

# Ackroyd's Milton as Wolfean Hero

The Urth list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 11 Apr 2013

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6369>

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Brian — 11 Apr 2013, 13:20

Has anyone read Peter Ackroyd's Milton in America? At one point, the blind Milton goes into the forest and sits under a tree. Then follows a passage of pronoun/identity confusion, with "I" and "he" switching back and forth. Milton walks on, and is pulled up into a tree by a deer snare, which breaks his leg. This experience has a healing or rejuvenating effect, because his vision seems to be restored at least for a time.

Any of this remind you of anything?

--B-Love

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Marc Aramini — 11 Apr 2013, 14:00 · in reply to Brian

Fairly interesting - Ackroyd seems to have made his career by riffing on famous literary figures - Wolfe does the same thing but in a less obvious and more allusive way, though of course he is not above writing short sequels to David Copperfield and such. It is fascinating how some authors have such a consistent mode of operation.

I haven't read the book in question, but this might be more Biblical/Miltonian than even Wolfe. Satan falls from a great height, injures his leg. Tree of the knowledge of good and evil and serpent imagery to tempt man to the same fall. So, while Wolfe might have made our leg injured protagonist pulled into a tree a hero, this seems like a definite Paradise Lost and subsequent temptation of mankind theme playing out.

--- On Thu, 4/11/13, Brian <brian at studiobl.com> wrote:

From: Brian <brian at studiobl.com>

Subject: (urth) Ackroyd's Milton as Wolfean Hero

To: urth at urth.net

Date: Thursday, April 11, 2013, 6:20 AM

Has anyone read Peter Ackroyd's Milton in America? At one point, the blind Milton goes into the forest and sits under a tree. Then follows a passage of pronoun/identity confusion, with "I" and "he" switching back and forth. Milton walks on, and is pulled up into a tree by a deer snare, which breaks his leg. This experience has a healing or rejuvenating effect, because his vision seems to be restored at least for a time.

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-----Inline Attachment Follows-----

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Brian — 11 Apr 2013, 15:00 · follows Marc Aramini

Marc, yeah, I didn't really think there was a connection to Short Sun, but once I noticed one similarity (the tree and the identity confusion) I kept finding others--the deer, the leg injury, the restoration. It was kind of weird.