

Reviews and Wolfe's sales figures

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 07 Aug 2000

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Ron Crown — 07 Aug 2000, 09:59

I will temporarily de-lurk to offer a couple of mini-reviews of IGJ from important trade publications (Library Journal has a big impact on library sales).

Library Journal, July 2000 v125 i12 p147

In Green's Jungles. (Review)_(book review) Jackie Cassada. Full Text: COPYRIGHT 2000 Cahners Publishing Company

Wolfe, Gene. In Green's Jungles. Tor. (Book of the Short Sun, Vol. 2). Aug. 2000. c.384p. ISBN 0-312-87315-8. \$24.95. SF

Horn's search for the legendary hero Patera Silk has taken him from the world called Blue to the humid jungles of Green, a neighboring planet populated by inhuman blood drinkers and their human slaves. As he tries to make sense of his wanderings, Horn's memories and dreams blend with the present in an elusive and intriguing chronicle of an ordinary man forced into extraordinary circumstances. The sequel to *On Blue's Waters* (LJ 10/15/99), the latest in an epic cycle that evolves from the four-volume "Book of the Long Sun," displays Wolfe's signature; style--literate, complex, and multilayered. Best read in the context of previous books in the series, this exploration of the nature of identity and reality belongs in libraries that own the preceding series titles.

Publishers Weekly, June 26, 2000 v247 i26 p54

IN GREEN'S JUNGLES. (Review)_(book review)
Full Text: COPYRIGHT 2000 Cahners Publishing Company

GENE WOLFE. Tor, \$24.95 (384p) ISBN 0-312-87315-8

In 1980, Wolfe published *The Shadow of the Torturer*, the first volume in his now classic Book of the New Sun, which was eventually followed by his much-praised Book of the Long Sun sequence. Whereas the former series was set on the decadent planet Urth, the latter took place within the Whorl, a hollowed-out asteroid whose inhabitants knew nothing of the universe outside their failing world. At the end of the second series, the charismatic Calde Silk led his people to the planets called Green and Blue and then disappeared. For years it had been rumored that the two novel sequences were somehow connected--and here the rumor is substantiated. In this second volume in *The Book of the Short Sun* (after *On Blue's Waters*), Horn, the narrator of the Long Sun books, is on a quest for the lost Silk. Although he engages in numerous adventures--leading an army, slogging through a monster-inhabited jungle, touring several exotic societies--the specifics of the plot are almost inconsequential. What counts is Wolfe's gorgeous prose, the brilliant dialogue and the dazzling way that reality shifts from one paragraph to the next. Horn soon discovers that he has the seemingly magical power to travel instantaneously between Green and Blue, though his body and those of his compatriots

undergo strange changes with each shift. Eventually, they visit a world with a dying red sun that may be long-lost Urth. Oddly, Horn also discovers that he has begun to physically resemble Silk. Like any middle volume in a series, this novel leaves mysteries unsolved and plot threads hanging, but that really doesn't matter. It's the sheer strangeness of this masterful tale that counts, and the glorious sense of unknown wonders to come. (Aug.)

A review like the PW one especially should help but this morning I checked the figures for the wholesaler that our library uses; they pre-pub ordered 1200 copies of IGJ, as of today, they still have 757 "on hand." Of course, that doesn't mean that 443 have sold yet either, they may have just delivered them to book stores which could still return them. Sadly, it appears that IGJ isn't jumping off the shelves, at least not from our vendor (which is one of the major vendors for both public and academic libraries).

Which raises a question for me; does anyone know about how many copies (hardcover and/or paperback) Wolfe sells? I once ran into a Tor representative at a library convention who mentioned the figure of 10,000 hardcover copies as being the standard expectation for Wolfe. Can any of the well-connected denizens of the WHORL confirm/correct this? (or is it a closely guarded secret?)

Back to lurk mode....

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