

# Scylla (wet)

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 05 Sep 2000

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Robert Borski — 05 Sep 2000, 12:21

Here are a few more plot-points to my Mother-as-Scylla hypothesis.

In addition to the previous examples I cited where Horn directly or indirectly compared the two, let me note the following, wherein Horn compares the Mother to the still-to-be-met Quadrifons: "And if Quadrifons (whose sign of the crossroads may well have become Pas's sign of addition) was in the final reckoning none other than the Outsider--which now seems certain to me--might not the Mother be Scylla as well?"

[Sidenote to Nick Gevers: I'll be very surprised if Quadrifons--he of the four faces--turns out to be a true physical manifestation of the Outsider, but wonder what the inhabitants of the Whorl might think of our old friend, Ossipago.]

Horn also seems to believe in the megatherian concept of godliness: "It may be that our gods did not come among us except by enlightenment and possession because they were too large to do so; even the godlings that they send among the people now are, for the most part, immense."

Compare this then to Seawrack's description of the Mother's physical dimensions:

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"The underwater woman taught me to sing like that. I wish I could forget her, too."

"Your Mother?" I asked.

"She wasn't my mother."

"The Mother.' You called her that."

"She wanted me to. I was on a big boat, and I remember a woman who talked to me, and carried me sometimes. I think that was my mother.

"After that, there was only the underwater woman. She doesn't look like a woman unless she makes part of herself a woman.

"She's another shape, vey big. But she is one. She told me to call her Mother, and I did."

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Seawrack later reflects on her former sleeping habitats. "The water was always warm and still in them, with Mother's smell in it. I'd curl up and go to sleep, knowing that Mother was so big nothing frightened her, and that most of the dangerous things and people were afraid of her."

This being of immense size sounds very much to me like Megatherian Scylla, the "sea monster of the Red Sun Whorl," who's taken refuge from Pas on Blue. (Echidna is dead, we're told; so perhaps are Scylla's brothers and sisters.)

Finally, there is this from Oreb, but first I'd like to thank Endymion for providing me with an additional item in my argument that Scylla is riding Oreb, although I wish you'd quoted more (to wit: "Dreamt that Oreb was back. Very strange. I was in the Sun Street Quarter again, made inexpressably sad by its devastation. I sent Pig away as I actually did there, with Oreb for a guide; but at the last moment I could not bear to be parted from him and called him back. He returned and lit upon my shoulder, wrapping a slimy tentacle around my neck, he having become Scylla. In Oreb's voice she demanded that I take her to the Blue Mainframe.") Incanto at this point has just said goodbye to the Neighbors, asking as his final question "Do you know about Seawrack and her mother?" and this sets Oreb to squawking:

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"Wet god? Wet god?" Oreb cried plaintively after them. Did he mean the Mother? Or Scylla, who haunts my dreams? I have questioned him, but he refuses to answer or contradicts himself. Possibly he meant both.

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The "contradicts himself" is interesting. Could Oreb be saying yes to Incanto's question of "Do you mean the Mother?" \_and\_ to the followup, "Or do you mean Scylla?"

I believe so --- because the Mother and Scylla are one and the same.

Robert Borski

\*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.