

Miscellany

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 29 Jan 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/769>

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Jim Jordan — 29 Jan 2000, 15:42

At 01:21 PM 1/22/00 PST, you wrote:

Allan Lloyd writes:

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!<<

And Alga replied:

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.

I read this as Pajarocu, because they were staging the trap with the lander, had a truce with the inhumis -- the inhumis wouldn't bite them because the humans allowed them to load up a lander full of meat/slaves for the home planet. If the inhumis started attacking people in Pajarocu, they might get scared off and/or warn other people.

Narwhal

Good point, and what I thought also, and still think is the major reason. But given all the sacramental stuff in the Severian series, and recalling how Tim Powers, for instance, uses wine and beer as sacramental protections against evil powers, the beer idea may have some merit also. Wolfe has read Powers, BTW, though the idea could easily be original with him apart from Powers.

Someone suggested iron. Well, there's good history for that, too, and it would be like Wolfe to put them both together (both "nature" iron and "grace" alcohol). As I recall, Powers also puts them together.

Someone also pointed out that the mysterious ring has an old white stone on it. I did not look up the passage, but as a thought: In Revelation 2:17, the overcomers (the faithful saints) are given a mysterious white stone. This may be a mere coincidence, or part of the tangled web that the Wolfe weaves, since it comes from a "god."

Someone also pointed out that Wolfe said that he put a ghost in the middle of one of his SF novels. Well, know that Wolfe believes ghosts are real; I heard him say so at a panel discussion at a World Fantasy Convention. So, when he puts a ghost, or an ancient god-spirit, into a novel, it's not a departure from HIS notion of reality or of SF -- not a move into "fantasy," so to speak. But I don't know which novel this is, and am inclined to agree with Alga that the ghost of Patera Pike is in fact Quetzal.

Horn's being cast into a pit is some kind of death-resurrection sequence, and has Biblical roots. It happened to Joseph, who was drawn up by his brothers and sold into Egypt, and then became a ruler; something similar happens to Horn when he becomes Rajan. Perhaps more interesting, it happens to Jeremiah, who is rescued by the Ethiopian Ebed-Melech (Jer. 38). As with Horn, Jeremiah's life only got worse afterwards, as you can read in the book of Jeremiah. The Ethiopian, being a foreigner and a stranger to Israel, and who looks different (being dark-skinned), could link with Krait, who is also a stranger, looks different, but chooses to have

compassion on a distressed human. (Obviously, Wolfe is not trying to link negroes with vampires! [Do I have to say this?]) I'm not going to go to the stake for any of this, but I thought I'd toss it into the mix.

Nutria

Nutria

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