

# Why is a chem needed...

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 03 Sep 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3438>

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James Wynn — 03 Sep 2002, 17:02

I hope not to come off as strident in this posting, but that's probably not possible <shrug>:

Several posts have argued that "it is not necessary for Hyacinth to be a transsexual chem." This is a response to that, especially to Mr. Friedman who has so very articulately made the argument recently. There are several textual requirements, some of which I've only firmed up since these postings began.

1) Hy's name suggests she's a chem; also, why is it "lie" that Hy overpowered the pilot? (despite Mr. Friedman's suggestion that Horn "got it wrong"?)

2) Load's of hints that's she's male including her name (ala Hyacinthus) and Silk's none to subtle association with Apollo

3) Silk's conversation with Horn after Hy overpowers the pilot, suggests she's a male chem. Otherwise, what does the plight of male chems have to do with why Silk tried to kill himself? Why is the relationship between Hy and Hammerstone so unique? Why do THEY among all others get along as equals? Silk asserts the answer is in this conversation. Can anybody else tie the pieces together in to one single explanation?

Thematic threads woven into the story by Wolfe (not by me) suggest something "not right" with Hyacinth. What secret Hy and Chenille hiding? Mr. Friedman has pointed out that Chenille is a sexually ambivalent name - Wolfe goes out of his way to define the name with it's MALE definition rather than the FEMALE one. She's the lover of Auk who is thematically linked to Silk (as a kind of "soul doppelganger") in so many ways it will take four essays to describe them. It is quite reasonable to ask how are Silk's and Auk's love affairs are similar?

Mr. Friedman seems to agree with me on the import of every clue I name but does not see a need for a larger conclusion - either regarding Hy or the woven themes I've delineated. IMO we agree that the recipe is to mix flour, eggs, milk, and sugar, and bake it. But Mr. Friedman wants to call it "Baked Flour, Eggs, Milk, and Sugar" while I want to call it "Cake."

Here's the situation as I see it. There are parts of Hyacinth scattered around throughout the Long Sun books. Some are female, some are bio, some are male, and some are chem. How does one put all these pieces together? Some parts must be "real" and others ornamental? Since Hy is \*ostensibly\* a female bio, it seems likely that the chem and male parts are non-ornamental.

I would looove to opt for a simpler theory in which Hy is a bio woman with male chem parts inside. It would be simpler. But there's no evidence of it in the text.

When I originally published the Hyacinth citation in "Thelx's Mirrors", I had only a vague certainty that she had to be chem and a sense that the clues pointed to her being Male. I have a more solid grasp on the affirmative clues now (albeit no real explanation for the negative

evidences (which I of course consider to be "lies"). I'll update the Hyacinth citation in the near future to give a more detailed, less disjointed explanation of the clues that point affirmatively to Hy being a male chem.

-- Crush

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Josh Geller — 03 Sep 2002, 17:15 · follows James Wynn

"It's probably a good thing that I don't read that mailing list."

-- Gene Wolfe

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On Tue, 3 Sep 2002, James Wynn wrote:

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Andy Robertson — 03 Sep 2002, 15:29 · follows Josh Geller

Just a thought. Auk is to Silk as Hildegrin is to Severian?

Hildegrin is in some ways Severian's dark/underworld/criminal twin. He is present at the rebirth of Severian's mother/lover Dorcas: in fact rescues and advises Severian at that time: so he is a sort of psychopomp. In his terminal conflict with Apu-Punchau/Severian in the Stone Town he is killed

**\*\*because\*\*** he does not recognise the union of Severian with his client (as I read it)

Can anyone draw out other threads here?

Andy R

out

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Michael Straight — 07 Sep 2002, 03:14 · follows Andy Robertson

On Tue, 3 Sep 2002, James Wynn wrote:

Why is the relationship between Hy and

Hammerstone so unique? Why do THEY among all others get along as equals?

Because Hammerstone is one of the few men who looks at her eyes when he talks with her.

-Rostrum