

The Book of Typhon part one, revised: Severian's true

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 07 Mar 2003

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***THAT* Matt Weber — 07 Mar 2003, 06:39**

The first clue is The Tale of the Boy Called Frog . For economy's sake I'll assume everyone's read it. On the surface it seems to be a story told around Little Severian. Frog is raised by woodcutters and then orphaned and sheltered by the Black Killer (Severian) and the naked one (Apu Punchau). In a very real sense this is the case, but there is more to this. Spring Wind, the father of Frog and Fish, is Typhon, aka Typhoon, which is a spring storm. Wolfe hides this cleverly in two ways: First, the story occurs before Typhon is introduced and second, the name Spring Wind seems Asian in origin and makes the story seem as if it comes from the First Empire. The Black Killer who shelters Frog, is the Torturers Guild, and the Naked One, who has never had a son of Meschia to teach, is none other than Father Inire who according to the Lexicon Urthus is the vizier to countless Autarchs since Ymarí. He occurs as the Naked One in Sword and Citadel as the bent and masked guide (pp. 350-1). And here we have the answer: Ymar is the bastard son of Typhon, Frog, sheltered by the Black Killer and taught by the Naked One, who rules by the red flower.

Yeah, okay, but it's also a paraphrase of Kipling's Jungle Book; as I recall, Mowgli means "Frog". The Black Killer is Bagheera, and the Naked One stands in for Baloo.

I don't buy the exegesis, but it's certainly impressive.

Matt

L'ordre règne à Varsovie.