

a pre-writeup general question on the short story Lukora

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 31 Jan 2015

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Marc Aramini — 31 Jan 2015, 17:34

Trying to finish up a few write ups in the late 80s and one that I have thought about but not started seriously yet is Lukora. The plot is simple enough, possibly off world surveyors are searching for "Small Folk" and the female suffers bouts of unconsciousness while following the male as he wanders around in the forest (full of "needle- trees"). They meet up with a pale woman whose initial description is tri-partite before she comes close, and it is merely her dark hair over her white shoulders splitting her so. Eventually the female seems to be overcome with a kind of blood lust that is almost lycanthropic.

The story is like a mixture of SF and fantasy, but the name Lukora seems close to the Spanish word locura, for madness or insanity. If it is SF, then this seems to be a "rabies" kind of story where the periods of unconsciousness are a kind of scientific lycanthropy and both of the searchers are contaminated. While Wolfe has done the tree/bacteria thing in Fifth Head, the needle trees (Evergreens) keep coming up here and I don't want to necessarily say that the small folk they seek are like the shadow children or the personified bacteria of Peritonitis, but the tribe which Michael battles has some members almost as tall as him ...

Trying to decide if I should pursue the possibility of a female goddess of madness and mythic resonances or the SF element - is the Lukora/locura similarity simply made up or is personified madness the theme?

The other issue: This was written for Terry Carr's memorial anthology, an influential editor and SF fan who also did some writing of his own. His Universe and Best of Anthologies are fairly famous. Any allusion to his work, fiction, or editing, could be so wide ranging as to be beyond the scope of my research allotment for this brief story (the stories in his collections are diverse and permeate the genre). Is anyone familiar with Carr's own fictional worlds to posit a direct allusion, or is this merely a story Wolfe wrote for the anthology?

Thought maybe someone would be more familiar with Carr's particular genre impact than I was.