

Caraboo-hoo

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 16 Jun 1998

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Tony Ellis — 16 Jun 1998, 10:21

William H. Ansley wrote:

I really don't agree with the "morphing carabao" theory...

Nor me. It's funny how any evidence for shape-shifting sort of melts away when you look at it closely, isn't it? (The one exception being the Old Wise One's mention of this ability - that's currently the only reason I think shape-shifting has anything to do with St Anne.)

It does seem as if there is some deeper meaning to this episode, but I don't think that providing evidence of shape shifting is it.

As you say, Marsch's cruelty seems to be significant, and the tears too. And why does Wolfe keep showing us Marsch gunning down the local fauna?

My impression is that this is all meant to suggest that the animals of St Anne might be "people" too. Not in the sense that they are all some sort of morphing alien race with a big SFx budget, but simply that on St Anne the distinction between human and animal is blurred. There are numerous references to the Annese being just "animals shaped like people", and also hints of the reverse. When VRT lists the "people" he used to see when living in the wilderness with his mother he includes animals, birds, trees and Shadow Children as if there was no distinction between them at all. He, too, cries when the carabao is killed.

That would make all those other animals Marsch so cheerfully shoots "people" too. Sort of ironic, given that Marsch wants so badly to meet the native Annese, no?

adam louis stephanides — 16 Jun 1998, 12:01 · follows Tony Ellis

On Tue, 16 Jun 1998 Tony Ellis wrote:

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And this occurs in a work of fiction by V.R.T.; we don't know if it reflects something he saw or thought he saw, is derived from Annese lore, or is his own extrapolation from Veil's Hypothesis.

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There was a similar phenomenon in "Tracking Song." There, too, you had characters who were intelligent, and who looked like people, but whom other characters regarded as "just animals," and quite cheerfully killed and even ate.

--Adam