

Seven American Nights question

The Urth list — 7 messages, 6 voices, 15 Jul 2007

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4880>

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aaron — 15 Jul 2007, 07:36

This may sound like a stupid question: What causes the ocean to turn yellow at the beginning of Seven American Nights? The American on board becomes very offended when Nadan points this out to him. Any help is greatly appreciated.

Aaron Singleton

Nigel Price — 15 Jul 2007, 14:53 · follows aaron

Aaron Singleton asked:

This may sound like a stupid question: What causes the ocean to turn yellow

at the beginning of Seven American Nights? The American on board becomes very offended when Nadan points this out to him. Any help is greatly appreciated.<<

Doesn't sound like a stupid question to me.

I imagine that the yellow colouration is caused by sand and mud carried out into the ocean by rivers flowing from the American interior. America has been blasted by war and bombs which have destroyed nearly all the vegetation. No longer secured by the roots of trees and plants, the top soil has come loose and blown and washed away. Now the rivers are washing all this loose topsoil out into the sea, where it discolours the water.

Nigel

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 15 Jul 2007, 16:26 · in reply to aaron

I have always assumed that it was pollution (or perhaps an algae blossom like a red tide) caused by American industry.

On 7/15/07, aaron <aaronsingleton at gmail.com> wrote:

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Urth Mailing List

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes, writer, trainer, bon vivant

<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

<http://www.danehyoakes.com>

Soon, where Toon Town once stood will be a string of gas stations, inexpensive motels, restaurants that serve rapidly prepared food. Tire salons, automobile dealerships and wonderful, wonderful billboards reaching as far as the eye can see. My God, it'll be beautiful.

Kurt Schwind — 16 Jul 2007, 11:42 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

I'm with Dan'l. I always thought it was a type of industrial pollution. I'm not sure why it's 'yellow' particularly, but I just assumed it was some poisonous industrial waste.

On 7/15/07, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danllo at gmail.com> wrote:
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On 7/15/07, aaron <aaronsingleton at gmail.com> wrote:

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aaron — 16 Jul 2007, 12:06 · in reply to Kurt Schwind

Thanks for everyone's input on this. I had always assumed that the yellow color came from oil or gasoline etc. leaking into the sea. The only thing that, to me, disputes the pollution theory is the fact that the captain tells Nadan: "It's his country...bleeding to death." That is why I assumed crude oil "bleeding" from the earth. But, after doing a little research, I found several sources that confirm the erosion theory. It seems that dirt carried into the ocean from rivers turns the water yellow (in the worst cases) or green (not quite as bad). Again, thanks to all.

Aaron Singleton

Gwern Branwen — 16 Jul 2007, 12:41 · in reply to aaron

On 0, aaron <aaronsingleton at gmail.com> scribbled:

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seems that dirt carried into the ocean from rivers turns the water yellow (in the worst cases) or green (not quite as bad). Again, thanks to all.

Aaron Singleton

And the captain isn't kidding about the bleeding to death thing. I remember the phrase 'soil erosion' popping up a distressing number of times in Jared Diamond's "Collapse" (usually in reference to something like the Mayan collapse, or the Fertile Crescent becoming unfertile, or Australia's environment...) and other places. It's still a little odd in America though - I personally associate yellow effluvium with more China and the Yellow River and company.

gwern

FDM GRU LRTS SIGDEV NACSI MEU/SOCPSAC PTT RFI ZL31 SIGDASYS TDM. SUKLO Schengen

Russ Allbery — 16 Jul 2007, 16:30 · in reply to Gwern Branwen

Gwern Branwen <gwern0 at gmail.com> writes:

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Ah, but see the Dust Bowl. Soil erosion has happened before in the US on a massive scale due to poor agricultural practices or use of land for things it just can't sustain.

See <http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/Study/DustBowl/> for more information, and there are many other interesting pages via Google.

Russ Allbery (rra at stanford.edu) <<http://www.eyrie.org/~eagle/>>