

Silk-23 skidoo

The Urth list — 6 messages, 3 voices, 13 Jul 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3346>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Michael Andre-Driussi — 13 Jul 2002, 03:41

William Ansley quoted me and wrote:

Likewise I'm reasonably sure that we can all agree that we are in the bleachers of the arena, and the referees made the call: they said the words (talk of combining two persons), they backed it up with actions (taking out the non-corporeal parts of Silk aged 40-something; transferring in Horn's non-corporeal parts; the download from Mainframe of Silk-23 later on may have been their doing or not, if it happened, that is).

The umpires made their call. This is not ambiguous.

Now you've lost me. Who are the referees/umpires? And why Silk-*23*?

I don't mean to be irritating, but I could use some clarification.

The umpires are the Neighbors, the ones who told dying Horn what they were going to do and then did it.

Why "Silk-23": because, rather than get into the slippery religious "soul in the machine" line of thinking, I have always taken Wolfe's use of uploading human consciousness in the Long and Short Sun series in the very straight new wave/cyberpunk mode. That is, imho, it is neither "soulful" heavenly, nor is it a mechanical life-caricature nightmare (this either/or state, techno-heaven or techno-hell, has been strongly present in the last few years of YEAR'S BEST SF, fwiw: very current burning issue, at least as far as YBSF goes). It is just there, like a Varley brain datastream that could be beamed into a clone to start-up right at the moment after the scan was first taken: there is no vital essence to the data, but there may be a copy limit (only one check out at a time, please).

(OTOH, the visit to Mainframe heaven at the end of Long Sun was a tad creepy, a shadowy show compared to the near-death experiences Silk had of ghosts, which seemed a bit more rich and "real" in comparison.)

So, in a sense, Pas is planning a "comeback" tour for his favorite son, Silk. The last few decades have not gone well for this ubermensch -- after a meteoric rise from obscurity ("Silk for Calde") and a heroic adventure, well, the whole thing went downhill. Why not jumpstart the whole thing by downloading that scan made of Silk at the moment of his glory, when he was around 23 years old, into the 43 year old body? Pretend like that depressing stuff never happened -- reload the hero and get on with the heroics, without being paralyzed by mid-life depression and shattered dreams.

Anyway. My position has been that Silk-43 brain-data was erased from the 43-year-old Silk body; Horn brain-data was downloaded via the Neighbors (by-passing the whole monitor mechanism); later on, Silk-23 brain-data was transferred from Pig to Horn-in-Silk via the eye and the monitor.

That is why "Silk-23" and "if it happened, that is."

=mantis=

Michael Straight — 15 Jul 2002, 18:14 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

On Fri, 12 Jul 2002, Michael Andre-Driussi wrote:

Anyway. My position has been that Silk-43 brain-data was erased from the 43-year-old Silk body; Horn brain-data was downloaded via the Neighbors (by-passing the whole monitor mechanism); later on, Silk-23 brain-data was transferred from Pig to Horn-in-Silk via the eye and the monitor.

Interesting theory - and kind of sinister - instead of Silk conquering Pas in Mainframe, Pas is secretly still around pulling all the strings.

But the Narrator can't be a complete reboot back to the Silk-23 back-up data, because he still knows and is trying to avoid facing the fact that Hyacinth is dead.

"I could not look upon Hyacinth, dead." - isn't that a line from a famous poem (with someone else's name in for Hyacinth)?

-Rostrum

Adam Stephanides — 16 Jul 2002, 16:31 · follows Michael Straight

on 7/12/02 10:41 PM, Michael Andre-Driussi at mantis at siriusfiction.com wrote:

Anyway. My position has been that Silk-43 brain-data was erased from the 43-year-old Silk body; Horn brain-data was downloaded via the Neighbors (by-passing the whole monitor mechanism); later on, Silk-23 brain-data was transferred from Pig to Horn-in-Silk via the eye and the monitor.

I've stated my objections to this view before, so I won't repeat myself.

But it just occurred to me that this position is also incompatible with the view (which seems to be the majority view) that it's Silk-in-Horn that impels Horn to donate an eye to Pig so that Silk-in-Pig can be uploaded into Mainframe, even at the apparent price of his mission's failure. What is your view of Horn's motive?

--Adam

Michael Andre-Driussi — 16 Jul 2002, 19:16 · follows Adam Stephanides

Adam quoted me and wrote:

Anyway. My position has been that Silk-43 brain-data was erased from the 43-year-old Silk body; Horn brain-data was downloaded via the Neighbors (by-passing the whole monitor mechanism); later on, Silk-23 brain-data was transferred from Pig to Horn-in-Silk via the eye and the monitor.

I've stated my objections to this view before, so I won't repeat myself.

But it just occurred to me that this position is also incompatible with the view (which seems to be the majority view) that it's Silk-in-Horn that impels Horn to donate an eye to Pig so that Silk-in-Pig can be uploaded into Mainframe, even at the apparent price of his mission's failure. What is your view of Horn's motive?

I'm confused by the term "Silk-in-Horn" in this context. I would say, in this case and this reading, that it is "Horn-in-Silk" who is still quixotically looking for "Silk" (quixotic because the Silk he is looking for is a character in a book that Horn wrote).

So it is Horn who makes the eye-sacrifice in order to get Silk-in-Pig out of Pig and into the Silk body. I don't see much rhyme or reason in getting Silk-in-Pig back into Mainframe, fwiw, but maybe I'm forgetting something
-- did Silk-in-Pig have some important news to report in VR person?

Horn would make the sacrifice in order to complete his mission. But in spite of his sacrifice, the narrator feels he has failed -- because he doesn't have the Silk he came to get (whether it is because Silk-in-Pig went into Mainframe instead of into Silk, or because the real Silk Horn has [Silk-43, Silk-23, or both or neither] does not measure up to the literary Silk that Horn and everybody else on Blue is expecting). (I agree I can't follow the motivation of what you have described.)

About the scan I'm calling Silk-23. Yes, it might have some Pas elements added to it, but since I don't recall any non-Silk details that would be positively Pas-like (for example, it seems to me that Pas would love to be a ruler and would never walk away from such a role; polygamy would be a fine thing; etc.), well. Calling it Passilk seems a bit heavy on the Pas side, but if that helps people grasp the concept, it could be useful.

As for when the scan was taken: I thought it was taken from the pool in the hotel, a very happy time (perhaps the happiest moment in Silk's life), not onboard the airship. But again, I could be wrong.

=mantis=

Sirius Fiction

booklets on Gene Wolfe, John Crowley

31 copies of "Snake's-hands" until OP!

<http://www.siriusfiction.com/>

Adam Stephanides — 18 Jul 2002, 14:19 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

on 7/16/02 2:16 PM, Michael Andre-Driussi at mantis at siriusfiction.com wrote:
I'm confused by the term "Silk-in-Horn" in this context.

This reflects my view that Silk is present in "Horn" (or Silkhorn, the Narrator, or whatever you want to call him) throughout.

I would say, in
this case and this reading, that it is "Horn-in-Silk" who is still
quixotically looking for "Silk" (quixotic because the Silk he is looking
for is a character in a book that Horn wrote).

So it is Horn who makes the eye-sacrifice in order to get Silk-in-Pig out
of Pig and into the Silk body. I don't see much rhyme or reason in getting
Silk-in-Pig back into Mainframe, fwiw, but maybe I'm forgetting something
-- did Silk-in-Pig have some important news to report in VR person?

Horn would make the sacrifice in order to complete his mission.

Hmm, maybe I'd misremembered the earlier debate. But I still see a few problems with this position.

1) Horn doesn't know, or refuses to admit, that he's in Silk's body, so he wouldn't know that he was transferring Silk-in-Pig into Silk's body.

2) Iirc, even after Horn recognizes that Silk is possessing Pig, he continues to look for the physical Silk. Of course, maybe he just wants a second string to his bow.

3) There is no mention in the text of this plan of Horn's nor afaik any indication that Horn thinks of his mission in any other way than bringing the physical Silk to Viron. Perhaps Horn suppressed this plan when talking to his sons, or his sons when they were briefing Daisy; but why would they do that?

4) When the "is Silk in the Narrator on the Whorl" question was last discussed, it was asked (as Rostrum has just asked) how Horn's failure to recognize that he's in Silk's body was to be explained if Silk wasn't present in Horn. Iirc, the answer was given that Horn can't accept that his unworthy self is in the body of his idol Silk. I find this implausible in any case; but if it's true, then it would surely be all the more inconceivable for Horn to contemplate transferring Silk's personality into the body he was inhabiting.

5) In any case, why would Horn think that just because he gives Pig an eye and puts him in front of a monitor, Silk-in-Pig will jump into *him*? For that matter, if Horn wants to be possessed by Silk, why not just stand in front of a monitor and get possessed by Silk-in-Mainframe directly, rather than at second hand?

--Adam

Michael Straight — 18 Jul 2002, 14:34 · follows Adam Stephanides

On Thu, 18 Jul 2002, Adam Stephanides wrote:

5) In any case, why would Horn think that just because he gives Pig an eye and puts him in front of a monitor, Silk-in-Pig will jump into *him*? For that matter, if Horn wants to be possessed by Silk, why not just stand in front of a monitor and get possessed by Silk-in-Mainframe directly, rather than at second hand?

This objection is so obvious, I'm surprised we haven't articulated it before -- I feel like it's been in the back of my head all this time.

The only answer I can think of would be if Silk-in-Pig wants to go to his Silk body more than any of the mainframe versions of Silk.

But in any case, I think Horn's motives are to restore Pig's sight and allow Silk-in-Pig to get out to wherever he wants to go (like Scylla wanting out of Oreb -- although note here that Scylla does not go from Oreb back to Mainframe, but from Oreb to her original body -- so maybe that analogy supports mantis's theory after all!)

-Rostrum