

Mute: There Is No Out

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 30 Jul 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5120>

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Dave Tallman — 30 Jul 2008, 16:01

Jill and Jimmy, brother and sister, are delivered by bus to the house where their father is supposed to be. It seems to be empty, except that the television in the front room is on and set permanently on "MUTE."

At the beginning of the story, Jill speculates whether the bus is a school bus or a "pay-as-you-get-on" bus. This tells us that she has no memory of boarding the bus.

The image of the innocent fawn with the long-haired girl is from **Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There** by Lewis Carroll. She and a fawn walk together when both have lost their memories. When they recover them the fawn runs away. This is like the innocence and animal friendship in the Garden of Eden.

The knight falling off his horse is also from **Through the Looking Glass**. The White Knight is encumbered by all his inventions and frequently falls. This suggests the fall of man after obtaining the knowledge of good and evil. The rusty picture of the girl on the horse suggests lost innocence also.

The father, whose ghost is seen and whose body they find, suggests being cut off from the love of the Father, God. The "MUTE" TV also suggests being unable to hear the voice of God.

Jill's nickname of "Jelly" is like the name "Candi Apple" in **Pocketsful of Diamonds**, and it gives the first hint of incest between the siblings.

They are in a closed Klein-bottle world with no outside. They go from the back of the house to a wall with a locked gate, and get inside it with difficulty (Jill by squeezing through the bars, Jimmy by climbing with the help of a fallen tree). Once inside, they climb a path and find themselves in the front of the same house they started from.

It's odd that this was put into an end-of-the-world anthology. This seems to be a pure horror story with echoes of the Genesis story of the Fall of Man. Jill and Jimmy seem to be trapped in a private hell that gradually grows worse. Their sin seems to be incest