

Calde of the Long Sun and Learning to Read Wolfe

The Urth list — 31 messages, 11 voices, 13 Jan 2009

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5308>

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Ken Rutsky — 13 Jan 2009, 13:10

Just finished book 3 of the Long Sun. I am dazzled by this work, more than I was with the New Sun books.

I suppose some of it has to do with learning how to "read" Wolfe, which I believe I'm just starting to do. Now, I'm not a dullard; my degree is in English and my favorite writers include Borges, late-period Samuel Delany, Nabokov. a lot of "lit snob" stuff. However, I've little background in studying the Bible, which I'm realizing is key to Wolfe's work, and is something I'm rectifying on my own. In addition, I am getting better at spotting massive revelations about the book's characters and the Whorl itself in casual, almost throwaway asides and oblique references; in particular, I was blown away by learning who Blood's father is in the last pages of this volume. Having had these insights into his style, I'll have to go back and re-read New Sun in the future.

On to volume four! I can't wait to comb through the list archives to read past discussions on this series. I've been very impressed with what I've read here so far.

Michael Straight — 13 Jan 2009, 17:38 · in reply to Ken Rutsky

For me, one of the most important keys to enjoying Wolfe's work is to let him take you where he wants to go. He's constantly doing this bait-and-switch, leading you up to some exciting event, making you want to see it, then taking you aside to listen instead to some conversation that is (at least at first glance) completely unrelated. You chafe, feeling like you're missing the real story. But the key is

- you are not. That thing you're missing is a distraction, a magician's trick. This conversation here is the real story. Don't miss it.

- Rostrum

On Tue, Jan 13, 2009 at 6:10 AM, Ken Rutsky <rkenneth at nycap.rr.com> wrote:
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Ken Rutsky — 13 Jan 2009, 22:56 · in reply to Michael Straight

That's a great point. I wonder if Loris saying "Is this germane?" during the last scene of Calde is a humorous way of hinting at this mode of writing/reading.

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

From: urth-bounces at lists.urth.net [mailto:urth-bounces at lists.urth.net] On Behalf Of Michael Straight Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2009 12:39 PM To: The Urth Mailing List Subject: Re: (urth) Calde of the Long Sun and Learning to Read Wolfe

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Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net

Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

Son of Witz — 14 Jan 2009, 17:04 · follows Ken Rutsky

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what a read!

I haven't searched the list yet, in order to avoid spoilers, but I can't find anything to define "Calde".

I'm not clear if Calde is a higher office than Prolocutor.

Obviously it's the theocratic civil ruler, but I'm not clear on the hierarchy.

Is Calde like a Bishop/Mayor or a Pope/Emperor? the book doesn't exactly make it clear. The fact that it's specific to Viron makes me think it's like a Bishop/Mayor role, and that the Prolocutor is the equivalent to a Pope for the whole whorl.

any help?

thanks

~witz

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To: "The Urth Mailing List"

Subject: Re: (urth) Calde of the Long Sun and Learning to Read Wolfe

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 14 Jan 2009, 17:18 · in reply to Son of Witz

"Alcalde" is Spanish for "mayor."

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 9:04 AM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:
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Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 17:24 · in reply to Son of Witz

A "calde" is a mayor if etymology and the things we see Caldes do have anything to say about it. The word, like "ayuntamiento" and "juzgado" has Spanish roots in "alcalde" which means "mayor", which itself comes from the Arabic "al-quadi", "the judge". There is no theocratic component to it, which is fitting since neither Silk's predecessor nor successor (a teeny spoiler from RttW) are religious authorities. Keep in mind that Viron is one city among many, so terms like Pope and Emperor are right out.

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Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 17:25 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Heh, beaten to the punch!

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Son of Witz — 14 Jan 2009, 17:38 · follows Paul B

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Thanks.

oops. I'd forgotten that I had considered Alcalde.

the other spanish words were easier to find.

You don't suppose there is a theocratic component when it's sanctioned by the charter? I guess it need not be.

and yeah, I had that same feeling that it could not be emperor.

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John Watkins — 14 Jan 2009, 17:42 · in reply to Son of Witz

I feel like Wolfe is making a somewhat common point with regard to American constitutionalism with the quasi-religious significance he gives to the Charter.

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Craig Brewer — 14 Jan 2009, 17:42 · in reply to Son of Witz

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and yeah, I had that same feeling that it could not be emperor.

I don't remember there being any official theocratic overtone to the position. But of course "Silk for Calde" was scrawled on the wall because rumor of his enlightenment got around (at least according to Horn).

And some other cities in Short Sun (no spoilers) have "Calde" as well (and also "Duko"), so mayor is the closest analogue.

Craig

Craig Brewer — 14 Jan 2009, 17:46 · in reply to John Watkins

I feel like Wolfe is making a somewhat common point with regard to American constitutionalism with the quasi-religious significance he gives to the Charter.

That could well be. But it gets more complicated since it's the people of the city, and not Silk, who give it that significance. And, of course, by the end, the Charter starts to seem incredibly "local" once the Whorl is seen for what it is.

Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 18:05 · in reply to Craig Brewer

This reminds me of an interesting point that was addressed on the list briefly, but inconclusively if I remember correctly. That being, who really got the ball rolling on "Silk for Calde"? As far as plausible motives, the ones considered were unknown confederates of Tussah for somewhat obvious reasons, and Quetzal for less obvious ones (he somehow had to have foreknowledge that Silk would have the best shot at starting the evacuation). The other possibilities are the Neighbors, who also infiltrated the Whorl as per RttW (and have reason to support the evacuation too), and common folk who all of a sudden became very impressed with Silk (but why?!) Is there any conclusive evidence out there?

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 14 Jan 2009, 18:08 · in reply to Paul B

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John Watkins — 14 Jan 2009, 18:10 · in reply to Paul B

I thought Pas was behind it...

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Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 18:11 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

If I remember correctly, wasn't the slogan chalked on a rather high wall? I suppose he could have gotten a ladder, and it's certainly true that he has a motive. But does he, or do his superiors, actually admit to it?

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 1:08 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:
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Stuart Hamm — 14 Jan 2009, 18:24 · in reply to Paul B

?A buddy of mine in Madrid has a good pun the Spanish use with/for ayuntamiento...

I'll get the correct version and pass it on

~S~

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624

???? Skype? stuart.hamm

myspace.com/stuhamm

? ??? stuarthamm.net

--- On Wed, 1/14/09, Paul B <pb.stuff at gmail.com> wrote:

From: Paul B <pb.stuff at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Calde of the Long Sun and Learning to Read Wolfe To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Date: Wednesday, January 14, 2009, 9:24 AM

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Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 18:26 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

I found what he was writing in "Nightside", p 252, which suggests he actually didn't.

"There is a movement to restore the Charter ... Thus far it seems confined to the lower orders. The watchword 'Silk for calde' is written on walls, although not" (it was a guess , but Crane felt confident of his ground) "on the Palatine. I am in contact with him and am gaining his trust. I have seen to it that he has an azoth. This can be reported if it proves necessary to destroy him."

If nothing else, Crane isn't aware of all the instances of "Silk for Calde" and thinks they (and the movement itself) have origins with the commoners. Also, he doesn't treat the movement as a planned diversion, but simply states its existence.

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Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 18:52 · in reply to John Watkins

Sure, Pas has a motive, but there are problems. Firstly, Pas is likely dead during the early part of the tetralogy as he makes his comeback in Epiphany. Secondly, he also has a foreknowledge problem regarding Silk being the best for the evacuation. Finally, I am specifically interested in actual evidence as we have seen that there are lots of people with motives to get Silk installed.

Paul

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 1:32 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:
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Craig Brewer — 14 Jan 2009, 18:54 · in reply to Paul B

I think it's Maytera Rose. She just wanted him out of the palaestra.

John Watkins — 14 Jan 2009, 18:59 · in reply to Paul B

I don't think either of those is a problem. The Plan of Pas is in motion even during the period that Pas is "dead," and depending on what we accept about Silk's parentage, that foreknowledge problem gets cleared up right away.

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On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 1:32 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

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Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 19:07 · in reply to John Watkins

I suppose Kypris could have had it written in Pas' absence, sure. What do you mean regarding his parentage? He was a special embryo bought by Tussah for his own purpose. Pas may know about his leadership abilities, but that alone doesn't seem to get him to evacuating the cargo. Even if I grant you the above two, there's the original problem of conclusive evidence. Assuming Pas has the proper motive and agency, he is still one among many candidates.

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On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 1:32 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

Brings us back to Pas.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 14 Jan 2009, 19:10 · in reply to Paul B

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 11:07 AM, Paul B <pb.stuff at gmail.com> wrote:
I suppose Kypris could have had it written in Pas' absence, sure.
What do you mean regarding his parentage? He was a special embryo bought by Tussah for his own purpose.

There is a strong belief among many on this list that the embryo that grows up to be Silk was intended by Pas to be his own body when the _Whorl_ reached its destination.

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

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

I once absend-mindedly ordered Three Mile Island dressing in a restaurant and, with great presence of mind, they brought Thousand Island Dressing and a bottle of chili sauce. -- T. Pratchett

John Watkins — 14 Jan 2009, 19:12 · in reply to Paul B

Kypris or, potentially, a flyer.

If Silk is a special embryo with heightened leadership abilities, etc., then it's entirely possible that his purpose from the beginning was to lead an exodus.

On 1/14/09, Paul B <pb.stuff at gmail.com> wrote:
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Even if I grant you the above two, there's the original problem of conclusive evidence. Assuming Pas has the proper motive and agency, he is still one among many candidates.

Paul

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 1:59 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

I don't think either of those is a problem. The Plan of Pas is in motion even during the period that Pas is "dead," and depending on what we accept about Silk's parentage, that foreknowledge problem gets cleared up right away.

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lots of people with motives to get Silk installed.

Paul

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 1:32 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

Brings us back to Pas.

Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 19:15 · in reply to John Watkins

Sure, why not, all sorts of things are possible, now bring on the conclusive evidence! Unless you simply meant to add Pas to my list of people with motives.

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 2:12 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:
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Or back to the Outsider, who enlightened Silk with the mission to "save the manteoin," (which actually meant save the people of his city and evacuate them to Blue). Silk's public discussion of that enlightenment got rumors to spread about him, probably boosted by the Outsider. If the Outsider could inspire one, he could inspire many others.

Kypris gave things a big boost a couple of days later by giving an appearance at the funeral -- those sacred windows had been inactive so long that hardly anyone believed they would see it happen in their lifetime. That it happened to the same enlightened holy auger everyone was talking about was a sure sign of the favor of the gods, so they must have thought.

Stephen Case — 14 Jan 2009, 19:35 · follows Dave Tallman

I can't remember why I thought it, but I was under the impression that Chenille had been writing "Silk for Calde" on walls.

John Smith — 14 Jan 2009, 19:59 · in reply to Paul B

Silk himself is responsible for one piece of graffiti When he goes to the home of Teasel, the girl who was dying from the bite of the vampire Quetzal, he tries to protect her from evil spirits by writing his name outside her window (also Patera Pike's name, if I recall correctly). I don't have the books with me, but I think the apartment was on the 5th floor. I believe that later someone reports that Silk's name had appeared high up, perhaps 5 floors up.

Best wishes,

Jack

--- On Wed, 1/14/09, Paul B <pb.stuff at gmail.com> wrote:
From: Paul B <pb.stuff at gmail.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) Calde of the Long Sun and Learning to Read Wolfe
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Wednesday, January 14, 2009, 1:11 PM
If I remember correctly, wasn't the slogan chalked on a rather high wall? I suppose he could have gotten a ladder, and it's certainly true that he has a motive. But does he, or do his superiors, actually admit to it?

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 1:08 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danl do at gmail.com> wrote:

Crane.

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 10:05 AM, Paul B <pb.stuff at gmail.com> wrote:

This reminds me of an interesting point that was addressed on the list briefly, but inconclusively if I remember correctly. That being, who really got the ball rolling on "Silk for Calde"? As far as plausible motives,

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ones considered were unknown confederates of
Tussah for somewhat obvious
reasons, and Quetzal for less obvious ones (he
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Neighbors, who also
infiltrated the Whorl as per RttW (and have
reason to support the
evacuation
too), and common folk who all of a sudden became
very impressed with Silk
(but why?!)
Is there any conclusive evidence out there?

Paul

On Wed, Jan 14, 2009 at 12:42 PM, Craig Brewer
<cnbrewer at yahoo.com>
wrote:

But of course "Silk for Calde" was
scrawled on the wall because rumor of
his enlightenment got around (at least
according to Horn).

Paul B — 14 Jan 2009, 20:05 · in reply to John Smith

That's interesting. However, I was talking about the full "Silk for Calde" slogan, which someone must have intentionally written.

Paul

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