

Scyllas I, II, III

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

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/902>

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Robert Borski — 04 Aug 2000, 13:08

Ian Smith having written:

<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?>

Scylla I is the original biological issue of Typhon and Echidna, or as Wolfe describes her, "a sea monster of the Red Sun Whorl." (i.e., Urth)

Scylla II is her scanned counterpart, the computerized goddess of the Long Sun series. Scylla I, we may assume, has been left behind on Urth just as Pas has left Typhon-Piaton back in his mountaintop citadel and she may have entered into an allegiance with Abaia & the Other Dark Lords, who arrive after Typhon's departure.

Scylla III, I'm proposing, is Scylla II made flesh again--that is to say, recarnified in one of the special bodies (possibly chems?) Pas has prepared for their eventual download once the Whorl reaches its destination. It's been surmised that Silk has been engineered to host Pas; surely counterparts exist for his wife and children. As for why Scylla III--the Mother--doesn't announce her presence, she may be hiding from restored Pas, who, along with her mother and siblings, she's attempted to kill; there may as well be a struggle for power among the other gods and goddesses of Long Sun; after all, they are the children, consorts and friends of ruthless Typhon.

Having Scylla be the Mother resolves another matter. Scylla means "she who rends," so perhaps she is the true agent of Seawrack's armlessness rather than Babbie. (I've learned to be skeptical of all unwitnessed offstage Wolfean events that are reconstructed by untrustworthy narrators.) As for why the Mother would mutilate Seawrack, perhaps she's worried that Horn, like Odysseus, will be able to resist the siren's charms, and is therefore hoping to appeal to his sense of pity. "Poor little crippled mermaid girl, there's no way I can cast you out of my boat now," etc., etc.

And while I'm speaking of Seawrack, isn't it possible she's one of the super-talents engineered by Pas? Scylla might easily have access to a secret cache of them, and this would help solve the puzzle behind Mucor's long swims out to her island, as well as the mysterious three fish that appear when Horn goes down to the rock; both being uberfolk, they've bonded and each is helping the other.

And lastly, from events presented in Wolfe's short tale of the Whorl, "The Night Chough," there's evidence that there may be a piece of Scylla in Oreb, just as there was a piece of Pas in Jerboa--that or she's riding him the same way human beings and chems get ridden by Echidna

and her brood.

Robert Borski

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

Fernando Q. Gouvea — 07 Aug 2000, 13:19 · follows Robert Borski

**** On Fri, 4 Aug 2000 13:08:01 -0500, "Robert Borski" <rborski at charter.net> said:

Robert> Scylla III, I'm proposing, is Scylla II made flesh again--that is Robert> to say, recarnified in one of the special bodies (possibly chems?) Robert> Pas has prepared for their eventual download once the Whorl reaches Robert> its destination. It's been surmised that Silk has been engineered Robert> to host Pas; surely counterparts exist for his wife and Robert> children. As for why Scylla III--the Mother--doesn't announce her Robert> presence, she may be hiding from restored Pas, who, along with her Robert> mother and siblings, she's attempted to kill; there may as well be Robert> a struggle for power among the other gods and goddesses of Long Robert> Sun; after all, they are the children, consorts and friends of Robert> ruthless Typhon.

My problem with this is that when Horn mentions the Mother to the Neighbors (in OBW, page 269), they say "that is one of her names". This suggests that she was on Blue before the Whorl arrived. (Only suggests, of course, there's certainly lots of ways to "spin" the Neighbors' response.)

Fernando

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A "No" uttered from deepest conviction is better and greater than a
"Yes" merely uttered to please, or what is worse, to avoid trouble.
-- Mahatma Ghandi

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