

The outsider (Lovecraft)

The Urth list — 5 messages, 3 voices, 30 Jun 2014

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6566>

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António Marques — 30 Jun 2014, 15:43

Hi.

For some reason, I'd never read this short piece. Now I'm trying to fill the blanks in some authors, I've come across it:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Outsider_\(short_story\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Outsider_(short_story))
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And you know what? The language rings very Wolfean. At first sight, it's a lame gothic tale. And there's really nothing hidden below that. But it can also be a lot of things if you want to read them into it. What I find interesting is that not only it could have been written by Severian, up to the last word, some imagery is very evocative. And then the words themselves. I'd have a very hard time believing the corpses that

strewed Severian's battlefield came from anywhere else, even if the image is different, but what got me wondering was if, with such gleaning going on, the name 'Outsider' has got some connection with this story too. Yes, at first sight there's no relationship to be found. I couldn't find any discussion of this story in connection to Wolfe - after all, why should there be?. Do you know of any? All I could find were analyses of 'An Evil Guest', which I have yet to read.

Fred Kiesche — 30 Jun 2014, 15:47 · in reply to António Marques

If it's Wolfean, then Wolfe is Lovecraftian and--more to the core--Poesian, as this was definitely one of Eich-Pee-El's pieces most inspired by E.A. Poe.

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António Marques — 30 Jun 2014, 16:55 · in reply to Fred Kiesche

Yes, of course. My choice of words is due to the fact that 1) I don't get this Wolfean linguistic ring from the rest of HPL and 2) though I agree many of the piece's elements are quite inspired by Poe, I don't think it would have been written by Poe. Can't quite say why. I can see Poe writing 'The Music of Erich Zann', or any of the stories that revolve around corpses, but for some reason not this one.

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Fred Kiesche — 30 Jun 2014, 17:02 · in reply to António Marques

HPL walked the streets of Paris with Poe. In a dream.

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Daniel Otto Jack Petersen — 30 Jun 2014, 18:39 · in reply to Fred Kiesche

I'm glad you brought this up. I've always thought the most interesting thing about Wolfe's divine Outsider as compared to Lovecraft's Outsider is that both are monsters of sorts: non-canonical, subterranean, tenebrous, subversive. It's part of the devious theological genius of Wolfe that he casts his 'true God' as an outcast, a creature of the night as it were, a monster. I think part of Wolfe's theological impulse is to see the Christian deity anew in a Chestertonian 'upside down' sort of way and this very obscure (but valid, I think) connection to Lovecraft's Outsider is one of the ways he achieves that *'mooreeffoc' <<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/mooreeffoc>>* epiphany.

-DOJP

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