

Perils of Agia

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 13 Oct 1998

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Charles Dye — 13 Oct 1998, 17:56

Robert Borski asks:

One last question for raster on the Claw's disappearance: when and how do you think the Claw winds up in Sev's sabertache? Is it after the altar crash, meaning that injured Agia, with her wits still about her, limps over, picks up the Claw, limps back over to unconscious (or dead) Sev, whereupon she puts it in in his sabertache, because she knows she's gonna be eventually stripsearched by the high nun of the Pelerines?

Planting the stolen goods on an unconscious man would be just a little dumb, wouldn't it? Especially if he also happens to be dead.

At the point when the Pelerines appear (and Agia finds herself in imminent danger of being caught) Sev is carrying her. I suppose he could've slung her over his shoulder like a sack of potatoes, but that's not how I visualize the scene. She has her arm around his waist, and he's a bit distracted. A sweet disorder in the dress, etcetera. In fact, between the girl, the fire, the loss of his sword, and the approach of the nice folks whose altar they've just trashed, he's probably very distracted.

(Could Agia have had some experience as a pickpocket before she and Agilus moved on to more lucrative crimes? I suppose her failed attempt in Agilus's cell argues against it.)

Because I've never believed Agia's involvement; if she's not looking for coins as her brother suggests when Sev comes to visit her and Agilus in his cell, I believe she's looking for Sev's whetstone, which she knows is in his sabertache. Sev also doesn't notice he has the Claw until just before the Pelerines torch their cathedral tent, which is, what, two days after the fiacre crash? Leaving me still perplexed as to how and when the Claw made its way into Sev's possession in the first place.

The Pelerines clearly know that that Claw is gone already ("Will you now also return to us anything of value to us you may have found?") But I must agree it's odd that Severian takes so long to discover his new toy.

What good would the whetstone do Agilus? His cell door ("merely wood bound with iron") locks from the outside!

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