

Peace Question #2

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 17 Apr 1998

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Michael Straight — 17 Apr 1998, 14:32

I got such enlightening responses from Paul, Tony, Adam, et. al., that I'm going to throw out another question I've gotten no takers on before.

The story of Finn M'Cool and his cat appears in Wolfe's Book of Days (I think - I don't own a copy). Was it originally composed for Peace or was it published earlier? Is the anthologized version the same as the one in Peace? It seems it must be a little different because the Peace version has an aside to Dennis ("and [the dog] would have had this tale if you hadn't laughed at the cat"--which is odd in that it implies a version of the story with the dog in the cat's role).

This is one story that seems to invite allegorical interpretation with the exchange: "Who are they? Well, one is wickedness, and the other a fairy cat." But while I enjoy this tall tale, I'm hard pressed to find any connections with Weer's story or tease out the allegory.

-Rostrum, who if he gets a good response to this might have the courage to ask a fourth time for help with the end of FREE LIVE FREE.

William H. Ansley — 18 Apr 1998, 00:21 · follows Michael Straight

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Rostrum,

I can only help you with a small part of your question. The story for St. Patrick's Day in _Gene Wolfe's Book of Days_, titled "St. Brandon" is an excerpt from _Peace_, aside to Dennis and all. In fact, I think the whole chapter (section?) containing this story is excerpted (I don't have my copy of _Peace_ handy to check.) The story in GWBOD starts with "We had fish and roast beef, and I think I remember green beans cooked with mushrooms." I suppose this would have bothered me more if I hadn't read _Peace_ first. (By the way, I am actually referring to _Castle of Days_ which contains GWBOD, as well as _Castle of the Otter_ and essays by GW.)

I found the aside strange, too. I agree that it does seem to imply a version of the story with the dog in cat's role, but it would have to be quite a different story if it were told that way, as far as I can see.

I don't know what this story has to do with Weer's story, but it amused me that America or more specifically Boston seems to be the earthly paradise here. This may have something to do with Weer referring to America as a magic land (if I recall correctly) elsewhere in _Peace_.

Rats **were** brought to America by Europeans and I am pretty sure domesticated cats were too, but I would guess that if GW has this in mind at all, it was a very minor part of what he put into the story.

William Ansley