

Short Sun notes: Remora.

The Urth list — 14 messages, 6 voices, 06 Oct 2013

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6446>

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Andrew Mason — 06 Oct 2013, 21:54

Lee Berman wrote:

I think we are supposed to get the sense that Neighbors are a higher order of being than humans. And Inhumis, despite their cunning, are a lower order. So perhaps a combination of the two is a good blend to walk among the middle ground of humanity.

The iNeighbours whom Horn/the Rajan meets certainly seem to be higher than humans, but we should remember that they thought that humans would be better able to cope with the inhumis threat than they did, so it may be that it's just a matter of who we see. (They may have been wrong about that, of course: It's likely that they were influenced by the example of Quetzal, and it's possible that he isn't a typical inhumis because his source - perhaps Pike - isn't a typical human.)

Gerry Quinn — 06 Oct 2013, 23:01 · in reply to Andrew Mason

From: Andrew Mason

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The discussion reminds me of Fifth Head of Cerberus, in which all parties (I think particularly of the three groups present on Sainte Anne before the French landing, but it applies equally well to humans thereafter) seem fairly well convinced of their own race's superiority. Though in truth no group, aboriginal or human, appeared to have too much to be proud of.

- Gerry Quinn

Brian — 07 Oct 2013, 21:37 · follows Gerry Quinn

...it's not that humans, being lower than Neighbors, are more capable of dealing with Inhumis in a "smash and bash" way. If the Neighbors thought humans more capable, it would be through treating them with kindness, ala Silk, creating a generation of kinder, gentler Inhumis.

Lee Berman wrote:

My interpretation is that humans are baser animals than Neighbors and are thus more equipped to resist infection by Inhumis. SilkHorn beats Jahlee to death. Other groups bury the Inhumis alive etc. Perhaps The Neighbors were unable to perpetrate such violent atrocities against their

parasitic enemies and were forced to escape to another plane of existence. They were unable to deal with the Inhumans here in the material world, as humans are at least partially able to do.

David Stockhoff — 07 Oct 2013, 23:00 · in reply to Brian

Yup.

On 10/7/2013 5:37 PM, Brian wrote:

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Lee Berman — 08 Oct 2013, 12:40 · follows David Stockhoff

Brian: If the Neighbors thought humans more capable, it would be through treating them with kindness, ala Silk, creating a generation of kinder, gentler Inhumans.

Andrew Mason: Well, the inhumans believe that humans could defeat them by being more noble- that is the point of the 'Secret'. And when the Rajan says that this is 'a weapon too heavy for our hands', he also says that the Neighbours knew of it but were unable to use it - which suggests to me that they do hope humans will be able to wield it.

David Stockhoff: Yup.

I'm hearing you guys, and considering a change of perspective. There is some thematic sense to this view. But some barriers still exist for me.

1. In their experience with humans, wouldn't the Neighbors more likely to find Horn as a typical representation of the species than Silk? And while Silk was surely kind and gentle, he clearly had the capacity for violence and destruction when he felt the need.

2. The story/series doesn't end with some sort of peace or reconciliation or understanding between human and inhumans. Quite the opposite. After the bond of cooperation established during the dream travelling, that is tossed aside and the final interaction between the races is akin to an all-out war.

I guess it could thus be argued that Wolfe ended this long story/series with a failure of the human race. But while Wolfe can be pessimistic, my intuition pushes me to think that the human war with inhumans was meant to signify hope and eventual triumph, rather than acquiescence to the inevitable.

When the peaceful Neighbors went to Green, they were twisted by their contact/entwinement with inhumans into making war on their brothers back on Blue. But humans, usually so quarrelsome among each other, band together to fight against the inhumans threat on Blue.

The band of humans marooned on Green showed similar unity and pluck in the face of

overwhelming odds. And SilkHorn's experience in the sewer on Green seemed to suggest that one man with a sword and a light can be the catalyst for major changes to a corrupted environment.

I wouldn't suggest Gene Wolfe is a simplistic, American patriot, but this idea of fiercely independent individuals coming together to fight against a common enemy seems like a positive value he might espouse as "uniquely human". Especially in contrast to a pluralistic, non-individualistic species such as Neighbors (no I won't mention communism, heh).

Lee Berman — 08 Oct 2013, 13:02 · follows Lee Berman

Andrew Mason: (I believe Marc thinks Quetzal's tree is a Neighbour: this may be right, but a tree isn't well-placed to make the acquaintance of many humans, so it's likely there are some in human form as well.)

Oh yes, that was an idea I liked very much. Aside from giving some reality to the Tree/Liana relationship on Green, it gives a real, literary purpose to making the natives of Blue to be multi-limbed (like trees).

And now I like it even better. The purpose of Windcloud being in The Whorl was to become acquainted with humans but probably not to allow humans to become acquainted with him. Being a tree might be the perfect vehicle for accomplishing that goal.

Marc Aramini: The tree of quetzal is not a neighbor but probably a vanished god, as are the cannibal trees on green and the giant "herbs" that make up the islands on blue. The trees can make new vanished people or neighbors but are not "really" them.

Argh. So Marc himself shoots down the idea. Or maybe not.

Anyway, on the subject of Vanished Gods, I don't remember Marc's opinion regarding the multi-limbed, crusted sea thing that appears on Horn's boat. It is far stronger than Babbie but responds to a command from Seawrack....

Of course there is a pretty big correlation between windcloud and typhoons, or at least a conceivable one.

I agree. In BotNS, Wolfe left it to people like James Wynn to figure out a connection between Spring Wind and Typhon. But in RttW, Wolfe is explicit in connecting Pas and Typhon to wind and storms.

I don't think we are given enough information to really know what the connection between a Neighbor named Windcloud and Typhon means; only that there is a tantalizing connection, just out of reach of understanding.

I find the same tantalizingly unexplained connection to be made for Scylla, the Mainframe god, the girl and the giant sea monster on Urth. Same for The Mother and Seawrack and their connection to Echidna and her two siren-named daughters.

David Stockhoff — 08 Oct 2013, 15:33 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 10/8/2013 8:40 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

1. In their experience with humans, wouldn't the Neighbors more likely to find Horn as a typical representation of the species than Silk? And while Silk was surely kind and gentle, he clearly had the capacity for violence and destruction when he felt the need.

And yet, remember the Secret is referred to as a "weapon," which means violence is not exactly ruled out. Indeed, if "love" is a weapon in this "war," I think Silk would get that.

Also, the "typical" human must surely be of little interest to the Neighbors. It's humanity's /potential /that they see.

Once again, the Fay/Sidhe template emerges. The Neighbors can no longer interact with the world the way we can. But they need just one hero to start on the path they have set for us.

David Stockhoff — 08 Oct 2013, 15:35 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 10/8/2013 9:02 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

Oh yes, that was an idea I liked very much. Aside from giving some reality to the Tree/Liana relationship on Green, it gives a real, literary purpose to making the natives of Blue to be multi-limbed (like trees).

And of course it echoes the magical Tree of Knowledge with its Talking Serpent.

Marc Aramini — 10 Oct 2013, 01:15 · in reply to Brian

I still think them pretending to be human in their mating ritual is just ontogeny recapitulating phylogeny. Even though the inhumis are a debased branch (heh heh) that cannot maintain sentience without original humans, they are still a vestigial remnant of people; just divergent evolution.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 7, 2013, at 2:37 PM, "Brian" <brian at studiobl.com> wrote:

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Lee Berman wrote:

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Marc Aramini — 10 Oct 2013, 13:32 · in reply to David Stockhoff

And of course there is a rough estimate of the relative sizes of the whorl and blue - I believe off the top of my head that blue was ten times the size of the whorl, but I don't know if that is a measure of diameter or of area. Big difference. I have tried to look at the size of Mars but wow I like biological sciences, I tend to tune out a bit when astronomical things come up in my reading. It is possible to figure out Blue's size from short and long sun ...
(Of course Green is the size of Urth heh heh)

I have sat down with pen and pencil but the area vs radius multiplication factor made me wary of any firm conclusions as to whether it could be the size of Mars.

Marc Aramini — 10 Oct 2013, 13:43 · in reply to Marc Aramini

And when I mention the Eucharist scene as the opposite of Hyacinthus' story, I mean that in terms of the Catholic ceremony itself: bread and wine made from grapes transform into flesh and blood. This time it's the actual ceremony's import that is resonating: vegetative substance becoming flesh and blood, involved with consumption. The story of Apollo and Hyacinthus is the opposite, blood becomes a flower and lives on. Continued existence through transformation. Though man dies something else that is his essence lives on.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 10, 2013, at 6:32 AM, Marc Aramini <marcaramini at yahoo.com> wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 10 Oct 2013, 13:49 · in reply to Marc Aramini

On 10/10/2013 9:32 AM, Marc Aramini wrote:

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I suppose you have considered that the multiple-legs pattern of Blue life as observed by Horn corresponds to E.R. Burroughs' Mars?

What happened to Lune, then? I recall a previous discussion where it was mentioned that the Whorl may have moved from one iteration to another, Moonless, one. Not only does that lack a mechanism, but I doubt life would evolve the same way on an earth without a Moon.

Marc Aramini — 10 Oct 2013, 14:17 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Yeah all problematic. The whorl is visible from green and blue but I am pretty sure it is much much smaller than the moon - a longtime ago I asks if a satellite could be called an asteroid but ... The moon is just too big, I think. Something happened to affect the tides on Urth at the end of urth of the new sun, that's for sure, and it could very well involve lune. Never liked the whole sails blocking the sun bit either in apu punchau's time. Hieros tossing a future moon into the past sun seems a big huge stretch too. Need textual evidence for crap like that.

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 10, 2013, at 6:49 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

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Marc Aramini — 10 Oct 2013, 14:18 · in reply to Marc Aramini

Asked - stupid phone. I will blame it

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 10, 2013, at 7:17 AM, Marc Aramini <marcaramini at yahoo.com> wrote:
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