

The weapon too heavy to wield

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 28 Apr 2001

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Alan Phillips & Ling Xiang — 28 Apr 2001, 02:03

I just had an idle thought on what the nature of the inhumis secret may be. This may not be supported by the books, but what if the inhumis inherit not only human intelligence from the blood of their parents but also inherit a link to part of the human spirit. The inhumis would gain sentience and a "soul" of sorts which is connected (astrally? psychic?) to the victims of their parents. If the human victims of inhumis bites die, then the inhumis children might "lose their souls" i.e. die or cease to be intelligent.

Here is where we get the "weapon too heavy to wield". There are 2 ways to reduce the inhumis to mindlessness, one improbable and one possible:

1) For all victims of inhumis bites to become so altruistic that the inhumis who share their spirits stop drinking blood and die out. This, however, is so unlikely that even the most paranoid inhumis need not fear it.

2) Kill all humans who have been bitten by inhumis. This would reduce all inhumis to animal intelligence. This may be what Horn/Silk fears. If word of this got out there could be a mass witch-hunt to slaughter all the inhumis victims. There are probably many on Blue (and Green) who would gladly attempt this if they thought it would work. This may be what the inhumis fear. Horn/Silk would also be reluctant to reveal this--less so because of his oath than to prevent the murder of innocent people.

Again, I haven't re-read the books to try to back this up and you have to swallow my soul-link theory to make it work but it sounded somewhat plausible.

--Alan

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