

Petty complaints (RTTW spoilers)

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 14 Feb 2001

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William Ansley — 14 Feb 2001, 01:08

At 6:03 PM -0500 2/13/01, <akt at attglobal.net> wrote:

From: Kieran Cleary <kcleary at jb.man.ac.uk>> Subject: Re: (whorl) Pig, Godling

Alga,

Couldn't agree more re Pig. Did he like deciphering that dialect? He did
nae!

It fashed my een! And my kin are Scottish on my mother's side--which made it all the more irritating! I know where your kin are from despite that "uk" in your address....

Hi, alga and all.

I finally had time to finish RTTW. I can't say that I was all that thrilled with it either, for a variety of reasons. I found Pig's dialect quite irritating as well; there were some things he said that I never figured out.

(Now that I think about it, I suppose that the fact that Hornsilk could always understand Pig could be taken as more evidence that Hornsilk was really Silk all along. In TBotLS, Silk could always understand, Tick, that highly annoying catacrest that always used random consonants at the beginnings of the words it spoke. (Something that has always bother me: what was the catacrest's real name? It couldn't have been Tick, if that's what it called itself.))

In fact I got heartily sick of all of the "distinctive" ways Wolfe came up with for his characters to speak in this book: Pig's dialect, the village of the Yodas, Olivine's repeating, Olivine's repeating herself, Prolocutor Italics and Remora's mumblings.

> The encounter with the godling struck me as very similar to one of Sev's meetings with Juturna ('I would save you'), or with the hierodules, where they kneel before him. In a sense, the godling is a debased version of a hierodule, and recognises Silk as the 'holy one'.

Well, yes. But I do think the operative word is "debased." I love Juturna and the hierodules and think they are used *extremely* well by the author (especially in that last book that some on this list like to put down), but as I said in an earlier post, the godling, to me, seems like a Hollywood special effect that serves no purpose other than cover art.

I was also bothered by the impossibly large size of the (big) godling. Wolfe should make up his mind, is he writing science fiction or isn't he?

As far as the cover art goes, this book far surpassed all of the the others in the wrongness of the cover, in my opinion. The artist apparently read the book with very little attention.

On p. 53 the godling is described as having "a smooth, domed head."

No mention of a hat or hood. So where does the artist come up with the very peculiar headgear he puts on the godling's head? From p. 139.

The yellow flame of the candle rose; he shut his lantern, mesmerized by the end of the godling's thumb, the smoothly rounded face of a faceless man wearing a peaked hat that was in fact a claw.

So the artist puts a hood with a bizarre, claw-like forward thrusting peak on his godling's head but no claws on his hand. I guess it's just me, but I find this profoundly irritating.

More complaints to come!

William Ansley

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