

Copperhead

The Whorl list — 5 messages, 5 voices, 04 May 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1417>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Alice Turner — 04 May 2001, 10:19

From: dd at Adobe.COM (David DiGiacomo)

http://www.scifi.com/scifiction/originals/originals_archive/wolfe/wolfe1.html

Wow, I hated this story. It had all my least favorite Lupine elements:
phonetic dialect, misogyny, Christianity, and an incomprehensible ending.

Did anyone like it?

Not me. A dumb little throwaway. What is with that urge to speak in tongues, anyway? Do you suppose he does it at dinner parties? Yikes.

-alga

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Alex David Groce — 04 May 2001, 11:27 · follows Alice Turner

alga wrote:

Not me. A dumb little throwaway. What is with that urge to speak in tongues, anyway? Do you suppose he does it at dinner parties? Yikes.

Are there more than a handful of Wolfe stories this short* that _aren't_ weird little throwaways? I didn't find this one particularly obnoxious, other than that ultra-irritating "alien woman speak with forked tongue" dialect, just par for the course.

Wolfe should stick to novelette length, at least. And avoid trying to be Lafferty.

* "Three Million Square Miles," "A Cabin on the Coast," and... there must be something else slipping my mind.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32

--

Alex David Groce (agroce+ at cs.cmu.edu)

Ph.D. Student, Carnegie Mellon University - Computer Science Department

8112 Wean Hall (412)-268-3066

<http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~agroce>

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Michael Straight — 04 May 2001, 12:06 · follows Alex David Groce

On Fri, 4 May 2001, Alex David Groce wrote:

Are there more than a handful of Wolfe stories this short* that _aren't_ weird little throwaways? I didn't find this one particularly

obnoxious, other than that ultra-irritating "alien woman speak with forked tongue" dialect, just par for the course.

* "Three Million Square Miles," "A Cabin on the Coast," and... there must be something else slipping my mind.

Other good Wolfe Short Shorts:

"A Solar Labyrinth," "Westwind," "How the Whip Came Back," "Peritonitis," "The War Beneath the Tree," "Useful Phrases" (actually Wolfe's translation of a Borges short story, but still good). I also like the one that's in Peace, the tall-tale about the cat and the big ship, and I also love the little story about the sidhe at the end of Peace; some people also seem to like "Suzanne Delage" more than I do.

-Rostrum

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 04 May 2001, 10:15 · follows Michael Straight

Other good Wolfe Short Shorts:

"A Solar Labyrinth," "Westwind," "How the Whip Came Back," "Peritonitis," "The War Beneath the Tree," "Useful Phrases" (actually Wolfe's translation of a Borges short story, but still good). I also like the one that's in Peace, the tall-tale about the cat and the big ship, and I also love the little story about the sidhe at the end of Peace; some people also seem to like "Suzanne Delage" more than I do.

Oolp -- well, if you're going to go that long (I have trouble thinking of a couple of these as "short shorts") don't neglect "The Detective of Dreams," my single favorite Lupine text, period. OTOH, I would regard about half the ones you name as essentially conceits ("Peritonitis," "The Whip") or bits of fluff ("War Beneath," maybe "Useful Phrases").

My first reaction to "Copperhead" was roughly equivalent to my first reaction to several other Lupine shorts, notably the ever-present "Suzanne Delage": "Huh?"

I'm not ashamed to say that I Don't Get It, and (unusual for me with Wolfe) I'm not at all convinced that "it"'s there to get. there's bunch of stuff at the beginning that isn't followed up at all; I have no idea why the woman with the strange voice from another dimension behaves as she does; and the ending vaguely-out-of-Genesis simply doesn't follow from the story in any way I can perceive. I suspect the whole thing of being to some extent a venting of spleen at Wm Jefferson Clinton, who doubtless has it coming, but would probably not have a clue that spleen had been vented at him.

--Dan'l

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

James Russell — 07 May 2001, 11:03 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

001 - William Ansley <wansley@w - Re: (whorl) New Wolfe story >online
(spoilers for "Copperhead"
So, what is "goose"? What about "neffer" and "grawnt"?

It seems to me that 'neffer' and 'gawnt' are 'never' and 'grunt'. "You will never grunt over me" again is Jane Doe denying the President sex, I assumed. What 'Groose' is supposed to be I don't know. "Gross", perhaps?

Also, with regards to the Short Sun, I was wondering if anyone thought that the inhumi's method of breeding had any bearing on the secret (or even the dubious Horn or Silk as inhumi option). Jahlee or Fava, I can't remember which, claims that the inhumi make love exactly as a man or woman would do, before moving on to the more technical, amphibious process. I'm sure that this has some bearing on the plot, although I haven't really managed to work out what.

On a personal note I haven't contributed to this list before, but have been lurking for ages. Hello everybody.

Jim Russell
Exeter. UK.