

# Fava in the Whorl, and where the Neighbors went

The Urth list — 9 messages, 4 voices, 21 Aug 2005

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thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 21 Aug 2005, 05:54

On p146 of IGJ, Fava talks about her supposed past in Grandecitta, the city in the Whorl where Inclito was born. "Back in Grandecitta, where I lived as a girl ..."

Although it's barely possible she came to the Whorl after humans came to Blue, I think she was on the Whorl pre-Exodus, and that she probably came to Blue on one of Grandecitta's landers. (She may even be the "strega" in Inclito's mother's second tale, but that's pure speculation.)

Maddeningly, Silkhorn never enquires how she came to the Whorl. Fava "dies" not long after this, but enough of her is present at various times to answer the question, if it had been put to her.

Her second story - the one which starts with an infant sentient inhuma hatching from an egg, and which Silkhorn "gets inside" - suggests to me that she was born on Green. Horn's appearance in the story was made up, so Silkhorn assures Mora, but Fava's description of infant inhuma life is probably from experience, given that Green is the only we place we know of where inhumi can be born.

Almost certainly, Fava was put on the Whorl by Neighbors as a young inhuma (if "where I lived as a girl" is true & has its natural meaning), in pre-Exodus times. Since she was born sentient, that means at least one of her parents must have fed on the Whorl (assuming no pre-Exodus humans on Green etc). Which in turn tends to support the idea of Neighbors shuttling inhumi to & fro between Green & Whorl.

Now this of course indicates another possibility for Jahlee - the same kind of beginnings & placement on the Whorl as Fava; descent to Blue, perhaps in Horn's own lander; and a subsequent Crossing to Green, to give birth to Krait. I note that Krait has the appearance of a boy several years younger than Sinew in OBW, which would fit with Jahlee Crossing to Green at the first conjunction after her attack on Sinew, in Blue year 4.

A snippet on where the Neighbors went: Silkhorn tells Inclito's family, "They have gone elsewhere - found a new home circling another short sun." (IGJ, p72) At least from that, it seems that the "Neighbor Whorl" is a "real", and the Neighbors' removal there a physical event.

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James Wynn — 21 Aug 2005, 12:07 · in reply to thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

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

From: <thalassocrat at nym.hush.com>

To: <urth-urth.net at lists.urth.net>

Sent: Sunday, August 21, 2005 8:54 AM

Subject: (urth) Fava in the Whorl, and where the Neighbors went

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James Wynn — 21 Aug 2005, 12:10 · in reply to thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

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Why? They could have gone elsewhere via astral travel leaving their bodies behind.

In fact, if astral travel requires that someone in the party has been to the destination before, it opens the possibility that the Whorl they've gone to is Urth....leaving their woody bodies growing comfortably on Blue and Green.

J

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Roy C. Lackey — 22 Aug 2005, 09:09 · follows James Wynn

Andrew wrote:

[snip]

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It occurs to me that, \*if\* Jahlee was imprinted with Chenille's spirit (due to her mother having fed on Chenille on Green), and if Jahlee went to Blue to feed on Sinew when she was too young to fly unaided and then returned to Green to give birth to Krait, then the difference in age between generations, at least in the case of Jahlee and Krait, can be only a few years. At the beginning of OBW, Blue year 20, Jahlee could be no older than Sinew, who would be 19 years old. I doubt that there is much of a correlation between human and inhumia ages, but Krait would have to be about 16 or 17 in Blue year 20.

If, per your theory above, Fava had been born before the Exodus, she would probably have to have been older than Jahlee and was \*certainly\* older than Krait, no matter what she said or how she looked in her chosen disguise of a human girl about the age of puberty.

Jahlee disguised herself as both a young woman and an old woman at that farmhouse. She habitually went among humans disguised as a loose woman in order to entice men and get them alone to feed on them. Those were conscious decisions. My point is that inhumia appearance cannot be a reliable guide to actual age. And they lie.

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I'm glad I waited as long as I did to respond; now it's \*your\* problem dealing with certain knotty theories. <G>

-Roy

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thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 23 Aug 2005, 05:49 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On Mon, 22 Aug 2005 09:09:10 -0700 "Roy C. Lackey"

<rlackey at stic.net> wrote:

My point is that inhumia appearance cannot be a reliable guide to actual age. And they lie.

That's certainly true. But I think that Krait took the form of a youth of the "right" age because he wanted very much to be Horn's son.

Actually, appearance != age seems to be true for inhumis even in their astral aspects. Astral Fava on Green is an old woman the first time, but sweet-little-Fava the second. In reality, I think that both she and Fava are probably as old as Quetzal.

I'm glad I waited as long as I did to respond; now it's \*your\* problem dealing with certain knotty theories. <G>

Not going there :) I like parts of the Grand Unified Tree Theory as stories, but I don't think they're Wolfe's stories.

I found where Neighborish spacecraft are mentioned: Silkhorn talking with Hide in IGJ, p353. "Eventually the Vanished People found some means of crossing the abyss to Green. Perhaps they built landers of their own - I believe they must have." But I suppose I can't hang very much on Silkhorn's guess at something that happened 1000+ years ago.

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don doggett — 23 Aug 2005, 18:54 · in reply to James Wynn

--- James Wynn <thewynns at earthlink.net> wrote:  
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Why? They could have gone elsewhere via astral travel leaving their bodies behind.

It seems to me that there are four possibilities for the neighbors travel.

1. They physically left the planet in ships. Maybe treeships, like the one in that SF poem Genesis.
2. Astral travel. If that's really what Silkhorn is doing, or as some have posited . . .
3. Time travel. Perhaps they have gone to the future (or the past). That would explain their continued presence on Blue and account for the speculation that they'd found a new short sun whorl. After all, a Blue of the future would be a new place.
4. They haven't gone anywhere and are just spirits of trees tied to their world.

I'm just trying to set parameters for this discussion so it makes sense to me. Are there any I'm missing?

Don

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James Wynn — 23 Aug 2005, 20:56 · in reply to don doggett

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Sure. That seems to encompass the possibilities. But (inexplicably to me) a lot readers are \*hostile\* to the idea that the Neighbors are \*in any way\* the trees. It seemed so obvious to me that that was what they were when the Rajan first clapped eyes on them in the forest. And the rest of the book continued to confirm it for me.

Someone once remarked that there was a Huorn (Horn?) feel about the trees in the SS. At one point the Rajan describes them as "sleepy". Which makes me think it most likely that they are away astral traveling.

Incidentally, since I decided Horn = Typhon, \*most\* of the direct clues that Urth=Green were answered in that alternate interpretation. For the Neighbors to go to Urth does not imply ipso facto a unified star system theory. Actually, the reference Andrew quoted above could just as well refer to the Whorl itself. It is "a new home" and it circles a different sun (the Long Sun).

J

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thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 23 Aug 2005, 21:12 · follows James Wynn

On Tue, 23 Aug 2005 18:54:32 -0700 don doggett  
<kingwukong at yahoo.com> wrote:  
It seems to me that there are four possibilities for  
the neighbors travel.

1. They physically left the planet in ships. Maybe  
treeships, like the one in that SF poem Genesis.
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trees tied to their world.

I'm just trying to set parameters for this discussion  
so it makes sense to me. Are there any I'm missing?

I'd include:

5. Travel by BOTNS-style mirrors. One little thing you could use to support this: Silkhorn says  
that neighbors on at least one occasion reminded him of images multiplied between facing  
mirrors, left behind when the actual source of the image had gone. (Somewhere near start of  
IGJ, as part of the sewer story.) I don't believe it, but it's possible.

My personal views:

[1] is most consistent with everything else we are told. Neighbors went to "a [real] new whorl  
circling another short sun" [in ships, possibly FTL,] and return to visit ancestral places on Blue  
via astral travelling. [2] leaves open the question of where the Neighbor bodies are & what  
they're doing when they're not astral travelling. If you explain that using [4], you've moved into  
Grand Unified Tree Theory territory which I don't believe in, but YMMV. You also have to explain  
away the Neighbors' lying when they claim that they have, in fact, gone away. [3] is like the  
GUTT; I don't find a shred of support for it in the text, though it could make a good story.

[5] is kind of attractive. It would also provide a mechanism for Neighbors getting real, physical  
inhumi onto the Whorl (as they did  
- this is as solid as anything ever is in Wolfe). But I don't know of any evidence for it, apart from  
the IGJ passage mentioned above, which doesn't have to imply it.

Whatever theory you pick has to deal with inhumini-related things:

- How did the Neighbors get inhumini onto the Whorl? If they don't have their own ships, they  
must either have used undocumented pre- Exodus human landers, or something like [5].
- How do Neighbors breed new inhumini to sue as mirrors for themselves? Either they have  
undocumented abilities to breed inhumini on their new whorl, or they have to be able to ferry  
inhumi to & from Green. In the latter case, [1] and [5] again seem to be the possibilities.

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James Wynn — 24 Aug 2005, 17:36 · in reply to thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

[1] is most consistent with everything else we are told. Neighbors went to "a [real] new whorl circling another short sun" [in ships, possibly FTL,] and return to visit ancestral places on Blue via astral travelling.

Well, actually, the only ships that we are told the Neighbors ever built were \*landers\* not starcrossers.

[2] leaves open the question of where the

Neighbor bodies are & what they're doing when they're not astral travelling. If you explain that using [4], you've moved into Grand Unified Tree Theory territory which I don't believe in,

Perhaps, then, I don't really understand then what the GUTT is. I thought you were referring to a belief that the trees on Urth were the trees in Bleen. If that's all it is then I don't know why [4] insists on that.

You also have to explain away the Neighbors' lying when they claim that they have, in fact, gone away.

Why would that be a lie? "Horn" left his body on Green. Would it be lying to say he left for Whorl? When the Rajan went to Green and Urth, did he go away?

[3] is like the GUTT; I don't find a shred of support for it in the text, though it could make a good story.

(shrug) Okay. If someone tells me there is "not a shred of support in the text" for time-travel, all the readily available proof-texting won't change anything.

[5] is kind of attractive. It would also provide a mechanism for Neighbors getting real, physical inhumis onto the Whorl (as they did - this is as solid as anything ever is in Wolfe). But I don't know of any evidence for it, apart from the IGJ passage mentioned above, which doesn't have to imply it.

I would find it very attractive except that the Rajan was \*convinced\* they required landers to get to Green.

Whatever theory you pick has to deal with inhumis-related things:

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- How do Neighbors breed new inhumis to sue as mirrors for themselves? Either they have undocumented abilities to breed inhumis on their new whorl, or they have to be able to ferry inhumis to & from Green. In the latter case, [1] and [5] again seem to be the possibilities.

Or their bodies are on Blue and Green with vines growing on them. That would have the advantage of being documented over and over again. ;-)

J