

Digest whorl.v012.n042 (RTTW SPOILERS!)

The Whorl list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 09 Feb 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1120>

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Shannon Appelcline — 09 Feb 2001, 10:32

From: Dan Schmidt <dfan at harmonixmusic.com>

OK, we're remembering the same text, but interpreting it differently.

I took that to mean that he did write about his earlier time in the Whorl (e.g., meeting Pig and Hound) but the editors picked it up after he arrived in Old Viron. Otherwise I would have expected them to write 'the Whorl' rather than 'Old Viron and the West Pole'.

It seems very unlikely that Hornsilk would suddenly change his entire writing style as well as the method he's been using to tell his story ... all for no particular reason. By Occam's Razor the third-person narrative in RTTW was written by Horn's sons.

Another point on narrative style:

* The place in RTTW where I really started to wonder if Horn was Horn was when he was speaking to Silk in Blood's mansion. It became blatantly obvious that their styles of speech were very, very similar. That pedantic, totally truthful style of speech that we've become so familiar with throughout the Short Sun series.

I'm wondering if this is intended as a real clue or if it's just how the Vironese speak. We have four books that are good samples of Horn's writing (though edited by Nettle). We also have samples of his speech in those books, which we probably can presume are less edited. How does Horn's speech in TBotLS compare with his speech in TBotSS?

From: "Pat O'Leary" <poleary at cecom.com>

1. Why was the farmer who gave Silk/horn the seed so fearful/hostile/violent toward him?

At least throughout his writing of TBotSS Hornsilk has a real persecution complex. From Sinew to Marrow to Babbie ... then throughout the books ... Hornsilk attributes to people the worst possible reasons for doing things. By the end of the books I questioned Hornsilk whenever he said someone was out to get him.

I'm not entirely sure *what* caused this persecution complex.

That's sort of how I read them. If this is the case then each letter is a formal overture of the central narrative method: Impersonation.

And, that's actually the theme of both series of books as well, in mirror images. TBotLS was a book about Silk written by Horn. TBotSS was a book about Horn written by Silk.

From: BMeyer7 at aol.com

5. There has previously been a suggestion that maybe Horn/Silk was an inhum. It has been noted that one feature of inhum is that they don't eat much. On p. 361, it is said of Horn/Silk: "sometimes it seemed like he was just pretending to eat and drink, and this was one of them." Wow! This is a Gene Wolfe red flare signal of something isn't it?

There was another pretty big hint in RttW. It's commented a few times that inhumis have really bad legs. And who spends the whole series walking around with a staff because he's partially crippled? Is this really a result of his 20-year-old wound at Blood's or something more?

I don't think that we can guarantee Hornsilks isn't an inhumis just because he *is* Silk, as that could be a result of a download going on top of inhumis-memory-transfer-through-blood.

I *doubt* Hornsilks was an inhumis at this point, but the question is: why would Wolfe offer so many hints that he might be?

Shannon

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

Shannon Appelcline — 09 Feb 2001, 10:32 · follows Shannon Appelcline

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Spectacled Bear — 12 Feb 2001, 09:32 · follows Shannon Appelcline

At 10:32 2001-02-09 -0800, Shannon Appelcline wrote:

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No-one else from Viron talks like that, with the sole and interesting exception of Hound. Does he just imitate Silk? He clearly knows of him. Or am I imagining it?

Spectacled Bear.