

Witches, mainly

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 15 Apr 1997

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m.driussi — 15 Apr 1997, 04:02

Reply: Item #5601061 from URTH at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET00#

Lasrach,

Well, the witches' table artifact isn't in the Lexicon, so I'll tell what I know and what others have said. You remember it quite well. The hairless critters seem crippled, though, I think. Anyway, if it ain't some hologrammic form of Pac Man (<g>), then it is very hard to tell what it is.

Jeff Wilson and I tried to tackle this, using two analogies ("witches really are witches" and "witches really are some technologically advanced department of government, such as we might have in the US today") and their shared origin with the torturers' guild.

First of all: since the Matachin is the tower of Severity, is the Witches' Keep the tower of Mercy? No. (That would be the healers' tower, or the cathedral of the Claw and the pelerines.)

When the jailers' guild was broken up into two, the torturers were given the task of strict obedience and were forbidden to interrogate or judge in any way--theirs is only to do what they are told to do. Granted, the women were said to be too sadistic, so the witches presumably are forbidden to torture . . . but can they interrogate? Well, not directly at least, and they don't have any clients . . .

Traditionally, witches are involved with information gathering. Crystal balls, magic cauldrons; Macbeth and witches of Endor stuff. Jeff thought that the Windows of the Whorl pointed to similar casual high tech devices for the witches--I said maybe but look out, those "mirrors" are teleport devices. Basically we decided that the witches were something like the NSA, monitoring ftl/psionic communications, watching for big movements against the Commonwealth.

Which brings us back to that table. I still don't know. If like real witches, then maybe it is a form of divination, like fortune-telling by cockroach observation. It seems somewhat like a scientist watching mice run a maze. Since the witches don't show any biotech ability, it seems less likely that these are homunculi that they have created, yet that is a possibility. Or it could be a sacred window showing life-in-progress on another world, or in another dimension.

The Miracle of Apu-Punchau, OTOH, was likely created by the good ship Tzadkiel. Yes, the tunnel corridors of the Old Citadel seem linked to the corridors of Time (as the Last House is) since Valeria has lived her life outside of Time as we know it. The Green Man does not know of the New Sun since the New Sun is all he and his kind have ever known. Jonas & Miles . . . ah, that's a complicated one I'll save for later, or for others . . . or for later others . . . the option you mention is the most comforting one (well, it was for me at least), but I'm afraid the evidence points to something a bit more disturbing . . .

Well, enough for now.

=mantis=