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Like the literary source, the picture is very gloomy and alarming. Perhaps even too much, by the standards of a children's work. I repeatedly read this story in my childhood, and I always felt some fear, because the atmosphere in it was very serious. This is especially felt due to contrasts - here is a hero in a difficult situation of an unfortunate orphan, then a miraculous salvation in the paradise Land of Dreams, and then this fabulous idyll again goes into the terrible tyranny of the demonic Kato, when fear, spies, enemy patrols and abductions are everywhere.

Of particular concern is the fact that, like in other similar stories about "fellow soldiers" (I apologize for this filthy word), when a hero from an eerie and gray reality leaves for a new wonderful world where he becomes a happy hero, there is always the possibility that all this is just a dying hallucination or schiz. And the more serious and better the work, the stronger this feeling.

The film is full of mystical symbolism. Starting from flying through the Galaxy (and in modern interpretations, Heaven is often associated not with the "celestial firmament", but with some other dimension) and ending with the bridge leading to the country of the Night (the image of the bridge connecting the worlds is also a classic of mythology). Or, for example, emaciated souls suffering in caves. And Father-King is clearly not just a feudal ruler, but a kind spirit, hence his thoughtfulness, bright sadness, lack of servants and his lonely walks in the gardens. This is also a reference to Hinduism with its cyclic Universe, when Kato says that a new Kato will come, and so on. Perhaps of course I thought it all up myself, and there is no such deep sense here, but, as you know, in the philosophy of poststructuralism, the reader has the right to co-authorship.

The antagonist also deserves special mention. Although the main enemy is not a three-meter-high Sauron in an iron mask or the ugly Voldemort, he looks even worse. A thin man with a terrible steel prosthesis is truly terrifying, especially after we are preparing the entire film to meet him. The claw itself is not even so much a prosthesis as a real part of its body, a manifestation of its infernal inner essence, hidden under the exterior of a person. And in that sense, he's even closer to Pennywise from 'It' than to classic dark magicians from fantasy. Although in the end it turns out that he, too, was rather a victim of some even deeper forces.