there are some very strange things about that Dorcas scene.

I've said so myself. See, iirc, "Dear Dorcas" in the older archive.

Severian goes to shore because he sees a flower in a little boat, newly built, at an ancient pier. He finds her kneeling "the body of the old man who had poled the skiff there lay on a bier before her, his back so straight, his face, in death, so youthful, that I hardly knew him".

Can we be sure it IS the old man from the skiff? Why would he look so much younger in death?

Severian thought people asleep looked younger than when awake -- Jonas being an exception.

Could Severian be once again mistaken about who a family member really is? Again, I think Severian's family tree may need major revamping.

If the body was not that of the dead Boatman, whose body was it? Surely not Inire, who remained with Severian all ten years of his autarchy. Severian saw both the dead Boatman and Rudesind just days apart. How could he look on them both and not see any resemblance, if

there was one? Masks? And he couldn't tell there were masks involved, even after ten years of being around both Inire and the three Hierodules?

-Roy

Roy C. Lackey — 25 May 2006, 20:50 · follows Roy C. Lackey

b sharp wrote:

Are you sure the old man is Dorcas' husband? The tar marks him as a sailor and the "not a woman" comment as someone familiar with undines.

Mantis, afaik, was the first to suggest that old man to be Dorcas' husband. Her husband was familiar with manatees and delivered the avern lecture. The basic idea is: The Boatman (her husband) went almost daily for forty years to look for her body. It wasn't where it was supposed to be. He said "Don't you heed what they say. They put them where the figure shows, but they don't stay there. Some has been see'd in the river, even."

He had to live near the Botanic Gardens and have a place to keep his boat. The friend's loft is presumed to be among the tenements below the Citadel, which is just downstream from the Gardens. That's why he was at the swimming area. His concern about someone possibly seeing the body of a woman under the water was because he thought his wife's body might have been washed downstream. Maxellindis' uncle said he had never confused a manatee for a woman, in CITADEL. In any event, he had no particular reason to be concerned about whether the person Severian had seen underwater was a man or a woman. Dorcas' husband did. That's the theory, anyway.

-Roy

don doggett — 25 May 2006, 22:11 · in reply to mournings glory

--- mournings glory <mourningsglory at hotmail.com>
wrote:

Plunking on the honkytonk of his brain, bsharp
improvises the following
cadenza about the pansimianess of Father Inire:

<The most telling clue is when Rudesind first comes
down from the ladder
"like an aged monkey, seeming all arms and legs and
wrinkled neck; his hands
were as long as my feet, the crooked fingers lined
with blue veins". Why
would Wolfe use almost all the physical descriptions
of Father Inire for
Rudesind unless he really was him?>

In his essay on the onomastics of the New Sun, Gene
Wolfe writes, "In this
piece I'd like to go into names a bit more deeply,
beginning with the rule
of naming I used: Everything is just what it says it
is."

Rudesind, of course, is a saint's name, a convention
used over and over
again by the author to differentiate humans from
Other -- a rule however

bsharp violates in favor of ape's blood and
gerontica.

This does not necessarily negate bsharp's argument -
that Inire is possibly disguised as the human
Rudesind. It would be natural for him to take a human
rather than a Hierodule name. To disguise oneself
successfully is to "become" the other in a sense. I
realize that the naming conventions are a device of
the author to convey metatextual clues to the reader,
but they also represent true differences in naming
conventions between cacogens and humans. I think
bsharp's idea still has legs.

Don

don doggett — 25 May 2006, 22:14 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

--- "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:
If the body was not that of the dead Boatman, whose
body was it? Surely not
Inire, who remained with Severian all ten years of
his autarchy. Severian
saw both the dead Boatman and Rudesind just days
apart. How could he look on
them both and not see any resemblance, if there was
one? Masks? And he
couldn't tell there were masks involved, even after
ten years of being
around both Inire and the three Hierodules?

I believe the argument is that Inire is a kind of
shapeshifter. No masks involved

Don

mournings glory — 25 May 2006, 23:18 · in reply to don doggett

From: don doggett

This does not necessarily negate bsharp's argument -
that Inire is possibly disguised as the human
Rudesind.

Except that there's no reason for Inire to disguise himself as a would-be painter. It serves
neither function nor purpose. So why do it, and to what end? Rudesind is not like
jungle-shaman-Inire who must disguise himself from Vodalus and Agia in order to make sure the
autarchy is passed on from Appian to Severian; nor is he like the nameless cowed servitor in
the House Absolute who may not even be trying to disguise himself, but is simply more or less
dismissed by an unobservant Severian half-lost in the fugue of thought. Rudesind encounters
Severian only three times, and each time we get elaborate backstory, rich with unnecessary
details; but why "pretend" to be human so you can give directions to the library, lecture
Severian about the green room, or pass on a letter written to the new autarch by Father Inire
-- who is yourself? In the latter regard, now that Severian has legitimately claimed the Phoenix
Throne, why doesn't Rudesind simply unmask himself and say, "Hey, it's me, monkeyface --
jokes on you."? Because there's no reason for him to continue the disguise, nor for that matter

ever to have donned it in the first place.

Furthermore, dismissing the naming conventions of saint, myth, and monster, and then claiming that a shape-shifting, mask-wearing, alien could be anyone, even including a shadow child from St. Anne, you wind up with a farrago of chaos --not a novel by Gene Wolfe.

z q x (alphamorph)

Adam Thornton — 25 May 2006, 23:43 · in reply to mournings glory

On May 25, 2006, at 6:18 PM, mournings glory wrote:
you wind up with a
farrago of chaos --not a novel by Gene Wolfe.

Yeah, I think "Farrago of Chaos" was one half of an Ace Double. Maybe one of the more forgettable Murray Leinster books?

Adam

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 26 May 2006, 02:09 · in reply to mournings glory

Totally off topic, but ...

On 5/25/06, mournings glory <mourningsglory at hotmail.com> wrote:
Plunking on the honkytonk of his brain, bsharp

Is there any particular reason why you believe b to be a he? I had tentatively decided "she," but would not presume to address b as either "he" or "she" pending confirmation from hir own keybird.

--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>

mournings glory — 26 May 2006, 02:55 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

From: "Dan'l Danehy-Oakes" <danldo at gmail.com>

Totally off topic, but ...

On 5/25/06, mournings glory <mourningsglory at hotmail.com> wrote:

Plunking on the honkytonk of his brain, bsharp

Is there any particular reason why you believe b to be a he? I
had tentatively decided "she," but would not presume to address
b as either "he" or "she" pending confirmation from hir own
keybird.

The Y chromosome seems especially dominant here and I cannot remember the last time that someone clearly identified as XX ventured to enter the domain.

Unfortunately, the Gender Genie (<http://bookblog.net/gender/genie.html>) is down today, so we can't test a chunk of his/her/its prose; at least with me, last time I did so, I'm still coming up "female".

Of course, b# could always tell us -- and regardless of gender and how often I may disagree, a big shout-out to you, sir or mam, whichever you may be! There have not been this many posts

in a single month since I joined the list three years ago, and if your posts about the rest of Wolfe's work are as provocative and interesting, it should make for much interesting reading and debate to come.

XmX

b sharp — 26 May 2006, 03:38 · follows mournings glory

Well, Mournings glory takes me to task for violating Mantis' saints and myths naming rule (I don't violate Wolfe's "everything is what it says it is" rule. We don't even get a name in the BotNS for the old Autarch who plays so many roles, from autarch to third bursar to pimp-daddy. Is he Appian in all those roles? We don't know.

Why can't Rudesind really be the guy's name in his human role and Father Inire really be his name when he is performing his hierodule role? Be that as it may, I am quite open to arguments that Rudesind is not Inire though I'd like those arguments to explain why Rudesind resembles Inire so closely in description as does Dorcas' husband and all the parallels between Rudesind and Dorcas' husband.

Naturally Fechin must be included, since he is connected to Rudesind and to Casdoe's family. And we can't forget that cloisonne might connect Dorcas to Thecla and to Cyriaca and to Fechin. and... Sheesh. fine! never mind. Let's read some Asimov.

-bsharp

b sharp — 26 May 2006, 04:41 · follows Adam Thornton

Mourning, I'm seeing a pattern. You are absolutely an anti-Rudesindite. You hate his painting, you hate his appreciation of Fechin, you hate his drivel and his working class vernacular, you hate the way he throws his feces through the bars when he gets mad...okay...sorry..

Anyway, consider your own arguments. Why DOES Wolfe give this vacuous babblers so much story time, strategically placed at the beginning, middle and end of BotNS? We are really supposed to just dismiss him, as you do?

I take issue with your contention that the role I assign him is worthless to the story. To me the parallel to Appian serving as his own servants is reinforcing. Understand that I don't think Dorcas' unnamed husband is Charon or Caronus or whatever but....Rudesind. Rudesind the widower, Rudesind the advocate of the dead. I think Wolfe wants us to find the names of his unnamed characters, not make them up.

Bonus question- Aside from Lewis Carroll, Father Inire has been compared to Daedalus because of all the labyrinths he constructs. Who then serves as his son Icarus who is killed by flying too close to the Sun?

-bsharp

don doggett — 26 May 2006, 04:50 · in reply to b sharp

--- b sharp <bsharporflat at hotmail.com> wrote:

Why can't Rudesind really be the guy's name in his human role and Father Inire really be his name when he is performing his

hierodule role?

Exactly my point. One clear theme in many of Wolfe's works is that the role ends up making the "man".

Be that

as it may, I am quite open to arguments that Rudesind is not Inire though I'd like those arguments to explain why Rudesind resembles Inire so closely in description as does Dorcas' husband and all the parallels between Rudesind and Dorcas' husband.

This is great stuff, and while it may yet be shown incorrect, I for one would hate for it to get snuffed out prematurely.

Don

Roy C. Lackey — 26 May 2006, 20:04 · follows b sharp

msg quoted and wrote:
This does not necessarily negate bsharp's argument - that Inire is possibly disguised as the human Rudesind.

[snip]

Furthermore, dismissing the naming conventions of saint, myth, and monster,

and then claiming that a shape-shifting, mask-wearing, alien could be anyone, even including a shadow child from St. Anne, you wind up with a farrago of chaos --not a novel by Gene Wolfe.<<

I have trouble with the idea that a member of an alien species could successfully interbreed with a human. (The product of the Severian-Apheta union was *not* biological.) That is, I can't see Inire fathering a child (or children) on Dorcas. If Dorcas did have another child, as the text implies, and that child had offspring, that would make Ouen, Severian's daddy, something of a monkey's uncle. <g>

Actually, Severian looked very much like his father, and neither resembled Inire -- or a monkey -- or any other of Inire's alleged human disguises. I see no evidence of shape-shifting in NEW SUN, but even if Inire had that ability, such a non-human characteristic further weighs against the likelihood of viable progeny, in my opinion.

As for the Boatman being a grieving Inire (though I suppose the story of the forty-year search for Dorcas was all a lie, given the stated assumption that a man who hadn't even been born when the search began was needed to call her back from the dead), there was no need for any such rigmarole. All that was needed was another Hierodule-made eidolon. If it can be done for a damn dog, it can surely be done for the Conciliator's grandmother and Inire's lost love. A few weeks of eating and breathing would be all that was needed to make her as "real" as Severian.

-Roy

Roy C. Lackey — 27 May 2006, 01:13 · follows Roy C. Lackey

I wrote:

I see no evidence of shape-shifting in NEW SUN,

I take that back; Tzadkiel could do it.

-Roy

mournings glory — 27 May 2006, 01:24 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

From: "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net>

I wrote:

I see no evidence of shape-shifting in NEW SUN,

I take that back; Tzadkiel could do it.

So, too, I believe, could his son, Venant -- unless you're going to argue he naturally looks like the very human, if false, Epitome of Urth.

mg

Jeff Wilson — 09 Jun 2006, 20:52 · in reply to b sharp

b sharp wrote:

3. Isangoma- He is old though being short, bent or twisted is not mentioned. But Wolfe explicitly notes his resemblance to the shape-shifting jungle guide with the monkey head pole. He is found in one of Father Inire's main haunts, The Botanic Gardens. He isn't said to look like a monkey but he mentions monkeys in a story and invokes baby uakaris in his cant. When we meet him, Marie is reading a Bibilcal passage to him- God's curse on Moses, the shepherd of the Chosen People, to never see the Promised Land himself. This could suggest Inire's role in BotNS.

However, Isangoma is butt naked; nothing to hide Inire's nonhuman nature or his ultratech gadgets.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

b sharp — 10 Jun 2006, 15:25 · follows Jeff Wilson

In response to the possibility of Isangoma and later the jungle guide being Father Inire Jeff Wilson notes:

However, Isangoma is butt naked; nothing to hide Inire's nonhuman nature or his ultratech gadgets.

True, he is, and so is the jungle guide (except for a mask, hiding eyes?) and his young twin assistants. All four of these guys have dark metallic-looking skin. Sounds a bit alien to me. This might be Father Inire's true form.

Just curious about people's opinions. Father Inire never makes an official, announced appearance in BotNS. Are there some who think he is forever an absent character like Norm's wife in Cheers or Niles' wife in Frazier?

-bsharp

Jeff Wilson — 11 Jun 2006, 21:57 · in reply to b sharp

b sharp wrote:

In response to the possibility of Isangoma and later the jungle guide being Father Inire
Jeff Wilson notes:

However, Isangoma is butt naked; nothing to hide Inire's nonhuman nature or his ultratech gadgets.

True, he is, and so is the jungle guide (except for a mask, hiding eyes?) and his young twin assistants. All four of these guys have dark metallic-looking skin. Sounds a bit alien to me. This might be Father Inire's true form.

No more alien than Doc Savage, or any number of other melanin-rich characters of literature. But Inire should have some obvious nonhuman feature to be considered a "cacogen," particularly in a metropolis where visible bionic limbs are commonplace and people with animal heads are merely unusual.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

don doggett — 12 Jun 2006, 06:03 · in reply to b sharp

I've found that I have no hate in my heart for any SF/fantasy writers (though there's plenty I have no desire to read). It's all reserved for "literary" fiction writers who pretend to something that SF is fortunately not burdened with- SIGNIFICANCE (note the caps). It's pretence that sickens me, not bad writing. But, back to Wolfe:

--- b sharp <bsharporflat at hotmail.com> wrote:
Just curious about people's opinions. Father Inire never makes an official, announced appearance in BotNS. Are there some who think he is forever an absent character like Norm's wife in Cheers or Niles' wife in Frazier?

That's an excellent question. Up until your posts I suppose I was of the bent that Inire was mostly an offstage character. I feel certain that he his the medicine man who guides Sev and the ascians and I also believe he is the "naked one" in the tale of fish and frog. Hidden once, hidden twice, hidden x times, okay, but you still haven't quite sold me. I'm listening though.

Don

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 12 Jun 2006, 06:48 · in reply to don doggett

On 6/11/06, don doggett <kingwukong at yahoo.com> wrote:
I've found that I have no hate in my heart for any SF/fantasy writers (though there's plenty I have no desire to read).

I'll go you one better: I don't hate any writer of any sort, at least as a writer. Nor any musician, painter, or any other sort of artist. I hold with Kurt Vonnegut that hating a work of art is like jousting with an ice cream sundae. It just isn't worth it.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes, writer, trainer, bon vivant

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

"One o'th'flay-rods gone out o'skew on th'treadle."

Daniel D Jones — 12 Jun 2006, 11:07 · in reply to don doggett

On Monday 12 June 2006 02:03, don doggett wrote:
I've found that I have no hate in my heart for any
SF/fantasy writers (though there's plenty I have no
desire to read). It's all reserved for "literary"
fiction writers who pretend to something that SF is
fortunately not burdened with- SIGNIFICANCE (note the
caps). It's pretence that sickens me, not bad writing.
But, back to Wolfe:

Interestingly enough, pretentiousness is one of the charges that is frequently leveled at both
Donaldson and Wolfe.

don doggett — 13 Jun 2006, 02:16 · in reply to Daniel D Jones

--- Daniel D Jones <ddjones at riddlemaster.org> wrote:
Interestingly enough, pretentiousness is one of the
charges that is frequently
leveled at both Donaldson and Wolfe.

I don't find Wolfe's style pretentious at all, mainly
because it serves his story. Too many writers are (in
my biased opinion, of course) in love with the Word
for its own sake and I feel they are either mistaking
the finger for the moon or covering for their lack of
anything relevant to say. Wolfe, at his simplest, is
saying THINK, which in this day and age is as
worthwhile as anything.

Don

don doggett — 13 Jun 2006, 02:26 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

--- Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:
I'll go you one better: I don't hate any writer of
any sort, at
least as a writer. Nor any musician, painter, or any
other
sort of artist. I hold with Kurt Vonnegut that
hating a work
of art is like jousting with an ice cream sundae. It
just
isn't worth it.

Oh, I don't know about that, some art is well
deserving of hate, if for no other reason than to spur
dialogue and make people think. Some artists actively
court dislike for that reason, while others (nazi
propagandists, to name an easy one) use art to convey
a message that should in good conscience be answered
and rejected, and rightfully despised. Note, I did not

say banned. That's a different can of worms altogether. But I'm way OT here.

Don

Daniel D Jones — 13 Jun 2006, 11:19 · in reply to don doggett

On Monday 12 June 2006 22:16, don doggett wrote:

--- Daniel D Jones <ddjones at riddlemaster.org> wrote:

Interestingly enough, pretentiousness is one of the charges that is frequently leveled at both Donaldson and Wolfe.

I don't find Wolfe's style pretentious at all, mainly because it serves his story.

I don't think the charge is that his `_style_` is pretentious, but that his work itself is.

don doggett — 13 Jun 2006, 19:21 · in reply to Daniel D Jones

--- Daniel D Jones <ddjones at riddlemaster.org> wrote:

I don't think the charge is that his `_style_` is pretentious, but that his work itself is.

I think that's a frivolous charge at best, and a lazy one. I assume those who say this think that Wolfe's work tries to rise "above its station" as SF? Pretending to significance in a genre that's by it's nature trite? Or am I way off the mark?

regards

Don

Daniel D Jones — 13 Jun 2006, 21:48 · in reply to don doggett

On Tuesday 13 June 2006 15:21, don doggett wrote:

--- Daniel D Jones <ddjones at riddlemaster.org> wrote:

I don't think the charge is that his `_style_` is pretentious, but that his work itself is.

I think that's a frivolous charge at best, and a lazy one. I assume those who say this think that Wolfe's work tries to rise "above its station" as SF? Pretending to significance in a genre that's by it's nature trite? Or am I way off the mark?

It's not like there's a coherent, monolithic movement, and I've read similar arguments to those. But there are those who dismiss the BoTNS as torture fetishism and The Wizard/Knight as simple wish fulfillment.

Bob Miller — 14 Jun 2006, 10:12 · in reply to Daniel D Jones

There are, unfortunately, many people out there who refuse to see. This is the reason why the injunction was, "...don't worry about that splinter in your neighbor's eye, worry about the log in your own."

From: Daniel D Jones <ddjones at riddlemaster.org> Reply-To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net> To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net> Subject: Re: (urth) Father Inire and SF loathing Date: Tue, 13 Jun 2006 17:48:37 -0400

On Tuesday 13 June 2006 15:21, don doggett wrote:

--- Daniel D Jones <ddjones at riddlemaster.org> wrote:

I don't think the charge is that his style is pretentious, but that his work itself is.

I think that's a frivolous charge at best, and a lazy one. I assume those who say this think that Wolfe's work tries to rise "above its station" as SF?

Pretending to significance in a genre that's by its nature trite? Or am I way off the mark?

It's not like there's a coherent, monolithic movement, and I've read similar arguments to those. But there are those who dismiss the BoTNS as torture fetishism and The Wizard/Knight as simple wish fulfillment.