

Digest Whorl v010.n019 (BLUE)

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 29 Sep 1999

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Robert Borski — 29 Sep 1999, 02:09

Alex Groce having written:

(1) The three stars struck me early on as having some significance, and I was pleased to see "Horn" explain them as Blue, Green and the Long Sun Whorl (and, of course, the three books of Horn's narrative, and (since this is Wolfe) perhaps the three SUN uber-novels and even the Trinity...)

This system of narrative break--the triangle of asterisks--is first used in THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS. Wolfe has denied that Blue and Green are Sainte Croix and Sainte Anne, of course, but I also think it's interesting to note that the Neighbors are hard to count when they number more than two--the same as the Shadow Children of Ste. Anne.

(3) I think I have a guess at the secret of the inhumis, but there's probably some startling aspect I haven't considered--it seems obvious that they only are intelligent because they drink the blood of intelligent creatures. I suspect that more than this, they in some sense take their "person"ality from the first person whose blood they drink--and that Krait was the inhumis whose first feeding was on Sinew, and thus he really is Horn's son, in a perverse (but in the end transfigured into something wonderful) sense. If this is so, I wonder if Quetzal might have fed on Silk (or maybe Silk's father)?

Interesting concept. But I think it's much more likely that Quetzal may have "dined" on Patera Pike than anyone else; such might explain, if your speculations are correct, the inhumis's semi-Eucharistic proselytization. (I also believe there's evidence in LONG SUN to support this for anyone willing to so argue.)

That being said, however, how might Horn's knowing this particular secret undo the soon-to-come plague of vampires? It's implied that if he shares his knowledge, the citizens of Blue will be able to thwart the inhumis. But what will they do--forcefeed the new arrivals stupid people or maybe animals, ensuring their lower level of intelligence?

(7) Also, now that I've (almost completely) dismissed my Urth is Blue theory, I'm wondering how Severian's going to make his supposed appearance.

I'm already leaning toward the theory he may be the mysterious Quadrifons--at least until we know something further about him.

Dan Rabin having written:

It has just occurred to me that the narrative structure of Blue has something in common with the Odyssey, in which the famous adventures, told in retrospect, are followed by a laborious homecoming. There are also the wife left at home and the son who sails in search of the missing father, monsters, and a siren to consider! [I had to go flip through the Odyssey to see if I recalled its structure correctly.]

Don't forget blind Maytera Marble, who functions the same as Tiresias, predicting Horn's future, as well as Circean Mucor, since surely Babbie is much more than an ordinary boat-rowing hus.

Robert Borski

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