

Book of Mirrors

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 16 Jul 1998

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m.driussi — 16 Jul 1998, 20:10

Dan,

Re: the incident with the Book of Mirrors. Granted that Appian knows more about Severian's destiny as future autarch than Severian (who is clueless at that point), and granted that Appian is suprised at the sudden request, thinking that he had more time, still I think this episode is more an innocent mistake rather than anything sinister by Appian.

A case where if Appian had =less= information about Severian, then he would have taken the question about "the garden" as being about the mundane grounds above the House Absolute rather than about Yesod--"the Garden." (Muttering: "They never tell me anything! Maybe they want him to go there once ahead of time? Who knows--he's in such a hurry.")

IMHO this is a human touch, a showing that it isn't quite a vast conspiracy, with everybody-but-Severian having 100% knowledge of not only him but their own role to play; or, the antithesis--that even the finest alien conspiracy is subject to bungling from participants who really should know better.

Likewise, Severian's confusion after having passed the Test: What is the New Sun; Where is it in space/time; How can I bring it anywhere; etc. The few answers he gets to any of these questions are vague, like those of an adult to a child.

"Well Severian, you've just redeemed Urth--what next?"

"I'm going to Disneyland!"

=mantis=