

The Trailer of Ink

The Urth list — 7 messages, 6 voices, 31 Jan 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5948>

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Jeff Wilson — 31 Jan 2011, 20:13

In URTH, Chapter XXXIX, "The Claw Of The Conciliator Again", Sev gives the new thorn to Typhon's guardsmen, establishing a one-off timeloop for it to come into his younger self's possession a thousand years later.

However, he also says, "Whence comes this unslakable thirst to leave behind me a wandering trail of ink, I cannot say" when contemplating a further volume of memoirs. This may be another timeloop setup, as in SHADOW VI,

"Of the trail of ink there is no end," Master Ultan told me. "Or so a wise man said. He lived long ago what would he say if he could see us now? "

Could this be actual textev that at least one of the volumes, or a work that quotes a found volume of Sev's manuscript, has come to rest in Ultan's library?

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Gwern Branwen — 31 Jan 2011, 20:30 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Mon, Jan 31, 2011 at 3:13 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:
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Severian's phrase doesn't include the key idea - the endlessness of writings. (Or at least, in a rather indirect way, with 'unslakeable'.)

I would look instead to Ecclesiastes. It is one of the wisdom books of the Bible, without doubt read several times by Wolfe, and internally attributed to a wise man. We read in one translation:

"By this, my sonne, be admonished: of making many bookes there is no end, and much studie is a wearinesse of the flesh."

(I seem to recall seeing it as "Of many words there is no end", which is even closer to Ultan's version.)

gwern
<http://www.gwern.net>

Adam Thornton — 31 Jan 2011, 20:33 · in reply to Gwern Branwen

On Jan 31, 2011, at 2:30 PM, Gwern Branwen wrote:

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I'd also comb through Borges.

Adam

Jeff Wilson — 31 Jan 2011, 20:41 · in reply to Gwern Branwen

On Mon, Jan 31, 2011 at 3:13 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

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That's what I mean - he can't say where the end is, either. In the original idiom, the wording may be even closer. Which is ironic, given "terminus est" can also be translated as "the end" or even "the final word".

David Duffy — 31 Jan 2011, 22:14 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Mon, 31 Jan 2011, Jeff Wilson wrote:

"Of the trail of ink there is no end," Master Ultan told me. "Or so a wise man said. He lived long ago what would he say if he could see us now? "

There is the question of who he is quoting. It might be a gloss, as per the sundials, of

...Of writing many books there is no end, [and much study is a weariness of the flesh].
Ecclesiastes 12:12

Marc Aramini — 31 Jan 2011, 22:18 · in reply to David Duffy

Just had a chance to read Circus of Dr. Lao this week, and was shocked by how much of the stuff has at least some resonance with Wolfe. The Hound of the hedges is a chlorophyll driven green hound that just kind of sprung into existence, but I was wondering if anything had been made of how the entire Woldercan scenes are just geared around the sacrifice of the most beautiful virgin.

As far as Evil Guest goes, I believe it was Dave Tallman who made a lot of cogent comparisons between it and other literature, (my apologies if it was another Dave, about all of my friends somehow are named David) and I was wondering if that sacrificial beauty pageant has anything to do with Cassie's final trip to Woldercan. I know there is the sacrifice on the Island, but is there something about her glamorization that has made her worthy of human sacrifice, too?

Also, the most fantastic part of the book is Dr. Lao just walking into a department before closing and getting the circus permits one night before the show. That was my job for three years, pretty much impossible anywhere nowadays.

Dave Tallman — 01 Feb 2011, 02:16 · follows Marc Aramini

Marc Aramini wrote:

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Thanks for the compliments. I think Bill Reis' sacrifice has many parallels with the Woldercan sacrifice scene.

1) There is a drought and the Woldercan people are praying for rain.
In AEG. they are trying to stop a storm.

2) A bold member of the audience suggests they demand instead of pray.
This reflects the hubris of Bill Reis, who thinks he can take over the world and give everyone literacy and enough to eat.

3) The betrothed of this man is selected for sacrifice.
Cassie is put in jeopardy.

4) He suggests his life be exchanged for hers.
Basically this is what Bill does.

5) There is a struggle and the man, his betrothed, and the offering priest all die.
Bill dies. Kanoa dies. Cassie dies to the world, no longer recognizable as the star she was.

6) There is a blessing -- manna and rain fall from the heavens.
Cassie at least is blessed, removed from the island and the storm to a place where she can survive.