

Severian's Daughter & Thais

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 29 Jul 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3379>

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James Jordan — 29 Jul 2002, 15:36

At 06:50 PM 7/27/2002 -0700, you wrote:

Well, as I glance back over UTNS, it seems unlikely that Thais could be Severian's kid by Dorcas. The last he saw of her was a decade or so before leaving to get the New Sun, and he returns several more decades latter, if poor shriveled Valaria is any indication. Thais is in Severian's estimation "fairly young", so perhaps a grandchild?

J

Hmmm. Well, I've always thought Severian was his own grandfather somehow, and that was the outcome of his relation with Dorcas. I can't recall how I came up with that -- maybe it was just the general ambience of the novels that led me to it. But if that's right, it would seem to eliminate Thais from direct consideration. Set me straight, someone!

Alga's contribution on Thais is interesting. THE Ship is clearly some kind of image of the Church, moving through of history, ascending to "heaven," bringing the "new sun," etc. So, what about other ships? Do they have symbolic meaning? One would think so, this being Wolfe and all. Is Thais the sailor a replay of the converted Thais the Saint, with her being a sailor on a ship a replay of her work in the church/convent?

One of Severian's youthful buddies (whose name I cannot call up at the moment; Eata?) is captain of the ship, iirc. (I'm 15 years removed from my second reading; gotta read'em again!) Is he Peter to Severian's "Christ"? Or at least a local pastor of a small ship linked to The Ship symbolically? Is this worth an investigation?

(For those who don't know, Church as Noah's Ark and Ship is common coin of symbolism. The interior of a church is called a "nave.")

Nutria

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Roy C. Lackey — 30 Jul 2002, 17:20 · follows James Jordan

Nutria wrote:

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If you have long held the Sev-is-his-own-grandpa theory, just ignore this. But if you picked up the notion from this list about three years ago, then the fault is mine. I posted just such a theory then. I say "fault" because the theory was based on the assumption that there was a baby in the basket Dorcas had with her when Sev last saw her, that the baby was hers, and Sev was the father. In the normal course of things, that just isn't possible. There just wasn't enough time between Sev's first encounter with her (late winter/early spring) and when he saw the basket

(late summer/early autumn) for them to have produced a baby.

My apologies if I led anyone astray. Of course Sev might otherwise be his own grandpa, but my theory was wrong.

-Roy