

A reaction to IGJ

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

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Jacob G Corbin — 05 Dec 2000, 03:22

Some discombobulated thoughts mere hours after plowing through IGJ:

-- I'm glad I went ahead and purchased the hardcover instead of waiting for the TPB. Notwithstanding my junkie-like desperation for the next SHORT SUN installment, the fact that I could leave the dust jacket at home averted many potentially-embarrassing situations. I know it's been discussed before on this list, but it bears repeating: that cover is an abomination. I mean, just look at it. Does it grab you and demand your attention, saying: "This book is superbly erudite, marvelously witty, and worthy of the closest scrutiny. It is the best its genre has to offer and you owe it to yourself to read it"? I'm afraid not. Instead, it shouts to unsuspecting passersby: "The person reading this is a socially-maladapted head case and is best given a wide berth!" Ehhh, I could go on for hours about SF's image problem, but I'll just stop here.

-- My only major complaint with the book was the repetitious Horn vs. the Despoiling Conquerors stuff. Now, obviously Wolfe wouldn't keep putting his characters in these situations if he wasn't trying to make a major point. And I'll grant that, like the Gaonese war, the Blanko fiasco allowed Wolfe to put Horn into a series of situations that would have been harder to contrive sans a background conflict. But why couldn't this have been allowed to *remain* in the background, like in OBW? The "climactic" battle suffered from a major case of deus ex machina. Wolfe spends large chunks of dialogue describing the relative might of Soldo's forces to ratchet up the tension and get us wondering what clever tactics will be used...but neglects to tell the reader that, oh yeah, Blanko had a bunch of heavy artillery just lying around. Handy, that.

-- I liked the way OBW dealt, to some extent, with the rearing of sons, and now IGJ has done much the same with daughters...as one would expect, given the dedications. Does anyone know if Horn's adventures in parenting bear any resemblance to GW's own?

-- I massively enjoyed almost every other aspect of the book. I probably gave a girlish squeal of glee when everyone turned up in Nessus. Unfortunately, thanks to my utter lack of discipline, I now have a very long wait for RTTW, and am going to have to spend the morning turning my bookshelves inside out in search of a suitable substitute...the methadone to GW's heroin, as it were. I'm open to suggestions.

Jacob G Corbin

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