

Yet another Secret theory: we have met the enemy and he is

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 23 Apr 2001

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William Ansley — 23 Apr 2001, 23:51

At 8:14 PM -0500 4/23/01, Adam Stephanides wrote:

Say what you will about Nicholas Gevers' proposal, he's got people thinking about the Secret again.

And this is a good thing? <G> I swore to myself that I was not going to contribute any more to this conversation. But your theory is too good to pass up, Adam.

When Jahlee says that the inhumis take their children's minds from the humans whose blood they drink, she is not merely referring to their intelligence. The children's spirits (perhaps their souls, if inhumis have souls) are taken from humans. Krait is Horn's son, not just by adoption, but because his spirit is the same as Sinew's. This is why, during astral travel, the inhumis appear human.

Interesting. This may explain why Krait had to die. If he had ever been the catalyst for astral travel, under this theory, presumably his astral body would have looked just like Sinew or at least borne a strong resemblance to him. (This does raise the question, who did Jahlee's mother bite? Anyone we know?)

So the way in which the Secret can be used as a weapon is indeed the Golden Rule bit proposed here before. If humans loved each other enough and were unselfish enough, then the inhumis, drinking their blood, would produce children who were too unselfish to drink human blood. Then the inhumis would lose their intelligence, and this would not be cruel to the inhumis because they were meant to be just animals: they have no spirits of their own (this is what I take to be Wolfe's view, not necessarily my own). The inhumis as they exist now are monstrosities, albeit pitiable monstrosities, like the beast-men of "The Island of Doctor Death" (sorry, alga, but I think that this fits Wolfe's portrayal of the inhumis better than visions of human-inhumis brotherhood [*] do).

I have always thought that an insurmountable objection to this was that humans who truly obeyed the Golden Rule would freely give their blood to inhumis, if doing so made them truly human, in the soul department at least. This would lead to a glorious human-inhumis partnership and they all would live happily ever after. But, if what the inhumis are actually getting is a copy or a piece of a human soul, then perhaps perfectly moral beings (that is, if this isn't too extreme a description of humans who follow the Golden Rule) would not feel it was necessary to give their blood to the inhumis.

(Hey, maybe the inhumis are stealing part of the soul of the child whose blood they drink. Maybe that's what was wrong with Sinew. Naaaaah!)

William Ansley

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