

Soul swapping and time bending thesis

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 05 Jan 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1521>

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maa32 — 05 Jan 2002, 19:11

In response to my crazed and unorganized theories involving Horn in Babbie and Neighbors as some kind of tree or something, Nutria kindly (and thoroughly, in a much more organized fashion than I have formulated it so far) replied:

Good point. The 3-horn business comes after the rule. Now, am I understanding you right? Are you saying that Horn's spirit first goes into Silk's body, and then when Silk is revived by Severian, Horn enters Babbie's body? That's an intriguing thesis. I'd like to hear from some of the others on this list, who have devoted more attention to the problem of who the Narrator is at various points.

Now, rather than repost all of your interesting missive, let me ask this: Are you suggesting that the Green Man who meets Severian might be a Neighbor from Ushas? From what you wrote, I gather you are suggesting something like this:

1. Urth becomes Ushas.
2. Intelligent plants, perhaps "descended" from humans, take over Ushas as Neighbors/Green Men.
3. Neighbors create inhumani on Green/Lune.
4. Much later, they transcend Ushas and "move on."
5. The Whorl arrives back at Ushas/Lune (Blue/Green), perhaps a million years later (because I don't see how all the above could have happened in 1000 years).

I'm not trying to be funny, just trying to figure out what your thesis is. Perhaps you can unpack it.

This is great Nutria, I think it is a wonderful way of organizing all of my incoherent gaps. Instead of saying that Severian ressurects Silk in Horn, I am suggesting that a part of Horn leaves Silk's body at the very end of On Blue's Waters, at which point he loses some sense of himself as Horn, and therefore re-reads the manuscript he has to piece together what is going on and notes all the things he left out. Note that On Blue's Waters is mostly in the past and only details the present situation of the narrator in small gaps, whereas In Green's Jungles is primarily in the present but recounts Horn's journeys through small snippets and through third person stories (such as his stories at the dinner table in Inclito's (Windcloud's) house where he calls himself "he" instead of "I"). In Return to the Whorl, Babbie returns to him and he looks him in the eye (also, neighbors are all over the place in that book, and supposedly he has "Seawrack's" ring again) and can complete transmitting Horn into Babbie (I'm not sure if this goes on, or whether Horn takes his leave at the end of Book 1: just remember how much meaner the Horn of On Blue's Waters seems than the narrator of In Green's Jungles and Return to the Whorl).

I am not sure why he meets Severian, but I am pretty sure that Silk needed to leave Pig in order to re-possess his own body, and that this happened at the sickbay where the screen was silvery-gray, (note the warnings of the doctor: pay attention to your monitor. Don't piss in the wind.) but I have no idea exactly where Silk came back into possession of his body in toto. I think Silk and Horn are both in fragments in Silk's body (but again, I am not entirely confident that it is Silk's original body. Fava calls him Dervis, Horn's father thinks he is Parietal, and he

seems mighty light [a slug gun knocks him off his horse] and reluctant to eat, at one point (maybe in astral travel) he doesn't have the scars on his arms from fighting Hierax). Fragments of Horn leave, but leave a little behind (just like godly possession), with the largest portion fleeing into Babbie at the end of On Blue's Waters, leaving Silk to kill the rest to take over full possession. I really think that the trees are related to the neighbors, but I am just not sure if they are the green man, and I just can't account for the doubling of limbs (for all creatures, big and small!). That's the biggest problem for me, unless it is yet another alternate branch like Master Ash/ Green Man: they can't both exist. I don't like that, because there doesn't seem to be ANY textual evidence for alternate realities in the Book of the Short Sun. I am saying that the trip to the past is important because it allows Scylla (Cillinia) to communicate with Greater Scylla and gives Silk a chance to learn how to get Seawrack from the future Greater Scylla (or her sister, or whatever). He does a favor for them both by returning Cillinia to her resting place, which would have been destroyed in the flood, so this is the last time (or an approximation of that time) at which Silk can arrive and perform this service for Scylla. Severian is important because he allows this service to Scylla to be completed since he is material and can lay her to rest, whereas if Silk opened the tomb it might become undone: remember how the neighbor asked Horn to clear out the sewer in Green with all the corpses? He said he could do it, but it would become undone if he did it and be clogged again. I think that the Neighbor was present to Horn in the same way that Silk is present in Urth. He needed Severian to lay Scylla to rest forever. This allows Silk to get a hold on Seawrack (and if you are at all interested in an unbiased presentation of Seawrack, read the afterward and see how she is described as a bestial creature ready to stick a knife in anything except Father), who is very important. Also, remember who commissions Hari Mau to bring back Silk: all his men keep having dreams about Echidna, the mother goddess. On Blue, I'm pretty sure these dreams are being sent by The Mother/Greater Scylla unless Echidna is hiding in a cow down there. That Mother is important, and I think the conclusion deals more with foiling the Mother's plot by placating her in the past (with the Savior Severian's help) than with ressurecting Silk. Yes, I would say that the whorl has been gone for a very long time. There are still some things I really think don't fit with all this, but you have encapsulated where I think one reading of the text can take us in a very nice fashion, Nutria. Thanks for taking the time to figure out what I'm trying to say: as I said, I had many different ideas about the text that I can not quite unify. I am not sure where the Vanished People are in the time of Book of the Short Sun: at times, it seems that they are everywhere, especially when Hoof randomly looks through the ring and sees one just hanging out in the ocean on a big tree. Are they really from the past? And, interestingly enough, there is that skeleton in the huge tower that Jahlee has made her home on Green, which she calls Silk's "friend" which she throws out, then at the top of the cliff he meets that man coming towards them in the colorless cloak. do you remember that scene in Return to the Whorl? Who wears a colorless cloak? Maybe Andy was right and Severian's spirit is on Lune. Does colorless mean clear/ white or fulligin? I don't know. That part creeps me out. Have we talked about that apparition? And why does Silk resemble Malrubius so much? Where they grown from the same embryo - why would they do that? Did Urth have sufficient technology to preserve an embryo for a thousand years and randomly grow it? Maybe that is why Silk can go back to that time period - his soul is essentially the same as Malrubius', and once Malrubius is dead he has an opening. I don't know. Let's not incorporate this into my thesis - it's more random speculation. Thanks for you attention, Nutria. I appreciate it. Marc Aramini

Michael Andre-Driussi — 05 Jan 2002, 19:56 · follows maa32

There is talk about time travel in the Short Sun series.

Marc Aramini wrote:

I am

saying that the trip to the past is important because it allows Scylla (Cillinia) to communicate with Greater Scylla and gives Silk a chance to learn

how to get Seawrack from the future Greater Scylla (or her sister, or whatever). He does a favor for them both by returning Cillinia to her resting place, which would have been destroyed in the flood, so this is the last time (or an approximation of that time) at which Silk can arrive and perform this service for Scylla.

But this isn't time travel: it is instantaneous travel across hundreds of light years of space. It is "real time" on Urth, just as it is on Blue.

The Claw bends time in THE BOOK OF THE NEW SUN, and Severian travels through time in URTH OF THE NEW SUN, yes. But Silkhorn's trip to Urth is not a form of time travel (except in the completely different sense that time has been negated from the time/space matrix, and the party astrally crosses vast space in zero time).

Yes, I would say that the whorl has been gone for a very long time.

In THE BOOK OF THE LONG SUN the whorl has been gone for about 1000 years Urth time, about 335 years ship-time: the time compression ratio is consistent with that of a ship which has been traveling at nearly the speed of light.

These facts do not demolish your emerging theory, but incorporating them will help sharpen things a great deal.

=mantis=