

Botanical Gardens

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 11 Apr 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3925>

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Che Monro — 11 Apr 2003, 13:08

Wise Ones:

The Botanical Gardens in Shadow of the Torturer was one of the more mysterious locations visited. It was not revealed whether the visitor travelled through time and space in the various exhibits, or whether they were in fact some kind of cunning and deceptive recreation of other times and places.

Either explanation would seem to be possible, given textual evidence, which is, no doubt, deliberately ambiguous.

What interests me is the people who get "lost" in the exhibits and become part of them. Severian recounts that he feels particularly at home and "part of" one barren, rocky and seemingly empty exhibit. Assuming that all of the exhibits are of real places and times, I wonder which place and time it is that Severian is attracted to.

It's my belief that knowing this would possibly be another significant clue to his character and symbolic meaning.

Che

Ché Franz Joseph Monro -- <http://www.chemonro.com>
che at chemonro.com -- flirt at technologist.com

Joshuafalchion — 15 Apr 2003, 04:43 · follows Che Monro

The connection between Severian and the Sand Garden would seem, to me, no more (or less!) complicated than the connection between the Conciliator and the claw, for it is there that he encounters for the first, unconscious, time the thorny bush that he later encounters on the beach in CITADEL. Of somewhat more interest to me is the curious fact that the two people listening to the naked man in the hut have names that are clearly from "our time": Robert and Marie. They also reference Paris, where Robert "used to be a student"; there is also the winged mail plane to tantalize us. What I wonder is, are these two people based on real people (a pair of artists or writers, perhaps)?

Also, on an unrelated subject, those readers disinterested in symmetry will probably not care, but it may prove a small detail to add to the endless arguments about the ties between Severian, Typhon, and Silk: the event where Severian encounters the corpse of Typhon on the mountain, the boy Severian is killed, and Severian speaks with and assassinates the revived Typhon takes place in the exact middle of the cycle of five books that make up the whole New Sun series. Since I have a writer's interest in symmetry, this interests me; but I understand if it seems less than relevant to the rest of you. Still, such a connective between the New Sun and the Long and Short Sun books, in such a central position, seems relevant to me.

But who can say?

Joshua the Falchion

Chris — 15 Apr 2003, 05:42 · follows JoshuaFalchion

I also was intrigued by the couple in the Gardens, but I can't place them.

As far as the symmetry, it's not that I discount it, it's just that this is one of those rare cases where the author's intention can't be ignored. Specifically, at the time that book was written, it was meant to be a 4 book series. Even after the series was done, Wolfe was against writing another novel because to his mind the series was done.

Symmetry as a matter of design interests me, but Wolfe's books already offer so much in the way of abstract and mysterious connections that I can't bring myself to start bringing accidental factors into it as well.

Chris (still unable to choose a proper name)

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Joshua the Falchion

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Malco — 15 Apr 2003, 10:40 · follows Chris

I remember thinking that the fact that the Sand Garden was not yet completed was significant. Will Severian (or what he becomes) complete this exhibit?

--- Che Monro <flirt at technologist.com> wrote:
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