

Fechin's cohort

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 19 Oct 1998

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m.driussi — 19 Oct 1998, 17:57

Robert Borski,

Right, it is young (twenty-something) journeyman Severian who dubs the Old Man in the hut as contemporary to Rudesind.

And Rudesind talks of when he was a boy seventy years ago, making him what, seventy-five or so.

So if Fechin was a Mozart of the canvas, he could have been a famous teenager painting a five-year-old Rudesind (or Fechin at twenty and Rudesind at ten), and seventy years later they would be considered members of the same cohort.

Re: the Old Man as Casdoe's father or father-in-law. I don't think it is you who screwed up, I think the text is very ambiguous on this relatively simple identity. Yes, Severian seems to think that Old Man is Casdoe's father--first when Old Man says, "Becan, come over here!" in ch. 15, and later at the top of ch. 17. But the way that Casdoe talks of her mother in Thrax makes it seem like the Old Man is Becan's father (Why would the one nearly infirm parent be so far away from the spouse and the comforts of civilization in Thrax? And if Old Man were her dad, she might mention something to that effect while asking if Severian had seen her mother, Herais ("Hera is . . . what?" <g>), something like, "Poopsie and I miss her something awful!" or "I fancy she is painting the old town red now that the divorce has come through" or "Pa would of been back there afore now ifen the road had not been awashed out three years ago" or who knows what.

As usual, we can believe Severian, or we can doubt Severian. And in this odd little case, if we doubt him we wonder, "Why does he want Old Man to be her father? Is he avoiding falling into thinking Old Man as his own father, since he has taken Becan's place at the table, and later as father to little Severian?"

Old Man is talking about Fechin, with all that emphasis on how the sun was brighter that day, and how Fechin went to do the nasty with that beautiful girl, then Fechin drew Old Man on one side of the page and beautiful girl on the other . . . and suddenly Agia (he-llo, pretty lady!) comes down the stairs. Spooky. Severian even =says= that her face might be a Fechin creation in wax which then melts in the fire of her rage.

Rudesind (widower) looking for a Fechin portrait of his younger face (Narcissis); Old Boatman (widower) looking in a mirror-like lake for the face of his young wife (Orpheus) . . .

And Rudesind says that Inire told him to tell Severian about his childhood . . . about Fechin. Pretty important guy, that Fechin, for whatever reason a person's application requires!

=mantis=