

A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

The Urth list — 26 messages, 9 voices, 13 Aug 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5129>

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.

Dave Tallman — 13 Aug 2008, 17:35

With what we know about the inhum, Mucor, and astral projection from the BotSS, we can revisit the sequence leading to the appearance of Pike's ghost in LotLS.

There are several things to explain.

1) Why is the wrapping on Silk's arm rather than his ankle?

He was so tired that he didn't want to have to keep recharging the wrapping through the night, so it made sense to take it off. He could have put it on his arm to pad the wounds there so he could sleep better, or because he knew it was valuable and wanted to guard against thieves. (But in the latter case it would make more sense to lock it up with the azoth, so I favor the first explanation).

2) Why did the wrapping get frosty?

The wrapping normally cooled as it lost energy, but to get frosty in a hot room required energy for refrigeration. It may be another medical function of the wrap -- if its built-in AI sensed it was wrapped around an infected site it might get cold to help kill the germs. The cold wrap caused his dream about Kypris grabbing his arm and giving him cold kisses, and it woke him up.

3) What did Silk see flapping away in the window?

Many have speculated that it was Quetzal he saw, but I find that unconvincing. From the later books we know the inhum cannot change their size that much. A human-sized Quetzal in flying form could not be mistaken for Oreb, even by a groggy Silk.

If the sight of Oreb wasn't part of Silk's dream, then it really was Oreb he saw, whatever the bird said. Oreb couldn't fly yet, but that's not a problem. Mucor was there, and she is known to be able to make her possession victims levitate (Crassula's story in NtLS, chapter 11).

I believe that Mucor possessed Oreb and brought him into Silk's room through the window. She was probably trying to cause Silk some trouble after his "exorcism" drove her away from her fun at Orchid's. Oreb's repeated denial of "No steal!" suggests she was trying to get Oreb to steal something -- maybe the wrap. If she had something of value to Silk she might have been able to get leverage against his blackmail. Oreb's tugging at the wrap on Silk's arm might have contributed to his dream about trying to pull free from Kypris/Hyacinth.

Oreb was afraid to admit to Silk what had happened, but his answers were technically true. "No fly" -- he wasn't flying on his own. "No hop" -- he didn't hop down. "No steal" -- he didn't successfully steal Silk's wrap.

4) Why did Mucor reveal herself to Silk?

She had an attraction to him, as shown by her "We'll be lovers" when she possessed Mamelta. She could have just left when she let go of Oreb, but she chose to tempt him for a moment instead.

Another possibility is that she detected the presence of Quetzal in the vicinity (see the theory below). She might have been trying to wake Silk up enough so that he could defend himself. One flaw with this idea is that she apparently couldn't see Quetzal when she astral-projected. She called him "the man who isn't there."

5) What caused the creaking of the bed? Why did Patera Pike's ghost appear?

Wolfe said in an question-and-answer session (<http://www.ansible.co.uk/cc/cc77.html>) that the apparition was not machine-made. That eliminates the Hierodule-created-aquastor theory and the Mainframe-generated-ghost theory, in spite of the shimmering disappearance. He also said it was not Quetzal. Inhumis don't seem to be able to impersonate other people (only make themselves look human) so I think any other inhumis is also out. Silk astral-projecting through time would also not look enough like Pike to be mistaken for him by Silk, who knew the man well. The most likely case is a real ghost.

There are two possible explanations for the ghost. The simplest is that the presence of Mucor stirred up Pike's ghost. He appeared in his bedroom first, then went to check to see if Silk was all right (moving through the closed door). He found his calotte there and put it on. With the solid cap on, he had to open the door to get out. When he saw that Silk was all right, he smiled, waved, and vanished. There is a real connection between the calotte and Mucor, since Silk wore it on the raid on Blood's house and therefore in the presence of Mucor.

The second explanation is more complicated but I like it better. I think Quetzal was there that night, wanting to attack Silk. Sphigxday night was the night after Teasel was bitten. Quetzal could have returned for more blood and found the names of Silk and Pike written outside the window. Quetzal said that he "went wide" when he saw Silk's name on the fifth floor of a building. Silk had to climb four flights of stairs to get to Teasel's room.

I don't believe the superstitious explanation that magic worked or that Quetzal was afraid of the sign of the cross. He couldn't be the Prolocutor if he was. The answer might be his fear of exposure as an inhumis. He knew that Pike was on his case, possibly correlating the descriptions given by his victims, and now he knew that Pike had told Silk about it.

Pike died about a month after he told Silk about the blood-sucking "demons" and that he was fighting them. (NtLS, chapter 9). This may not have been a coincidence. Quetzal or one of his inhumis "doctor" allies might have killed Pike by draining his blood over a period of time. Pike is shown sacrificing a rabbit to the Outsider in Silk's first enlightenment, once with a vivid image of blood. Quetzal's Genesis story likens humans to rabbits. (We know the sacrifice was to the Outsider because the rabbit was speckled -- animals that are not pure black or pure white can only be offered to all the gods or to a specific minor god: LotLS ch. 2. Also, the enlightenment contained information about the prayers that the Outsider was answering).

It's interesting that Pike's ghost would put on his old calotte. He only wore it on the coldest days (NtLS ch. 3), and this was a hot night. He died in the spring, so it couldn't be because of the memory of his last day alive. In the enlightenment vision of the rabbit his hands were said to be cold. (NtLS ch. 1). Loss of blood would make him feel cold, so that may be another clue about his death.

Dr. Crane implied that he tried to become a doctor for Quetzal and was snubbed. "Haven't you noticed that when he gets sick I'm not the one he sends for? Well, that's why. Now and then I make a mistake. The sort of doctors he had in never do. Just ask them." Quetzal would never dare let a real doctor examine him, so his "doctors" must be fellow inhumis. A job as a doctor to the Prolocutor would have been nice for a spy. So would working for someone in the Ayuntamiento, but they used chem substitute bodies. Crane had to settle for being Blood's doctor.

If Quetzal killed Pike, he knew where his bedroom was and he would have expected Silk to have moved into it. The creaking of the bed in Pike's old room might have been caused by Quetzal. Finding Silk absent, he might have sat on the bed to await his return, causing the creaking.

Pike's ghost must have a strong reason for appearing. Remora once said that holy augers rarely have ghosts (in RttW). Pike wasn't altogether holy (as the father of Blood with Rose), but one would think he would be heavenly-minded enough to avoid ghosthood. But if Pike was murdered by an inhumis, that would give him unfinished business. He might have appeared to drive off Quetzal and assure himself that Silk was safe.

Mark Millman — 13 Aug 2008, 17:52 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Please, everybody, let's get this right, 'cause it's an easy one and it's really frustrating:

masculine: inhumu

feminine: inhumas

plural: inhumis

How can we trust a close reading when the analysis based on it gets something as simple as this wrong?

Best,

Mark Millman

Dave Tallman — 13 Aug 2008, 18:07 · follows Mark Millman

All right, I said "an inhumis" a couple of times in there. I meant it as a gender-neutral shortcut for "an inhumu or an inhumas." People often use the plural for gender-neutrality in their writing these days. If you let a quibble like that spoil your entire trust of my reading, I'm sorry.

Mark Millman — 13 Aug 2008, 18:37 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Dear Mr. Tallman,

I actually don't mean to pick on you personally; my frustration with the issue just happened to overflow while I was reading your post. I apologize if I upset you.

However, you did write, "I think any other inhumis is also out," which could just as easily and more correctly have been rendered with "are" without losing gender-neutrality. Other instances of singular inhumis aren't (as) easy to make both gender-neutral and plural without changing your meaning, so for them, your explanation satisfies me. And you get points, on the gripping hand, for writing of Quetzal, "his fear of exposure as an inhumu," later in your post.

Because, y'know, I do seem to be in a picky mood today.

Best,

Mark Millman

On Wednesday 13 August 2008, Dave Tallman wrote:

All right, I said "an inhumu" a couple of times in there. I meant it as a gender-neutral shortcut for "an inhumu or an inhumu." People often use the plural for gender-neutrality in their writing these days. If you let a quibble like that spoil your entire trust of my reading, I'm sorry.

brunians at brunians.org — 13 Aug 2008, 19:18 · in reply to Mark Millman

Why is it important to you that other people should conform to your standards of correctness, Mark? If you understand what they are saying, is it really necessary that you point out to them that they are wrong? Why do you do this, if it is not necessary?

.

Dear Mr. Tallman,

I actually don't mean to pick on you personally; my frustration with the issue just happened to overflow while I was reading your post. I apologize if I upset you.

However, you did write, "I think any other inhumu is also out," which could just as easily and more correctly have been rendered with "are" without losing gender-neutrality. Other instances of singular inhumu aren't (as) easy to make both gender-neutral and plural without changing your meaning, so for them, your explanation satisfies me. And you get points, on the gripping hand, for writing of Quetzal, "his fear of exposure as an inhumu," later in your post.

Because, y'know, I do seem to be in a picky mood today.

Best,

Mark Millman

On Wednesday 13 August 2008, Dave Tallman wrote:

All right, I said "an inhumu" a couple of times in there. I meant it as a gender-neutral shortcut for "an inhumu or an inhumu." People often use the plural for gender-neutrality in their writing these days. If you let a quibble like that spoil your entire trust of my reading, I'm sorry.

Mark Millman — 13 Aug 2008, 19:25 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Dear brunians,

Dunno. Why is it important for you to know?

Alternatively: Don't you ever feel that way?

Also, and most pickily: Please note that I haven't invited you to address me by my given name.

But, I fear, we're getting way too off-topic now, so I won't be responding to any more messages in this thread.

Anybody who wants the last word is welcome to it.

Best,

Mark Millman

On Wednesday 13 August 2008, brunians wrote:
Why is it important to you that other people should conform to your standards of correctness, Mark? If you understand what they are saying, is it really necessary that you point out to them that they are wrong? Why do you do this, if it is not necessary?

Matthew King — 13 Aug 2008, 19:45 · in reply to Mark Millman

Last!

On Wed, Aug 13, 2008 at 2:25 PM, Mark Millman <markjmillman at gmail.com> wrote:
Dear brunians,

Dunno. Why is it important for you to know?

Alternatively: Don't you ever feel that way?

Also, and most pickily: Please note that I haven't invited you to address me by my given name.

But, I fear, we're getting way too off-topic now, so I won't be responding to any more messages in this thread.

Anybody who wants the last word is welcome to it.

Best,

Mark Millman

On Wednesday 13 August 2008, brunians wrote:

Why is it important to you that other people should conform to your standards of correctness, Mark? If you understand what they are saying, is it really necessary that you point out to them that they are wrong? Why do you do this, if it is not necessary?

hammstu at sbcglobal.net — 13 Aug 2008, 19:50 · follows Matthew King

.....Word

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

From: Matthew King

Sender:

To: The Urth Mailing List

ReplyTo: The Urth Mailing List

Sent: Aug 13, 2008 12:45 PM

Subject: Re: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

Last!

On Wed, Aug 13, 2008 at 2:25 PM, Mark Millman <markjmillman at gmail.com> wrote:

Dear brunians,

Dunno. Why is it important for you to know?

Alternatively: Don't you ever feel that way?

Also, and most pickily: Please note that I haven't invited you to address me by my given name.

But, I fear, we're getting way too off-topic now, so I won't be responding to any more messages in this thread.

Anybody who wants the last word is welcome to it.

Best,

Mark Millman

On Wednesday 13 August 2008, brunians wrote:

Why is it important to you that other people should conform to your standards of correctness, Mark? If you understand what they are saying, is it really necessary that you point out to them that they are wrong? Why do you do this, if it is not necessary?

Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net

Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

brunians at brunians.org — 13 Aug 2008, 20:47 · in reply to hammstu at sbcglobal.net

To answer Mark's questions in order: it's not, no, and so what?

People divide into those who wish to control the actions of others and those who do not. The motivations of the first group are of interest to me, so when I observe this behavior, I have been known to attempt to ascertain the motivations of the individual so behaving.

.

.....Word
-----Original Message-----
From: Matthew King
Sender:
To: The Urth Mailing List
ReplyTo: The Urth Mailing List
Sent: Aug 13, 2008 12:45 PM
Subject: Re: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

Last!

On Wed, Aug 13, 2008 at 2:25 PM, Mark Millman <markjmillman at gmail.com> wrote:

Dear brunians,

Dunno. Why is it important for you to know?

Alternatively: Don't you ever feel that way?

Also, and most pickily: Please note that I haven't invited you to address me by my given name.

But, I fear, we're getting way too off-topic now, so I won't be responding to any more messages in this thread.

Anybody who wants the last word is welcome to it.

Best,

Mark Millman

On Wednesday 13 August 2008, brunians wrote:

Why is it important to you that other people should conform to your standards of correctness, Mark? If you understand what they are saying, is it really necessary that you point out to them that they are wrong? Why do you do this, if it is not necessary?

Jeff Wilson — 14 Aug 2008, 04:56 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

To answer Mark's questions in order: it's not, no, and so what?

People divide into those who wish to control the actions of others and those who do not. The motivations of the first group are of interest to me, so when I observe this behavior, I have been known to attempt to ascertain the motivations of the individual so behaving.

Isn't "control" is a bit strong for a peer's plea involving "please" and "let's" ?

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

brunians at brunians.org — 14 Aug 2008, 05:48 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

To answer Mark's questions in order: it's not, no, and so what?

People divide into those who wish to control the actions of others and those who do not. The motivations of the first group are of interest to me, so when I observe this behavior, I have been known to attempt to ascertain the motivations of the individual so behaving.

Isn't "control" is a bit strong for a peer's plea involving "please" and "let's" ?

I don't think that pleading is an accurate description of what Mark was doing.

That's enough out of me: I risk indulging in the very pedantry I deplore.

.

Jeff Wilson — 15 Aug 2008, 20:25 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

To answer Mark's questions in order: it's not, no, and so what?

People divide into those who wish to control the actions of others and those who do not. The motivations of the first group are of interest to me, so when I observe this behavior, I have been known to attempt to ascertain the motivations of the individual so behaving.

Isn't "control" is a bit strong for a peer's plea involving "please" and "let's" ?

I don't think that pleading is an accurate description of what Mark was doing.

That's enough out of me: I risk indulging in the very pedantry I deplore.

er, are you sure you're on the right list?

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com

< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

don doggett — 09 Sep 2008, 21:14 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Hi everybody,

Just got my finished copy of the book (I know it's not out 'til the 16th, but a rep sent it to me). I plan to read it asap and give a short spoiler free review.

bye now

Don

James Wynn — 17 Sep 2008, 20:32 · in reply to Dave Tallman

Dave,

I'm coming very late to this, but no one ever responded to your original post.

I find it interesting that you specifically noted the additional understanding to be gained from

tBotSS regarding Pike's ghost yet failed to note another fairly obvious explanation which I suggest you consider: that the Pike's ghost was the Raja (aka Silkhorn) in spirit-travel.

Reasons for believing this:

- 1.. The appearance of a second Oreb with a healed wing which faded away as he flew off.
-
- 2.. The ghost interacts with Pike's calotte which drops to the floor after he fades. This is behavior very unlike a gothic ghost, but comports well with the physics of a spirit-traveling person.
-
- 3.. Yes, this would mean that a spirit-traveller would have to be able to travel in time as well. But there are many reasons to be convinced that this is so. The grandmother (in In Green's Jungles IIRC) ends her story with a description of the Raja and Oreb standing by a grave. The easiest explanation of this is that the Raja heard the grandmother's story and was prompted to go back in Time and do it. And in RttW, when Horn's sons describe when they left home, it is clear that there is something seriously wrong with the timeline.
-
- 4.. Wolfe says it was a "real ghost". Well, the Raja during spirit travel IS a real ghost (meeting the Raja's definition of one): He is a disembodied spirit of a person who has died.

Reasons people don't like this:

I think the main one that bugs people is that it means that Silk mistook himself 20 years later for Pike. I don't have a problem with this at all. It works just fine with me. But considering the insufficiency of all the other explanations, and that this is the only one that causes the event to be part of the general narrative, rather than a bizarre "one off". I think readers are compelled to accept that Pike's ghost was the Raja and to grapple with Silk's misapprehension however they will.

J

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

From: Dave Tallman

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2008 12:35 PM

Subject: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

With what we know about the inhum, Mucor, and astral projection from the BotSS, we can revisit the sequence leading to the appearance of Pike's ghost in LotLS.

[..]

5) What caused the creaking of the bed? Why did Patera Pike's ghost appear?

Wolfe said in an question-and-answer session (<http://www.ansible.co.uk/cc/cc77.html>) that the apparition was not machine-made. That eliminates the Hierodule-created-aquastor theory and the Mainframe-generated-ghost theory, in spite of the shimmering disappearance. He also said it was not Quetzal. Inhum don't seem to be able to impersonate other people (only make themselves look human) so I think any other inhum is also out. Silk astral-projecting through time would also not look enough like Pike to be mistaken for him by Silk, who knew the man well. The most likely case is a real ghost.

There are two possible explanations for the ghost. The simplest is that the presence of Mucor stirred up Pike's ghost. He appeared in his bedroom first, then went to check to see if Silk was all right (moving through the closed door). He found his calotte there and put it on. With the

solid cap on, he had to open the door to get out. When he saw that Silk was all right, he smiled, waved, and vanished. There is a real connection between the calotte and Mucor, since Silk wore it on the raid on Blood's house and therefore in the presence of Mucor.

The second explanation is more complicated but I like it better. I think Quetzal was there that night, wanting to attack Silk. Sphigxday night was the night after Teasel was bitten. Quetzal could have returned for more blood and found the names of Silk and Pike written outside the window. Quetzal said that he "went wide" when he saw Silk's name on the fifth floor of a building. Silk had to climb four flights of stairs to get to Teasel's room.

Pedro Pereira — 17 Sep 2008, 20:54 · in reply to James Wynn

Just some points to consider:

1) Oreb in Astral form was always like a small boy with feathers. He is ALWAYS like that because the astral form shows how a person's spirit "is". For example Silkhorn says, when he sees Babbie in astral form for the first time, that he was curious to see how much "human" babbie was. This does not agree well with seeing Oreb in astral form as he is in the real world.

2) There's nothing in Wolfe's Solar Cycle that goes against a ghost having physical form capable of interacting with objects. In fact there are plenty of examples on "gothic stories" in which ghosts do have physical presence and can interact with physical objects.

Pedro

From: crushtv at gmail.com To: urth at lists.urth.net Date: Wed, 17 Sep 2008 15:32:07 -0500 Subject: Re: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

Dave,

I'm coming very late to this, but no one ever responded to your original post.

I find it interesting that you specifically noted the additional understanding to be gained from tBotSS regarding Pike's ghost yet failed to note another fairly obvious explanation which I suggest you consider: that the Pike's ghost was the Raja (aka Silkhorn) in spirit-travel.

Reasons for believing this:

The appearance of a second Oreb with a healed wing which faded away as he flew off.-
The ghost interacts with Pike's calotte which drops to the floor after he fades. This is behavior very unlike a gothic ghost, but comports well with the physics of a spirit-traveling person.-
Yes, this would mean that a spirit-traveller would have to be able to travel in time as well. But there are many reasons to be convinced that this is so. The grandmother (in In Green's Jungles IIRC) ends her story with a description of the Raja and Oreb standing by a grave. The easiest explanation of this is that the Raja heard the grandmother's story and was prompted to go back in Time and do it. And in RttW, when Horn's sons describe when they left home, it is clear that there is something seriously wrong with the timeline.-

Wolfe says it was a "real ghost". Well, the Raja during spirit travel IS a real ghost (meeting the Raja's definition of one): He is a disembodied spirit of a person who has died.

Reasons people don't like this:

I think the main one that bugs people is that it means that Silk mistook himself 20 years later for Pike. I don't have a problem with this at all. It works just fine with me. But considering the insufficiency of all the other explanations, and that this is the only one that causes the event to

be part of the general narrative, rather than a bizarre "one off". I think readers are compelled to accept that Pike's ghost was the Raja and to grapple with Silk's misapprehension however they will.

J

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

From: Dave Tallman

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Sent: Wednesday, August 13, 2008 12:35 PM

Subject: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

With what we know about the inhum, Mucor, and astral projection from the BotSS, we can revisit the sequence leading to the appearance of Pike's ghost in LotLS.[...]5) What caused the creaking of the bed? Why did Patera Pike's ghost appear? Wolfe said in an question-and-answer session (<http://www.ansible.co.uk/cc/cc77.html>) that the apparition was not machine-made. That eliminates the Hierodule-created-aquastor theory and the Mainframe-generated-ghost theory, in spite of the shimmering disappearance. He also said it was not Quetzal. Inhum don't seem to be able to impersonate other people (only make themselves look human) so I think any other inhum is also out. Silk astral-projecting through time would also not look enough like Pike to be mistaken for him by Silk, who knew the man well. The most likely case is a real ghost. There are two possible explanations for the ghost. The simplest is that the presence of Mucor stirred up Pike's ghost. He appeared in his bedroom first, then went to check to see if Silk was all right (moving through the closed door). He found his calotte there and put it on. With the solid cap on, he had to open the door to get out. When he saw that Silk was all right, he smiled, waved, and vanished. There is a real connection between the calotte and Mucor, since Silk wore it on the raid on Blood's house and therefore in the presence of Mucor. The second explanation is more complicated but I like it better. I think Quetzal was there that night, wanting to attack Silk. Sphigxday night was the night after Teasel was bitten. Quetzal could have returned for more blood and found the names of Silk and Pike written outside the window. Quetzal said that he "went wide" when he saw Silk's name on the fifth floor of a building. Silk had to climb four flights of stairs to get to Teasel's room.

James Wynn — 18 Sep 2008, 02:54 · in reply to Pedro Pereira

Pedro says:

"1) Oreb in Astral form was always like a small boy with feathers. He is ALWAYS like that because the astral form shows how a person's spirit "is". For example Silkhorn says, when he sees Babbie in astral form for the first time, that he was curious to see how much "human" babbie was. This does not agree well with seeing Oreb in astral form as he is in the real world."

Marc responds:

"Oreb appears as a human spirit because he is imbued with scylla"

I say:

Marc is right. Oreb appears as part human when he is possessed. And IIRC his looks change during the various spirit travel episodes. Furthermore, there is frankly no other explanation for the ghost-Oreb event except for Silk's rationalization which, aside from being totally contrary to the described event, is negated by Wolfe's M.O. of having "rational explanations" be always wrong.

Pedro says:

"2) There's nothing in Wolfe's Solar Cycle that goes against a ghost having physical form

capable of interacting with objects. In fact there are plenty of examples on "gothic stories" in which ghosts do have physical presence and can interact with physical objects. "

I say:

Not like this....except maybe in Abbot & Costello's "Hold That Ghost". The event is way too playful --even corny-- and, anyway, if the ghost is Pike (in the way Silk believes it is) it has zero narrative significance in anyway that anyone has explained so far.

Dave Tallman — 18 Sep 2008, 11:36 · in reply to James Wynn

James,

I actually did note that theory in my post, very briefly, as dismissed it as follows:

Silk astral-projecting through time would also not look enough like Pike to be mistaken for him by Silk, who knew the man well. The most likely case is a real ghost.

Perhaps I was too hasty. We have evidence that an astral-projecting Silk can be mistaken for other people if their minds are prepared by memories and pre-suppositions. Severian mistook him for the ghost of Malrubius, even though Sev knew the other man well as his teacher. Silk was prepared to see Patera Pike because of the memories stirred up by the creaking of Pike's bed, so he too could have been mistaken.

The explanation that the flying Oreb was also an astral projection is a good one. Oreb appeared smaller and more bird-like without Scylla, as we see in RttW when Scylla separated herself from him.

There's another odd case -- in IGG when Silk/Horn first visited Green in astral form, the enslaved Auk seemed to recognize him, saying "You'd better beat the hoof, Patera." He shouldn't have looked enough like Silk at that stage to be instantly recognizable. Perhaps his astral-form clothing was an auger's garment, and Auk just called him Patera because of that. It could also be Auk's power to understand how things work when he sees them -- the explanation I used for Auk's unexpected ability to astral-project himself.

Much of my earlier post was devoted to the presence of Quetzal, a theory which I now believe is wrong. When Quetzal told Remora about the incident where he "went wide" he said it happened "yesterday." He didn't expect Remora to understand him so he had no reason to lie. The timing of a re-visit to Teasel can be no earlier than Molpesday night, long after the Pike apparition. Before Quetzal saw that writing on the wall he would have no reason to attack Silk, even if the inhumis did kill Pike (which I still think is plausible).

Dave,

I'm coming very late to this, but no one ever responded to your original post.

I find it interesting that you specifically noted the additional understanding to be gained from tBotSS regarding Pike's ghost yet failed to note another fairly obvious explanation which I suggest you consider: that the Pike's ghost was the Raja (aka Silkhorn) in spirit-travel.

Reasons for believing this:

- 1.. The appearance of a second Oreb with a healed wing which faded away as he flew off.
-
- 2.. The ghost interacts with Pike's callotte which drops to the floor after he fades. This is behavior very unlike a gothic ghost, but comports well with the physics of a spirit-traveling person.
-

3.. Yes, this would mean that a spirit-traveller would have to be able to travel in time as well. But there are many reasons to be convinced that this is so. The grandmother (in In Green's Jungles IIRC) ends her story with a description of the Raja and Oreb standing by a grave. The easiest explanation of this is that the Raja heard the grandmother's story and was prompted to go back in Time and do it. And in RttW, when Horn's sons describe when they left home, it is clear that there is something seriously wrong with the timeline.

-

4.. Wolfe says it was a "real ghost". Well, the Raja during spirit travel IS a real ghost (meeting the Raja's definition of one): He is a disembodied spirit of a person who has died.

Reasons people don't like this:

I think the main one that bugs people is that it means that Silk mistook himself 20 years later for Pike. I don't have a problem with this at all. It works just fine with me. But considering the insufficiency of all the other explanations, and that this is the only one that causes the event to be part of the general narrative, rather than a bizarre "one off". I think readers are compelled to accept that Pike's ghost was the Raja and to grapple with Silk's misapprehension however they will.

J

Pedro Pereira — 18 Sep 2008, 13:11 · in reply to James Wynn

Marc and James:

1) You're right. I remember now that when Scylla separates from Oreb in Red Sun Whorl he becomes more like a normal bird.

2) I still think that just by itself the theory that "real" ghosts cannot interact with physical objects is fleamsy (or whatever is the correct word in english). Although the physical body is dead they are still the spirit of a being, just like in the case of astral projection, so its possible that in this "universe" ghosts can become more material. HornSilk is very clear on that point, if I remember correctly. When SilkHorn is at the tomb of Scylla it seems that both he and Hide tend to become less material unless they are interacting with the world, or so Hide tells us, for example. Anyway, this does not mean that both Marc and James are wrong on this point. I'm just pointing out that I think this is a weak argument just by itself.

I'd like to point out that I'm not averse to the idea that astral travel can be done both in space and time in the books. Your arguments are pretty solid and I don't remember anything against it in the books. I was just pointing out some things for you to consider in your arguments and in one of them I was shown to be incorrect. The other one I'm not convinced but it doesn't contradict your ideas anyway.

I'll take the opportunity to put some questions of my own here, if you don't mind and could be so kind as to give me some input:

1) I remember Horn mentioning the beast with three horns in IGJ. When did Horn get into Babbie?

2) I always thought that the Red Sun Scylla was the daughter of Typhon having become one of the sea monsters, maybe transforming itself like Baldanders is supposed to become and as is suggested for other creatures in BotNS. But in RttW we are shown that she died young (killed by Typhon for her revolt when still very young?) If that is the case, how did the Red Sun sea monster Scylla came about? It seems then that Typhon's daughter, as part of the plot against him, had as her main contact the sea monster Scylla instead and not that she became that same Scylla. When she was uploaded she could have chosen the name Scylla as a kind of nod

to her "master". This seems to be more correct than. After all there seems to be some kind of connection between the sea monster Scylla from Red Sun and the "Mother" from Short Sun.

Pedro

From: crushtv at gmail.com To: urth at lists.urth.net Date: Wed, 17 Sep 2008 21:54:17 -0500 Subject: Re: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

Pedro says: "1) Oreb in Astral form was always like a small boy with feathers. He is ALWAYS like that because the astral form shows how a person's spirit "is". For example Silkhorn says, when he sees Babbie in astral form for the first time, that he was curious to see how much "human" babbie was. This does not agree well with seeing Oreb in astral form as he is in the real world."

Marc responds:

"Oreb appears as a human spirit because he is imbued with scylla"

I say:

Marc is right. Oreb appears as part human when he is possessed. And IIRC his looks change during the various spirit travel episodes. Furthermore, there is frankly no other explanation for the ghost-Oreb event except for Silk's rationalization which, aside from being totally contrary to the described event, is negated by Wolfe's M.O. of having "rational explanations" be always wrong.

Pedro says: "2) There's nothing in Wolfe's Solar Cycle that goes against a ghost having physical form capable of interacting with objects. In fact there are plenty of examples on "gothic stories" in which ghosts do have physical presence and can interact with physical objects. "

I say:

Not like this....except maybe in Abbot & Costello's "Hold That Ghost". The event is way too playful --even corny-- and, anyway, if the ghost is Pike (in the way Silk believes it is) it has zero narrative significance in anyway that anyone has explained so far.

brunians at brunians.org — 18 Sep 2008, 13:58 · in reply to Pedro Pereira

Pedro writes:

2) I still think that just by itself the theory that "real" ghosts cannot interact with physical objects is flimsy (or whatever is the correct word in english).

Flimsy.

There is a whole class of ghosts that interact with physical objects. They are called poltergeists.

.

Pedro Pereira — 18 Sep 2008, 14:00 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Thanks for the english correction.

I know that, but I was refering to ghosts as portreyed in the Solar Cycle... ;)

Pedro

brunians at brunians.org — 18 Sep 2008, 14:07 · in reply to Pedro Pereira

Sure.

Sorry, I was confused by your saying 'real ghosts', which I took to mean 'ghosts as people who believe in ghosts in the real world believe they behave'.

.

Thanks for the english correction.

I know that, but I was refering to ghosts as portreyed in the Solar Cycle... ;)

Pedro

Date: Thu, 18 Sep 2008 09:58:47 -0400> From: brunians at brunians.org> To: urth at lists.urth.net> Subject: Re: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike> > Pedro writes:> > > 2) I still think that just by itself the theory that "real" ghosts cannot> > interact with physical objects is fleamsy (or whatever is the correct word> > in english).> > Flimsy.> > There is a whole class of ghosts that interact with physical objects. They> are called poltergeists.> > > .> > >

Pedro Pereira — 18 Sep 2008, 14:10 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Sorry!

No, by "real ghosts" I meant spirits of the deseased but WITHIN the context of the Solar Cycle.

Pedro

Dave Tallman — 18 Sep 2008, 16:06 · follows Pedro Pereira

Pedro *Periera wrote:

*

1) I remember Horn mentioning the beast with three horns in IGJ. When did Horn get into Babbie?

Toward the end of OBW, the Rajan was surrounded by inhumi and feared for his life. Soon after this, he met someone in the woods (a Neighbor or the Outsider?) and placed his head in his lap as Babbie would. I think that this is the point at which part of Horn went into Babbie. It wasn't all of Horn, just as the part of Scylla that went into Oreb was not all of her. But it was a piece of himself, intended to preserve his life even if his human body was killed, just as Scylla preserved a part of herself when under attack by Pas.

In the next book, the Narrator has become much more Silk-like. After part of Horn went into Babbie there was more room for the original personality to express himself.

2) I always thought that the Red Sun Scylla was the daughter of Typhon having become one of the sea monsters, maybe transforming itself like Baldanders is supposed to become and as is suggested for other creatures in BotNS. But in RttW we are shown that she died young (killed by Typhon for her revolt when still very young?) If that is the case, how did the Red Sun sea monster Scylla came about? It seems then that Typhon's daughter, as part of the plot against him, had as her main contact the sea monster Scylla instead and not that she became that same Scylla. When she was uploaded she could have chosen the name Scylla as a kind of nod to her "master". This seams to be more correct than. After all there seems to be some kind of connection between the sea monster Scylla from Red Sun and the "Mother" from Short Sun.

I never imagined that interpretation. I thought Scylla was one of the extraterrestrial Megatherian monsters that came to Urth along with Abaia and others. Princess Cilinia, daughter of Typhon, allied herself with this monster (probably in a plot to overthrow her father). She took the god-name of Scylla for her uploaded personality probably to honor her "master" as you suggest. Baldanders is a very special case -- I don't know if we have evidence of any other human becoming an immortal water-dwelling giant. Baldanders had to invent the technology for this himself. It wouldn't have been available to Cilinia.

Back on the main subject, there's one more clue about Pike's ghost that I just noticed. Silk selected the calotte for his burglary mission because it would "supply a certain concealment" even if his straw hat blew off. Unlike the typical clerical skullcaps of our world, the calotte must have projected out above his forehead and cast the upper part of his face into shadow (under certain lighting conditions, such as being seen from below at the top of the stairs).

The "ghost" didn't speak; it only waved and vanished. The motive for wearing the calotte might have been disguise, in order to create the impression of Patera Pike that Silk remembered. If the only reason for going was that memory, then we have a pure causality paradox. But there were probably other reasons, such as intimidating Mucor before she did some mischief. It's interesting that she never tried to possess Silk himself. It may be the astral projection of the future Silk and Oreb scared her away from trying this.

Pedro Pereira — 18 Sep 2008, 16:26 · in reply to Dave Tallman

1) Yes, I remember now. That makes sense. But the part still in the body would have to remain in contact with that "piece" of himself in Babbie or the "piece" would have to return to his human body later on, or else how would he write about it? Probably it was only a temporary phenomena, and that's why he says that he rode a beast with 3 horns. He rode, but not anymore.

2) I guess I was under the wrong impression. What you say makes sense. None of the monstrosities seem to have been humans in the past. The Megatherians seem to be the 17 creatures behind the Ascians and who are referred to in the book "lives of the seventeen megatherians". That would explain very well the existence of other creatures like that, including "The Mother".

Thank you!

Pedro

Date: Thu, 18 Sep 2008 10:06:23 -0600
From: dave@tallman.com
To: urth@lists.urth.net
Subject: Re: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

Pedro Pereira wrote:

1) I remember Horn mentioning the beast with three horns in IGJ. When did Horn get into Babbie?

Toward the end of OBW, the Rajan was surrounded by inhumans and feared for his life. Soon after this, he met someone in the woods (a Neighbor or the Outsider?) and placed his head in his lap as Babbie would. I think that this is the point at which part of Horn went into Babbie. It wasn't all of Horn, just as the part of Scylla that went into Oreb was not all of her. But it was a piece of himself, intended to preserve his life even if his human body was killed, just as Scylla preserved a part of herself when under attack by Pas. In the next book, the Narrator has become much more Silk-like. After part of Horn went into Babbie there was more room for the original personality to express himself.

2) I always thought that the Red Sun Scylla was the daughter of Typhon having become one of

the sea monsters, maybe transforming itself like Baldanders is supposed to become and as is suggested for other creatures in BotNS. But in RttW we are shown that she died young (killed by Typhon for her revolt when still very young?) If that is the case, how did the Red Sun sea monster Scylla come about? It seems then that Typhon's daughter, as part of the plot against him, had as her main contact the sea monster Scylla instead and not that she became that same Scylla. When she was uploaded she could have chosen the name Scylla as a kind of nod to her "master". This seems to be more correct than. After all there seems to be some kind of connection between the sea monster Scylla from Red Sun and the "Mother" from Short Sun. I never imagined that interpretation. I thought Scylla was one of the extraterrestrial Megatherian monsters that came to Urth along with Abaia and others. Princess Cilinia, daughter of Typhon, allied herself with this monster (probably in a plot to overthrow her father). She took the god-name of Scylla for her uploaded personality probably to honor her "master" as you suggest. Baldanders is a very special case -- I don't know if we have evidence of any other human becoming an immortal water-dwelling giant. Baldanders had to invent the technology for this himself. It wouldn't have been available to Cilinia. Back on the main subject, there's one more clue about Pike's ghost that I just noticed. Silk selected the calotte for his burglary mission because it would "supply a certain concealment" even if his straw hat blew off. Unlike the typical clerical skullcaps of our world, the calotte must have projected out above his forehead and cast the upper part of his face into shadow (under certain lighting conditions, such as being seen from below at the top of the stairs). The "ghost" didn't speak; it only waved and vanished. The motive for wearing the calotte might have been disguise, in order to create the impression of Patera Pike that Silk remembered. If the only reason for going was that memory, then we have a pure causality paradox. But there were probably other reasons, such as intimidating Mucor before she did some mischief. It's interesting that she never tried to possess Silk himself. It may be the astral projection of the future Silk and Oreb scared her away from trying this.

James Wynn — 19 Sep 2008, 00:19 · in reply to Pedro Pereira

Pedro says:

2) I guess I was under the wrong impression. What you say makes sense. None of the monstrosities seem to have been humans in the past. The Megatherians seem to be the 17 creatures behind the Ascians and who are referred to in the book "lives of the seventeen megatherians". That would explain very well the existence of other creatures like that, including "The Mother".

I say:

Cilicia was an agent for Scylla the Megatherian. She was a traitor against her father. When her personality was deified on the Whorl, she gave it the name Scylla and accepted lordship of the sea in honor of her mistress.

Pedro Pereira — 19 Sep 2008, 13:45 · in reply to James Wynn

Yes, that's my opinion too. I don't know where I got the idea that Great Scylla had been Cilicia and that was confusing me. Need to re-read the books some of these days.

Pedro

From: crushtv at gmail.com To: urth at lists.urth.net Date: Thu, 18 Sep 2008 19:19:35 -0500 Subject: Re: (urth) A second dream team: Mucor, Oreb, and Pike

Pedro says: 2) I guess I was under the wrong impression. What you say makes sense. None of the monstrosities seem to have been humans in the past. The Megatherians seem to be the 17 creatures behind the Ascians and who are referred to in the book "lives of the seventeen megatherians". That would explain very well the existence of other creatures like that, including

"The Mother".

I say:

Cilicia was an agent for Scylla the Megatherian. She was a traitor against her father. When her personality was deified on the Whorl, she gave it the name Scylla and accepted lordship of the sea in honor of her mistress.