

Silk's appetite

The Urth list — 6 messages, 6 voices, 07 Jul 2002

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David Duffy — 07 Jul 2002, 06:10

I seem to recall someone earlier pointing out that Silk was always very abstemious, as befits an augur.

Steve Strickland — 08 Jul 2002, 14:40 · follows David Duffy

This explanation has never really satisfied me. The question of why Silk doesn't eat much is probably the one that puzzles me the most.

Certainly, it is intended to suggest that Silk may be an inhum, though there are also suggestions that he is not. One of these days I'm going to have time to re-read ShortSun and get to the bottom of it, though it's discouraging to hear of people who've read it twice and still don't know the answer.

I can't help but wonder: maybe the clues that Silk is an inhum are all too clear and readers such as we simply refuse to accept them out of preference.

Another possibility that I wish I had time to explore: maybe Silk's lack of an appetite is a clue as to the true nature of Silk's "power". We know that Silk is profoundly good, at least in certain respects. Part of that goodness is reflected in kindness to the inhum and it seems to be a kindness of such an absolute quality that it serves as protection against the inhum, which seems to be related to their secret, which Silk exposes. It seems to me that just as the inhum take on the nature of the humans upon whom they feed, perhaps Silk takes on some of the aspects of the inhum, who he has mastered. I know that's just an idea in its inception, and it's been awhile since I've read Short Sun, but it's an idea I toyed with at the time of reading and I can't help but think there's something there.

On another subject: I think it's wrong to view Horn as gone, just because Silk is alive. Horn's memories, at least, remain in Silk, where they were transported across worlds while Horn lay dying on Green.

Steve Strickland

----- Original Message -----

From: "David Duffy" <davidD at qimr.edu.au>

To: <urth at urth.net>

Sent: Sunday, July 07, 2002 1:10 AM

Subject: (urth) Re: Silk's appetite

I seem to recall someone earlier pointing out that Silk was always very abstemious, as befits an augur.

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Spectacled Bear — 08 Jul 2002, 16:25 · follows Steve Strickland

At 15:40 2002-07-08, Steve Strickland wrote:

This explanation has never really satisfied me. The question of why Silk doesn't eat much is probably the one that puzzles me the most.

As an augur he was extremely poor, and had very little food to live on. Look at what a treat the tomatoes are in Long Sun, for instance.

Spectacled Bear.

Roy C. Lackey — 08 Jul 2002, 19:10 · follows Spectacled Bear

From: David Duffy <davidD at qimr.edu.au>

I seem to recall someone earlier pointing out that Silk was always very abstemious, as befits an augur.

Silk was a kid fresh out of the seminary. He was a novice as an augur, hadn't had time to inculcate the poor-as-a-church-mouse stereotypical appetite of same. His eating habits must date from childhood, about which we are told very little.

Silk's abstemiousness is, to some degree, an affectation. When his mind is otherwise engaged he can--and does--eat normally, as at Inclito's house. (IGJ, 71)

-Roy

matthew.malthouse — 09 Jul 2002, 10:46 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On 07/07/2002 07:10:36 David Duffy wrote:

I seem to recall someone earlier pointing out that Silk was always very abstemious, as befits an augur.

Befitting or not his Mantieon seems always to be on short commons so likely it was a long engrained habit.

Matthew

Ashley Crill — 09 Jul 2002, 20:51 · follows matthew.malthouse

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In my opinion, this emphasis on Silk/Horn's appetite in IGJ is simply a clue to the reader that Horn is now inhabiting Silk's body. As Roy notes, Silk does not usually eat much. Now that Horn is in Silk's body, he eats only as much as Silk would normally eat. Before reading RTtW, I didn't realize that Horn was inhabiting Silk's body in IGJ. His appetite is simply a clue to the change that has taken place.