

Strewn garments

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 12 Aug 1997

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Kieran Cleary — 12 Aug 1997, 14:05

vividly coloured oddments of clothing. Hmmm. From memory & probably inaccurately;

tBotNS:

- scented, peach coloured scarf in antechamber. Dropped by prankster exultant.
- Pelerine scarf (?) in shepherd's beehive hut (red with tassles?)
- ditto left behind in stone town? Merryn's?

ok. all women's scarves. any more?

lasrach

From: Alice Turner <al at interport.net>
To: whorl at lists.best.com
Subject: (whorl) Peachy scarf!
Date: Tuesday, August 12, 1997 12:57 AM

[Posted from WHORL, the mailing list for Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun]

Wow!

I feel boorish saying it, but the scarf in Mattak's drawer (I'm sure that is Mattak's drawer) is not necessarily peach-colored; the perfume reminds Silk of a peach-colored handkerchief of Blood's.

I always thought that scarf would lead to something, but I thought it was just another clue to Hy's perfidy, that she slept with both Oosik and Mattak. But a historical clue....

But how could it be? The antechamber scene takes place centuries after Typhon dispatched the Whorl. Doesn't it?

(alga, excited, gets up to join the dance, but trips over own cilia)

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

m.driussi — 12 Aug 1997, 22:16 · follows Kieran Cleary

Reply: Item #0962161 from URTN at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET02#

lasrach,

Right, there's the tassled hem (or whatever) of the pelerines which Severian gets in the stone town (presumably given to him by Apu Punchau, as it turns out later in URTN, if I recollect aright) and which he then leaves in the shepherd's hut as payment for rations consumed. Good point--it is similar to the scarf, but in this case I know that it really is a clue for the hero and I know what the clue is ("find the pelerines").

Which is a set up for, among other things, the masque at Thrax where Cyriaca (the adultress) is costumed as a pelerine and Severian falls for it. Then he falls for her! Proving that she is guilty! Then he betrays his guild by not executing a client!

(Cyriaca escaped to Nessus. Sometimes I imagine her teaming up there with Dorcas. Two Seamstresses . . . and Ouen. Maybe they could open up a shop? Not in Cobbler's Common, that's too classy for them. Maybe south of there, near the khan with the statue of Night on its roof, across the river from the Old Citadel. Repair clothes for travelers staying at the khan, that sort of thing. Or gee, I suppose they could buy that rag shop just north of the bridge? Not at first I suppose. Too creepy.)

Now I realize that this next note reflects an obsessive nature, and I apologize in advance. On the way to the Sanguinary Field, Severian sees a lot of red and yellow silk being worn by women. Skipping lightly over the "silk" aspect, in that same room where Silk finds the scarf, he also finds sweaters red and yellow in color. I don't know what this means, I don't know or mean to suggest that it =does= "mean" anything, but it is there.

MEANWHILE, okay, now this is kind of scary. I was wondering about color symbology with regard to the soldiers of the autarch, and ranking within the Commonwealth; specifically I was thinking about the guild tincts and the colors of soldiers' armor--gold, mirror, blue, etc. So what I was looking for was some scale that had gold and silver at the top, down to black/fuligin at the bottom. Preferably a scale in use in medieval times.

Well lookee here! Turns out that heraldry shorthand uses numbers to indicate colors.

1. Gold (Septentrion Guard, erentarii kelau)
2. Silver (Praetorian Guard)
3. Red (dimarchi of Thrax) (pelerines)
4. Blue (xenagie of Nessus, blue huzzars at Orithyia)
5. Black (Black Tarantines) (the torturers)
6. Green (green/black Guasacht's irregulars)
7. Purple
8. sanguine/murray
9. tenne'/orange
10. carnation ("flesh")
11. bleu celeste (color of Claw's light)
12. ashen gray (the librarians)
13. brown (the pelerine postulants)

Well okay, so what?

Hey, maybe "scarf" is just a punning reference to "escarpe" (source of word) as "escape," since the scarf shows up in prison settings and somehow sorta leads to escape? (Scarf leads to manly talk of prostitutes between Oosik and Silk, which maybe tilts

Oosik toward freeing Silk; peachy leads Severian to hints about the whip weilders.)

Now =that= is about as tenuous as a belch in a hard vacuum. And tangential as all get out.

=mantis=