

Blue not urth.....? (IGJ spoilers)

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 04 Aug 2000

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Ian Smith — 04 Aug 2000, 11:19

Thank-you all for your suggestions re: the change in narrative voice between OBW and IGJ, and especially William for making the reply I hadn't got round to sending on Alga's comment. The scene I quoted from the end of OBW certainly deems relevant, be it an encounter with a god, babbie or whatever.

Another question to which I (perhaps naively) do not have the answer. Has the 'blue=urth, green=lune' theory been discounted by everyone now? I know that the evidence is turning against it at the moment, but it's such a delectable idea I don't want to let it go unless I have to. Unfortunately all the evidence I find points in the other direction. One thing I've noticed which definitely weighs against the theory is Wolfe's definition of the Red Sun Whorl as "the distant planet on which Rigoglio was born", but is it possible Wolfe is simply being obtuse as he is when dealing with definitions of 'Incanto', 'Rajan', 'Horn' and 'Silk'? Could the distance be in time? When I reached the red sun chapter I hunted madly through it for reference to anyone recognising 'lune' as 'green' or similar, without joy. In fact, we get the narrator saying "I look up at the stars then...but I could not find Green there, or Blue, or the Whorl, or even the constellations Nettle and I used to see..."(349). Ok, so he could be in a different hemisphere....did Mantis ever work out the phase of the moon on the night Severian rescued Vodalus in the necropolis? Does anyone have anything which can resurrect the theory?

And on a (possibly related) matter.

Robert wrote

I'd like to now toss out the following notion: is it possible that the entity Horn and Seawrack call the Mother is actually Typhon's daughter Scylla?

I agree that if it the Mother was just plain Long-Sun Scylla, she'd probably announce it loudly and do unpleasant things to any humans she encountered, but I love the idea that we could be talking about Typhon's daughter here.

But why does Wolfe have two Scylla's in his stories, and why make the reference to the original Scylla in the glossary? I suppose the two possible explanations to the first question are either 1) Long-Sun Scylla is named for Scylla on urth, or 2) Urth-Scylla is Typhon's real daughter, perhaps transformed in a Baldanders-type fashion. (which would weigh against her having been loaded up bodily onto the Whorl). Whichever of these is the case, if Blue is urth, might the mother indeed be (urth) Scylla?

Finally, the inhumani secret. I'm afraid my thoughts on this have been very silly indeed, but the debate seems to be going in the direction that the secret may be something quite specific which relates to the APPLICATION of the golden rule. As all are agreed, just saying 'right, be nice to each other' is not a practical solution, but if there were something in particular that humans could do (or not do) which would change the inhumani based upon this principle... (such as

Adam's suggestion of 'not wishing people dead'). My only initial thought is obviously trite , silly and pants, but I'll give it to you as an example of the sort of thing I mean, rather than a serious suggestion: Maybe humans just need to become vegetarians? This doesn't work because a) it's daft, and b) Inhumis don't eat anyway, they only drink blood. But it did make me think of the green man.....which brings me back to where I started, so I shall stop and go away, head in hands in shame.

Please dissect, mock, destroy and force feed back to me in small pieces

Ian

P.S. Why do people keep assuming that Horn's first 'body jump' was into Silk's body, and that there was only one?

P.P.S. the narrator looks at his reflection in the water at least once in OBW

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

james.kellar — 04 Aug 2000, 12:18 · follows Ian Smith

I expect this has been remarked on before, but has anyone else noticed the references to 'green' and 'blue' in The Fifth Head of Cerberus? I'm only halfway through it at the moment, but in the first section someone (can't remember who) describes Ste Anne as green, and in the second section (Dr Marsch's story) Ste Croix is referred as being blue! Presumably this is just a coincidence - and anyway, they can't be the same planets, can they - in the first section Dr Marsch talks about the journey back to Earth taking 20 years of Newtonian and 6 months of subjective time... The inhabitants of Ste Anne also appear to have quite a lot in common with the inhumis, don't they? I have to keep reminding myself that, although I'm reading 5HOC last, it was actually written long before the other books. Apologies if this comments will sound silly in the light of future revelations in this book!

Still waiting for my copy of IGJ to come from amazon (I live in the UK) but the order status page is now saying "1 soon to be delivered", so it can't be long now!

regards to all

James

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