

IGJ, Major Spoiler re Silk (2)

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 09 Aug 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/917>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

Michael Andre-Driussi — 09 Aug 2000, 12:55

My sense of it is that Silk committed suicide (with knife) by himself next to Hyacinth in her coffin.

To expand this and add to it:

1) I think that Silk really crossed the Rubicon and slashed himself, offering his own body as a funeral sacrifice, just as I think Horn's body gave out on him against his will to live and struggle on Green. I don't think Silk just thinking, "Gosh, I could just die right now, I'm so sad" would be nearly enough.

2) Because I think Silk killed himself, I think Horn has a very different/revised impression of the real man behind the mask that was first created by the politics of Viron and later embellished/enshrined within his work TBOTLS. Silk's suicide is definitely non-heroic, even without a Catholic angle. This factor plays in the whole "Horn/Silk Tangle."

3) Metempsychosis, the transmigration of souls. My sense of what the Neighbors did and how they explained it is this: Silk wanted to die, and was dying (but this was fixable); Horn wanted to live, and was dying; so Horn's spirit (and probably his soul, if it is a separate thing within this context) was put into Silk's body, and Silk's spirit/soul went elsewhere. "Spirit Weak, Flesh Strong" and "Spirit Strong, Flesh Weak" into "Spirit Strong, Flesh Strong" (and some discards of weak flesh, weak spirit).

4) Seems to me that while Horn knows where Horn is (in Silk's body), and he knows that Silk is not there (except as a "ghostly" residue, like the seeds left after a god has possessed a Vironese person for a while), he does not know where Silk's non-corporal part is. Two immediate options are: Silk's spirit/soul has gone on to Mainframe/heaven (in which case nobody is ever going to see him on Blue); Silk's spirit/soul has been installed into another body, perhaps one that doesn't have a such a melancholic tinge (in which case he might appear on Blue at any moment). I don't think that Horn thinks that Silk is in Horn's old body on Green: if he did, his descriptions of "Silk" would sound more like the shorter bald guy we know Horn looked like when he set out from Lizard Island: still, it is possible that this is what the Neighbors did, but I tend to think it is not (I think the Horn body is dead and decomposed).

Now, whether "Passilk" is a creation from before or after the suicide remains to be seen. If after, well then, that's where Silk went--into Mainframe (but even then he could download into a human host).

=The Horn/Silk Tangle=

As we keep pointing out, the majority of the people in TBOSS know Silk only through reading TBOLS, they do not have firsthand experience.

The "Silk" they know, then, is a step or two removed from real-life. And Horn is in a unique

position to know, first-hand, how far off his own boyhood hero-worshipping version was.

But the world of Blue seems to really need a hero exactly like the Silk of TBOLS (crop failures, slavery, wars of expansion are just a few of the problems marring the "paradise" of a new world). And as an architect of that hero, Horn seems to have volunteered/been drafted to become the hero.

Paradoxically, this means that Horn must become more like "Silk" and less like Silk; he must become the fiction, not the warts-and-all fact. So things are being burned away: bits of Silk, bits of Horn.

On to the editing of Horn's first book (OBW), but not his second book (IGJ): yes, this =is= something very interesting. OBW has five frames (Blue, Green, Whorl, present, and future), but IGJ has only two (Green and present); we have no indication that Horn returned home, nor even his book IGJ being read by his family. Things are very uncertain, suddenly.

With regard to the next volume, I have a suspicion that there will be even =less= about the whorl, directly and indirectly, then there is about Green in IGJ: rather like how Sainte Anne is in 5HC (you =think= you've been there, but you've really just read a forgery and a traveller's diary about the place).

=mantis=

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