

hus (onomastics)

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 02 Dec 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1049>

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Robert Borski — 02 Dec 2000, 12:54

After trying for the past four years to figure out the etymology of hus, but failing, I decided to go to the man himself for help, and here is what he told me:

"Hus is a little embarrassing. It's an old word for house. (A hussy was a kept woman: a house woman, like a house dog, rather than a housewife--a woman who was shacking up.) When I started the book, I wanted to combine the house-pet idea with the wild-boar idea, and called Babbi a hushhog. I hadn't gotten very far before I realized that most readers would see the word as hush.org and my characters began referring to him as "hus." So I left it at that."

Robert Borski (who still doesn't understand how a "a half-grown hus" can look like "a cluster of boys, or two men upon their hands and knees," but I guess that's me.)

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

Michael Straight — 04 Dec 2000, 09:19 · follows Robert Borski

On Sat, 2 Dec 2000, Robert Borski wrote:

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"hush.org"? Looks like a website for librarians. I suppose that's supposed to say "hush og"? And I guess you mean that the original word was 'hushog' (one 'h' in the middle) pronounced "hus hog"? Took me a minute to figure that out - more confusing than the Matera Mint typo in Exodus.

Robert Borski (who still doesn't understand how a "a half-grown hus" can look like "a cluster of boys, or two men upon their hands and knees," but I guess that's me.)

I think it's just trying to capture the oddity of eight legs. Maybe our perceptions are so used to two/four legs that seeing eight legs would initially register as more than one critter.

-Rostrum

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