

OBW contains five frames

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 08 Jun 2000

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 08 Jun 2000, 08:37

Timothy Reilly wrote

Nick Price's review of OBW was
also a fine job (and needless to say I agree with the diplomatic criticisms
it contains of the plotting of TBLS), but one point of detail - how do we
know Hari Mau was searching for Silk on the Whorl? - my impression is that
he was doing so on Blue only.

Oo-oo, I can provide some parts of an answer for that one!

ON BLUE'S WATERS, among other wonders, contains five distinct timeframes: Blue, Green, Whorl, Present, and Future. Most of the "action" is in the Blue frame (the beginning of the quest, boat on the sea, etc.), and then there is some in the Present frame (the writing of the book, administration, the war, etc.). And the Future is contained in the footnotes added by others.

But Green and the Whorl are covered, too. For example, we know a bit about the trees and lianas on Green (189), as well as the mystery of the Rajan's death on Green (195)--at least, that there =is= a mystery. We know even more (and yet, paradoxically less) about events on the Whorl: the pencase from Horn's father's shop (burned out), references to a fellow named Pig, the presence of Oreb, Silk's robe, Hyacinth's azoth . . . that Hyacinth is dead (379) and Olivine is alive (290) . . . even the corn (310) that was the main purpose of the quest, and a new eye for Marble (310). And more.

We don't know how the narrator got from Green to the Whorl. But we do know how he got from the Whorl to Gaon:

"When I came here I was a prisoner--a prisoner who was respected, true. I was treated with great kindness and even reverence by Hari Mau and his friends, but I was a prisoner just the same. I knew it, and so did they . . .

"I owe this town and its collective population nothing, because I was taken from the _Whorl_ against my will" (309).

So it becomes clear that the Rajan, finding his quest in ruins (for reasons which remain obscure: after all, he has the corn, the eye, etc.), was willing to remain on the Whorl (or wait for a different lander) yet was compelled by Hari Mau and company to board a lander. Which led directly to his situation in the Present frame (as rajan of Gaon).

(Also, iirc, Hari Mau was looking for Silk based upon what he knew from TBOTLS.)

=mantis=

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