

Who's in Oreb

The Urth list — 15 messages, 4 voices, 24 Jun 2005

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James Wynn — 24 Jun 2005, 15:11

Pas in Oreb? I don't think so. That was Scylla. (RTTW, 348)

Yes, but Orebs possession by Scylla did not occur until after Pas's resurrection (RTTW 359-360). Echina, Hieros, Molpe, and Scylla did not start possessing animals until they became really desperate to escape Pas. [Incidentally, it is at the location I cited that the Rajan denies Pas intended to rule Blue in person.]

I'm referring the time when Silk first bought Oreb. As you recall, Oreb died just before Silk could sacrifice it, and then was inexplicably resurrected. Since *someone* was possessing that bird I'd say Pas and Kypris were the most likely candidates. But Silk mentions that night choughs are signitory birds of Pas. Well?

Granted at first glance it would make more mythological sense to have Pas hide in a black ram. Since that is where Zeus hid when Typhon drove the gods off Olympus. But Pas is also thematically assigned to Apollo (as is Hieros at times) so a raven is not really off script either.

~ Crush

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 24 Jun 2005, 15:17 · in reply to James Wynn

On 6/24/05, James Wynn <thewynns at earthlink.net> wrote:
I'm referring the time when Silk first bought Oreb. As you recall, Oreb died just before Silk could sacrifice it, and then was inexplicably resurrected. Since *someone* was possessing that bird [...]

That's rather a large assumption. There is only one known-for-sure example of a god of Mainframe possessing an animal (Scylla-in- Oreb, forsooth and fershoor), and that was in extreme circumstances. Pas at this time was already shattered and scattered, and, while Kypris was not, nothing in her early encounter with Silk suggests that she was in particular fear at that time.

Is there any reason to suppose that Oreb was possessed, rather than, say, playing dead?

--Dan'l

I do not fear Satan half so much as I fear those who fear him.
-- St Teresa of Avila
<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

James Wynn — 24 Jun 2005, 15:48 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

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Is there any reason to suppose that Oreb was possessed, rather than, say, playing dead?

Well, "playing dead" is no small clue. Silk is a trained and practiced "butcher". He deals with dead animals all the time. He had every reason to want Oreb NOT to be dead. It was a terrible disheartening event for the bird to die mid-sacrifice. If Silk was convinced Oreb was dead, I think his assessment is trustworthy. His death and resurrection can hardly be termed anything but a miracle.

Maybe I'm wrong about who was in there. I can't imagine who else it might be because even though Kypris does tell Silk she's on the run, I agree she does not seem to be as desperate as the the renegade gods seem to have been when they fled into animals. Also, black birds are signatories of Pas. Also, in a literary sense, the bird's death and resurrection foreshadow Pas's same.

But maybe I could be wrong. After all, we don't have any proof to the degree we get regarding Scylla in RTTW. Or maybe even the Outsider did it. But that was a significant event that was never explained in the story. And I think my explanation is the most probable.

~ Crush

James Wynn — 24 Jun 2005, 15:51 · follows James Wynn

I'm referring the time when Silk first bought Oreb. As you recall, Oreb died just before Silk could sacrifice it, and then was inexplicably resurrected. Since *someone* was possessing that bird [...]

Dan'I says:

That's rather a large assumption. There is only one known-for-sure example of a god of Mainframe possessing an animal (Scylla-in-Oreb, forsooth and fershoor), and that was in extreme circumstances. Pas at this time was _already_ shattered and scattered, and, while Kypris was not, nothing in her early encounter with Silk suggests that she was in particular fear at that time.

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~ Crush

Roy C. Lackey — 24 Jun 2005, 23:30 · follows James Wynn

Crush wrote:

Yes, but Orebs possession by Scylla did not occur until after Pas's resurrection (RTTW 359-360). Echina, Hieros, Molpe, and Scylla did not start possessing animals until they became really desperate to escape Pas.

[Incidentally, it is at the location I cited that the Rajan denies Pas intended to rule Blue in person.]

I'm not sure what the point of that last statement was, but that's not quite what is said. I'm not going to quote it all; readers can read it for themselves, pages 361-362. In short, Scylla is reported by Silkhorn to have believed that "Pas would not have peopled Blue unless he had some way to go there himself to rule them." Silkhorn thought she was wrong. Eventually, Silkhorn says, "Pas has not yet come, perhaps. Or perhaps he has, and Oreb simply failed to find the place that Pas found or created." And, later, "Then I believe Pas knows that as the years pass we will come to realize how much we need him, and bring him." [. . .] "The same impulse [that sent Horn to find Silk] will be applied to Pas in another generation, surely."

-Roy

James Wynn — 25 Jun 2005, 10:25 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Crush said:

[Incidentally, it is at the location I cited that the Rajan denies Pas intended to rule Blue in person.]

Roy answered:

I'm not sure what the point of that last statement was, but that's not quite what is said. I'm not going to quote it all; readers can read it for themselves, pages 361-362. In short, Scylla is reported by Silkhorn to have believed that "Pas would not have peopled Blue unless he had some way to go there himself to rule them." Silkhorn thought she was wrong.

You are wrong; self-evidently so. That is exactly what the text said.

Why are you quibbling about it? The point of that statement was that the Rajan, who arguably knows as much or more about Pas than anyone, flatly denies that Pas felt it personally necessary or desirable to rule the colonies in person. He implies that he has special insight into this matter that he could have made available to Scylla if she had asked. Thus the idea that Pas would not want clones or other hyped-up embryos ruling in his stead is not true. Being of a generous nature, I will quote it for readers:

"She possessed Oreb, as I told you, because she knew he would soon be brought [to Blue]. She felt sure--she told me this one night--that Pas would would not have peopled Blue unless he had some way to go there himself to rule them. 'Lord it' was the phrase she used. She was wrong, as I could have told her." [361 RTTW]

See? Not that hard. That aside was not meant for you, Roy. Sorry for the confusion. It was an **aside** regarding something Chris and I had discussed.

Eventually,
Silkhorn says, "Pas has not yet come, perhaps. Or perhaps he has, and Oreb simply failed to find the place that Pas found or created." And, later,
"Then I believe Pas knows that as the years pass we will come to realize how much we need him, and bring him." [. . .] "The same impulse [that sent Horn to find Silk] will be applied to Pas in another generation, surely."

All of which says nothing about Pas's **intent**.

However, once again I'm glad it was you and not me that cited the quote "Pas has not yet come, perhaps. Or perhaps he has, and Oreb simply failed to find the place that Pas found or created."

Heh heh heh, or perhaps he has come to Blue **indeed** (cough! Horn).

~ Crush

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 25 Jun 2005, 12:44 · in reply to James Wynn

On 6/25/05, James Wynn <thewynns at earthlink.net> wrote:

You are wrong; self-evidently so. That is exactly what the text said.
Why are you quibbling about it? The point of that statement was that the Rajan, who arguably knows as much or more about Pas than anyone,

More than _Scylla_, James?

Really?

Yeah. right...

--Dan'l

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James Wynn — 25 Jun 2005, 13:33 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

The point of that statement was that the Rajan, who arguably knows as much or more about Pas than anyone,

More than _Scylla_, James?

Really?

Yeah. right...

The Rajan seems quite comfortable that he knows more about this issue than Scylla. He doesn't elaborate why, but there is something about his assuredness makes me believe him. And certainly, at this juncture he **does** contain a good deal of Pas within him. Anyway, Scylla was wrong in this case that Pas would only permit the colonists to come to Blue if He could rule them directly and the Rajan says he knew in advance that it wasn't so. Maybe the Rajan was lying or bragging, but I don't think so.

~ Crush

Roy C. Lackey — 25 Jun 2005, 21:05 · follows James Wynn

Crush said:

[Incidentally, it is at the location I cited that the Rajan denies Pas intended to rule Blue in person.]

Roy answered:

I'm not sure what the point of that last statement was, but that's not quite what is said. I'm not going to quote it all; readers can read it for themselves, pages 361-362. In short, Scylla is reported by Silkhorn to have believed that "Pas would not have peopled Blue unless he had some way to go there himself to rule them." Silkhorn thought she was wrong.

You are wrong; self-evidently so. That is exactly what the text said.

Hardly. Silkhorn did not deny that "Pas intended to rule Blue in person", as you claimed.

Why are you quibbling about it? The point of that statement was that the Rajan, who arguably knows as much or more about Pas than anyone, flatly denies that Pas felt it personally necessary or desirable to rule the colonies in person.

That statement says no such thing, exactly or otherwise. The statement purports to express a conditional belief of Scylla's. It says nothing about what Silkhorn may have thought about Pas' intentions, one way or another, to rule Blue. What Silkhorn disagreed with, it seems to me, is the condition Scylla believed would have kept Blue (and Green) from being colonized at all. That condition was that Pas had to be there, somehow. Silkhorn knew, for a fact, that both Blue and Green had been colonized. He also had no reason (and therefor neither do we readers) to believe that Pas was present on either planet, in any form. Thus Scylla was wrong, in his opinion.

He implies that he has special insight into this matter that he could have made available to Scylla if she had asked. Thus the idea that Pas would not want clones or other hyped-up embryos ruling in his stead is not true.

There you show where your bias lies. You want your theories to be true. Silkhorn's disagreement with Scylla's assessment says nothing about Pas' proclivities for ruling the colonies via clones or bodies grown from enhanced embryos. Implications are one thing, but they have to take a back seat to what was actually written.

I didn't call you a liar. All I said was "that's not quite what is said". I stand by that.

-Roy

James Wynn — 26 Jun 2005, 12:16 · follows Roy C. Lackey

"She possessed Oreb, as I told you, because she knew he would soon be brought [to Blue]. She felt sure--she told me this one night--that Pas would would not have peopled Blue unless he had some way to go there himself to rule them. 'Lord it' was the phrase she used. She was wrong, as I could have told her." [361 RTTW]

Crush said:

[Incidentally, it is at the location I cited that the Rajan denies Pas INTENDED to rule Blue in person.]

Roy answered:
That's not quite what is said.

Crush replied:
You are wrong; self-evidently so. That is exactly what the text said.

Roy responded:

Hardly. Silkhorn did not deny that "Pas intended to rule Blue in person", as you claimed.

Let me rest my forehead on this cool desk for a moment. There. That's better.

I reiterate:

"[Cilinia] felt sure...that Pas would **WOULD NOT** have peopled Blue **UNLESS** he had some way to go there himself to rule them....**SHE WAS WRONG**, as I could have told her." [emphasis mine]

Are you splitting the hair between "Pas had **NO** plan to rule Blue in person", and "Pas **MIGHT** have preferred to rule them in person (although the text AFAIK never says that **WAS** his intention) but he would not have insisted on it."?

Fine. Split away. But I don't need nearly as fine a microscope to split this one:

I didn't call you a liar. All I said was "that's not quite what is said".
I stand by that.

I don't need to be a major league centerfielder to catch the gist of your remark that I was subverting the text in some undeclared subtle or not so subtle way. Take out "undeclared" and that's all fair game, but when doing that you could have posted the full relevant text rather than pull a sentence from it and then summarize what the Rajan's take on it was -- and then "leave it to the readers" to look it up. It wasn't a long reference and you had no problem quoting other references. A nasty shot from the bushes IMO, and I'll stand by that.

Crush said:
He implies that he has special insight into this matter that he could have made available to Scylla if she had asked.
Thus the idea that Pas would not want clones or other hyped-up embryos ruling in his stead is not true.

Roy responded:
There you show where your bias lies.
You want your theories to be true.

I don't think you have to cast around far to find out where my biases lie. And I'm impressed to learn you are disinterested in whether your opinions are true or not. But this being untrue would hardly undermine any theory I have. I just happen to think it **IS** true, otherwise why supply the hyped-embryos (plural) to the Whorl? That's my opinion.

~ Crush

Chris — 26 Jun 2005, 13:51 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

To take an opportunity to return to my own speculation from earlier, this whole exchange reinforces my original conviction that the Rajan at that point had access to, or had currently assimilated, some elements of Pas - this can be the only real source of his confidence in asserting he could have told her differently. And again this points to the possibility that he knew full well who Severian was.

As far the dispute that's going on here, while Dan'l is correct about the strict semantic content of the exchange, I think he's incorrect in assuming that Scylla would know her father better. She

was a *child*, and realistically how long was it before you really understood your own parents? I have to admit for my own part that I am still discovering things I never understood about my father until I reached adulthood. And Scylla's exposure to her father was likely to be quite minimal due to his position, as well - not to mention her personal resentment is going to interfere.

In any event I thought we were generally agreed that Typhon did not associate personal identity with electrical impulses capable of uploading, so the presence of Pas on the Whorl, embodied or not, would never have served to satisfy any desire to personally lord it over the colony because Typhon would not have considered Pas to be Typhon. So the Rajan seems to be on fairly solid ground here.

On 6/25/05, James Wynn <thewynns at earthlink.net> wrote:

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Yeah. right...

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 26 Jun 2005, 16:36 · in reply to Chris

On 6/26/05, Chris <rasputin_ at hotmail.com> wrote:

As far the dispute that's going on here, while Dan'I is correct about the strict semantic content of the exchange, I think he's incorrect in assuming that Scylla would know her father better. She was a *child*, and realistically how long was it before you really understood your own parents?

She was a child when she was scanned. She has spent three hundred years with him in Mainframe.

I don't claim that she has "grown up" in that time, for I don't know whether that would be possible (either in the "real" world or in the Lupine universe-of-discourse); but I'd be inclined to suspect that she's learned a lot about her Da in that time. She is not, after all, stupid.

And Scylla's exposure
to her father was likely to be quite minimal due to his position, as well -
not to mention her personal resentment is going to interfere.

Again, this would be true of Cilinia, but not, I think, of Scylla-in- Mainframe: and that's who makes the statement we're dealing with here.

--Dan'I

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James Wynn — 27 Jun 2005, 15:25 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Well, I will note that I said that the Rajan "ARGUABLY knows AS MUCH
or more about Pas than anyone".

I don't deny there is an argument to be made that others know more. But he DOES seem rather confident regarding his knowledge in this case.

James Wynn

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

From: Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com>

Sent: Jun 26, 2005 7:35 PM

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth-urth.net at lists.urth.net> Subject: Re: (urth) Who's in Oreb

On 6/26/05, Chris <rasputin_ at hotmail.com> wrote:

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 27 Jun 2005, 15:40 · in reply to James Wynn

Yes, I agree that the ... unreliable narrator, who is in complete denial about his own identity ... does indeed seem very confident about this.

--Dan'l

On 6/27/05, James Wynn <thewynns at earthlink.net> wrote:

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James Wynn — 27 Jun 2005, 16:28 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

I said:

Well, I will note that I said that the Rajan "ARGUABLY knows AS MUCH *or* more about Pas than anyone".

I don't deny there is an argument to be made that others know more. But he DOES seem rather confident regarding his knowledge in this case.

Dan'I said:

Yes, I agree that the ... unreliable narrator, who is in complete denial about his own identity ... does indeed seem very confident about this.

Well, all of Wolfe's narrators are unreliable to some extent and his identity is rather ambiguous so his denial is not *complete* nor *entirely* wrong.

But leaving that aside, in this case, after a year of experimentation by Scylla, he has had his beliefs about Pas exonerated.

~ James

"My name is not Silk...It has never been Silk."

"Was this you, Incanto? Were you on Green?"

"I shook my head and told him it had been someone else, a man whose name I have forgotten, a man who wore a ring with a white stone. My own name is Horn, no matter what Oreb may say." ~ "In Green's Jungles"