

The Mystery of Malrubius's Ghost, SOLVED!

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 29 Mar 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1306>

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William Ansley — 29 Mar 2001, 23:00

I thought I would take the liberty of assembling the appropriate portions of the relevant posts.

At 7:53 PM +0000 2/6/01, Ian Smith wrote:
and another from cephalothorax:

"Persnickety: Are we really meant to believe that Severian, who writes about Master Ash, and the Green Man, and being a white fountain hundreds of years before he's born is going to consider "Horn" too much of a stretch for his readers to believe because he's got the love-vibe and walks through walls?"

On this I'm no more certain, but I got the distinct impression that the apprentice Severian was under the impression that Horn / Silk's spirit was actually Malrubius' ghost (hence his comment to Gurloes about Oreb), which of course does get mentioned frequently throughout TBOTNS(& he certainly pairs Malrubius with Triskele a fair bit). Whether Wolfe has managed the phenomenal task of tying the ends up, we won't know until someone has the energy to re-read TBOTNS looking for them. Surely such a thing is impossible, but I'm trying not to make the mistake of under-estimating Wolfe...

At 1:35 PM +0000 2/9/01, Spectacled Bear wrote:
At 07:30 2001-02-09 EST, BMeyer7 at aol.com wrote:

...

...

3. Are we to believe that Horn/Silk is Malrubius?

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It's an interesting idea, and quite plausible.

At 6:39 PM -0500 3/29/01, BraveSaintCroix at aol.com wrote:
Whoo-pee, I finally feel like I have something worthwhile to contribute to this group- unless, of course, someone beats me to it. I got the April catalogue of the Science Fiction Book Club today, and it has a one-page article/advertisement for the Book of the Short Sun. Of course, as is the way of the SFBC, it makes the book sound terribly pulp-sci-fi-ish. (. . . the inhumani, blood drinking aliens who take human form. . .) It even seems to give away quite a bit. The last paragraph reads: "As his inability to find Silk weighs heavily on his mind, Horn is further tormented by the fact that his new body bears a striking resemblance to the lost Calde. In the end, he will have to answer a troubling question: has he truly failed in his sworn task, or has he become the very man he sought?"

I'm not complaining though, because it also includes a "note from the author". Gene Wolfe writes: "At the end of the 18th Century, serious scientists denied that stones could fall from the sky. At the end of this

one, very few still insist that phenomena incapable of proof are beyond the realm of possibility. We may doubt telepathy, ghost, and precognition- indeed, we should doubt them. But we cannot rule them out altogether. That phenomenon most often called astral projection plays a part in these books. (So does space travel, which most adults derided as utterly impossible not so long ago.)" And here's what really got me: "Accept it for the sake of the story, and you may learn the identity of Master Malrubius's ghost." (My emphasis.) Wow. That makes my head spin. I didn't even think of that, and if I remember, no one on here has discussed it much. Who then, was Master Malrubius's ghost?

Apparently the the astral projection of Hornsilk was.

Well, well. Congratulations, Ian. Confirmation from the horse's mouth.

Gene Wolfe seems to have at least a mild case of Asimov's syndrome. I hope he recovers before his next book.

William Ansley

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