

Humans, inhumans and irony [mild SPOILERS]

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 25 Jul 2000

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Adam Stephanides — 25 Jul 2000, 09:59

Josh Levitan wrote:

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When Jahlee(? I've had about five hours of sleep in the past few days, so my memory's a little hazy at this point, and a marathon reading session didn't help, but I'm pretty sure it was Jahlee and not Fava) is asked by Horn what the inhumans who fed on the Neighbors would have been like, she says "Wonderful," or something to that effect.

I think you're thinking of this dialogue from the last chapter, where just after Jahlee has argued that she is human inside:

"What about the inhumans who destroyed the vanished people, Jahlee? Were they human too?"
"They were dead before I was born." (376)

Jahlee doesn't recognize the irony of Horn's question (or if she does, she doesn't mention it), and I missed it too on my first reading. But what Jahlee should have said was "See? That proves we're human!" I'm sure that from the author of THE FIFTH HEAD OF CERBERUS this irony is intentional.

--Adam

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