

Tracking Song

The Urth list — 4 messages, 1 voices, 02 Jul 1998

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mary whalen — 02 Jul 1998, 22:37

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

Just an odd little thought about technology in the story Tracking Song. Cim, who's like a mink, has a mysterious rod (endieva) that probably uses electricity or poison (that's how little we know about it). Min are cyborgs (or anti-cyborgs) who possess excellent but old (from our future, though) technology. The men in the Great Sleigh have very powerful technology, and are able to terraform an entire planet by raising its temperature. Wouldn't this make the chart of the progression of technology read: mink-min-man? Progression of knowledge by variation of letters?

Oh, this reminds me. Since I used the word cybernetic organism just now, I remembered the discussion on the story Hellish Hues. Kybernetes (from which cybernetic comes) is Greek for helmsman, and now relates to robots. This reminds me of the helmsman of the Egg in the story, KUL. They seem to fit together, and in Greek there is no difference between the letters u and y (so kybernetes is the same as kubernetes). Anyone know why there's an L at the end? Anyone think I'm reaching too far?

prion

mary whalen — 07 Jul 1998, 22:27 · follows mary whalen

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

I recently reread Tracking Song and have seen some points that I don't think have been addressed earlier.

First, at the very beginning of the story, Cutthroat says that he's using the device to record his words so that if someone comes for him and he's dead, they'll understand what happened to him, and "I feel that someone may, though I do not know why." This seems to be a precognition of what happens at the end of the story, and perhaps shows that he did die at the end.

Second, I'm fairly sure that he's not an animal-person dressed in a Sleigher's clothes, as he remembers parties, etc., knows how to use some of his equipment, and isn't familiar with the plant and animal life in the area.

I don't know how I missed this before, but Cutthroat clearly calls the insulated clothing he's wearing "the captain's coat."

prion

mary whalen — 08 Jul 1998, 17:43 · follows mary whalen

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

In the same book, there is a story called "How the Rabbit Lost His Tail." In it, the rabbit has a brother who has amazing powers. The rabbit goes west to find adventure, and his brother says he will come to help him when he calls, even when he is busy. The rabbit keeps meeting people, being foolish, and changing clothes with the people he meets. Everytime this happens he calls his brother who takes care of it.

This seems to relate to Tracking Song, too. If the rabbit is like Cutthroat and his brother is someone on the Great Sleigh, the recording/transmitting device is the means by which he lets the sled know if he's in trouble. Perhaps the GS does increase its speed so that it can reach Cutthroat sooner. I am not sure exactly how the clothes-changing relates to this, but it may indicate if Cutthroat's a human or not (or a human head on an animal's body).

prion

mary whalen — 14 Jul 1998, 00:12 · follows mary whalen

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

Doesn't anyone want to discuss "Tracking Song"? Oh, well.

Well, anyway, after I recently reread it it seemed to me that every mammal is an anthropomorphic creature that has a living cognate as well as an analogous Ice Age creature of larger form, both living in North America.

Tribe: current animal/Ice Age animal

Wiggikki: wolf/dire wolf

Lenizee: deer/?

Nashhwonk: moose/?

Ketin(cha): lion(ess)/cave lion(ess)

Pamigaka: boar/?

Pummanga: ?gopher/?

Mimmunka: lynx/smilodon (sabre-toothed tiger)

(Cim's t.): mink/giant mink

(vampires): bat/?

Min: ?bear/?cave bear

(snow monkey variety 1): ?rabbit, chipmunk, mouse/?

(snow monkey variety 2): squirrel/?

(tall thin woman): ??

(bear-like thing): ??

Cutthroat: ?man, rabbit

I think the Min are probably bears because of the similarity they have with the Native American bear stories I've read (a bear with half it's body made of flint, living in a cave, causing trouble for the hero). I'm not completely sure, though.

Cutthroat may be a native man, a man from the Great Sleigh, or some man whose head has been attached to a rabbit man's body. I'm really not sure.

Pummanga never appears in the story, so this is only a guess.

Cutthroat says that there are several varieties of the snow monkeys, with big fluffy tails. I think

they're just as human as the other animal tribes, just smaller and less intelligent.

Be alert for my weapon analysis!

By the way, are all of my letters getting through and being sent? I've had several that haven't been answered by anyone. Am I doing something wrong? Am I just sending too many?

prion