

Innocents Aboard

The Urth list — 4 messages, 3 voices, 15 Jul 2014

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6571>

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Antonin Scriabin — 15 Jul 2014, 01:43

Working my way through this collection, and checked the Wiki for clues pertaining to "The Friendship Light". If one of you threw in the quip about the Star Child from 2001, thanks for the laugh!

As for the story itself, is there a type of demon / vampire from any mythology that spurns the heads of its victims? This behavior reminds me of certain cats I've known, who will leave snake and mouse heads untouched and eat a good portion of the rest.

Daniel Otto Jack Petersen — 15 Jul 2014, 08:20 · in reply to Antonin Scriabin

One of my favourite stories by Wolfe: I've often wondered about the creature. As I recall, some character says, laughingly, that its victim probably **thought** it was a devil or demon - implying that this wasn't at all the case.

I wondered if it was some sort of avenging angel (think of the monstrous seraphim and cherubim of Hebrew scripture - Wolfe references the latter to great effect in another story in this collection, as he also does in 'Quadrifons' from Long and Short Suns).

I also wondered if it was a gryphon or sphinx or some other being from mythology.

(I've also never been able to figure out what in the world is a 'friendship light' is.)

-DOJP

On Tue, Jul 15, 2014 at 2:43 AM, Antonin Scriabin <kierkegaurdian at gmail.com> wrote:

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Antonin Scriabin — 15 Jul 2014, 12:35 · in reply to Daniel Otto Jack Petersen

Here it is:

"You took him, as you promised, whole and entire. I have no grounds for complaint upon that score, or indeed upon any. And I feel certain he met his well-deserved death firmly convinced that he was in the grip of demons, or some such thing, which I find enormously satisfying."

We get very little (even by Wolfe standards) description of the maybe-demons. All we really know is they have wings and green eyes. I'm wondering if they aren't some kind of alien ... Ty seems to think it is somewhat funny that his brother-in-law will have thought he was being attacked by demons. Can we take this to mean there is no supernatural element at all? Ty clearly has a good idea of what they are, and he doesn't think they're demons.

I wonder also about the Coleman lantern at the end, strung up in a tree to flicker when "signal frequencies" change. It's not uncommon in American-myth for alien spaceships (or the beings themselves) to mess with electronics and gadgets of all kinds, when close.

Alien abduction classically is "whole and entire" as well, but this doesn't mesh with the disemboweling of Nicollete or the headless cat, unless these are "mutilated cow" events.

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Tony Ellis — 15 Jul 2014, 14:46 · follows Antonin Scriabin

Antonin Scriabin wrote (re: The Friendship Light)

As for the story itself, is there a type of demon / vampire from any mythology that spurns the heads of its victims?

The 'friends' are HP Lovecraft's Fungi from Yuggoth, who steal human brains. You can read about them in The Whisperer in Darkness.

The fact that they're attracted by a lamp is a Wolfean pun on the fact that the Fungi are described as moth-like.