

Blue & Green same as worlds in Fifth Head of Cerberus?

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 02 Jul 1997

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/388>

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Peter Cash — 02 Jul 1997, 14:12

David Langford wrote:

...Like I suspect many readers, my reaction when we learn that Whorl has arrived at what appears to the same double-planet system as featured in The Fifth Head of Cerberus was one of surprise (I think "bloody hell" was the phrase!) but I wonder, is there a consensus on whether Wolfe "means" this, or is he just playing with a similar theme?...Personally I have trouble seeing how Whorl, Severian etc can fit in the same universe as Fifth Head, which seemed much more recognisably linked to the present, but, again, I really must reread it.

Actually, I could suggest a way that the worlds depicted in Fifth Head could be the same as the destination of the Whorl. Assume that the arrival of the Whorl is a considerable time after the events depicted in Fifth Head. Suppose that in the interval, the inhum (the shape-shifters) absorbed all the humans on Blue and Green. That would account for Quetzal's ability to mimic humans so well, and his knowledge of human culture, and for the absence of indigenous humans on Blue. In fact, Quetzal is probably pretty confused about what he is, if he's one of the shape shifters described in Fifth Head...

This is one of the questions that will be asked of Mr. Wolfe, so we'll see. (Then again, maybe we won't!)

Rock

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Alastair Reynolds — 03 Jul 1997, 08:11 · follows Peter Cash

[Posted from WHORL, the mailing list for Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun]

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Have to 'fess up and admit I wrote the above, not DL - but I agree that the only way it'd make sense is if the chronology's as you suggest above.

al