

Silk's death (spiritual vs. physical)

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 20 Apr 2001

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Robert Borski — 20 Apr 2001, 13:17

Kevin M. writing:

<<...just as others believe ... that Silk has committed suicide or accidentally bled to death from cuts inflicted during the grieving process.>>

<Does anyone believe the latter? Silk's body is healthy, but his spirit/soul is dying, implies the Neighbor.>

Then Herr Schabe geschriebt:

<As the originator (as far as I know) of the Silk-cut-himself-in- grief hypothesis, I have to point out that this hypothesis does not involve Silk bleeding to death, accidentally or otherwise.

<In fact, I profoundly doubt the value or validity of any theory that involves Silk being (physically) dead at the time Horn "possesses" him. The whole point of what the Neighbor offers Horn is to take a living soul from a dying body and put it into a living body with a dying soul. (My wording; I don't have the text before me.)>

Here's the exact quote from IGJ, p. 127:

"I can send your spirit into someone else, into someone whose own spirit is dying. If you wish, I will find someone in the whorl in which you were born. Then there will be one whole man there, instead of two dying men, one here and another there."

Like so much of Wolfe, a passage couched in ambiguity, and therefore grist for us exegetes. But to my mind, it can be read either way. That Silk has depaired and only his "spirit is dying." Or that Silk and Horn are both mortally wounded and therefore "two dying men."

Robert Borski

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