

Wolfe and Noah

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 08 Jul 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5095>

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Russell Wodell — 08 Jul 2008, 21:05

May I ask a simple? possibly very naive — question about the climax of "The Urth of the New Sun"?

If I understand correctly, the New Sun melts Urth's encroaching glaciation, flooding at least Nessus and part of the Commonwealth, if not most of the planet, washing away Urth and creating Ushas.

I have always assumed this was a strategic victory for Abaia and his attendant undines, whose underwater domain is thus greatly enlarged, and a defeat for Erebus (who as I recall lived under one of Urth's poles, and presumably wanted an ice age). It is of course difficult to assign motives to off-stage monsters, but wasn't it for just this reason that the undine saves Severian from drowning as an apprentice? That it gives Urth over to Abaia and his minions, plus those like Baldanders who seek immortality through extended youth, which means unlimited physical growth, which necessitates living in the oceans (though we are also told they can swim among the stars).

Now Wolfe is anything but a simplistic Catholic -- indeed, I have the impression, through hints in his interviews, that some of his philosophical ideas might seem heretical. But isn't it basic Christian doctrine, Catholic or Protestant alike, that God promised Noah He would never again destroy humanity through a great flood, and set the rainbow in this heavens as a pledge of this promise?

Try as I may, I can't see how Sev and his fellow survivors from the House Absolute could possibly be identified with Noah and his family.

Russell Wodell

"Quanti canicula ille in fenestra"

Lane Haygood — 08 Jul 2008, 21:10 · in reply to Russell Wodell

Well, I suppose that God was not responsible for Sev and the New Sun, so God hasn't broken any of his promises directly (assuming, of course, you're not an occasionalist, but who is?).

Another way of looking at it is that Abaia, Erebus and Scylla might actually be disadvantaged by the more luminous sun. They might be able to inhabit only colder worlds, or the increase in radiation might destroy them. After all, the books are peppered with references to the "New Sun" being able to defeat Erebus and Abaia, and Sev himself has argued (with Jonas) that humans could not defeat creatures so great as Abaia. Perhaps this usage of "New Sun" refers to the actual new star and not to Sev.

Lane

On Jul 8, 2008, at 4:05 PM, Russell Wodell wrote:

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Russell Wodell

"Quanti canicula ille in fenestra"

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2008, 21:35 · in reply to Russell Wodell

May I ask a simple? possibly very naive — question about the climax of "The Urth of the New Sun"?

The short answers/spoilers are:

- the world doesn't stay flooded; when the White Fountain passes on into the sun, the tides return to normal.
- the destruction is widely spread around the world, and Erebus and Abaia, being big as mountains, are bigger targets for more damage, and as likely to be washed away as any other geographic feature.
- as the only other time-traveler of Commonwealth extraction and the only female, Juturna like saves Severian because she's his missing sister.
- very large creatures "swim among the stars" in that they can flourish in microgravity as on The Ship, and that The Brook Madregot allows beings to swim through time and space like the Corridors of Time allows beings to walk or run through time and space.

- the Urth of the Book is in a previous Big Bang/Grand Gnab cycle of the universe, before the promise was made.
- the survivors of Urth are more of an Edenic group than a Noahide one.

Jeff

J Jankiewicz — 08 Jul 2008, 22:09 · follows Jeff Wilson

wow - "the survivors of Urth are more of an Edenic group than a Noahide one"

----- Original Message -----

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>
Sent: Tuesday, July 8, 2008 4:35:48 PM
Subject: Re: (urth) Wolfe and Noah
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"The?Urth of the New Sun"?

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