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The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 14 Jan 2000

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Bobosmash — 14 Jan 2000, 04:46

Greetings to all,

Long time listener, first time caller. After reading the latest post. I feel I need to reread OBW again, immediately.

-- The Venus thing is an interesting guess. Perhaps, through the relativistic effects of vast interstellar travel over the three hundred years or so the ship was in transit (if I'm remembering correctly), it did manage to do a boomerang/Planet of the Apes deal and head back to Urth after the new sun arrived, encountering a flooded Urth (which fits with New Sun) and a green Venus. However, what happened to the remaining seven planets?--

I like this idea. I like it a lot. I feel the lack of the rest of the system is pretty insignificant. It's the far future. Many civilizations (including Urth (both terrestrial and extraterrestrial nature)) seem to have the engineering skills to do away with those useless hunks of dead rock. No asteroid belt either. I would think that the biggest factor against a pretty reasonable sounding guess is the fact that Gene Wolfe is never that easy.

After I finish OBW again, I'll try to contribute something a little more constructive to this very helpful tome.

Pete Clark

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

David Langford — 15 Jan 2000, 14:11 · follows Bobosmash

Josh Levitan wrote ...

[snippage]

I have a feeling that Wolfe's given us enough info to figure out what the secret is currently. It reminds me of that Borges story, "The Mystery of The Phoenix(?)" (something like that) in Ficciones, where he talks around the secret rite of the cult of the Phoenix and supposedly gives enough info to figure out what the rite is (although I've always been too dense to figure it out).

Where does it say that Borges gives enough information? My reading of "The Sect of the Phoenix" (also translated as "The Cult of the Phoenix") is that it's a joke, practically a shaggy dog story, deliberately blurred by anti-information. Drop the teasing physical details about "the cork and the slime", or push them sideways into metaphor, and ...

[Does Borges need spoiler space on this list? Oh well:]

... it does seem very much as though the Mystery Rite, which is despised, trivial, not talked

about, abstained from by the very virtuous, yet somehow never dies out and may indeed have become instinctive, is ordinary human sexual intercourse.

Dave

David Langford

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