

Change of Pace / Peace

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 16 Dec 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6142>

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Antonin Scriabin — 16 Dec 2011, 21:12

I don't know if many of you watched the short-lived but well-executed HBO miniseries, **Carnivale**. Basically, it was a pseudo-end times supernatural mystery / thriller set during the Great Depression (dust-bowl Midwest), alternating between the stories of a young "Avatar" of good (a man traveling with a circus / carnival) and an "Avatar" of evil, a preacher in (I think) California who gains a large following. Anyways, I noticed some parallels between it and **Peace**, during the portion in which a character in the book (I can't remember if it is the narrator himself or a story-within-a-story) apprentices with the man turning to stone. The young man goes, for some reason, to visit a neighboring carnival, where he finds a mother-daughter "burlesque dancer" team (just like in the TV show) and a character named Scudder (the last name of the Avatar of good's father in the TV show). "Scudder" is far from a common name; I can't think the similarity is coincidental! The carnival scenes in **Peace** also take place in a Depression area Midwest town. I seem to remember a few other interesting similarities between **Peace** (which was written 28 years earlier) and **Carnivale** that I will try and remember. Anyone notice this / know if the HBO writers were fans of or influenced by Wolfe's work?

Larry Miller — 16 Dec 2011, 22:11 · in reply to Antonin Scriabin

The shows creator was Daniel Knauf who also writes comic books (or did) and I wouldn't be surprised if he knew about Wolfe's work. Neil Gaiman is always dropping Wolfe's name in interviews. BTW Ronald Moore who developed the *Battlestar Galactica* remake also wrote for *Carnivale* and has said he was an avid SF reader as a teen. The only literary influences I know that Knauf mentioned myself is *Something Wicked This Way Comes* and *The Grapes of Wrath*. If you're interested in further elaboration of *Carnivale*'s mythology search around online for the "Pitch Document" which is a series bible of sorts. Do you recall the episode where Ben Hawkins is sent to clean out the baggage trailer? Briefly shown on camera is a fetus in a liquid filled jar that opens its eyes. That always reminded me of the mandragora. That may also be a nod to Wolfe's work.

On 12/16/11, Antonin Scriabin <kierkegaardian at gmail.com> wrote:
I don't know if many of you watched the short-lived but well-executed HBO miniseries, **Carnivale**. Basically, it was a pseudo-end times supernatural mystery / thriller set during the Great Depression (dust-bowl Midwest), alternating between the stories of a young "Avatar" of good (a man traveling with a circus / carnival) and an "Avatar" of evil, a preacher in (I think) California who gains a large following. Anyways, I noticed some parallels between it and **Peace**, during the portion in which a character in the book (I can't remember if it is the narrator himself or a story-within-a-story) apprentices with the man turning to stone. The young man goes, for some reason, to visit a neighboring carnival, where he finds a mother-daughter "burlesque dancer" team (just like in the TV show) and a character named Scudder (the last name of the Avatar of good's father in the TV show). "Scudder" is far from a common name; I can't think the similarity is coincidental! The carnival scenes in **Peace** also take place in a Depression area Midwest town. I seem to remember a few other interesting similarities between **Peace** (which was written 28 years

earlier) and *Carnivale* that I will try and remember. Anyone notice this / know if the HBO writers were fans of or influenced by Wolfe's work?

David Duffy — 16 Dec 2011, 22:27 · in reply to Antonin Scriabin

On Fri, 16 Dec 2011, Antonin Scriabin wrote:

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Anyways, I noticed some parallels between it and *Peace*, during the portion in which a character in the book (I can't remember if it is the narrator himself or a story-within-a-story) apprentices with the man turning to stone. The young man goes, for some reason, to visit a neighboring carnival, where he finds a mother-daughter "burlesque dancer" team (just like in the TV show) and a character named Scudder (the last name of the Avatar of good's father in the TV show). "Scudder" is far from a common name; I can't think the similarity is coincidental!

I didn't watch it (it looked like too much work ;)), but the Wikipedia article is fairly extensive. It suggests, for example, that the cootch family came into the story following research. I would have thought Bradbury's _Something Wicked This Way Comes_, _Dr Lao_, even _The Dreaming Jewels_ might be other literary precedents. And Nehemiah Scudder appears in Heinlein's _If This Goes On_

"The First Prophet was Nehemiah Scudder, a backwoods preacher turned President (elected in 2012)"

..that was my immediate thought when you mentioned the name Scudder.

Cheers, David Duffy.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 17 Dec 2011, 00:48 · in reply to Larry Miller

Larry Miller wrote:

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episode where Ben Hawkins is sent to clean out the baggage trailer?

Briefly shown on camera is a fetus in a liquid filled jar that opens its eyes. ?That always reminded me of the mandragora. That may also be a nod to Wolfe's work.

Possible, but it's more likely to be a nod to Ray Bradbury's "The Jar," which was made into an astonishing Alfred Hitchcock episode.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes