

khaibits

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 07 Oct 1998

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1133>

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 — 07 Oct 1998, 00:38

I think Barbea is unlikely as a candidate as she is a khaibit and therefore
a clone of the original (somewhere I think Inire or Apian came out and
said
that directly).

In CLAW, Gurloes tells us khaibits are "common girls that look like the chatelaines. [But] I don't know where they get them." Severian, in his first and only visit to the House Azure, believes them to be recruited from the poor. But in CASTLE the Autarch implies they're clones, "grown from the body cells of exultant women so an exchange of blood will prolong the exultant's youth." So which is it?

If clones, as asserted by the Autarch (who is himself a master of deception), why are khaibits somewhat shorter--as both Gurloes and Severian assert?

On the night that Roche and Severian visit the Echopraxia, the Autarch tells them the women at the House Azure have been flown in by flier. But when alone with his khaibit, the "Chatelaine Thecla" tells him that she and Gracia have come by sleigh. Given that it's winter and snowing, is it likely that she and Gracia have come all way from the House Absolute, where the Autarch's seraglio is located? The House Absolute is well outside Nessus, remember, and even by destrier, in winter this would be some trip. And what of the other two hookers present--the Chatelaines Thea and Barbea? How have they arrived? (And why are fake Thecla's clothes so tacky?)

If beloved, alzado-ingested Thecla has a clone, or has undergone rejuvenation via bloodsharing, Severian does not mention the memory of either. Nor does the leech who attends Severian when he's recaptured by Vodalus. His idea of rejuvenation, because "youth is contagious," is to sleep with a 13 year old boy. And if cloning is practiced in the Commonwealth, are there any other mentions of it in the BotNS?

I claim wiggle room here.

That being said, I do think Jon Camfield's sis-might-be-in-the-Healer's-Tower proposal to be at least worthy of consideration, especially if he can find any secondary textual evidence.

Robert Borski

ps: I'm surprised no one's mentioned Merryn's calling Thecla "sister" in the fever dream Sev has in the lazaret.

Peter Westlake — 07 Oct 1998, 09:22 · follows Robert Borski

At 00:38 1998-10-07 -0500, you wrote:
I think Barbea is unlikely as a candidate as she is a khaibit and
therefore

a clone of the original (somewhere I think Inire or Apian came out and said that directly).

In CLAW, Gurloes tells us khaibits are "common girls that look like the chatelaines. [But] I don't know where they get them." Severian, in his first and only visit to the House Azure, believes them to be recruited from the poor. But in CASTLE the Autarch implies they're clones, "grown from the body cells of exultant women so an exchange of blood will prolong the exultant's youth." So which is it?

If clones, as asserted by the Autarch (who is himself a master of deception), why are khaibits somewhat shorter--as both Gurloes and Severian assert?

The Hierodules tell Severian that Baldanders is so big because on Urth, perpetual growth is the only way to prolong life. The khaibits will be younger than their originals, so maybe a growth hormone or some such thing is the active agent in the exchange of blood; but however it works, the exultants are having their lives prolonged, so they become taller.

It is interesting that Thecla memories don't mention cloning, but then Severian is hardly one to give a complete account of important details.

SBear.