

# Fairy Blood; Orrery

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 May 2000

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Jim Jordan — 02 May 2000, 12:44

At 11:53 PM 4/29/00 -0400, you wrote:

From Ratty:

Violet as the source of fairy blood. Is that a guess, or is there any real evidence? Hawksquill is not from her, but from her earlier lover -- but Violet's son from that union is the non-fairy Auberon!

I can "see" your argument, but I'm not sure the text supports it. My inclination was that the fairies are "seducing" people into their "trap," and that Violet's father is one of these. That is, the Victorian theosophists and fairy photographers, etc., are "seduced" into the plan. Continuing "my" line of argument, I notice that once Violet moves into the pentacle, everyone conceived THERE is part fairy. Yes, August does spawn (being fishy) a school of kids, but "my" take would be that all the people who moved into the pentacle of the five towns have moved into the border of faerie, and thus have part-fairy children anyway. It's geography more than genetics.

Slimina replied:

Well, gosh, I don't think it's a "guess," exactly, any more than S. Holmes "guessed" at his conclusions. Just look at the evidence! JC doesn't flat out say, "Hey, Vi was a fairy!" but why would he give us the backstory and the chart otherwise? Why would he have August go on a spending spree (I use the word in its old-fashioned sense--no, not spree) among the local girls otherwise? It's not geography, it's genetics. Form, in the sense of the pentacle, follows function. Besides, this is fiction, and you get to have pentacles if you want them.

The Big Rat rejoins (Hey, any noun can be verbed.):

Unpersuaded am I, Alice. It does not seem so simple, and Ariel Hawksquill is the problem.

Where does she get fairy blood? But then again (against me), she's not conceived in the pentacle either. I guess you could say that Oliver H. gets "infected" by Violet -- a kind of Fairy VD -- and then this is passed to his daughter Ariel.

The chart does not strike me as "evidence" either way. The backstory, it seems to me, is to establish that the Rev. Bramble was an apostate Anglican, turning away from Christianity and possibly scientific humanism toward fairy magic, and this is the point of initiation of the "tale."

Alga continues:

Well, I think you may be right. American fairies, yes. Drawn by Vi and by the pentacle, but dwindling in number. And I do agree that Drinkwater seems quite oblivious to anything "odd" about his circumstances. But in a way this is part of the fun (if I may use that word--you don't seem to think it's much fun). Folklore and literature are rife with tales of the man who marries a fairy wife. But I think JC is the only one to explore the "and then?" aspect--what happens to the family? What do you think about the notion that the fairies didn't plan anything at all, that it all came into their heads at the moment when August wished, rashly, that no girl could

resist him---that this suddenly came to them as a way to implement a new plan to perpetuate themselves?

Ratface replies:

I'm not invested in anything here, but Violet does not have to be a fairy to be an agent of the fairies. She can be a "fairy wife" in that sense.

As to your last suggestion, it seems unlikely to me. Underhill moves to America with Violet, so to speak, and seems to have enlisted her previously. I think the House On The Borderland is built by accident, so to speak, and turns out to be just what the fairies want. So they move there and start to use it. They need a place separated from the Christian/Scientific world. But I'm vague on the details here, and may be overlooking important details.

Mantis:

I don't think there are meant to be logical explanations for all these things. At any rate, that seems to be the meaning of Mrs. Underhill's speech to Eigenblick in "Give Way, Give Way" (Book Six, Chap. Five), the gist of it is that there are no explanations, it's just the way the world is.

Alga:

Yes, I keep on about this too. This isn't a tidy kind of book. Many of the most interesting books are not too tidy.

Nutria:

Dunno. He worked on it for a long time. Rather than setting something aside as untidy, I'd assume the opposite. As to Mantis's point: Well, the fairies are nature powers, and nature does work like clockwork. Humanity has freedom, but the Drinkwaters are giving theirs up and becoming part of nature, "devolving" on the "evolutionary" scale, so to speak, moving backwards and down. Freedom and choice seem to be seen in Smoky. So, of course, the fairy explanation for things is that "this is how it is."

On the orreries: Ariel's is run by electricity in the City, while the orrery in the House is run by astral influences from the stars and makes electricity. This suggests to me that the pentacular House is not just a conduit "down" to lower nature, but also "up" to the heavens. It is in the border in both respects. The fact that Smoky dies implies that this is the way to the heavens, in some sense; and also implies that the Drinkwaters "die" in order to get into nature. Dunno for sure, though. Grist for the mill.

Nutria