

Summary of the case for Silk as Typhon's clone

The Urth list — 14 messages, 7 voices, 19 Jan 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5927>

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 19 Jan 2011, 18:52

Suppose that Silk were Pas's son of the body, or even his clone. Would people point at him and say, "There goes Pas"?

Not necessarily.

If this were the case then Silk would look -- modulo environmental/developmental differences -- like young Typhon, to be sure.

But does Pas look like young Typhon? I question this. We know that at least some of the other gods of Mainframe present as god-forms, either idealized versions of themselves or otherwise different. Why would Pas be different? I suspect that Pas-in-Mainframe does not look enough like Typhon for a much-younger version of himself to attract that much notice.

This leaves two special cases: Mamelta and Rigoglio.

Rigoglio we can dismiss; the Silk (body) he sees is missing an eye and otherwise scarred by time and sorrow.

Which leaves Mamelta -- whose memories may have been tampered with, and who has been possessed by Mucor. Is it that unreasonable to suppose that she wouldn't recognize a much-younger version of the Monarch?

I believe then that there is no serious bar to Silk being Pas's son, or even his clone. But that's not the same as positive evidence.

Why then would I believe that Silk is Typhon's clone?

Typhon is psychically adept in some way. And he isn't willing to have his consciousness downloaded into another (such as Piaton), though the technology is clearly available to him.

I suggest that it isn't just (though Typhon seems to say so) that people are "accustomed" to obeying that particular face; it is that Typhon has psychic ability to make people follow him. He was unwilling to give this up, so he had to preserve his brain -- and a brain transplant was too risky for a number of reasons. So he sought to immortalize himself by having his head put onto Piaton's body.

But also he sought to be the Father-God of the Whorl; and I suggest that he was not going to give that authority up when the Whorl reached its destination. He intended to lead the Cargo to its new home, and to do so required a body. What body would Typhon want?

Why, one with the psychic ability to make people follow him. He may be a god, but he isn't giving up any advantage. That body would be a clone of the one he left behind.

Now, who has an uncanny ability to make people follow him? Why, Silk...

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Marc Aramini — 19 Jan 2011, 19:00 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

--- On Wed, 1/19/11, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

Now, who has an uncanny ability to make people follow him?
Why, Silk...

Yes, and this is listed as why he was included as an embryo on the whorl. I think all the evidence, SAYING Kypris is mother OUTRIGHT, not even interpretationally, is ridiculously hard to ignore that Silk is her son, especially in light of his face on Pas and the thrice repeated monarch wanted a son to succeed him idea. However, I don't know if that embryo was ever fully grown before being placed on the whorl - was it "new" or just a copy? That is why I lean toward him being Typhon's love child more than a clone, genetically distinct, different in countenance, and then if he was engineered and then loaded into the whorl but never grown, no one but Kypris and Pas would know he was anyway, since Pas is not happy with his current brood, according to Lemur.

Against this is that they seem to know already what the embryo will do when it grows up (that it will exert that special attraction for others, but honestly Silk's gift seems to be intuitive leaps with that cheek circling bit.) And the appearance of Silk's face on Typhon's body. So I think the evidence is stronger for genetic son, but I just don't know if Silk was ever an adult or not, but he definitely was an embryo that had pre-designed powers, I just don't know if they knew that through scientific prediction or because they had the adult version already and knew what he did.

Marc Aramini — 19 Jan 2011, 19:04 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Oh yeah, as far as Mucor goes ... are those dogs she gives birth too the gods of the tunnel or are they different? Because if she gave birth to the gods that seems to create a bit of an analogy between Echidna, birthing monsters, and Mucor. And Mucor does say of Echidna, "I know her, she likes me." Could these embryos be the entire family of Typhon? Does Mucor giving birth to the gods, possibly, create an analogy between Echidna and herself?

I don't think so, but I am just trying to rationalize why the tunnel dogs are called gods and why Mucor gave birth to them.

António Pedro Marques — 19 Jan 2011, 19:53 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (19-01-2011 18:52):

Suppose that Silk were Pas's son of the body, or even his clone.

No, please. First thing off: separate those two cases.

Would
people point at him and say, "There goes Pas"?

Not necessarily.

If this were the case then Silk would look -- modulo

environmental/developmental differences -- like young Typhon, to be sure.

But does Pas look like young Typhon? I question this. We know that at least some of the other gods of Mainframe present as god-forms, either idealized versions of themselves or otherwise different. Why would Pas be different? I suspect that Pas-in-Mainframe does not look enough like Typhon for a much-younger version of himself to attract that much notice.

Disagree. Unless Typhon's image of himself was wildly at odds with what others saw, I think the default assumption is that Pas looks like Typhon. People have asked about other gods forgetting that it's Pas who called the shots. If he wanted one of his family to look like a mouse, that's what they would have looked like.

This leaves two special cases: Mamelta and Rigoglio.

Rigoglio we can dismiss; the Silk (body) he sees is missing an eye and otherwise scarred by time and sorrow.

There was also no special connection between Roger and Typhon, so no special reason to suppose he'd think much of it - he merely mentions wakers don't know how to honour the gods and they sleepers knew them best.

Which leaves Mamelta -- whose memories may have been tampered with, and who has been possessed by Mucor. Is it that unreasonable to suppose that she wouldn't recognize a much-younger version of the Monarch?

I think so. Not impossible, but not very reasonable.

I believe then that there is no serious bar to Silk being Pas's son, or even his clone. But that's not the same as positive evidence.

Why then would I believe that Silk is Typhon's clone?

Typhon is psychically adept in some way. And he isn't willing to have his consciousness downloaded into another (such as Piaton), though the technology is clearly available to him.

I suggest that it isn't just (though Typhon seems to say so) that people are "accustomed" to obeying that particular face; it is that Typhon has psychic ability to make people follow him. He was unwilling to give this up, so he had to preserve his brain -- and a brain transplant was too risky for a number of reasons. So he sought to immortalize himself by having his head put onto Piaton's body.

But also he sought to be the Father-God of the Whorl; and I suggest that he was not going to give that authority up when the Whorl reached its destination. He intended to lead the Cargo to its new home, and to do so required a body. What body would Typhon want?

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Now, who has an uncanny ability to make people follow him? Why, Silk...

Pas is not Typhon. Typhon created Pas as his tool. A clone of Typhon is also not Typhon. And not a single person leads the exodus from the Whorl.

Why ever would Typhon clone himself? Does he want two Typhons?

António Pedro Marques — 19 Jan 2011, 20:01 · in reply to Marc Aramini

Marc Aramini wrote (19-01-2011 19:04):

I am just trying to rationalize why the tunnel dogs are called gods

I think someone should look into this. Along with many others, it's the kind of 'clue' that stares at you in the face, and yet people don't do anything about it because they can't make sense of it, instead looking for 'clues' where none are perhaps needed.

Agia's metallic sound, the gods, Agia's relentless pursuit of Severian, those are things that cry for an explanation and no good ones have been proposed yet.

and why Mucor gave birth to them.

I think the Rajan mentions Nettle was lucky to be pregnant with Sinew or she would have had to bear some calves. Apparently the idea was not so outlandish in the Whorl and on Blue. Why the heck they did it with Mucor remains a mystery.

Marc Aramini — 19 Jan 2011, 20:17 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

--- On Wed, 1/19/11, Ant?nio Pedro Marques <entonio at gmail.com> wrote:

, Agia's relentless pursuit

of Severian,

This, at least, does not seem to be a great mystery, he killed her brother and lover, both by overcoming their scam and in actual fact through execution. The greater mystery is involved in those straps to Agilus' mask that don't go anywhere. Revenge can be relentless, but there do seem to be connections between them that need examination.

Son of Witz — 19 Jan 2011, 21:56 · in reply to Marc Aramini

On Jan 19, 2011, at 12:17 PM, Marc Aramini <marcaramini at yahoo.com> wrote:

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For whatever reason, I've always felt that Agia's revenge for Agilus was only part of her motivation. Hethor has a thing for Severian that goes beyond Agia's. They stalk him across urth, threaten and save him, and Agia replaces Vodalus! There is SOMETHING else going there, IMO.

António Pedro Marques — 19 Jan 2011, 22:01 · in reply to Son of Witz

Son of Witz wrote (19-01-2011 21:56):

For whatever reason, I've always felt that Agia's revenge for Agilus was only part of her motivation.

(And how can one talk of revenge when Severian was innocent in Agilus's killing? Revenge for what, for Severian's having not died in the duel which they contrived *apparently* in order to kill him and take his possessions? For Severian's employment as an executioner? Maybe for some deranged person, but very little in Agia points to derangement.)

Hethor has a thing for Severian that goes beyond Agia's. They stalk him across urth, threaten and save him, and Agia replaces Vodalus! There is SOMETHING else going there, IMO.

Unfortunately I have no answers, but I think *this*, in conjunction with others, is the kind of thing that's supposed to be studied by the reader. Well, if GW expects to be debated for 300 years, we won't be around when someone finally grasps it all.

Son of Witz — 19 Jan 2011, 22:15 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On Jan 19, 2011, at 2:01 PM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com> wrote:
Son of Witz wrote (19-01-2011 21:56):

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Yes, exactly. Not that revenge need be rational though, I guess.

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Seriously.

I can't grab the quote now, but Aramini just mentioned that he thinks Agia and Hethor appear in UotNS. Where? As crew of Tzadkiel's ship? Somewhere else?

Jane Delawney — 20 Jan 2011, 01:06 · in reply to Marc Aramini

On 19/01/11 19:04, Marc Aramini wrote:

Oh yeah, as far as Mucor goes ... are those dogs she gives birth too wth? Yes, Mucor does tell Silk she's some time before been implanted with some animal embryos and given birth to them. She refers to one of them at least as her 'son', in consequence. But these are not dogs;

still less are they the gods/bufes of the tunnels. Her 'children' are the lynxes (medium-big cats) to whom Silk is introduced in the course of his first excursion into Blood's mansion. One of them is called Lion; others are not individually named but it is clear that there at least six of them, male and female.

At the end of BoTLS one of these cats has definitely been killed (Lion himself, in the gallery of the Grand Manteion, defending Silk and Auk) but the fates of the others (at least five others) are not determined. Silk shot a couple of them with Hyacinth's needler, but there's no definite evidence that these were fatal shots. Even at the end of RTTW there could still be 5 or more lynxes wandering the Whorl, looking for mama Mucor.

Not at all sure why anyone has a confusion between these cats and the bufes. Just saying.

jd.

Gerry Quinn — 20 Jan 2011, 01:43 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

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

Suppose that Silk were Pas's son of the body, or even his clone. Would people point at him and say, "There goes Pas"?

Not necessarily.

If this were the case then Silk would look -- modulo environmental/developmental differences -- like young Typhon, to be sure.

But does Pas look like young Typhon? I question this. We know that at least some of the other gods of Mainframe present as god-forms, either idealized versions of themselves or otherwise different. Why would Pas be different? I suspect that Pas-in-Mainframe does not look enough like Typhon for a much-younger version of himself to attract that much notice.

This leaves two special cases: Mamelta and Rigoglio.

Rigoglio we can dismiss; the Silk (body) he sees is missing an eye and otherwise scarred by time and sorrow.

I don't think you can dismiss him, actually. Silk has just replicated Typhon's military strategy of taking the side of the underdog in a military conflict and winning, something which Rigoglio has discussed. 'Almost like a young Typhon' must have been a phrase that crossed his mind.

Which leaves Mamelta -- whose memories may have been tampered with, and who has been possessed by Mucor. Is it that unreasonable to suppose that she wouldn't recognize a much-younger version of the Monarch?

The Monarch who dominated the lives of his subjects, to the extent that his family danced through their dreams? The Monarch she TALKS ABOUT with Silk? Wouldn't she at least mention a resemblance?

But you also left out Echidna, Kypris and Scylla. Remember, the gods may not appear as they used to in life. But all three know how they iused to appear.

I believe then that there is no serious bar to Silk being Pas's son, or even his clone. But that's not the same as positive evidence.

The five people listed above effectively rule out the possibility that he is a clone of Typhon. Remember, this is literature, not life. It is a variant of Checkov's gun. A clone must be recognisable as such, or the author must give a reason why. Wolfe would never write anything so lame.

Of course, if he is Typhon's son the negative evidence is probably just about surmountable. He seems to have the same colour hair, at least. You'd still expect a stronger gesture from the author to note a familial resemblance.

Why then would I believe that Silk is Typhon's clone?

Typhon is psychically adept in some way. And he isn't willing to have his consciousness downloaded into another (such as Piaton), though the technology is clearly available to him.

He has charisma, aggression and self-confidence, that is certain. I'm not convinced his powers extend to the supernatural.

As for downloading, it could be that Wolfe hadn't considered that option when he wrote BotNS. Also, Typhon thought his face was important to maintaining his power - that was the reason he gave Severian for not having a simple brain transplant (it also suggests again that his powers are not psychic).

I suggest that it isn't just (though Typhon seems to say so) that people are "accustomed" to obeying that particular face; it is that Typhon has psychic ability to make people follow him. He was unwilling to give this up, so he had to preserve his brain -- and a brain transplant was too risky for a number of reasons. So he sought to immortalize himself by having his head put onto Piaton's body.

He actually said a brain transplant was his doctors' first idea, but he vetoed it on account of the face.

But also he sought to be the Father-God of the _Whorl_; and I suggest that he was not going to give that authority up when the _Whorl_ reached its destination. He intended to lead the Cargo to its new home, and to do so required a body. What body would Typhon want?

Why, one with the psychic ability to make people follow him. He may be a god, but he isn't giving up any advantage. That body would be a clone of the one he left behind.

I agree that that is a possible motivation. But you still need evidence that that is what happened. And as I pointed out above, the negative evidence really is quite damning.

Now, who has an uncanny ability to make people follow him? Why, Silk...

Not everyone with leadership ability can be Typhon. Silk showed no ambition to conquer the Whorl, for example. He doesn't really seem like Typhon at all.

(I said earlier that he replicated Typhon's military strategies on Blue. But by that time, he really did have a piece of Pas in him.)

- Gerry Quinn

Gerry Quinn — 20 Jan 2011, 01:44 · in reply to Marc Aramini

From: "Marc Aramini" <marcaramini at yahoo.com>

Oh yeah, as far as Mucor goes ... are those dogs she gives birth too the gods of the tunnel or are they different?

Surely it was cats?

- Gerry Quinn

Andrew Mason — 20 Jan 2011, 15:53 · follows Gerry Quinn

Gerry Quinn wrote:

. Remember, this is literature, not life. ?It is a variant

of Checkov's gun. ?A clone must be recognisable as such, or the author must give a reason why. ?Wolfe would never write anything so lame.

I think relying on negative evidence is a bit tricky here, because it seems to me fairly clear that Horn does not know exactly as much as he is saying; he is putting some stuff in as clues, which would be pointless unless he knew what they were clues to, but he doesn't tell us. Perhaps he has been influenced by reading some of the works of Gene Wolfe, preserved in (what was to become) Ultan's library, and copied into the Chrasmologic writings.

I should say that I do not see any positive evidence for clonehood, and there are a couple of things that do seem to me to count against. For one thing, if he is a clone, who is the mother whom he meets on the aureate path? A male clone does not have a genetic mother in an obvious sense. In a way, Typhon's mother might be considered his mother - if Typhon, who claims not to have been born, had a mother.. But in that case is the man who appears with her Typhon's father? In any case I don't think either Mamelta or Kypris was Typhon's mother.

For another, why is he in Viron? That actually doesn't count against his being a clone as such, but it does count against his being a super-special clone of the kind that Dan'I has in mind. I can well imagine that there are, possibly, clones, or, perhaps more likely, specially bred children of the gods scattered throughout the Whorl; It seems a plausible and Typhonic way of producing people of special abilities. But one would expect a clone destined to be the leader of the new colony to be kept at Mainframe.

Why then would I believe that Silk is Typhon's clone?

Typhon is psychically adept in some way. And he isn't willing to have his consciousness downloaded into another (such as Piaton), though the technology is clearly available to him.

He has charisma, aggression and self-confidence, that is certain. ?I'm not convinced his powers extend to the supernatural.

He manages to get Severian to see things at an impossible distance, in a way that implies psychic power. (I'm not sure Wolfe would consider this supernatural, though. He refers to Silk's psychic powers in an interview somewhere in a very casual way, which suggests to me that he thinks such powers are actually part of the world.)

As for downloading, it could be that Wolfe hadn't considered that option when he wrote BotNS.

Almost certainly,. But in the light ?of BOTLS, we can look back and ask how to make sense of what happens in BOTNS given this new information (make sense of it in-story, not make sense of Wolfe's writing it).

I do think there is a problem with downloading - does Typhon download his personality into an infant or into an adult? In the former case, we have an adult mind in a child's body, with rather weird consequences. In the latter, the person chosen for download already has a personality of his own - is it completely overridden? If not, it will make a difference to the way the reborn Typhon operates. (And if Pas is in fact later downloaded into Silk, he clearly does not eliminate his Silkishness.)

Also, if Pas was planning to be downloaded into this body, would he have to give it special abilities in advance? Don't gods communicate special abilities to those they possess? I seem to remember Chenille having special abilities while Kypris was in her.

From: "Marc Aramini" <marcaramini at yahoo.com>
Oh yeah, as far as Mucor goes ... are those dogs she gives birth too
the gods of the tunnel or are they different?

Surely it was cats?

Yes, lynxes to be precise. Though it is a puzzle where the tunnel gods came from. Are they just the result of three hundred years of Lamarckian evolution? Or were they specially bred?

Gerry Quinn — 20 Jan 2011, 17:25 · in reply to Andrew Mason

From: "Andrew Mason" <andrew.mason53 at gmail.com>
Gerry Quinn wrote:
[--]

For another, why is he in Viron? That actually doesn't count against his being a clone as such, but it does count against his being a super-special clone of the kind that Dan'I has in mind. I can well imagine that there are, possibly, clones, or, perhaps more likely, specially bred children of the gods scattered throughout the Whorl; It seems a plausible and Typhonic way of producing people of special abilities. But one would expect a clone destined to be the leader of the new colony to be kept at Mainframe.

Another point against it is that, IIRC, Tussah was reported to have paid a lot for the embryo. If it was part of Typhon's plan, you'd expect Tussah to be paid, or to do it out of loyalty or just obedience. You wouldn't expect him to pay.

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True - I kind of assumed there was some technological enhancement of vision built into the window, but the text doesn't really seem to support this. (On the other hand, who knows what the ancient super-science was truly capable of?)

As for downloading, it could be that Wolfe hadn't considered that option when he wrote BotNS.

Almost certainly,. But in the light of BOTLS, we can look back and ask how to make sense of what happens in BOTNS given this new information (make sense of it in-story, not make sense of Wolfe's writing it).

We travel murky paths when we take that route. The problem is that there is no reason to believe that anything else in the text will correlate with such ideas; and if the author actually intended something relating to a point we deal with this way, we will actually tend to obscure it.

- Gerry Quinn