

Alien invaders of Urth?

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 22 Apr 1997

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David Wells — 22 Apr 1997, 14:18

Mantis,

As usual, or perhaps moreso, none of these points are unarguable.
(Which makes me wonder why I bother putting them up.

I think they're very interesting, and thanks for posting them. Not that this will prevent me from arguing, just a little :-).

Exultants as offworld invaders:
-- Jonas says they are new (II, ch. 10).

True. I guess I had assumed the exultants to be a genetically "improved" aristocracy, rather than offworlders. Which would also fit with Jonas' remark, and explain why they are taller than armigers. But this certainly isn't conclusive and doesn't explain

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at all. Exultants' access to superior technology I had put down to a simple class matter - just as fin-de-siecle English aristocracy had "access to" petrol-driven vehicles while the working classes "had not" (and also tended to be taller and healthier). But we British tend to be obsessed with class.

As for Typhon,

"I have told you that I was autarch on many worlds . . . This world, the most ancient of all, I made my capital."

is suggestive but (as you admit), not conclusive. Typhon's comment that

"those to whom I had given control of such ships as could reach the stars had fled in them"

is fascinating in the light of BOtLS. We get the impression from III Chs 25, 26 that Typhon's Piaton-transplant is relatively recent, (an experiment still in progress) which suggests that the Whorl left Urth shortly before the Conciliator arrived and Typhon was abandoned behind his curtain to die. So did the Whorl set sail _after_ Typhon's generals had fled in his starships? This suggests that its despatch was a bit of an emergency measure, rather than being carefully-planned..

Having reread these passages, I am struck by an ambiguity which I hadn't noticed before. I had always assumed that Severian/the New Sun unwittingly resurrected Typhon - particularly ironic as this comes between two failed resurrections which Severian actually wanted to achieve. But I now note that Severian doesn't seem to touch Typhon at all (although it's not, admittedly, completely clear whether this is necessary for "the Claw" to operate). But he does fiddle with the machinery. So is Typhon resurrected by natural rather than supernatural means?

David W/newt

Jim Jordan — 22 Apr 1997, 14:36 · follows David Wells

Mantis wrote:

-- Thecla born under zodiac sign of Swan (IV, ch 23), not possible on Urth/Earth, but possible in a different star system.

1. Cygnus is one of the decans of Aquarius. It is in the north, but if the Urth flipped....
2. The planets have other names in the Urth of Severian's day. Perhaps the constellations did also.

Either of these could support an Urth birth for Thecla.

How about it?

Nutria