

Divine Silk and Pas (spoilers)

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 08 Feb 2001

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Spectacled Bear — 08 Feb 2001, 12:51

At 16:01 2001-02-07 -0800, Jonathan Dale wrote:

Hi,

Having just finished RTTW and being new to this list, the following questions may already have been answered in the current yet-to-be-published digest! Apologies, if so.

I was quite astounded by the end of RTTW; not so much the question of identity regarding Horn and Silk, but more the chronology of what happens when; Wolfe manages to masterfully obscure the precise ordering of events until the very end (I managed to get hints by seeing when Horn/Silk possessed the azoth).

...

4. Is the nature of the azoth revealed anywhere but when Horn/Silk cuts the boat in two in RTTW? What is the speculation on this - that it is some kind of shaped antimatter beam? Also, what's the relationship to the black blade that the Neighbour chooses for Horn when he has to clear the sewer - is it some strange precursor to the fact that he will one day get the azoth?

A literary echo, I think. The only hint as to how the azoth works is given when we first see it in Nightside, which talks about reality splitting in two. The fuligin cloaks of the torturers are compared to the colour of the blade in RttW, which does make it sound more like a space-time phenomenon than a material thing. It can be deflected a little by good steel, though, and it doesn't reach indefinitely. Azoths wouldn't have been allowed on the Whorl if they were likely to puncture it!

5. Given the nature of the inhumini/human symbiosis secret, I was unclear on the exact specifics of how children were created; in one part of RTTW, the process of inhumini mating is clearly explained and somewhere in IGJ Fava explains about breaking out of the egg, etc., but I was unclear from where the mind was drawn. Is it that a primal inhumini takes on the mind from the first victim (which would explain Krait and Sinew) or is it more related to who the parents were?

The inhumini drinks blood, develops an egg with a supply enclosed, and lays it in the water. The mind comes from the blood by the chemical transfer of memories, as in the Book of the New Sun.

Spectacled Bear.