

Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth

The Urth list — 13 messages, 8 voices, 30 Aug 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3430>

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James Wynn — 30 Aug 2002, 14:31

The following is my response to A. Bin Talal who contacted me off-list but has offered of his own accord for my response to be posted on-list.

Thanks so much for your comments.

You say:

In Thelxepeia's Mirrors you assert that Hyacinth is male chem, your arguments for Hyacinth being a chem are very compelling, but do not explain how she became Viron's top prostitute.

Response

Well, the story is somewhat vague on exactly how that occurred. It probably began while she was sold by her (I'll refer to Hyacinth in the feminine) father to be a housemaid. She was attractive and she began to make money for sexual favors. From there, she began to take on the necessary modifications to make even more money.

You say:

The other arguments about overpowering the pilot could be taken as clues she is not human but a chem, a chem female should be stronger than a human

Response

True, and I consider her over-powering the pilot to be evidence that she is chem - not male. Actually, Marble DOES over-power Musk. This brings up a point that I should segregate those arguments that Hyacinth is a MALE chem from those that show she is MERELY chem.

You say:

The arguments for her being a male are alas unsound, you seem to use circular logic, she is a male because of 'thematic requirement'(which you assert there aren't any), the story about Apollo's lover and the church, but she represent that theme because she is a male!! in short you assume she is male, then conclude she is male, your conclusion is correct but you can't generalize it (I took a course on formal logic, never thinking I will be using it.

Response

I don't consider my arguments circular. I consider the story of Hyacinthus is to be a thematic *allowance* that she "could" reasonably be male but not a requirement. If one accepts that Hyacinth is chem, then the concept of homosexuality might just as reasonably be satisfied by Silk's stated doppelganger relationship with Sgt. Sand (in Blood's house in Calde of the Long Sun). On the other hand, that would still not be homosexuality since chems are sexually divergent like bios. Still, Wolfe *could* have used Silks "mentoring" relationship with Horn on the airship to incorporate that aspect of the Apollo-Hyacinthus relationship - Wolfe does a lot of character syncretism in the sub textual themes of the Long Sun (I haven't yet published my essay on Silk and Auk playing duo roles as Hephaestus and as Aristaeus, or how Mint, Marble, and Rose merge into the Myrtle-nymphs, but I will after I finish reading Robert Graves' "White

Goddess.")

My point is that while it "fits" for Hyacinth to be male, she doesn't NEED to be as IMO Incus NEEDS to be female because of the roll she plays regarding Quetzal (the demon-Dionysus) and the roll she plays in the Aristaeus story (not that Incus particularly needs to be a female, but in the sense that only a female could play those roles).

The most straight-forward clues that Hyacinth is male (there are weaker ones) are the following:

1. Hyacinth's statement:

"You know what I look like without all this [make-up and clothes]?...Like a boy, only with tits down to my waist."

2. In the Silks conversation with Horn on the airship, discussing why he tried to kill himself, Silk talks about Marble's lie about being Moly and the general plight of the chem population *due to the lack* of female chems. Silk further points out, "Some male chems were artisans and farm laborers, from what I know of them, and a few were servants - butlers and so forth."

3. In the same conversation, Horn also says that Hyacinth behaves physically weak and in a female-identifiable manner, because she wants Silk to be attracted to her. Just as the fierce lynx, Lion (a female with a male name-note that this is specifically pointed out) pretends to be kittenish with Mucor.

Again, thank you so much for your interest, your arguments really made me think..

Jerry Friedman — 30 Aug 2002, 20:34 · follows James Wynn

--- James Wynn <crushtv at HotPOP.com> wrote:

The following is my response to A. Bin Talal who contacted me off-list but

has offered of his own accord for my response to be posted on-list.

Thanks so much for your comments.

...

You say:

The other arguments about overpowering the pilot could be taken as clues she is not human but a chem, a chem female should be stronger than a human

Response

True, and I consider her over-powering the pilot to be evidence that she is chem - not male.

Why is that inconsistent with her being a healthy young human woman who has experience at fighting? She takes the pilot by surprise, ramming her thumbs into her (the pilot's) eyes and kicking her knees until she falls down. Seems quite reasonable to me. Silk thinks Hyacinth blinded the pilot, but Chenille (I think) disagrees. This is evidence that Hyacinth is *not* a chem--someone with superhuman strength could (I imagine) obviously blind a person this way by breaking her eyeballs, and probably obviously cripple her knees as well.

Actually, Marble DOES over-power Musk. This brings up a point that I should segregate those arguments that Hyacinth is a MALE chem from those that show she is MERELY chem.

Quite true.

...

The most straight-forward clues that Hyacinth is male (there are weaker ones) are the following:

1. Hyacinth's statement:

"You know what I look like without all this [make-up and clothes]?...Like a boy, only with tits down to my waist."

She doesn't mean she has a penis. Silk would have spotted that (and then would have nicknamed Hyacinth "Pinto"). I don't think this comment is particularly amazing for a slender young woman who has had a breast enhancement and tends to speak of her appearance deprecatingly. Incidentally, it brings up what I think is one of the stronger criticisms of your theory: would Silk really have sex with someone he knew was a chem, and if not, could he really be fooled?

2. In the Silks conversation with Horn on the airship, discussing why he tried to kill himself, Silk talks about Marble's lie about being Moly and the general plight of the chem population *due to the lack* of female chems.

Silk further points out, "Some male chems were artisans and farm laborers, from what I know of them, and a few were servants - butlers and so forth."

I don't see this as a straightforward clue. In fact, I don't see it as evidence at all.

3. In the same conversation, Horn also says that Hyacinth behaves physically weak and in a female-identifiable manner, because she wants Silk to be attracted to her. Just as the fierce lynx, Lion (a female with a male name-note that this is specifically pointed out) pretends to be kittenish with Mucor.

This seems to be completely consistent with her being a tough young woman thanks to the life at Orchid's that Chenille describes.

By far the best clue I see that Hyacinth *could* be a chem is her name, as you pointed out. But I see nothing to contradict the obvious interpretation that she's a bio.

Speaking of Chenille and names, this seems like a good time to restate my theory that Chenille, who has an ambiguous name, could be a chromosomal male with testicular feminization syndrome (perhaps Tussah's failed attempt at a male heir?). ...

Jerry Friedman

James Wynn — 31 Aug 2002, 18:22 · follows Jerry Friedman

Jerry Friedman says:

By far the best clue I see that Hyacinth *could* be a chem is her name, as you pointed out. But I see nothing to contradict the obvious interpretation that she's a bio.

I respond:

Ah! But then you immediately identify a very BIG one -- see below. Of course, names could be coincidences (you mention Chenille's), but if someone can show that Villus is a little girl pretending to be a little boy, I'll collect my trophy immediately. Also, I have vociferously asserted that Incus (a man's name) is a woman - and if I'm wrong about that I should shut down my site. Hyacinth's name is a flag, but only one among many.

Jerry Friedman says:

Speaking of Chenille and names, this seems like a good time to restate my theory that Chenille, who has an ambiguous name, could be a chromosomal male with testicular feminization syndrome (perhaps Tussah's failed attempt at a male heir?).

I respond:

I agree it's ambiguous, I've yet to formulate a theory as to why. All I know for sure is that she's not the biological heir of Tussah (because he's not human).

This brings up a relevant point though because Auk is the lover of Chenille. Auk, as I will explain in a planned essay, is the "awk end" of Silk. While Silk is Hesphaestus the lame Smith god (whom Graves identifies as originally a Sun god, "he who shines by day"), the Sun ascending, the supplicant of Thetis-Kypris..., Auk on the other hand is Hesphaestus, the Sun gone down into the Underworld, in the cave in service to Thetis, with his hammer (Hamerstone) and anvil (which is the meaning of 'Incus'). They share duty as Aristaeus and as Briarius. Auk leads his followers to Green (Hell, if the SHORT SUN goes as I expect) and Silk leads them to Blue.

So if Silk is to Hyacinth as Auk is to Chenille...

Something to think about.

I Said:

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Jerry Friedman says:

Why is that inconsistent with her being a healthy young human woman who has experience at fighting? She takes the pilot by surprise, ramming her thumbs into her (the pilot's) eyes and kicking her knees until she falls down. Seems quite reasonable to me. Silk thinks Hyacinth blinded the pilot, but Chenille (I think) disagrees. This is evidence that Hyacinth is *not* a chem--someone with superhuman strength could (I imagine) obviously blind a person this way by breaking her eyeballs, and probably obviously cripple her knees as well.

My Response

Knowing how to handle yourself in a brothel cat-fight is not like taking on a trained soldier -- particularly for a very petite young woman as Hyacinth is. Silk caught Chenille and Hyacinth in a lie in the very exchange to which you're referring, so she's really not credible. Actually, that conversation suggested both that Hyacinth is hiding something and that Chenille is an accomplice in it.

Anyway, Silk has another take on it. Here's a subject-to-subject run-down of Silk's conversation with Horn after he asks why Silk tried to kill himself -- after Horn says, "Won't you please tell me what's wrong? Please, Calde?"

1. Silk says the Plan of Pas has gone awry and cites the plight of the chems as an example. There aren't enough female chems.
2. Horn alludes to his suspicions regarding Silk's true heritage, to which Silk finally answers,

"There are so many lies in the whorl...May I instance you one more? Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth alone." How is that a lie if the fight went the way you describe it? If it went like Marble's fight with Musk (as I infer) then there really is something else going on.

3. Silk compares Hyacinth over-powering the pilot to the idea of Incus over-powering Auk. This is an interesting analogy because Incus has just acquitted (him)self quite well in battle. Everyone has seen Incus "bewitch" the Trivigaunte's weapons. The only reason it DOES apply is that Incus is a woman in disguise.

4. Horn compares Hyacinth with the female lynx, Lion (male name), acting kittenish for Mucor's approval. Here is a second character in disguise - this one in two ways.

5. Horn says that Hyacinth and Hammerstone have a rather unique relationship. They behave as equals. He does NOT say Chenille also shares this relationship with "Stoney" even though she is also a tough prostitute with an actual history with him as comrades-in-arms. This may be a false memory but one of the things on my list to look for in a re-reading is the reference to Hammerstone's impressive chin (I think it's while he's in the tunnels with Auk and Chenille. Of course Chenille goes on about Hyacinth's chin (conversation on the airship).

6. Silk talks about his wedding night - that it was "wonderful" yet there was a "taint" to it that did not come from either of them.

7. Silk says that the Outsider created the gods and that evil serves the Outsider because it draws us to him.

8. Then Horn asks again why Silk tried to kill himself, and Silk says, "It's obvious, isn't it?"

Well maybe it isn't so obvious, but I think I get the gist of it. I recommend you re-read this conversation and between Silk and Horn after they return to the airship. See if my reading doesn't fit. Silk IMO is saying the following:

"This whorl is a humongous turd-shaped cluster-f, a "shag-up" as Hammerstone called it, an unresolvable knot from the sphincter of Escher. It is so screwed-up, so far beyond correction or reform, that even love is tainted. The love Hyacinth and I share (the first thing that either of us have done that we now rightly consider worthwhile) is a screw-up arrangement from the very start.

"Because female chems are so rare, it is unlikely any particular male chem will ever find love. So the one I love has taken perhaps the only opportunity to escape the loveless life of a chem. I myself am an "artificial" thing, a thing made by Pas -- constructed from flesh rather than metal. So is the whorl we live in. I myself have just left a long love-affair with the Nine whom I now know to be artificial constructions at best, demons at worst. There is no resolution, there is no fix, no going back to a time when things were right and starting over (because no such time existed). The Outsider doesn't want to *fix* this whorl. He wants save us right out of it -- not to Blue or Green either, that's just a picture of what He wants to do. I wanted to force that by killing myself and escaping to Him, but that's just one more screwed-up plan of a creature of this whorl."

I said:

The most straight-forward clues that Hyacinth is male are the following:

1. Hyacinth's statement:

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Jerry Friedman says:

She doesn't mean she has a penis....I don't think this comment is particularly amazing for a slender young woman who has had a breast enhancement and tends to speak of her appearance deprecatingly. Incidentally, it brings up what I think is one of the stronger criticisms of your theory: would Silk really have sex with someone he knew was a chem, and if not, could he really be fooled?

I respond:

Chems don't have penis. Obviously she has made modifications in order to carry out her rouse. I don't think Silk knew that she was a chem until the wedding night, and then only after he was enlightened for the second time. I think Oosik knew she was a chem, that's why he went out of his way to remind Silk how lucky he was. Chenille did the same thing. Those that knew she was a chem didn't care, perhaps it made her more appealing as a whore. Using someone as a prostitute is an act that in itself "objectifies" the person -- using them as a "thing."

It WAS a problem for Silk. Consider his reaction after she takes out the pilot, consider that he does not have sex with her after their wedding night (at least up until his conversation with Horn on the airship). But he loved her. There is no evidence that sex with a chem (for a laymen) is a sin in his religion -- still, it bothered him. It struck him as unnatural, "awk", and screwed-up BUT when he considered it, it was not Hyacinth but Pas' Plan that was screwed up and the whole whorl he created. And after all, Silk himself is no thing of "nature," nor is the whorl they live in. The fact that everything was so screwed up that even good acts have an awk element in them is why Silk tried to kill himself.

---Consider Silk's "meritorious deed" of trying to save his falling apart mantaeon from destruction - he realizes later that "saving" it will mean razing it and rebuilding it from scratch - then he realizes that "saving" it means leaving the structures behind and getting its PEOPLE out of the whorl ---

He finally chooses, rather than reform the evil in the whorl, or to reject everything in which he finds evil (like Horn for instance) to depend on the Outsider's rescue.

--Crush

Jerry Friedman — 31 Aug 2002, 20:47 · follows James Wynn

--- James Wynn <crushtv at HotPOP.com> wrote:

Jerry Friedman says:

By far the best clue I see that Hyacinth *could* be a chem is her name, as you pointed out. But I see nothing to contradict the obvious interpretation that she's a bio.

I respond:

Ah! But then you immediately identify a very BIG one -- see below.

Which one?

...Hyacinth's name is a flag, but only one among many.

[Snip some discussion of mythology. My take on all of your mythological arguments is that Wolfe is well-read in classical mythology and we shouldn't be surprised if some of his stories resemble myths. Even if he's sometimes thinking of specific myths, as in the Theseus story in the brown book or the reference to *spoiler* that you'll like at the end of TBotSS. But I don't think that means you can argue allegorically as you've been doing--X represents Chi so X must have some property of Chi.]

I Said:

I consider her over-powering the pilot to be evidence that she is chem -
not
male.

Jerry Friedman says:

Why is that inconsistent with her being a healthy young human woman who
has
experience at fighting? She takes the pilot by surprise, ramming her
thumbs
into her (the pilot's) eyes and kicking her knees until she falls down.
Seems quite reasonable to me. Silk thinks Hyacinth blinded the pilot,
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Chenille (I think) disagrees. This is evidence that Hyacinth is *not* a
chem--someone with superhuman strength could (I imagine) obviously blind
a
person this way by breaking her eyeballs, and probably obviously cripple
her
knees as well.

My Response

Knowing how to handle yourself in a brothel cat-fight is not like taking
on
a trained soldier -- particularly for a very petite young woman as
Hyacinth
is.

Anybody out there have any experience in hand-to-hand combat? My feeling is that, between two people with experience in fighting, the advantage of surprise is decisive. The pilot simply doesn't have the reaction time to evade the blows, and I think you'd have to be a *really* experienced fighter to do much after painful blows like the ones described. We know nothing about the pilot's training, but we can guess that it has focused on piloting and that the combat part of it has focused on fighting with weapons, which is far more useful for soldiers. So the pilot may have little more experience than Hyacinth. We also don't know how big the pilot is, do we?

Silk caught Chenille and Hyacinth in a lie in the very exchange to
which
you're referring, so she's really not credible. Actually, that
conversation
suggested both that Hyacinth is hiding something and that Chenille is an
accomplice in it.

True, but the lie may simply be one of Hyacinth's attempts to seem cute and kittenish.

Anyway, Silk has another take on it. Here's a subject-to-subject
run-down of
Silk's
conversation with Horn after he asks why Silk tried to kill himself --

Even before this, Silk was suicidal (if we can believe Horn). He thinks it would be a blessing if the airship crashed into the lake, and I think there's something else.

after

Horn says, "Won't you please tell me what's wrong? Please, Calde?"

1. Silk says the Plan of Pas has gone awry and cites the plight of the chems as an example. There aren't enough female chems.

2. Horn alludes to his suspicions regarding Silk's true heritage, to which Silk finally answers, "There are so many lies in the whorl...May I instance you one more? Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth alone." How is that a lie if the fight went the way you describe it? If it went like Marble's fight with Musk (as I infer) then there really is something else going on.

I described it pretty much the way Horn described it. It's possible Horn was wrong for some reason--I forget whether he was a witness. Is that what you're saying?

3. Silk compares Hyacinth over-powering the pilot to the idea of Incus over-powering Auk. This is an interesting analogy because Incus has just acquitted (him)self quite well in battle. Everyone has seen Incus "bewitch" the Trivigaunte's weapons. The only reason it DOES apply is that Incus is a woman in disguise.

This is contrary to your argument. Incus acquits himself (?) well in battle despite being relatively weak and timid, even (if you're right) despite being a woman, so it's evidence that Hyacinth's success is possible to a woman.

4. Horn compares Hyacinth with the female lynx, Lion (male name), acting kittenish for Mucor's approval. Here is a second character in disguise - this one in two ways.

5. Horn says that Hyacinth and Hammerstone have a rather unique relationship. They behave as equals.

I admit this one is suggestive, but it may just tell us something about Hyacinth's personality.

He does NOT say Chenille also shares this relationship with "Stoney" even though she is also a tough prostitute with an actual history with him as comrades-in-arms. This may be a false memory but one of the things on my list to look for in a re-reading is the reference to Hammerstone's impressive chin (I think it's while he's in the tunnels with Auk and Chenille. Of course Chenille goes on about Hyacinth's chin (conversation on the airship).

Though about its beauty, not its impressiveness, and for all we know its beauty could be thanks to Crane.

6. Silk talks about his wedding night - that it was "wonderful" yet there was a "taint" to it that did not come from either of them.

It came from Adam and Eve. The prudish and enlightened Silk in the Catholic Lupiverse considers that something is wrong with premarital sex and maybe with all sex that's not for the purpose of procreation. There's evidence for Silk's belief in TBoTSS, a line about going clean to one's marriage bed.

7. Silk says that the Outsider created the gods and that evil serves the Outsider because it draws us to him.

8. Then Horn asks again why Silk tried to kill himself, and Silk says,
"It's obvious, isn't it?"

Well maybe it isn't so obvious, but I think I get the gist of it. I recommend you re-read this conversation and between Silk and Horn after they return to the airship. See if my reading doesn't fit. Silk IMO is saying the following:

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"Because female chems are so rare, it is unlikely any particular male chem will ever find love. So the one I love has taken perhaps the only opportunity to escape the loveless life of a chem.

This is where you need your claim that Hyacinth is male, right? If so, he had another opportunity--to pass for a male bio and love a woman. Why not do that instead of (I imagine) getting a black mechanic to reorient his sexuality? Or are there gay male chems?

I myself am an "artificial" thing, a thing made by Pas -- constructed from flesh rather than metal. So is the whorl we live in. I myself have just left a long love-affair with the Nine whom I now know to be artificial constructions at best, demons at worst. There is no resolution, there is no fix, no going back to a time when things were right and starting over (because no such time existed). The Outsider doesn't want to *fix* this whorl. He wants save us right out of it -- not to Blue or Green either, that's just a picture of what He wants to do. I wanted to force that by killing myself and escaping to Him, but that's just one more screwed-up plan of a creature of this whorl."

I pretty much agree with you, but Hyacinth's being a chem is unnecessary to your argument. Silk is disappointed at the way she's deceived him (and may be thinking that he played up to her in the same way--and of course he feels guilty about losing his virginity).

I said:

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1. Hyacinth's statement:

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Jerry Friedman says:

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I respond:

Chems don't have penis. Obviously she has made modifications in order to carry out her rouse. I don't think Silk knew that she was a chem until the wedding night, and then only after he was enlightened for the second time.

How could he not have known that the woman he was in bed with was not a biological human? (On the other hand, the narrator of "Seven American Nights" does have a comparable surprise--but one or the other of his experiences may have been a hallucination.)

I

think Oosik knew she was a chem, that's why he went out of his way to remind Silk how lucky he was. Chenille did the same thing. Those that knew she was a chem didn't care, perhaps it made her more appealing as a whore. Using someone as a prostitute is an act that in itself "objectifies" the person -- using them as a "thing."

This is certainly possible, but I'd expect liking chem prostitutes to be rather a minority taste.

It WAS a problem for Silk. Consider his reaction after she takes out the pilot, consider that he does not have sex with her after their wedding night (at least up until his conversation with Horn on the airship).

I don't think they had much time.

But he loved her. There is no evidence that sex with a chem (for a laymen) is a sin in his religion -- still, it bothered him.

If you're saying he didn't know she was a chem while they were having sex, I guess it doesn't matter whether it bothered him because the Outsider enlightened him and told him sex with nonhumans is sinful, or because he just considered it unnatural, or whatever.

It struck him as unnatural, "awk", and screwed-up BUT when he considered it, it was not Hyacinth but Pas' Plan that was screwed up and the whole whorl he created. And after all, Silk himself is no thing of "nature," nor is the whorl they

live in. The fact that everything was so screwed up that even good acts have an awkward element in them is why Silk tried to kill himself.

---Consider Silk's "meritorious deed" of trying to save his falling apart mantaeon from destruction - he realizes later that "saving" it will mean razing it and rebuilding it from scratch - then he realizes that "saving" it means leaving the structures behind and getting its PEOPLE out of the whorl ---

He finally chooses, rather than reform the evil in the whorl, or to reject everything in which he finds evil (like Horn for instance) to depend on the Outsider's rescue.

Again, I more or less agree, but don't see the connection to Hyacinth's being a chem rather than just not entirely candid.

Jerry Friedman

Andy Robertson — 31 Aug 2002, 18:24 · follows Jerry Friedman

I have been offlist for a while and just got back.

I now fear I am suffering a disconnect from reality.

Is it really possible that all the discussions on this list have been this loony, and it is only now I come back after some time away that I am able to judge them properly? :-)

hartshorn

--- Original Message -----

From: "Jerry Friedman" <jerry_friedman at yahoo.com>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Sent: Saturday, August 31, 2002 9:47 PM
Subject: Re: FW: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth

--- James Wynn <crushtv at HotPOP.com> wrote:

Jerry Friedman says:
By far the best clue I see that Hyacinth *could* be a chem is her name, as you pointed out. But I see nothing to contradict the obvious

Alice K. Turner — 01 Sep 2002, 03:23 · follows Andy Robertson

hartshorn,

Yes, they (discussions, not discussers, necessarily--it remains to be seen) are this loony. Help us back to some semblance of sanity.

Is it really possible that all the discussions on this list have been this loony, and it is only now I come back after some time away that I am able

to
judge them properly? :-)

-alga

matthew.malthouse — 02 Sep 2002, 09:34 · follows Alice K. Turner

On 31/08/2002 19:24:14 Andy Robertson wrote:
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A break does provide one with perspective, does it not? ;-)

Matthew

Andy Robertson — 02 Sep 2002, 07:18 · follows matthew.malthouse

Ah well, I love it anyway. But the idea that Hyacinth is a transsexual bio does seem slightly more probable, I confess: though I really see no need for it.

hartshorn

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

From: <matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Sent: Monday, September 02, 2002 10:34 AM
Subject: Re: FW: (urth) FW: Elucidations of the Long Sun:Hyacinth

On 31/08/2002 19:24:14 Andy Robertson wrote:
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William Ansley — 07 Sep 2002, 05:01 · follows Andy Robertson

At 1:22 PM -0500 8/31/02, James Wynn wrote:
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you one more? Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth alone." How is that a lie
if the fight went the way you describe it? If it went like Marble's fight
with Musk (as I infer) then there really is something else going on.

Hello, Crush.

I *finally* caught up with all the messages generated in response to your quite interesting ideas and I have a comment to make. But first I must warn you that, if anyone is, I am part of the "not

... large contingent on the list" that Robert Borski warned you about in his message of 8/28/02, the members of which will subject you to "a certain amount of ridicule, scorn, and derision." I certainly don't intend to submit you to such things, but I never meant to do so to Robert, either, so apparently I can't help it.

I don't agree with you on the necessity of Hyacinth being a chem. In fact, we seem to be interpreting Wolfe's words so radically differently, I doubt we can agree on much. You cite Silk's line "There are so many lies in the whorl...May I instance you one more? Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth alone." as support for the idea that Hyacinth is a chem, if I understand you correctly. It seems to me to be just the opposite.

Your reasoning seems to be:

-Hyacinth did defeat the pilot alone.

-A normal flesh and blood woman would have had a very hard time doing this while a chem would have had an easy time of it.

-Therefore, it is very likely that Hyacinth is a chem.

-Silk is aware there is something fishy about how Hyacinth defeated the pilot so he say the line above.

But surely, the statement "Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth alone." is **true** if Hyacinth defeated the pilot by herself, whether she is a chem or a bio. The only thing that would make it a lie is if she **had help from someone else**! I have no idea what form this help might have taken or who it was from (or even if she really did have help) but the way I interpret Silk's remark is that he suspects that Hyacinth had help, not that she is a chem with super-strength. If Silk had said something along the lines of "There are so many lies in the whorl...May I instance you one more? Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth, a mere weak, flesh-and-blood woman." then I'd say you had a point.

William Ansley

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James Wynn — 09 Sep 2002, 14:29 · follows William Ansley

William Ansley said:

I don't agree with you on the necessity of Hyacinth being a chem. In fact, we seem to be interpreting Wolfe's words so radically differently, I doubt we can agree on much.

Crush responds:

This is a very good point. This recent thread has taught me how naive I was to think everyone would read Wolfe in the same way I do. I never let a word or conversation go without critical investigation. When Oosik goes on about how he wishes he were in Silk's place with Hyacinth, I say "why's he doing this?" When Chenille compares Hy to Poppy (copy) I say "what is her point?" Naturally, this leads to all sorts of theories that are weird to someone who is willing to give Wolfe the benefit of the doubt regarding "honest" narrative motives. I don't know if that category includes you. But I see now that there are people who read him that way unless clearly shown otherwise.

Actually, even among people who DO read him the way I do, I've yet (to my knowledge) gained a single convert. But they probably won't convert until they re-read the books for themselves and see that mine is the necessary conclusion to tie all the clues together (that's the way, it would be for me) - in spite of the red-herrings.

William Ansley said:

You cite Silk's line

"There are so many lies in the whorl...May I instance you one more? Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth alone." as support for the idea that Hyacinth is a chem, if I understand you correctly. It seems to me to be just the opposite.

Your reasoning seems to be:

-Hyacinth did defeat the pilot alone.

-A normal flesh and blood woman would have had a very hard time doing this while a chem would have had an easy time of it.

-Therefore, it is very likely that Hyacinth is a chem.

-Silk is aware there is something fishy about how Hyacinth defeated the pilot so he say the line above.

But surely, the statement "Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth alone." is **true** if Hyacinth defeated the pilot by herself, whether she is a chem or a bio. The only thing that would make it a lie is if she **had help from someone else**! I have no idea what form this help might have taken or who it was from (or even if she really did have help) but the way I interpret Silk's remark is that he suspects that Hyacinth had help, not that she is a chem with super-strength. If Silk had said something along the lines of "There are so many lies in the whorl...May I instance you one more? Hyacinth subdued our pilot, Hyacinth, a mere weak, flesh-and-blood woman." then I'd say you had a point.

Crush responds:

Hmmm. I consider the lies of the Whorl to be more intricate than that. They are lies about lies or lies that cannot be corrected because they are actually true in a universe of lies. The lie is that Hyacinth overpowered the pilot, but the Hyacinth she apparently is could never do that.

But perhaps I'm wrong, then I'd be very interested in your explanation of how the conversation between Horn and Silk (which takes place between Horn's words "Won't you please tell me what's wrong? Please, Calde?" and Silks words "It's obvious isn't?") explains why Silk tried to kill himself. Silk insists the explanation is there. How do YOU tie the whole conversation into one single explanation? Or do you say Silk tried to kill himself because someone helped Hy overpower the pilot?

-- Crush.

Michael Straight — 09 Sep 2002, 15:55 · follows James Wynn

On Mon, 9 Sep 2002, James Wynn wrote:

Or do you say Silk tried to kill himself because
someone helped Hy overpower the pilot?

Not because someone helped her, but because she lied to Silk about what really happened. He was sad about being lied to.

Or at least that was my initial impression, looking back at the conversation it's hard to see how it all fits together, especially what the stuff about the chems has to do with anything.

-Rostrum

James Jordan — 09 Sep 2002, 16:30 · follows Michael Straight

At 10:55 AM 9/9/2002, you wrote:
On Mon, 9 Sep 2002, James Wynn wrote:

Or do you say Silk tried to kill himself because
someone helped Hy overpower the pilot?

Not because someone helped her, but because she lied to Silk about what
really happened. He was sad about being lied to.

It's been a long time, but I thought it was because Hy had been unfaithful to him.

Nutria

Jerry Friedman — 13 Sep 2002, 21:54 · follows James Jordan

--- James Jordan <jbjordan4 at cox.net> wrote:
At 10:55 AM 9/9/2002, you wrote:

On Mon, 9 Sep 2002, James Wynn wrote:

Or do you say Silk tried to kill himself because
someone helped Hy overpower the pilot?

Not because someone helped her, but because she lied to Silk about what
really happened. He was sad about being lied to.

It's been a long time, but I thought it was because Hy had been
unfaithful
to him.

Had she?

I thought Silk was upset for exactly the reason that Horn talks about: Hyacinth had deceived
Silk by acting cute and helpless, like Mucor's lynx.
Her being able to subdue the pilot unassisted is the *evidence* that she deceived him. He hates
being made a fool of and he hates wondering whether he loves the real Hyacinth or an illusion.
Of course, other depressing things are happening (some of which would only depress a saint).

Jerry Friedman