

Beans and other pollutants

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 10 Feb 1998

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/370>

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.

Charles Dye — 10 Feb 1998, 09:11

CRCulver at aol.com writes:

In *_Shadow_*, chapter XXXV, there is the tale of the woman who brings black beans from the stars. This woman threatens to cast them into the sea unless she were obeyed. The lords of the time "a hundred times more complete in their dominion than [the] Autarch...had her seized and torn to bits."

This story seems, in my opinion, to show the planting of the black hole in the Old Sun. I think that the sea mentioned is not Ocean but rather Oroborus(sp?), which is outer space. The lords, I think, are the monarchs, because they were more powerful and had a larger empire than those of the autarchy. Thus, the black hole was put into the sun because of the tyranny of the monarchs.

I had interpreted this as the arrival of Abaia, Erebus, Arioch, and company. (Like Baldanders, we're told, they grow) Still, perhaps the one is symbolic of the other?

There is an alternative interpretation of this story. Jonas mentions that this happens before the city was called Nessus, because "the river" was not yet poisoned. Perhaps the black beans that the woman brought from the stars were simply a device used to poison Gyll.

I would like to know the etymology of 'Nessus' and what relation it has to poison.

Nessus, if I recall aright, was a centaur murdered by way of a poisoned cloak. (Larry Niven's "Ringworld" includes puppeteers named Nessus and Chiron.) As for the poisoning of the river, I don't see anything terribly mysterious there. Gyll is both the sewer and the drinking- water source for a very large city. The city climbs the river as the lower reaches become too polluted to sustain even the most desperately poor.

raster at highfiber.com