

The secret of the inhumani [SPOILERS for IGJ]

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 25 Jul 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/874>

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Adam Stephanides — 25 Jul 2000, 09:38

Josh Levitan wrote:

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Alex David Groce wrote:

1. The inhumani's secret (maybe) becomes a little clearer, in some aspects: Krait's _mother_ drank from Sinew, and I believe it may be that when the inhumani spawn their children take their spirit (in some sense) from (a particular, I assume) victim of the parent.

I don't think that's the case.

I don't think Alex's theory is the secret either, although it may be true. I don't see why the inhumani would see Alex's theory as more of a weapon against themselves than the fact that they draw their nature from what they feed on, which Krait told Horn without demanding he take a vow of secrecy. (82)

I do think it has become a bit clearer, although not crystal clear yet. And unfortunately, all evidence seems to point to the "Do Unto Others Theory" as being extremely likely to being "the secret."

I don't think so. As said above, Krait tells Horn freely that the inhumani take the nature of those they feed on, and Horn tells us, whereas he remains coy about the secret. And "Do Unto Others" is a merely a logical (if impractical) deduction from this, moreover one that Horn has explicitly stated. So neither of these are the secret.

On the other hand, when Hide responds to Horn's socratic questionin: "They really do make themselves just like we are....Only they couldn't do it if they didn't have us to copy." Horn replies "'I'd scarcely hoped to take you this far without violating an oath, which I will not do.'" (351) This does suggest that the secret lies in this area (it also suggests that Horn underestimates Hide's intelligence as much as he does Sinew's character).

There are some other clues as to the secret in IGJ that I've noticed.

1. The inhumans believe that the secret is a weapon against them, but Horn believes it is "a weapon too heavy for our [human's] hands." (125)
2. The Neighbors knew the secret, but were themselves unable to "wield it." (125) So "wielding" the secret can't mean depriving the inhumans of all intelligent blood for a period of time, since the Neighbors could have done that by "going away" temporarily at any time before the humans arrived.
3. The secret, along with the inhumans' desire to absorb humans' natures, explains why they drink blood. (82)
4. The secret is somehow connected with "what had happened almost twenty years ago" (presumably Krait's mother feeding on Sinew) (82).
5. Krait feels he has to tell Horn the secret before he dies. (82)

Maybe somebody else can put these clues into a pattern better than I can.

--Adam

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

Alex David Groce — 25 Jul 2000, 09:57 · follows Adam Stephanides

Preserving spoiler space (didn't on my last post, sorry)

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Adam said:

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Sorry if I gave the impression I think this is the secret. I don't, but I think that your point 4:

4. The secret is somehow connected with "what had happened almost twenty years ago" (presumably Krait's mother feeding on Sinew) (82).

is somehow crucial--I don't think we have enough to figure out the secret, but I'm betting the mother feeding on Sinew is at the heart of the explanation.

Perhaps if we can put together all the chronology of the Neighbors relationship with the inhumans that we have we can come up with something more specific.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32

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