

# Horn's narrative biases

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 13 Jun 1997

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David Wells — 13 Jun 1997, 09:21

Mantis wrote:

Re: Hyacinth as a nasty fighter when she needs to be.

Fact is, she's just plain nasty whenever Silk isn't looking!

Says Horn, of course. Who, I would submit, is a particularly unreliable witness in this case. All kinds of complicated sexual jealousy might be likely to spring up between a horny (:-|) young man, his hero figure and an older woman, his hero's lover and possessed of supernormal/supernatural sexual allure. (Come to think of it, maybe it was a bit naughty of Hyacinth to use her goddess-like supersexuality to seduce the virginal Silk, hence also stripping him, Delilah-like, of his own (pseudo-)spiritual ability to talk with Gods. I can certainly see why Horn might think so). And, to add insult to injury, Hyacinth not only "stole" Silk from Horn, but also abandoned him later. For what appears to have been a very capricious reason - but again we only have Horn's word for this.

Random musings:

Sexuality. There's quite a lot of sex in the Long Sun, especially in Exodus, and some of it is explicitly homosexual in nature (lesbian soldiers and transvestite spies). When I finished Exodus, one of my first thoughts was that the sex in New Sun had been all, and unspokenly, heterosexual, and I wondered if Gene was in some way making up for this. But, of course, my memory was at fault. There's certainly lesbianism in New Sun, and between fairly major characters, too. I think the only reason that this seems important to me is that authors who never even seem to consider that their characters might have non-mainstream sexualities often seem to be very bad ones.

Horn's narrative bias, again. Horn's view of the inhumi seems particularly interesting now we know the nature of the sequel. As I've pointed out before, his description at the end of Exodus is wildly self-inconsistent. After having told us over hundreds of pages how Quetzal managed to pass himself off as a senior priest for over thirty years, he describes the inhumi as possessed of only rudimentary subhuman intelligence (lower than dogs, I think he says). Assuming that this isn't a satirical comment on the intelligence of the clergy (<g>) it seems to leave the colonists with an interesting (and far from unprecedented) prejudice-based military problem: they think that their enemies are enormously stupid, while in reality they are at least as intelligent as themselves...

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