

Where's the Minotaur?

The Urth list — 4 messages, 2 voices, 09 Feb 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5961>

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Jeff Wilson — 09 Feb 2011, 23:41

I saw this image while checking Eckhart's quote on devils:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Meister-Ekkehard-Portal_der_Erfurter_Predigerkirche.jpg

"das licht leuchtet in der finsternis und die finsternis hates nicht erfasst"

and it reminded me that I had been meaning to pick up the thread about the "teratoid symbols" Sev sees on the door to Inire's mirror chamber. Thecla also has seen the chamber door, and describes their designs as labyrinthine.

So LEE BERMAN, where's the Minotaur?

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Lee Berman — 10 Feb 2011, 01:17 · follows Jeff Wilson

Jeff Willson: and it reminded me that I had been meaning to pick up the thread about the "teratoid symbols" Sev sees on the door to Inire's mirror chamber. Thecla also has seen the chamber door, and describes their designs as labyrinthine. So LEE BERMAN, where's the Minotaur?

Heh, that one's a bit too easy Jeff. I wasn't sure if you were kidding or not. But perhaps you haven't followed any of the discussion between James and I on the general mythological subject matter. Finding Dionysus and Ariadne is sorta tough. Finding Theseus, not so difficult. Minotaur, somewhere in between I guess.

In the tale of the Student and His Son, the Son is obviously a Theseus analog. His labyrinth is a series of islands and channels, his Ariadne is Noctua so obviously the Naviscaput is the Minotaur analog. As the raper of his sister Night, the Naviscaput is mythologically like Erebus. But Severian compares this creature to Abaia. So, first answer for Minotaur= Erebus and Abaia.

But we also have monster and labyrinth symbols in the Secret House. Who can be found at the center of the Secret House? What is the connection of Father Inire to Erebus and Abaia?

Elsewhere I have discussed the connections between Father Inire and Dionysus. One of the primary symbols of Dionysus is the bull. In his battlefield delirium, Severian/Thecla has a memory of her father who inexplicably takes the form of a "man with the horns and muzzled face of a bull".

As Wolfe took Earth's Mowgli and Romulus and Remus and mushed them together to give us Urth's Fish and Frog, so he has taken Earth's Dionysus and Minotaur and mushed them in a

similar way to give us Urth's Inire, Abaia and Erebus- the monster(s) at the center of the Labyrinth which is BotNS.

(add Flora/Fauna and the Dionysian snake and you can add the Cumaean to the list as well).

I'm sure that answer is just what you were looking for ;-).

Jeff Wilson — 10 Feb 2011, 05:23 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 2/9/2011 7:17 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

Jeff Willson: and it reminded me that I had been meaning to pick up the thread about the "teratoid symbols" Sev sees on the door to Inire's mirror chamber. Thecla also has seen the chamber door, and describes their designs as labyrinthine. So LEE BERMAN, where's the Minotaur?

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That's fine, for that maze and that level of metafictionality.

But we also have monster and labyrinth symbols in the Secret House. Who can be found at the center of the Secret House? What is the connection of Father Inire to Erebus and Abaia?

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I was wanting the monster that goes with the panels - of course, there's a *lot* of monsters that can come through the mirrors - but what minotaur-like entity is associated with the House Absolute?

Not Thecla's dad - male exultants don't get to live there.

Not Abaia or Erebus - they are the monsters outside.

Inire lives there, but he's supposed to be a monkey.

Though if the monkey rides on the back of a bull, is it the Autarch? A particular autarch?

Lee Berman — 10 Feb 2011, 14:00 · follows Jeff Wilson

LB: So, first answer for Minotaur= Erebus and Abaia.

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LB: > But we also have monster and labyrinth symbols in the Secret House. Who can be found at the center of the Secret House? What is the connection of Father Inire to Erebus and Abaia?

JW: I was wanting the monster that goes with the panels - of course, there's a *lot* of monsters that can come through the mirrors - but what minotaur-like entity is associated with the House Absolute?

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Hmm..how to put my view into words....

I think Wolfe, in trying to make ancient gods "real" in his story recognizes that they are, as in legend, giant, superpowered beings who must change size and shape to appear in human form and interact with them. Wolfe recognizes that, on Urth, only in water (or deep underground) could such giant beings have actual, physical form.

Their human-sized, -shaped agents, as shapeshifters, must follow the rules and always betray some sign of their origin. Often this is expressed via an animalistic association, but coloration, naming or other marks can also serve (as seen in the Armiger's Daughter).

As demiurge, Dionysus/Pan is the model for Father Inire. He is not really a monkey. As the deepest, most central mystery of the labyrinth of BotNS he needs a really good disguise for the Pan model. If Wolfe had said he resembled a goat, the mystery would be far too easy to solve. So, we get monkey from layering and wordplay. Pan=Faunus=Inuus/Inire=monkey. BTW, Inuus sylvanus is a monkey which has no tail, so we don't have to worry about what's lurking under the guy's robes.

Like Pan, Inire is not really one being but a small horde of similar beings all working toward the same goal. But if you are looking for a "center" Father Inire is it, since he never openly appears.

If you want the version of him which is the center of mirrors and monsters, that would be Hethor. There are a number of others.

Grr..time pressed right now. I know this is sketchily presented. I can elaborate or answer questions later if desired.