

Crush's Page and Quetzal

The Urth list — 9 messages, 4 voices, 27 Aug 2002

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 27 Aug 2002, 22:35

For those who haven't checked out Crush's Long Sun page (<http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>), I think it ought to be required reading for Long Sun discussion. I definitely don't agree with every conclusion he reaches (for example, I very much doubt that Incus is female, or that Hyacinth a male chem), but, wow, there is some good good stuff here.

A couple of things I'd like to comment on. This is totally out of context, so maybe you ought to go read the real thing first.

Quetzal, the inhuma Prolocutor, copies Dionysus' effeminate upbringing in that he wears make-up (he says) "like a woman" to pass as human. Calde Tussah did the same thing.

Leaving me to wonder ... Was Tussah, could Tussah have been, an inhumu? It would seem to fit with a lot of Crush's thematics for him to be a demon/god.

Quetzal - A Venerable holy man, ends up rescuing the people of Viron and giving his life for the people/his prey.

Combine this with Krait's comment that people are the cattle of the inhumi and you get a very interesting, if dark, riff on the idea of the Good Shepherd. (After all, shepherds don't take care of the sheep for the sheep's sake, ultimately. They eat them.)

Alice K. Turner — 27 Aug 2002, 18:13 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Crush, have you met Robert Borski? You're both gifted with imagination plus, and should have much to discuss.

-alga

For those who haven't checked out Crush's Long Sun page (<http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>), I think it ought to be required reading for Long Sun discussion.

James Wynn — 28 Aug 2002, 13:52 · follows Alice K. Turner

The nice comments I've received recently on my "articlettes" have surely turned my head.

I do need to thank Blattid for correcting my grammar on the use of the word "inhuma". Having not read the Short Sun books yet, I see now that my usage was wildly speculative. I've updated the Dionysus article and over the next few days I'll search the other articles for similar mistakes (I'm probably still using the word wrong). If anyone else has any technical comments, they will surely receive a glad hand. :)

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

From: Dan'l Danehy-Oakes [mailto:ddanehy at siebel.com] Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2002 5:36 PM To: 'urth at urth.net' Subject: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal

For those who haven't checked out Crush's Long Sun page (<http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>), I think it ought to be required reading for Long Sun discussion. I definitely don't agree with every conclusion he reaches (for example, I very much doubt that Incus is female, or that Hyacinth a male chem), but, wow, there is some good good stuff here.

--Blattid

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James Wynn — 28 Aug 2002, 13:31 · follows James Wynn

Crush, have you met Robert Borski? You're both gifted with imagination plus, and should have much to discuss.
-alga

I've never met Robert Borski, although I enjoyed his recent Peace article. I haven't to my knowledge met anyone on this list, although it is my desire to go to WorldCon one day and put a few faces to the names here. :-D

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

From: Alice K. Turner [mailto:aturner6 at nyc.rr.com]
Sent: Tuesday, August 27, 2002 1:14 PM
To: urth at urth.net
Subject: Re: (urth) Crush's Page and Quetzal
For those who haven't checked out Crush's Long Sun page (<http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>), I think it ought to be required reading for Long Sun discussion.

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Robert Borski — 29 Aug 2002, 00:12 · follows James Wynn

Crush, have you met Robert Borski? You're both gifted with imagination plus, and should have much to discuss.
-alga

I've never met Robert Borski, although I enjoyed his recent Peace article.

I

haven't to my knowledge met anyone on this list, although it is my desire to go to WorldCon one day and put a few faces to the names here.

(Extending a right hand blithely across the aether.) How do you do, Crush!

I've never met anyone on the list either, although Nigel Price and I talked about getting together last spring; alas, while he was in the American Midwest, I was in Central Europe. That being said, however, I fear you've misread alga's comments, which were intended not as a suggestion that you and I actually meet, but that your work, like mine, is neither valid nor substantive, but rather falls into the realm of "fan fiction." Like me, you've apparently been "swimming with undines," thus your severe intellectual anoxia. Thank the stars she didn't call you my "partner in flakiness," like she did Prion (aka Sean Whalen), who promptly left the list

after the tirade she leveled against him. And heaven forbid your work ever find acceptance elsewhere; I fear the six essays I wrote on Wolfe that have been published by The New York Review of Science Fiction have forever sullied its reputation (obviously Ms. Turner's essays on John Crowley were accepted by an editorial cadre in much more command of its critical faculties). In other words expect a certain amount of ridicule, scorn, and derision to your Long Sun exegeses by what is, thankfully, not a large contingent on the list; if you're extremely unlucky, however, as I've been, expect a fair amount of shrillness from you-know-who.

Personally, I applaud your efforts. I don't agree with many of your conclusions, but rather than take a cheap shot at what has obviously been a labor of love, with a fair amount of scholarship ("Those who have original thoughts, post; those who don't, carp"), I thought I'd ask you a few questions about your Hyacinth essay. According to you she's a chem. So does this mean that she fabricated the story about her father being a head clerk at the Juzgado? (Newt by my reckoning.) And again, is she lying (or implanted with false memories) when she tells Auk that her father is a "pig's arse"? And who is the woman described as her dead mother that Hyacinth sees at Mainframe? Nettle seems to know her (I've theorized elsewhere she's Lime), but wouldn't she have to be a chem--as must be her father? Simply put, are there really that many chems running around outside the military and the religious orders, and are they as prone and subject to toxic parenting as your average bios? Since you're speculating about someone whose life history does not end with SHORT SUN, you also need to read Wolfe's followup series because there's an event in there that makes your theory even less tenable. I won't spoil it for you; suffice it to say I don't think rust is the causative agent.

Robert Borski

James Wynn — 29 Aug 2002, 23:05 · follows Robert Borski

Regarding essays at <http://www.visualclick.com/~jwynn/GeneWolfe/LongSun/>

Robert Borski said:

I fear you've misread alga's comments, which were intended not as a suggestion that you and I actually meet, but that your work, like mine, is neither valid nor substantive...In other words expect a certain amount of ridicule, scorn, and derision to your Long Sun exegeses...

My response:

Unfortunately, I'm not so harassed by fraternal greetings and compliments that I can afford to exegete them when they come my way. I'll presume until textually proven otherwise that by "imagination plus" Alga meant merely "...plus imagination" rather than "...plus something-else-not-so-wonderful." As for receiving derision, I should HOPE to converse with someone who feels so strongly about the Long Sun series - that's why I published the essays on a website. So deride away! It's up to the derider however to engage me enough to respond. I purpose that no shots will be "cheap", I'll do all I can to see that they are hard won.

----- Robert Borski said I thought I'd ask you a few questions about your Hyacinth essay.

My response:

I'm working on a response to your questions, but I can't finish until I can check my sources. Still I've received a couple emails offline on the chem-Hyacinth theory that follow the same tack, and I'd like to respond to that "tack" first.

First if people are responding off-list because they feel more comfortable for some reason, yet *really* want to discuss some point, that's fine. But if someone responds off-list to keep from *humiliating* me, their concern is misdirected. The purpose of this list, I would guess, is to exchange opinions.

Second, no matter WHAT one believes about Hyacinth, her impressive bosom is bursting with lies and slight-of-hands about her *true* nature. As I say in "Thelxepeia's Mirrors," the Hyacinth citation is not really finished and won't be until after I re-read the books. I currently ONLY cite the clues that she IS a chem rather than explain the (IMO) mis-directions that she is NOT a chem. My conviction currently rests only on affirmative proofs. That's only half the ballgame, I know.

Consequently, while I think I allay certain general concerns like those Mr. Borski is asking. I can't really address specific problems like "if Hyacinth is a chem, how does she cry? or "then why is she CLAIM to be a junkie?" or "why does she stuff her face with nectarines?"

At the end of Silk's discussion with Horn on the airship, Silk says of his reasons for trying to kill himself, "Isn't it obvious [after all I've told you]?" Well it isn't "obvious." It IS (to me at this point), however, inexorable. Still, I welcome all challenges to anything I've published on my site, including this. Just understand that I can't answer everything.....yet.

Third, as to my need to read the Short Sun, I guess I will have to read this one if only to have the credentials to discuss Hyacinth. But I've paid enough attention to the Urth list discussion to know she's dies and there is some ambiguity as to how. This is not a spoiler for me because: Since Silk and Hyacinth are Apollo and Hyacinthus -- and there is more reason than just her name to suggest they are - it is necessary that Silk will directly cause her death - the only question is how.

I'm inclined to disbelieve, though obviously without evidence, that the manner of her death insists that she's bio since every person whose brought this up, felt the need to supply other (less persuasive?) proofs. Unless there is blood all over the walls, it's hard to imagine that it will present in more difficult puzzle than why does she produce snot when she cries and why is her breath warm.

Does the event in question take place in "On Blue's Waters?" I do have that one already.

Curiously, I kind of expected my other (I thought) controversial theory, that Incus is a woman, to provoke at least as many challenges as Hyacinth's. I feel much on much better ground to defend it. Then again, perhaps I *have* defended it better since no one has yet offered a detailed challenge on that.

A sole-proprietor in flakiness,
-- Crush

James Wynn — 30 Aug 2002, 15:15 · follows James Wynn

After checking my sources, here's my response to Robert Borski's questions (thanks again Mr. Borski): Robert Borski said

According to you she's a chem. So does this mean that she fabricated the story about her father being a head clerk at the Juzgado? (Newt by my reckoning.) And again, is she lying (or implanted with false memories) when she tells Auk that her father is a "pig's arse"?

My response:

No and no. Actually Silk says that he went to meet him. I sure her father is NOT Newt. Newt is a commissioner at the Juzgado in charge of the Guard finances. Hyacinth's father is a "head clerk" of the Fisc. Silk also met with an "officer" of the Fisc while he was there. Clearly her father is

well down the chain of command. BTW: see the entry on Newt in "Things of the Long Sun".

There's no reason that her father could not be a chemical person. And as Silk discovered in Nightside, a talus can be bribed. What would a talus do with money? Marble explains in Exodus, "The same thing anyone would do with money, dear" So chems are not essentially different from bios when it comes to corrupt conduct. Is it so amazing that a chem parent would prostitute his child for money when bios sometimes do it?

Actually, the well-flagged concept that chems and taluses can be corrupted for money is sitting around in the story like an unfired gun in a play. I've fired it by tapping Hyacinth and her father as examples.

Robert Borski said

And who is the woman described as her dead mother that Hyacinth sees at Mainframe? Nettle seems to know her (I've theorized elsewhere she's Lime)

My response:

The woman was Hyacinth's mother. It is easier for me to imagine how chems would "go to Mainframe" when they die than it is for me to see how it is done with bios. As for Nettle knowing her that's an interesting question, but unless her mother can be clearly identified with a bio female it doesn't change anything. I'm curious about your "Lime" theory. I don't find it explained in the Urth archives. In the archives I DID see you make a reference to a snide comment by Wolfe regarding Hyacinth's mother in a "LS question list" - what is this?

Robert Borski said

Simply put, are there really that many chems running around outside the military and the religious orders, and are they as prone and subject to toxic parenting as your average bios?

My response:

Well there's not that many chems running around outside the military -- relatively. Marble is the only one I'm aware of in a religious order. Non-military chems are rare relative to when the Whorl left Urth, but they are not non-existent. No adults in Viron remarks on chems as if they'd never seen one before. I suppose if you or I were to walk the streets of Viron, we would no doubt think we saw chems everywhere we looked.

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Robert Borski said

Since you're speculating about someone whose life history does not end with SHORT SUN, you also need to read Wolfe's follow-up series because there's an event in there that makes your theory even less tenable. I won't spoil it for you; suffice it to say I don't think rust is the causative agent.

I cannot express the pleasure I get from these e-mails.

-- Crush

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I intended to clip the following Boski question from my response since I answered it in my other recent posting. Failing to clip it makes it look like I'm being sarcastic when that was NOT my intention.

Robert Borski said

Since you're speculating about someone whose life history does not end with SHORT SUN, you also need to read Wolfe's follow-up series because there's an event in there that makes your theory even less tenable. I won't spoil it for you; suffice it to say I don't think rust is the causative agent.

Robert Borski — 31 Aug 2002, 20:43 · follows James Wynn

Crush responding:

I'm curious about your "Lime" theory. I don't find it explained in the Urth archives. In the archives I DID see you make a reference to a snide comment by Wolfe regarding Hyacinth's mother in a "LS question list" - what is this?

Almost certain I posted this somewhere, but couldn't find it myself, so let me attempt a brief reprise.

In the process of describing their visit to Mainframe, where a number of dead ancestors are encountered, Horn (the author of LS) records the following dialogue:

"Hyacinth's mother visited her, too."
Nettle looked surprised. "I didn't think her mother was dead, Caldé." "Neither did Hyacinth."

Now to me--and perhaps only to me and my imagination plus--Nettle's surprised look implies that (1) she possibly knows Hyacinth's mother, and (2) the last time she saw her she was alive. But when Wolfe was asked in the aforesaid LS question list about this ("Who was Hyacinth's mother? It seems we should know her."), he responded: "I don't know how to answer that. She was not a character you have known in some other connection, if that's what you mean. She was the wife of Hyacinth's father, and the mother of her sisters and brothers."

So why then is Nettle surprised? Are we to assume that Nettle and Hy are close enough they've having sisterly chats about their mothers and their current states-of-health? Nonplussed, I set the idea aside for a while.

But then on a reread of EXODUS, I came across the following passage, where Hyacinth is talking about when she first left the family nest. Says she: "Know what I had when I left h-home? Two gowns M-Mother made and her umbrella. She didn't have a-anything else to give me, so she gave me that. A big green umbrella. I kept it for years and I don't know what happened to it."

Could, however, the color and emotional value of this precious umbrella be a hint here? [Again, is it likely that chems need and keep umbrellas?] Green, of course, made me immediately think of Lime, who is described as "a lank woman of forty, with ginger-colored hair that Maytera Mint had decided was probably dyed." [Would a chem dye her hair?] When last seen alive, even though she wants to fight, she's told by Mint that "Your women are no longer fighters unless they've got needlers or slug guns. We need people to get our wounded out of the fight and take care of them." Lime takes off, but then later, *in the presence of Nettle*, Teasel is told by Mint to "find Lime. Tell her where I am, and that I want to see her just as soon as she can get away." But we're never told if Teasel finds her--there is a civil war going on, and she may, in fact, be

the dead woman on Silver Street that Silk sees in his first enlightenment--and she's never encountered in the narrative again--unless she really is the Mainframe manifestation that Hyacinth identifies with her mother.

Bonus gratuity: although I don't believe this is true, in order to make your theory work, you might try arguing that "Lime" is short for "Limestone."

But what about Hy's father? As you declaim:

I sure her father is
NOT Newt. Newt is a commissioner at the Juzgado in charge of the Guard
finances. Hyacinth's father is a "head clerk" of the Fisc. Silk also met
with an "officer" of the Fisc while he was there. Clearly her father is
well
down the chain of command.

Only initially by my read. For as we've been told by Chenille in LAKE, "Her father's a head clerk in the Juzgado." Later then, in response to the following question about new councillor Newt, "Where is it they find you?" she responds, "In the Juzgado. Councillor Newt was a commissioner there, the one who bought supplies for the Caldé's Guard, made out the payroll, and so forth." These types of duties are perfectly consistent with being a head clerk with a commission--one he received for a specific reason. Or as Chenille relates:

"...One of the commissioners saw [Hyacinth] when she was maybe fourteen, and said, 'Listen, I need a maid. Send her up and she can live at my house'--they had eight or nine sprats, I guess--and she can make a little money, too, and *you'll get a nice promotion.*' Hy's father was just a
regular clerk then, probably."

[Again, how likely is it that a pair of destitute chems are going to build eight or nine sprats? Olive's parents seem to have a great deal of difficulty bringing her into the world.]

Also, as you note, Silk has met with Hy's father, saying "I knew Hyacinth's father was a head clerk...I located him, and while we were talking about reforming the Fisc he said that the devil is in the details." But this takes place before we learn that Newt has been elevated to commissioner and he may have been trying to impress Caldé Silk, hoping to trade not so much on daughter Hyacinth's sexual indenturement for another promotion, but his own managerial skills.

No way I can wrangle a name chemish for Newt, but as you know at least one of the other Councillor's is a chem.

Robert Borski