

Names, animals, and meanings (A)

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 28 Jul 1998

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mary whalen — 28 Jul 1998, 11:58

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

It's fairly clear in the Long Sun books that the names of the characters are meant to have some allusional significance, like the Councillors having the names of lower primates or Silk and Chenille both beings semi-related materials.

Here are some similar comparisons.

Abanja. Arabic, but I can't find a definition. Based on her personality, it might mean crafty, sneaky, secretive.

Aer. Irish for air, sky, climate, gaiety, pleasure, tune, and wonder.
It is a loan word from Greek aer.

Ah Lah. The name for Allah in the Writings.

Aloe. Any of several kinds of plants, or the dried juice of genus Aloe used for medical purposes. Perhaps since Aloe is pious, she helps the sick.

A-man. The name for Adam in the Writings. First man, a is first letter. He's a man, representing all men.

Aquifolia. The holly tree, any plant in its genus Aquifolium, or a plant in the its family Aquifoliaceae. From Latin, meaning sharp leaf.
A girl in Marble's class.

Aquila. Latin for eagle, and the name for a genus of eagles which includes many species with feathered feet. This is the name of an eagle, one of Musk's birds.

Arolla. Arolla pine, or Swiss pine. No apparent meaning, might be connected to Orpine, another girl at Orchid's.

Asphodella. Probably asphodel, an herb of family Liliaceae and genus Asphodelus or Asphodeline. It is perennial and was thus formerly thought to be immortal. One of Marble's girls, a minor figure who doesn't appear to have any meaning connected with her name.

Aster. Greek for star. The name of a genus of plants, which usually have flowers resembling a starburst (or what someone would call a starburst). One of Rose's girls.

Auk. (Family: Alcidae). The name comes from Norwegian and Icelandic alk, or alka. There are 22 living species of auk, including razorbills, puffins, and murre. They live in the far northern hemisphere. They are seabirds; divers who live on cliff tops and rocks. They spend much time

underwater. They are short, stout, with short thick necks and usually have broad beaks and webbed feet. They are usually black and white. They are similar to penguins, but are not closely related to them. Silk says that Auk is a common name given by mothers who hope their sons will never leave them, as the small auks on Lake Limna are flightless. On Earth, only the great auk, which is now extinct, was flightless. All the small species can fly, except when molting, and Auk actually is the first person to fly away from the Whorl. Since auks are black and white, this can be a symbol of the mixed good and bad parts of Auk. Mostly black auks become white in the winter for camouflage, and this could symbolize Auk becoming purer in the face of adversity and bad times. Auk reminds me most of the razorbill (*Alca torda*), which is broad and large (over a foot) with a thick broad bill. It is an auk that becomes whiter in the winter. It lives in the North Atlantic Ocean. The razor part indicates his criminal nature. When Silk first meets him face to face, he feels from his characteristics that Auk is an assumed name, and he was originally named Bear or Wolf. He's apparently wrong, and his brother is Bustard, another bird.

prion

Kevin J. Maroney — 28 Jul 1998, 15:27 · follows mary whalen

At 11:58 AM 7/28/98 -0700, Prion wrote:

Ah Lah. The name for Allah in the Writings.

Minor bit of detail: "Al lah" was indeed originally two words in Arabic, "Al" (the) and "lah" (god). Before Mohammed (bbhn!), the Kabbah was a shrine to a goddess known only as "Al lat", "the goddess". "Allah" is not a name in the way that "Jesus" is a name; it means "THE God".

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