

# (no subject)

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 26 Jan 1997

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Charles Dye — 26 Jan 1997, 14:49

This is from "Fernando Q. Gouvea" <fqgouvea at colby.edu> :

DL> I'm puzzled over the appearance of Patera Pike's "ghost" in \_Lake\_.

DL> Did Silk see an inhumu (probably Quetzal?). Are there any other cases  
DL> of such \_observed\_ shapeshifting on the part of Quetzal (or anyone  
DL> else, for that matter)? Recall that we haven't even met Quetzal,  
DL> though we have seen Teasel attacked. Later in the story, Quetzal  
DL> invariably disappears when everyone's back is turned.

I think that's a very interesting possibility, one that hadn't occurred to me. It's true that the ghost incident is one of the more mysterious ones in the series. The thing that's missing to make this a plausible explanation, though, is a reason: why would Quetzal be doing that? Why create an appearance of Patera Pike?

I came to a completely different conclusion regarding Patera Pike's visitation. If you've read "The Book of the New Sun," take another look at the pivotal Chapter 31 of "Citadel."\* Pike's appearance is perfectly compatible with an "aquastor," even down to the dissolve-to-mist finale. Master Malrubius even implies that an aquastor would be able to wear a physical hat, for a time. The generation of an aquastor seems to require the presence of powerful computers nearby, in both space and time. We know the Whorl has more than its fair share of these!

Looking at "Calde" again, I was struck by the opening paragraph. Wolfe has Quetzal examining his own reflection in a silver teapot! I had originally pictured Quetzal as a Nosferatu-style vampire, but that doesn't work. Wolfe certainly knows the traditional restrictions on vampires; he uses them repeatedly and to good effect in "Castlevision." Quetzal doesn't fit the job description. Rather, Wolfe seems to be comparing Quetzal to a snake of some kind. Quetzal tells the Adam-and-Eve story from the serpent's point of view. What is Quetzal?

raster at highfiber.com

\* If you haven't read the "Book", for God's sake do so -- but read it in order the first time through! Don't Even Think about reading the chapter mentioned above before starting the series.

Questions or problems to whorl-owner at lists.best.com