

Sev's dad & aunt

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 06 Jan 1998

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m.driussi — 06 Jan 1998, 01:11

Christopher,

alga is right. As for Sev's mother, I prefer using "Katharine" for the patron saint of the torturers and the role played at the feasts of the torturers, "Catherine" for the mother. Just to make a distinction, if there is any real difference in the metaphysical/time-travelling, loop-the-lupine-loop sense of things.

Dorcas + "Charonus"

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Ouen + Catherine (an exultant or of exultant)

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Severian, Merryn

Dorcas: an optimate (see TBOTNS appendix re: social classes). She is the only representative of this class in the text.

"Charonus": the old guy dragging the Lake of Birds, probably a former commoner who tried to become optimate and fell hard.

Catherine: as a fallen Pelerine, she is presumed to be exultant or optimate (see Ava talking about the Order in volume four). However, she doesn't seem very tall, so she might not be an exultant; yet Severian's biological background suggests, if not requires, that there be an exultant back there. One solution bandied about is that Catherine is (1) a runaway khaibit (2) from the same exultant family that has the half-sisters Thea and Thecla (see the undetailed "family arms" on one of the critically important books Sev brings to Thecla); said exultant family might, in turn, (3) be one of the "northern clans" (Thecla's family has holdings at Lake Diuturna, quite northern), (4) perhaps even the very same family whose crest one of the other torturer apprentices draws above his bunk (but NOT NOT NOT the detailed crest of Severian's mausoleum, I don't usually think, at least--at one point we are told the exultants, like the autarch, is always buried elsewhere--but at another point there might be a line about Severian's mausoleum housing an exultant family).

Back to khaibits: because they are clones, unagumented by the biotech magic that makes exultants so tall--in fact, khaibits are the raw material that allows exultants to be tall. Thus khaibits are of the blood yet not really exultants.

Anyhow, if I remember right, John Clute proposed (in that seminal essay of his) that Thecla is an indwelling aunt. Meaning, if we take him literally, that Catherine is an escaped khaibit of the Thea/Thecla bloodline (generation previous to Thea/Thecla). Or something like that? Well that's what I usually think--and she doesn't age between torturer feasts because she's living in the same Atrium of Time area that Valeria lives in. That's another one of my details.

Happy New Year!

=mantis=