

Severian's Slivers

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 31 Jan 1998

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/325>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

m.driussi — 31 Jan 1998, 05:26

Reply: Item #6021037 from URTH at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET02#

Christopher,

I admire the work you are doing here, but I disagree with some details.

I theorize that Severian has Sliver-selves, or, if you like, he sheds his skin like a snake and becomes something new--but the skin lives on as the old self. (Remember that whole "hologram" thing? Each fragment contains the whole, however distorted.)

So there are =literally= more than one Severian scattered in our narrator's wake.

Apu-Punchau is one of them. The Apu-Punchau Severian meets for the first/last time in the Stone Town is the same one he meets for the last/first time in the tomb. It isn't "him" anymore, but the way he was "then," now living on and having adventures which Severian knows next to nothing about (e.g., when Severian finally gets out of the tomb and avoids imploding, he sees Apu-Punchau going out to be among his people again).

And remember--the vivimancer Apu-Punchau was called up in the ruins of the Stone Town, or called the summoners back into the deep past when the city was alive . . . but since Severian did not have that adventure while he was in the past (i.e., he did not close the loop at that end--did not see the same scene from the other angle, which is what happens at one point in A VOYAGE TO ARCTURUS) then it must have been done by somebody else.

The dead Severian on Tzadkiel (remember: he saw a body there) is probably another sliver--perhaps the one who helped arrange the miracle eclipse via the ship's sails. This "sailor Severian" is also a top candidate for "who is buried in Severian's mausoleum," since the heraldic crest (featuring a flying ship) would be especially appropriate for a former sailor.

The Claw is also a sliver, or semi-sliver since it doesn't have much of a body. But it is quite independent.

Since we don't know what "Canog's Book of the New Sun" says about the final days of the Conciliator, we know precious little ourselves. Did he really vanish into thin air at Mount Typhon? It may be that once again there was a body left behind, which then reanimated and went about its business.

How often is "entering the corridor of time" merely a symptom of physical death?

=mantis=

P.S. Oh yes, one more thing about the futures hanging in suspension. There is a thread that

might be separate, but no, it ultimately leads back into the Ragnarok future: the future that had Baldanders on the Phoenix Throne rather than Severian. See, the folks from Yesod were quietly testing Baldanders until they could see which of the two futures he would follow . . . once they saw, they dropped him. Or was it the other way--they aided him to make Severian struggle against him and do the opposite? (It is so tricky figuring causality when they are moving =backward= in time.)

=m=

CRCulver — 31 Jan 1998, 21:22 · follows m.driussi

Mantis said:

The Claw is also a sliver, or semi-sliver since it doesn't have much of a body. But it is quite independent.<

Who's to say that the Claw isn't simply a device made by Tzadkiel to help Severian bring the New Sun? I'm pretty much ruled out the idea that it is an invention of the Hierodules due to the nonchalant response given it by Famulimus, Barbatus, and Ossipago.

it ultimately leads back into the Ragnarok future: the future that had Baldanders on the Phoenix Throne rather than Severian.<

I would like page references for this, if you wouldn't mind. Incidentally, Baldanders would most certainly fail the test, because he seemed to think of the New Sun, the Claw, and the BotNS lore as superstition. So, Baldanders as Autarch would = Ragnarok.

So there are =literally= more than one Severian scattered in our narrator's wake.<

So, can I explain this away by hypothesizing that there were, in fact, iterations of Briah before Apu-Punchau1's? I don't know about slivers, as that would suggest more Severians than I am prepared to account for.

Christopher R. Culver <crculver at aol.com>
<http://members.aol.com/crculver/index.html>

"Ignorance, that light of fools steers a wayward path"
-Brendan Perry