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The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 07 Oct 1998

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Jon Camfield — 07 Oct 1998, 20:28

From: Dan Parmenter <dan at lec.com>

Yes, and we are told that torturers never go there.

They never go there to be healed, but it doesn't necessarily follow that they wouldn't drop off a child (though it seems more likely that they'd hand it over to the witches. Maybe the witches passed it off, though this gets more and more complex. We assume Catherine gave birth to Sev and Sev's sister while in the Obuilette (why else would Sev remember nursing in the prison cell, otherwise?)

But... (Sorry, I don't have my books here) don't the torturers not accept babies that young? Don't they have to be able to stand, but shorter than a man's leg?

Perhaps Catherine gave birth to Sev and Sis while in the obuilette, then after her excrutiation, was let free. Being the daughter of at best an optimate family, and having committed a crime worthy of torture, she probably didn't have much money. She scrapes by, but eventually returns to the Seekers for help. She gives them her son and earns extra wages by being Katherine of the Wheel once a year.

...But what about the daughter? Knowing the Seekers wouldn't take her, the daughter wouldn't be given to them and probably not to the witches either. Perhaps with only one child Catherine could afford to care for her (barely?)? Perhaps she gave the child to the Healers, or even to the Pelerines. Or perhaps the child grew up and became a whore at the Echopraxia.... (since the khaibit theory is back to being in question)

Of course Severian is a healer too. He is praised as a "leech", and patches up Triskele (after first raising him from the dead :-)

And the healers are known for acts of cruelty to torturers-- nice mirroring, I think

By Gurloes "dropping hints", do you mean hints about Severian's true nature? Or hints about his own ghastly life? I'm thinking of the "metal phallus" scene here.

I meant the metal phallus / "viagra" powder scene, yes.

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"The most incomprehensible fact about nature is that it is comprehensible"
-- Albert Einstein