

Mutter matters

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 16 Mar 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1274>

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Robert Borski — 16 Mar 2001, 11:28

Some more questions for those of you arguing that the Mother and Greater Scylla of Urth are from the same, galaxy-conquering, bad-ass family of aliens who all speak the same lingua monstre:

1) Are we agreed that the Mother can change shape? Seawrack tells Horn that "She used to look like a woman for me and hold me in her arms, and I used to think the woman was the real her and make her bring the woman back. She looked like a woman for you too. Remember?" Horn also believes the Mother can change shape, and at one point even compares her with the inhumi: "The inhumi can change their faces, for instance, much more than we can by smiling or sucking in her cheeks. But I believe that a better companion might be with the Mother, who--" At which point he's interrupted by Seawrack and never finishes--another of Wolfe's many aposiopeses.

2) By logical extension of the above-stated premise, does this mean that Greater Scylla can also change her shape?

3) How has Cilinia of Urth died? As she tells Horn, "I died young. It can't have been long after I was scanned for the Whorl." Unlike the process that creates Mr. Million, however, we know the scanning process doesn't kill, and apparently someone cared enough about her to bury her in the family mausoleum--it almost had to have been Pas and Echidna, otherwise how would Cilinia--aboard the Whorl as a computer program--even know she had died? But what has killed the eldest daughter of Pas?

4) Are we to make anything of the similarity in names "Cilinia" and "Scylla"? Or is this just more happy coincidence?

Robert Borski

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

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 16 Mar 2001, 11:06 · follows Robert Borski

1) Are we agreed that the Mother can change shape?

If I recall correctly, she makes some part of herself look like a human woman for Horn (and earlier for Seawrack). So she has some kind of capacity for disguise, yes, but no ability to change her mass -- as I recall Horn makes a comparison to an iceberg or a mountain-island, that he sees the woman-shaped bit above the water but the vast bulk of the Mother is below.

The short answer though is a limited yes.

2) By logical extension of the above-stated premise, does this mean that Greater Scylla can also change her shape?

In absence of actual knowledge I would guess that she has a similar capacity.

3) How has Cilinia of Urth died?

Unknown.

As she tells Horn, "I died young. It can't have been long after I was scanned for the Whorl." Unlike the process that creates Mr. Million, however, we know the scanning process doesn't kill,

Well, there are a few millenia of additional technology involved...

But what has killed the eldest daughter of Pas?

Again, unable to say from available information.

4) Are we to make anything of the similarity in names "Cilinia" and "Scylla"? Or is this just more happy coincidence?

I make of it Mr Wolfe being cute. He likes futzing about with names.

Dan'l

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