

Revelation-BOTLS

The Whorl list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 29 May 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1425>

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Alice Turner — 29 May 2001, 15:15

This is from -Grace Abounding-, the autobiography of John (-Pilgrim's Progress-) Bunyan. This happens on a Sunday: "as I was in the midst of a game of Cat, and having struck it one blow from the Hole, just as I was about to strike it the second time, a Voice did suddenly dart from Heaven into my Soul, which said, -Wilt thou leave thy sins and go to Heaven, or have thy sins and go to Hell?- At this I was put to an exceeding Maze. Wherefore, leaving my Cat upon the ground, I looked up to Heaven, and was as if I had, with the Eyes of my understanding, seen the Lord Jesus looking down on me, as being very hotly displeased with me, and as if he did severely threaten me with some grievous Punishment for these and other my ungodly Practices."

Bunyan is famously Protestant, of course, but very famous too. Leaving aside the accusatory nature of his revelation, doesn't it seem more than coincidence that Silk, too, should be struck just in the middle of a game? The game is called "tip-cat" according to the OED and is played thus: A small piece of wood tapering at each end, used in the game of tip-cat, etc.; it is hit at one end by the cat-stick, and made to spring from the ground, and then driven away by a side stroke. Bunyan is among the citations.

-alga

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

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 29 May 2001, 13:00 · follows Alice Turner

Alga:

This is cool. Whether or not it is an actual "reference," it's interesting to observe a few contrasts - aside from the non-accusatory nature of Silk's enlightenment, for example, the fact that Silk then continues and wins his game. I don't know if this is exactly a Catholic difference, but it does seem related to Silk's later observation -- from memory, my copy is at home -- to the effect that "perhaps that is what free will is: the grace of being permitted to co-operate with what is going to happen anyway." There is a kind of casualness to Silk's enlightenment, the sense that, okay, he's been enlightened, and now everything is different (for him), and yet everything is still the same...

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James Jordan — 29 May 2001, 15:20 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

It certainly seems more than a coincidence! Very interesting.

Nutria

At 03:15 PM 5/29/2001 -0400, you wrote:

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Endymion9 — 30 May 2001, 15:45 · follows James Jordan

Blattid wrote:

There is a kind of casualness to Silk's enlightenment, the sense that, okay, he's been enlightened, and now everything is different (for him), and yet everything is still the same...

This seems very accurate from my experience. It shows me that Wolfe knows how *true* enlightenment really affects people.

1. Silk is changed and knows he is changed. Although externally nothing has really changes, it is very hard to shake his belief in what he knows has happened to him because as Christian author/speaker Leonard Ravenhill used to say, "You have your theories, but I've lived it, man!". Silk sees things differently now. It's his attitude that is affected.

2. Silk is not intent on explaining his enlightenment to others or convincing them to see and experience his enlightenment. Although he can't help talking about it to others due to his excitement, his enlightenment is for him and affects him. It affects others through his actions, but not through his arguing, debating or cajoling others to also accept it.

Dennis/Endy

<http://home.mindspring.com/~endymion9/index.htm>

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