Identify Confusion and More

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 06 Oct 1999

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David Lebling — 06 Oct 1999, 10:51

mantis mentioned "chem-bio" identity confusion... Which reminds me of another Wolfe trademark, a more generalized identity confusion (Sev/Thecla being one of the more prominent ones, but Marsch/VRT comes to mind as well).

Check out the end of _Blue_ for another, as we get confused between Horn and Babbie, not to mention a touch of Silk. I have a feeling we'll be seeing a lot more on this one later in the trilogy. As with Oreb, there is a lot more to Babbie than meets the eye.

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alga and mantis both commented on the multi-armed Neighbors. Most of the native mammals (or is that "mammals") on Blue have eight legs, I think. Babbie is the prototype for this, as we meet him first. But the "elephants" aren't elephants (two trunks, for example), the "horses" aren't horses (not completely sure about this one), and so on. Cows seem to be cows, at least, but even that I wouldn't wager on. I don't think the wallowers ("hippos" with horns?) or the breakbull ("elk"?) ever have their number of limbs specified, but I'd bet it's also eight. It is interesting that so many Blue "mammals" have horns, though.

Seawrack, as mantis opines, is almost certainly a modified (gills, Siren abilities, etc.) human born on Blue. She has memories of her real mother, after all. Seawrack deserves a whole essay of her own, of course. Just to start, there's her strange relationship with the Mother, and the equally strange one with Horn. Does she actually love either? There's her obvious guilt about her sirenian (a word which has the wrong meaning, but fits somehow) seduction of Horn, which she was forced into by Horn at the instigation of Krait. Yikes! Given that they are in some bizarre way a family (or pose as one, anyway), they could get on Jerry Springer in a minute!

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alga, are you going to follow up on your tantalizing comment about racism?

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Does anyone know the publication schedule for the remaining two volumes? I thought we had had a post on that subject, but I couldn't find it in the archives.

-- Dave Lebling
(aka vizcacha)

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