

Babbie; Scylla; Oreb in the Night Chough

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 25 Aug 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/980>

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.

Robert Borski — 25 Aug 2000, 01:31

alga and William Ansley writing respectively:

It's the hus, the whole hus, nothing but the hus.

But, Babbie *is* an eight legged beastie! I just think it was Babbie the whole time. Most likely under Mucor's control then, and perhaps later.<

Essentially, the three of us are in agreement here, all thinking the eight-legged creature is Babbie. I just believe Babbie is more than a regulation hus, especially given Horn's rather oblique description of it. Why, for example, doesn't he call it Babbie (who he's seen up close)? At this stage he still has two good eyes, and is even far-sighted enough to describe the expression on Mucor's distant face ("her face the face of General Mint restrained by subordinate"). But now Babbie is "a small dark figure that seemed almost a cluster of boys, or two men upon their hands and knees"? Is Horn-the-writer simply being elliptical here? Color me curious.

alga then continuing:

<This may well be true in "The Night Chough," which only you and mantis seem to have read. But there's not a tweak of evidence for it in the five books we have all read. Scylla has apparently been there (for the story), done that and skedaddled.>

I'm curious, alga, if you have any thoughts about why then in GREEN's Proper Names In The Text, Wolfe parenthetically includes information about how Scylla is "also a sea-monster of the Red Sea Whorl"--since it doesn't seem to play (selon toi) a part in the Green narrative at all. Also curious if you're still holding to your Mother-as-undine theory, and how you fit undines into the Short Sun weltanschauung.

Falcon then ruminating:

<Just because Oreb sees Scylla in the lake and another person sees Scylla walking beside Oreb and someone else doesn't prove that Oreb is being ridden by Scylla. What we see of Scylla, for example when she rides Chenille, is a personality that exhibits vicious and bloodthirsty characteristics utterly foreign to Oreb's character. [snip] A Scylla-ridden Oreb would be a much different, and less likable and wise, bird.>

Oreb, in "The Night Chough," is a somewhat more sinister figure, even going so far as to suggest which weapons Starling use to avenge the murder of his girlfriend. Then again, the murderers (who also sexually assault Lily) are hardly sympathetic figures. (Hurry up, Kevin M. and reread the story. Surely others on the list have read TNC?)

Robert Borski

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