

A couple of points

The Whorl list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 02 Sep 1997

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/421>

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Kevin J. Maroney — 02 Sep 1997, 17:24

I do not regularly contribute to Whorl, but I've been reading the archives, and I had some comments.

First, re: Seven American Nights and the egg: I believe that I have read a description of Wolfe answering the question about which egg contained the hallucinogen, though I do not remember the specific answer. The description of Wolfe's answer indicate that he seemed somewhat saddened by the fact that people felt they had to ask him; I sometimes suspect that Wolfe is upset by the degree to which we the readers attribute to him both infalibility and infinite cleverness. Generally, there are answers to any question we might have, and we just have to ask the text correctly.

Second, I have a question about how long the _Whorl_ was actually in flight, and have not been able to find any discusson of this particular piece, nor is my memory of the text good enough to confirm it. Sometime in the portion of the novel in which Rose/Marble sees the airship, she thinks about how long she's been around, and comes up with an answer of three hundred years. Then she realizes that she must have misplaced a decimal somewhere.

Does anyone else have any memory of this? The dilapidation of the _Whorl_ is much more credible if it has been in flight for 3000 years. Certainly the engineers of the _Whorl_ would not have designed a ship that would be completely falling apart less than 10% beyond the expected travel-time of the ship?

Yours,
Wombat

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<http://ebbs.english.vt.edu/olp/nyrsf/nyrsf.html>

Kieran Cleary — 03 Sep 1997, 14:19 · follows Kevin J. Maroney

When Kypris shows Silk the picture of Pas, with Silk as one of the heads, I asked "which head"? Is this a picture of the original plan where Typhon's "head" rules Silk's body? Is Kypris turning it around, offering to download Silk's personality and use Silk's "head" to rule the partially assembled Pas program? I wouldn't be surprised if she did that with or without Silk's consent and that in the next series we find that "Pas" is now an amalgam of Silk and Typhon.

Cool. I hadn't really thought of that. Godly duplicity again. Seems more than reasonable, despite Typhon's apparent rehabilitation, that Silk, already accepted as Calde, would merely be used as a mount. Although, as I quibbled (much) earlier, I have trouble with Pas having to graft his head onto some hapless subject for locomotive and presentational reasons when the

technology for personality downloading existed. His appearance as the two-headed one in tBotNS indicates that he never availed of this technology. Why not? Although, quibbles aside, I agree that Kypris' depiction of Silk's head sharing a body with Typhon is, at the very least, ambiguous.

lasrach

From: Michael Straight <straight at email.unc.edu>
To: whorl at lists.best.com
Subject: Re: (whorl) A couple of points
Date: Wednesday, September 03, 1997 1:30 PM

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

On Tue, 2 Sep 1997, Kevin J. Maroney wrote:

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the engineers of the _Whorl_ would not have designed a ship that would be completely falling apart less than 10% beyond the expected travel-time of the ship?

Some points that might explain the condition of the Whorl after only 300 years:

1) When Silk meets the woman in the tunnels who had been in suspended animation, I seem to remember her making some comment to the effect that the "cargo" had had their memories tampered with, which would explain how knowledge of the Whorl's nature had expired.

2) For some reason, people are using as currency computer cards that are necessary to run the Whorl. Vital components may have been raided by people in search of "money."

3) The children of Pas have "killed" (or at least temporarily disabled) him, apparently so that their toys (the people) won't be able to leave the ship. They may have damaged the ship in their battle with him, or purposely sabotaged it to keep people from leaving.

4) The Whorl may be set so that the sun starts to fail when it reaches its destination so that the colonists are forced to disembark. Or maybe Pas, knowing that he was being hunted, in addition to saving bits of himself in various places, set the sun to self-destruct so that even if he was killed, his children couldn't keep the colonists in the ship forever.

Does anyone else agree with the idea that bioengineered people like Silk and Chenille were originally intended to be permanent host bodies for Pas and his children so they could continue to rule when the colonists disembarked?

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-Rostrum

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.

Michael Straight — 03 Sep 1997, 08:30 · follows Kieran Cleary

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Alastair Reynolds — 03 Sep 1997, 07:29 · follows Michael Straight

Wombat:

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it didn't seem long enough to me either - not just from the point of view of how rundown everything was, but how comprehensively the origins of the Whorl had been forgotten.

Was it not also the case that the Whorl had arrived at its target system at least a century earlier, long enough for Quetzal to get aboard and infiltrate things?

al (should re-read these buggers!)