

Black Hole Series -- I hope not!

The Whorl list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 12 Oct 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/683>

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David_Lebling — 12 Oct 1999, 16:41

Lots of the speculations engendered by Kevin Maroney's hints (and some before that -- it isn't his fault) revolve around what I call the Black Hole Series philosophy. That is, Urth is Green (or Blue), Blue is St. Anne, Silk is Severian, Seawrack is Merryn, Horn is Silk's cousin, Horn is Severian's second cousin twice removed, Marble is Jonas, and so on, until every detail of the author's earlier works is sucked into the black hole of the current one.

In these sorts of series, it turns out everyone is related to everyone else, all the mysteries are cleared up by connecting them with chains of infodump to all the other mysteries, gods fly down from the ceiling on wires, galactic conspiracies are exposed, and the whole enterprise is revealed to be a shaggy dog story. Asimov's attempt to spot-weld the Robot stories to the Foundation series is the Milli Vanilla poster-child-classic of this genre, and Niven's "Down in Flames" is the intentional reductio ad absurdum.

With all due respect to those who are speculating along these lines, that isn't gonna be what Wolfe is doing here. He's too good a writer for that.

I hope.

-- Dave Lebling
(aka vizcacha)

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

Jim Jordan — 12 Oct 1999, 16:04 · follows David_Lebling

Hope you're right. To be honest, the business of Severian's showing up in the current series has always struck me as kind of hokey, and it will require Wolfe at his best to convince me. Of course, I know he will, and I'll be happy.

I keep thinking that we've really got two huge trilogies going here. The first consists of TBNS and TUNS, which leaves the story of Severian hanging, and projects a third book (book series) left to go. And now it appears that the current trilogy is going to leave us hanging, as Horn seems to be left hanging, which might project a third and final set of books to round out the Silk story.

Oh, stupid me! Scratch that. I was thinking that OBW was written by someone at the end of his own journey, but the next two volumes will carry the total story forward, and perhaps round things out fully.

But I'm not counting on it. Since when has Wolfe ever left us feeling that it's all been told? (He'd better not die anytime soon).

Nutria

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Michael Straight — 13 Oct 1999, 08:26 · follows Jim Jordan

On Tue, 12 Oct 1999 David_Lebling at avid.com wrote:

With all due respect to those who are speculating along these lines, that isn't gonna be what Wolfe is doing here. He's too good a writer for that.

I hope.

Here! Here! Huzzah! Amen! Me Too!

-Rostrum

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