Train from Wolfeland

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 14 Jun 1997

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m.driussi — 14 Jun 1997, 21:15

Here they are, the Answers to the trainload of questions. Without any further preamble --

1. "Who or what is Oreb?" Oreb is a night chough.

2. "What is his [Wolfe's] attraction to (pretenses that turn out to be true?" I'm sure it must be the unconscious hope that some of mine will.

3. "What was Typhon's purpose in lanunching the Whorl and was the Blue/Green system the intended destination?" Knowing Typhon as I do, he probably had at least half a dozen purposes; but certainly one of the chief must have been self-aggrandizement -- to return human kind to the stars would be a very great thing indeed. Yes, the Blue-Green system was the intended destination.

4. "Pike's ghost." It was seen in the manse, not the manteion; it wasn't machine made. I have not played Starcross, but then STARCROSSER'S LANDFALL was David Hartwell's title, not mine; so it seems likely enough that David has. [Mantis note: obviously I took the liberty in adding a rider to vizcacha's question, explaining what "Starcross" is, etc.]

5. "Silk's englightenments." They are purely miraculous.

6. "What is the source of information for the auguries?" Silk is. He is to some degree psychic and sometimes lucky; he also forms unconscious conclusions, as we all do. In other words, he foretells the future very much as others do with cards or crystals. What are the very accurate divinations to which this questioner refers?

7. "What are Quetzal's motives?" For what? He hates the Ayuntamiento and would like a thriving colony of human beings on Green.

8. "Valleys filled with shadows." This one throws me completely. Where is the difficulty, unless all the valleys run parallel to the Long Sun? Naturally they don't.

9. "Kypris's beam." It's the electron beam of the Sacred Window in the former manteion. Kypris is saying that she would have shown herself in the Window, had it been possible.

10. "What are the dimensions of the Whorl?" I don't know.

11. "What changed Mint's character?" Kypris. What I was trying to say is that there is more to love than doves and simpering.

12. "Who was Blood's father?" Patera Pike.

13. "Was the live cargo of the Whorl only put on board to preserve the `wild' half of mankind so

the Typhon/Pas entity could establish a vital human vassal state on the destination world, or did the Inhumi (sic) require the `wild' parts to satisfy their blood lust?" Neither. Typhon did not know about the inhumi [and] would have done everything possible to keep them out of the Whorl if he had. He could not be certain that the sleepers would not die before the Whorl reached its destination, or that they would be able to form viable societies when they were awakened. He coppered his bets by sending humans in three forms: cargo, sleepers, and frozen embryos. The first arrived largely intact. Some of the second and most of the third were lost.

14. "Is there a member (current, former, or future of the Order of Seekers for Truth and Penitence on the Whorl?" I'm going to interpret this questino in the broadest possible sense, since that seems to be what Parsons wants. Yes, there is. It is Silk.

15. "Is the Outsider a form of Severian?" No. Severian is a form of the Outsider.

=mantis=

Patri10629 — 14 Jun 1997, 21:37 · follows m.driussi

Thank you Michael. And thank you Gene.

The biggest shock (for me) is Patera Pike being Blood's dad. I wonder if there are clues in the text?

For once I doubt Wolfe means more than meets the eye when he claims "Silk is a seeker of truth and pentitence". He is, of course, that. Maybe the question he wants us to consider is: What do Severian and Silk have in common? Perhaps they both arrive at the same place, adopt the same mantle of leader/saint--the surrogate presence of God. The help the Outsider has promised is them, and, naturally I suppose, us.

A very Catholic idea, it seems to me.

They happen to be the heroes of their adventures. As we are of ours.

Thanks for fun!

Not to be snotty but it seems obvious to me The Outsider is God (note the lack of quotation marks:)--the only thing I disagree with in John Clute's lovely review of the LONG SUN BOOKS in the New York Review Of Science Fiction.

I have no right to feel smug about this: Damn don't I feel like a dufus? Ah, Mr. Wolfe, he asked cleverly ....What's Oreb? "Oreb is a black bird." So much for my sly interrogation. I simply wondered if the bird--oh never mind.

PS: Reccomend Wolfe's interview in the latest INTERZONE. Fun stuff.

best as always

Patrick O'Leary