

Inhumi secrets and the ring

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 22 Jan 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/763>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Alice Turner — 22 Jan 2000, 10:30

Allan Lloyd theorized (apparently on Oct. 26, 1999):

First, whatever happened to Horn in the pit was one of the most significant events in the novel. Horn says "With that fall the best part of my life was over. The pit was its grave." He may have been speaking of the betrayal of his wife to save himself, but I think it was more than that. When he was unconscious after falling I think Krait took much of his blood. The deal with Krait involved being given a transfusion of mixed blood from Krait. We know that inhumi can do this because Jahlee offered to return blood to the cow that she had fed from. (Horn didn't believe her, but he's a cynical, rather unpleasant person who sees the worst in everyone).<<

This is certainly possible. Though I don't know about the returning of blood. Jahlee is a notably sarcastic creature (as is Krait), and this may be an instance of her humor.

After a transfusion, the personalities and appearances of the donor and receiver tend to merge. Krait had previously eaten from Sinew, and Seawrack tells Horn how similar the three of them are, more so than just father/son resemblance. Also, after the pit experience, Horn's eyesight improves and he becomes a surprisingly good shot. So is the sharing of blood in some way good for humans who survive the experience?<<

Certainly something happened there, a kind of death, but that it is "sharing of blood" is only a theory. (Actually, I am inclined to doubt it.) This is not the point where Horn's spirit goes into Silk's body, though--that, he says somewhere, happened later.

Seawrack gives Horn a ring. This fairly trivial event gives a whole chapter its title. She tells Horn he must wear it because "he might fall in the pit again". Horn says that he never would have guessed that it would save his life on a ruined lander on Green. Does it protect the wearer from the vampiric Inhumi? This seems a bit simplistic, but could Wolfe be playing with the silver cross/vampire thing? The ring is made of some silvery metal that did not tarnish as pure silver would have. It also had a white stone that was very old.<<

It is the ring that causes the Neighbors to choose Horn as the spokesman for humanity. We have to assume that the ring came from the Mother, who is or was a god of the Neighbors. It's indeed important, but I don't think it is a guard against the inhumi, necessarily. More of a Neighbor thing, and we know that the Neighbors were not able to guard themselves against the inhumi.

The other thing that puzzles me is the dialogue on page 353 where Sinew claims that no-one gets bitten in Pajarocu. They agree that visitors do but natives of the town don't. Could it be the home brewed beer that is mentioned!<<

Interesting! Wouldn't it be funny if that was the much-discussed "secret!" I had simply assumed that Pajarocu was a sort of DMZ, though--don't mess with us and we won't mess with you.

-alga

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