

Jonas and the sardines (herrings?)

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 31 May 1999

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 31 May 1999, 17:46

Okay. So do we sort of agree that Jonas-the-android-bits was created on Urth?

Now then, let me walk through the current antechamber set: Jonas sees the love of his looong life, then get bonked on the head and thrown into the antechamber with all the sardines. The central point for Jonas is that people don't get out of the antechamber, all the seeming clues that do not match this point are discarded as red herrings: "Kim Lee Soong" as a name (it is a signpost to big time because Jonas says it was common in places now sunken); the one, two, or three spaceship crashes/events (the only time marker here is that of generations of prisoners since their crash); details of the original structure of the room; the way that Jonas never sees Hethor, even when they are both prisoners in the antechamber; etc.

(The mystery of what happened at the city gate is a case of too little information; in contrast, this reading of the antechamber set offers a plethora of red herrings.)

The crashprisoners talk of their crash on the grounds of the House Absolute--or on Urth at least (crash number one), which reminds Jonas of his crash--on Urth? (crash number two). After the attack of the exultants (hey, didn't the exultants attack at the play--no, that was Baldanders who started it), Jonas becomes sort of unhinged, and believes that he is back in a ship incident (crash number three--may not be an actual "crash").

(If the prisoners didn't crash in the gardens of the House Absolute, then they must have been arrested for just trespassing as a body--like Severian, Jonas, Hethor, and Beuzac. Lessee, they were looking for a port . . . in Typhon's time, Citadel Hill was called the Old Port, implying a new Port somewhere else)

Severian finds the way out--Jonas goes with him. Free! Now all he has to do is find Jolenta and declare his love! Yet, look, here's a mirror . . . I'll just duck in and freshen up.

Who knows what Jonas has in mind? He seems to think he can do something himself--he certainly isn't counting on the Claw to bring him back. And yet that is what happens, and maybe this, finally, is the reason why Jonas is brought in to hijack Miles (if that model is the case): Jonas stepped into the mirror intending to return to Urth, he wasn't suiciding (we agree on this, I assume); Severian knew it, and the Claw did, too (if you want to grant it more intelligence than a dumb object); so EVEN THOUGH Severian needed a friend out there near the battle front and hence regained Jonas (we all agree this is a good reason for Severian--it is just a unique use of the Claw), ALSO Jonas had gone and vowed to return, so it was an important thing on =his= side, too (even if he wasn't expecting it to happen that way).

And doesn't =that= seem like a very "deal with the fairies" sort of thing? Like the protag in "A Cabin on the Coast," Jonas went to the fairies and somehow paid for his dream of re-construction to take place, and then he was returned to Urth at the easiest opportunity (either as a spirit to hijack Miles, or already within the Miles body crafted for him in Yesod), only

to learn that his love had already died. The moral? Don't deal with fairies! Or "better to have loved and wooed while flawed than to have done the Charles Atlas thing and let the babe wilt unto death." Or "she needed you, man, and you weren't there--her death is on your head--you were the only one who could have saved her, and you were off at the gym."

Lookie here! The tin soldier didn't desert the paper ballerina in her time of trouble--hell no! He hopped in there, right with her to the end.

=mantis=