

Navigator

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 09 Jun 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1673>

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Robert Borski — 09 Jun 1999, 02:48

Item 10: the little girl mentions "the navigator" in conversation with Severian.

Comment: this is the first indication that at least some ancestors of the generational prisoners might have been the crew of a starship. The girl is talking to Severian, not Jonas. We aren't sure of the kin-group of the girl--she might or might not be a member of the same group that was talking to Jonas.

mantis:

While I understand how you may have arrived at this conclusion, I think it raises more questions than it answers (as opposed to my own navigator = JFK theory). And while alternate theories are always welcome, I believe each must somehow address the following:

1) How are the survivors of a crash, whether the ship is Tzadkiel's starship or a tender from the same, able to organize a funeral, complete with black wagons? Especially when it appears they will be subject to arrest very soon?

2) Why do the "burying people" (possibly posthistoric morticians or their equivalent--but again how are the survivors of the crash able to engage these?) wear black? While a custom in our times (and hence my belief that Oringa is talking about the members of the funeral procession, not strictly morticians), Severian tells us wearing black to a funeral slanders the deceased because of its association with his guild.

3) What if anything are we to make of Oringa's statement about "people in black clothes walking"? (As if walking behind a black funeral wagon is somehow out of the ordinary--although as I've stated before most accounts of JFK's funeral make mention of how the widow Kennedy refused to ride in a car to St. Matthew's Cathedral and hence walked behind the horse-drawn caisson bearing her dead husband.)

Also: you might want to consider one additional datapoint, Item 0.2 perhaps, where Jonas continues the tale he began at the Piteous Gate (CHAPTER VIII, CLAW). It again suggests Jonas has access to information outside the ordinary ken--at least for someone born during Severian's time.

Hey, I like the launch-silo theory! Especially since Sev seems to see radiation biohazard icons.

Robert Borski

Mitchell A. Bailey — 09 Jun 1999, 09:59 · follows Robert Borski

Robert Borski wrote:

...

1) How are the survivors of a crash, ...able to organize a funeral, complete with black wagons? Especially when it appears they will be subject to arrest very soon?

Concurrence! Exactly what I was wondering when this crew-of-crashed-spaceship theory for the original residents of the Antechamber first got floated.

2) Why do the "burying people" ...wear black? While a custom in our times ...Severian tells us wearing black to a funeral slanders the deceased because of its association with his guild.

Ummm, I think Severian actually meant that the wearing of *_fuligin_*, as distinct from mere black, constituted the association with torturers. He went to some trouble to explain to the little girl how the color of his habit could be distinguished.

BTW, speaking of variations in burial customs, isn't a significant component of the crashed-starship theory that its crew is predominately of eastern Asian origin, Korean or Chinese, due to that name "Kim Lee Soong" which crops up? If I'm not mistaken, the eastern asian cultures use white as a funereal and mourning color much as westerners use black. I would expect that a Korean crew, given the chance to organize a funeral, would dress predominately in white. I think the Chinese do use black in funerals in certain instances, but I'm not clear on the distinction - I think it depends on the relationship to the deceased.

CRCulver — 09 Jun 1999, 14:10 · follows Mitchell A. Bailey

In a message dated 6/9/99 9:08:17 AM EST, MAB at lindau.net writes:

<< BTW, speaking of variations in burial customs, isn't a significant component of the crashed-starship theory that its crew is predominately of eastern Asian origin, Korean or Chinese, due to that name "Kim Lee Soong" which crops up?>>

That's what one would think, but Severian doesn't mention that the prisoners are xanthoderms, something which he would probably consider worth mentioning, because it doesn't look like he has seen any in the Commonwealth. (In fact, the only place I can find the word "xanthoderm" in the BotNS proper is Father Inire's Letter).

Christopher Culver