

Betel & Quetzal

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 15 Apr 1997

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/204>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Ranjit Bhatnagar — 15 Apr 1997, 01:05

Why is the extremely minor (?) character Maytera Betel always carefully described as dark and sleepy-eyed? It's bothering me. Sounds dangerously like a deliberate clue, like Tussah's coarse skin. I can't think of any other sleepy-eyed characters, but Poppy of the yellow house is dark, and named, like Betel, for a narcotic plant. Could Betel have reenacted Rose's shame more recently, and do we care?

By the way, there seem to be two different, unrelated plants called betel, both of which are narcotic.

Also, I don't remember anyone commenting on the passage in III, p17, in which Quetzal removes a powder puff from a drawer across the room, without leaving his chair. So does he have a chair with wheels, or telekinesis, that's what I want to know.

I just watched Disney's *Jungle Book*, and now Quetzal makes me think of a cross between Disney's serpent Kaa and the Simpsons' Montgomery Burns (as playing a vampire in the Halloween special).

r.

m.driussi — 15 Apr 1997, 15:30 · follows Ranjit Bhatnagar

Reply: Item #5599352 from WHORL at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET00#

Ranjit,

I agree with you--that Betel is a puzzler. She was a sibyl at Sun Street and might have been senior sibyl when Magnesia the maid of all work posed for the painting (see Q&D "Magnesia" entry for the tangle around the painting). I also agree there is something of the "shame of Rose" going on, also linked in with that painting thing, where we are told "the artist was a relative of the senior sibyl," "the artist's mother posed as Molpe," (the painting perhaps took place at the manteion, otherwise why would Magnesia be around?); so how many relatives in this scene, and why were they all at the manteion? Unless there were just the woman (sibyl) and her son (artist)?

Even if that doesn't pan out--Betel may have been the sibyl whose death triggered the need to bring a chem sibyl into the manteion.

Good hunting, Ranjit! Tell us what you find.

=mantis=