

Random thoughts on Forlesen

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 13 Oct 1998

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mary whalen — 13 Oct 1998, 08:05

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

These are just some random observations and thoughts on the story "Forlesen."

I was recently asked why Mr. Frick doesn't seem to age and remembers his youth and past, unlike Forlesen. I'm not completely sure that anyone outside of Forlesen's family has the problems that he does, but it's possible that Frick is meant to be an English form of Fricco/Frey(r), the Norse god of youth.

When Forlesen looks in the red book, he reads about the types of the dead and death. The translation lists 12 different types. One of those is types are in either torment or pleasure. It seems odd that those two would be grouped together into one type when there are so many. If they were two separate types, there would be thirteen types.

Elsewhere in the book, 13 is mentioned by Beale as the number of children his parents had, of which he is the oldest member. The first type mentioned in the book is "those for whom new worlds are created."

Of course, perhaps pleasure or pain is merely different in the eye of the beholder, like sado-masochism. S&M in the text is used to abbreviate supervisory and managerial, which is the type of job Forlesen has. The clock he punches is beige ("not brown") and perhaps this is meant to show the racial divide between blacks and whites. Forlesen says that the translation on one side of the book can't be right, because the size of sections greatly differ in some instances. This is not necessarily true. English is very different than other languages in how long its constructions can be. For example, "first come, first serve" would be quite a long sentence or modifying phrase in Welsh, and many other languages. Thus, "And finally, those who sleep" might be a very long sentence in the translated language Forlesen sees. Conversely, the long English phrase about the frolicking dead might be only one word in the translated language, something like "Elysian."

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