

Further RTTW stuff

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 12 Feb 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1139>

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Alex David Groce — 12 Feb 2001, 13:02

1) I'm unconvinced that Silk was actually attempting suicide in the manse, in any sense other than not binding his wounds and hoping that he would die. I'm still not sure how he was wounded, though I have some ideas (but need a second reading to clarify them). Silk's suicide attempts/contemplations in BOTNS and the rest BOTSS are passive--even jumping off the airship strikes me as "letting the ground kill me." Second of all, I can't buy that if Silk really did decide to do something, he'd cut his arms in random spots, halfheartedly.

2) I agree with alga that the godling is problematic. I was impressed by the overall effect of RTTW, but there are a lot of points still bugging me, aside from what seems to have been rather subpar copyediting. The godling serves a useful role in the plot (but not one I'm convinced couldn't have been handled otherwise) and definitely heightens the surreal atmosphere of the whole night at Blood's, but it still seems superfluous.

3) Hyacinth is one reason Silk doesn't admit to himself who he is until Remora forces him to, but I think there is another, equally compelling: Horn and Silk both know that Horn has failed. Horn was sent by New Viron to bring the Silk that Horn wrote about, a Silk who will solve their problems. Silk is a very good man, but he knows (and Horn finds out) that he isn't the Silk of BOTLS. Viron is in better shape than New Viron (certainly not physically, but as far as the quality of its civic life) and Silk can't "fix things" there. Silk can lead people to victory in war. He has the moral power of being a very good man. But, in the end, there isn't much that he can do about people selling each other as slaves, if that's what they really want to do. Ironically, there's a twist here on the reception of Christ: if the New Vironese expected Silk to lead them as an earthly king to victory over enemies, he might suit the purpose. Instead, they want him to make them just and at peace without any change on their part, which he can't do. This also explains Silk's reluctance to go with the Gaonese, but his willingness as well. They want the Silk that he isn't as well, but at least they want him for something he can probably really do.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32

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