

Accord, curation...and a surprise.

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 Nov 1999

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Alice Turner — 02 Nov 1999, 19:46

From: Dan Parmenter <dan at lec.com>

Isn't Father Inire, the old BEM himself at least one of the curators of the Botanical Garden? Damn, I don't have the text here.

I agree with pretty much everything in the last digest, uncluding the general awfulness of the covers, but I thought I might doublecheck on Dan's question. And lookee what I found:

In a conversation on the Admamnian steps about religion, the Claw and whether the Conciliator is more than a legend, Agia veers to talk of sunshine being hard on women's skin, causing wrinkles and showing up defects. In a Jonas-like statement, she remarks, "Urvasi loved Pururavas, you know, before she saw him in a bright light."

So I thought I'd look them up, Pururavas first. She turned out to be an apsara, a sort of sky-nymph or minor angel (like Polychrome, Wm.<g>). They're very popular in Hindu art. And paired with her friend and fellow apsara Urvasi (*not* a male--this time), she occasionally will go into voluntary concubinage to a notable human. Well! So then I looked up Urvasi, who is a dawn apsara, sometimes invoked at hearths and by lovers, and guess what else *she* is called.

Usas or Ushas.

Here's the story: Urvasi decided to live on earth for a while and Pururavas, male here, wanted to marry her. She agreed, under three conditions, one of which was that she wouldn't have to see him naked. Eventually the gods wanted her back, so they stole her sheep (keeping her sheep in the bedroom was another condition--hey, where do you think writers get these ideas?--the third was that she got plenty of clarified butter). Pururavas jumped up to run after the sheep, naked, the gods made lightening so that Urvasi saw him, and, bam, she was outta there!

Now, Dan's question. There is an old man, a curator, at the gate, but we don't learn his name. Sev tells a story which features Inire. And it turns out that Inire ordered the averns (from off-planet) to be planted. So Inire is certainly concerned with the garden. But I suspect he is too busy to be a specific curator of anything except the Autarchy itself.

Ooops, I just looked in LU and mantis already has the story. But I've typed it, and it's entertaining, and we can speculate on why this should come from Agia (of all people) and about "bright light" so I'm going to send it anyway.

-alga