

Green Thoughts

The Whorl list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 02 Aug 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/896>

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Joel Priddy — 02 Aug 2000, 10:46

Ahoy, ahoy,

I thoroughly enjoyed IGJ, and have since thoroughly enjoyed catching up on the discussion here. Here's my two cents...

The Inhumani Secret:

Although I wish it were otherwise, I left IGJ with the distinct impression that the Golden Rule was the secret of the inhumani. All of the business with inhumani feeling that they were human spirits caught in vampire bodies, and wanting nothing more than to be fully human, seemed to be leading up to it (Although I guess it's significant that Jahlee can't give up her little love-nips when in Nessus). But the clincher was when Horn is talking to Hide about the inhumani, and Jahlee interrupts him at some point, and basically states the Golden Rule thing, and Horn replies with "I wasn't going to say that, and I never would say that." Which I take to mean that saying it would break his oath.

Although maybe he would never say that because he thinks it's a silly idea too, but that wasn't how I read it.

Also, one of the earlier convincing arguments against the Golden Rule being the secret was that it was impractical to employ, and IGJ states several times that the secret is impractical. Unwieldy, as it were.

Oh, and then there's the whole Eucharist thing... I rolled my eyes when I first read the scene. It seemed to me that Wolfe was getting a little lazy and too direct when it came to the Catholic references. But it just occurred to me to project it onto the inhumani. Humans participate in a pretend blood-sharing ritual to pretend to be closer to Divine Nature. Inhumani participate in a real blood-sharing ritual in order to really participate in human nature. So they become a degraded parallel to our own striving for Grace, which is accomplished via the Golden Rule.

Much of IGJ seems to be about showing us that the inhumani are worthy of charity. We see that Horn's relationship to Krait wasn't the exception brought on by Krait being Sinewy, but could be the rule. If Horn can just keep adopting inhumani...

Reverence of Pas:

I don't think we can be thinking about Pas as being just a disembodied Typhon anymore. We all know that power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely, but it seems that divine power makes you indistinguishable from God, and therefore you sorta become a part of God. Kypris is a precedent here, but Wolfe stories are full of things imitating things so well that they become what they were imitating. Time turning our lies into truths, and such. This, plus the possible addition of Outsider-inspired Silk into his system may make Pas an entity worthy of reverence.

Oreb in the dream projections:

I'm sorry, but I just can't stop think of Heckel and Jeckel (sp?), the cartoon birds. No matter how I try to picture Oreb during his feathered dwarf episodes, I can't get past cartoon imagery. In my weaker moments I even picture him with the stub of a cigar and three-fingered gloves.

cephalothorax

Adam Stephanides — 02 Aug 2000, 22:56 · follows Joel Priddy

Joel Priddy wrote:

The Inhumani Secret:

Although I wish it were otherwise, I left IGJ with the distinct impression that the Golden Rule was the secret of the inhumani. [snip] But the clincher was when Horn is talking to Hide about the inhumani, and Jahlee interrupts him at some point, and basically states the Golden Rule thing, and Horn replies with "I wasn't going to say that, and I never would say that." Which I take to mean that saying it would break his oath.

The actual passage is:

"You sell your own kind to us for weapons and treasure," she told him [Hide] almost apologetically, "and your cruelty and the more numerous you are, the crueler and more violent you are. Your cruelty and your violence strengthen us."

...

"Ask this man you call your father. He'll tell you."
I said, "He hasn't, and he won't." (380-81)

But in fact Horn has told Hide that human cruelty and violence strengthen the inhumani, in his

discussion of why they shouldn't kill Jahlee. (354) So what Horn won't tell Hide must be something else, perhaps Jahlee's deterministic view of human nature. And since Horn has told it, it can't be the secret.

--Adam

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

William Ansley — 02 Aug 2000, 23:18 · follows Adam Stephanides

At 10:46 AM -0700 8/2/00, cephalothorax (Joel Priddy
<mossmail at yahoo.com>) wrote:

Oreb in the dream projections:

I'm sorry, but I just can't stop think of Heckel and
Jeckel (sp?), the cartoon birds. No matter how I try
to picture Oreb during his feathered dwarf episodes, I
can't get past cartoon imagery.

Of course! I knew that Wolfe's description of the "dream Oreb" reminded me of something. I bet it's deliberate; Wolfe has used cartoon imagery more than once before.

In my weaker moments
I even picture him with the stub of a cigar and
three-fingered gloves.

Now you're being silly. Cartoon birds don't wear gloves! But I remember the cigar.

"I say old bean, Silk good!"

William Ansley

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