

mysteries of the long sun?

The Urth list — 15 messages, 8 voices, 27 Oct 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6090>

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larry miller — 27 Oct 2011, 23:29

Just finished reading Nightside the Long Sun. I was really hoping that more than things would stand out on this second reading of the book. I know Im missing something here and was wondering if any of you guys can tell me if there is something along the lines of puzzles or mysteries that I still might have overlooked. Nightside seems pretty straightforward compared to New/Short books and thought maybe I just wasn't as attentive a reader as I should have been. Just wanted some things to look out for and think about before I dive into Lake.

James Wynn — 28 Oct 2011, 15:18 · in reply to larry miller

On 10/27/2011 6:29 PM, larry miller wrote:

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In Silk's vision, who is the dead woman in an alley off Silver Street?

On the way to the market, why does Silk spend two pages speculating over why he called Blood "son" when that was what he was trained to do?

Whose knife killed Orpine?

larry miller — 28 Oct 2011, 17:43 · in reply to James Wynn

yeah I was wondering about the woman too. Surely most of the visions presented to Silk have connections with events in the book (Silk seeing lights beneath his feet is him seeing the stars out the window of the Whorl for example) so just who was the woman? Any thoughts? Also the patch of skin found on the roof, any thoughts on this?

On 10/28/11, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

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James Wynn — 28 Oct 2011, 17:49 · in reply to larry miller

On 10/28/2011 12:43 PM, larry miller wrote:

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IIRC, It was a rabbit killed by the gyrevulture. When Silk picked it up, he was attacked. Musk what coursing his hawk with rabbits earlier or maybe later in the story. Now, you'll ask, why did Wolfe put a gyrevulture at the top of Blood's roof? What narrative value did it offer? It breaks up the narrative and provides some action. Also, I think it had a role in a thematic reference that Wolfe was weaving into the story.

J.

Antonin Scriabin — 28 Oct 2011, 17:52 · in reply to James Wynn

His injury by the vulture is also one of the reasons he is able to become close with Crane; his hurt ankle serves as a pretext for Crane to give him the wrapping, etc. So the vulture serves an importance narrative purpose as well. Also, Wolfe seems to have a thing with lame protagonists. Weer, Severian, Silk ... not sure why that is.

On Fri, Oct 28, 2011 at 1:49 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 28 Oct 2011, 17:56 · in reply to Antonin Scriabin

Antonin Scriabin wrote:

Also, Wolfe seems to have a thing with lame protagonists. Weer, Severian, Silk ... not sure why that is.

Resonance with the Fisher-King, perhaps? Or Tamurlane?

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Lee Berman — 28 Oct 2011, 18:40 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn: why did Wolfe put a gyrevulture at the top of Blood's roof? What narrative value did it offer? It breaks up the narrative and provides some action. Also, I think it had a role in a thematic reference that Wolfe was weaving into the story.

I agree. I remember being struck by the pervasive bird theme from the first reading of Long Sun. Character names. Musk's hobby. Flyers. Almost as pervasive as the fishy theme which inhabits so much of BotNS.

I get the sense it is part of a mythological reference shift for Wolfe from Greco-Roman to Egyptian. Birds are more important to the Egyptian myths than the Greek. Of course there are obvious reasons Egyptian mythology is less sea-oriented than for the Greeks. (same contrast for mostly dry Whorl and mostly wet Urth)

I see it in the gods; on the Whorl, Typhon has a family of which there was no hint of in BotNS (well, aside from veiled references to Scylla and Echidna). In reading Egyptian mythology I get more of a sense of family ties (dysfunctional but tied) among the gods than I do reading Greek or Roman.

Typhon does make a nice bridge between Greek and Egyptian mythology. In the former he is just a terrible monster but for the Egyptians (as Typhon-Set) he was more of a dark, rather unpleasant god. The inclusion of another crossover god, Sphigx (Sphinx) as one of Typhon's kids could be a slight hint of the shift from Greek toward Egyptian. (though the Egyptian sphinx is male while the Greek and Whorl Sphinxes are female).

James Wynn — 28 Oct 2011, 19:28 · in reply to Antonin Scriabin

On 10/28/2011 12:52 PM, Antonin Scriabin wrote:
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His leg injury occurs when he falls out of the window because Hyacinth is taunting him with her azoth. He only gets a cut from the gyrevulture.

The Silk leg injury another example of Silk and Auk acting out the life of Hephaestus. Hephaestus was alternately tossed off Mt Olympus by Zeus (lighting bolt) and Hera (make of it what you will), and injured his leg. There's the prophesy in Genesis in which the serpent bites the heel of the "enmity" which in turn crushes his head. Also, Jason and Cinderella had only one shoe and Oedipus had a club foot.

J.

Antonin Scriabin — 28 Oct 2011, 19:31 · in reply to James Wynn

Ah! Thanks for correcting me ... I was conflating the two injuries.

On Fri, Oct 28, 2011 at 3:28 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:
On 10/28/2011 12:52 PM, Antonin Scriabin wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 29 Oct 2011, 14:23 · in reply to James Wynn

On 10/28/2011 3:28 PM, James Wynn wrote:

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And Jesus was stabbed in the thigh. Don't forget that one!

The provenance of this trope is ancient. As I recall, it has to do with the sacred status of a king and his ability to procreate; symbolically, if the king is virile the land will be fertile. If he is wounded, this is put in doubt. Groin = thigh = leg = foot :: foot = leg = thigh = groin.

All good heroes have been dealt blows that weaken them; they can't all be King of the Prom and captain of a winning football team. In fact none can be unless they then suffer a blow. If they were, they would always win and their stories would be very short.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 29 Oct 2011, 17:07 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff wrote:

And Jesus was stabbed in the thigh. Don't forget that one!

Excuse me -- when was this? He was stabbed in the side with a spear, but I don't recall a stab in the thigh.

David Stockhoff — 29 Oct 2011, 17:18 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

On 10/29/2011 1:07 PM, Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

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Details, details.

You're right, it was someone else.

Jane Delawney — 29 Oct 2011, 20:24 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 29/10/11 18:18, David Stockhoff wrote:

On 10/29/2011 1:07 PM, Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

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Possibly Jacob, who was wounded in the 'thigh' (read: groin, I strongly suspect) when he wrestled with the angel?

However ... David, is it possible you were thinking of Robert Graves's novel 'King Jesus' when you wrote your OP? In this, the 'wrestling with an angel' motif is transformed into a rite of passage for the rightful king of Israel; Jesus undertakes this rite and is wounded in the thigh/hip area (his hip is dislocated) giving him a permanent limp.

Not exactly being stabbed in the thigh/groin but close.

In King Jesus, this rite is undertaken as a preliminary to the marriage ceremony for the rightful King. Jesus is married to Mary Magdalene who is also of the royal line - but he derails the ritual by refusing to consummate this marriage (he tells Mary on their wedding night, 'You are my sister! - I can't remember whether or not Graves intends this to be literally true, ie. that here MM was actually Jesus's sister and that this was supposed to be an Egyptian-royalty style sibling marriage). It's all very 'White Goddess' as one might expect from Graves.

This is the only occasion, literary, mythological or otherwise, when I recall Jesus being wounded (not stabbed though) in the 'thigh'.

This is a long way from what happened to Silk, though - though rather nearer to what happened to Severian, whose injury is undoubtedly in the thigh.

And let's not forget the Fisher King either.

JD

David Stockhoff — 29 Oct 2011, 20:44 · in reply to Jane Delawney

On 10/29/2011 4:24 PM, Jane Delawney wrote:

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Hi Jane

I was probably thinking of both King Jesus (although I have never actually read it) and the Fisher King, yeah.

Gerry Quinn — 03 Nov 2011, 14:53 · in reply to James Wynn

From: James Wynn

Whose knife killed Orpine?

Isn't it established that Orpine was stabbed by Chenille? Orpine was possessed by Mucor and came on to Chenille — or so she interpreted it — alarming her. I assume Mucor had cried a

connection between Chenille and Silk.

- Gerry Quinn