

source of charge in Jolenta rape

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 21 Apr 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3964>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 21 Apr 2003, 21:59

Marc Aramini wrote:

I must speak about the Jolenta "rape" - because I don't think it really is one.

Before things spin any further away and out . . .

. . . the source of the charge of the possibility of Jolenta's rape . . .

. . . is none other than Severian himself, in URTH (iirc).

Thus it is not something whipped up by fan or critic.

Severian himself, writing his tale, alludes to it as possibly being rape. He uses that word.

Once again, in pursuit of accuracy.

=mantis=

P.S. The Y series auctions have begun on eBay.

=m=

Sirius Fiction

booklets on Gene Wolfe, John Crowley

<http://www.siriusfiction.com/>

eBay Auctions <http://cgi6.ebay.com/ws/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewSellersOtherItems&userid=mr.sirius>

Chris — 21 Apr 2003, 22:28 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

I agree that it's Severian himself who makes the charge, though I think he makes it against himself fairly immediately.

I also think what's been said about Jolenta is a bit unfair. It's a bit muddled to explain why I come to this conclusion, but bear in mind that everyone involved in Talos' play is rather overtly representing something else. Jolenta is "beauty", if you like, and Talos is clearly the "writer/poet" - what Talos does with Jolenta, and what he makes of her, is somewhat telling. This may not seem important, but it helps to explain a passage that is otherwise confusing (and which I cannot reproduce or look up), in which Severian basically says that she can't help the way she is, and implies that **everyone** is taking advantage of/raping her - with the possible exception of Talos.

This may or may not be in the same league, thematically, with the others. In any event, I was

very sadly sympathetic to Jolenta considering how one-dimensional (by nature) a character she was.

I believe, however, that at some point Severian lets slip a statement, no longer than a sentence or two, that implies that (despite the fact that they were lovers at some point) he had forced Thecla. I'm not confident of that as an assertion, but there was definitely violence involved; Severian through most of those books is very evasive w.r.t. Thecla, and one is often forced to re-evaluate things he's said earlier in light of things he says later.

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 21 Apr 2003, 23:47 · follows Chris

I agree that it's Severian himself who makes the charge, though I think he makes it against himself fairly immediately.

It's also (imho) telling that he says -- using Wolfian bigwords -- that Jolenta, who brought out lesbian tendencies ('tribidism') in many women, brought out sadistic tendencies ('algophilia') in the torturer-hero.

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In fact I think it's not at all certain whether or not Severian and Thecla were ever lovers in the flesh ... Very probable, but there remains the possibility that the "memories" of their sexual encounters (which only appear in the text _after_ the perverted Eucharist in the wood) may be of Thecla's imaginings rather than specific reality. The whole question must be considered alongside Master Gurloes' claim that to be "abused" by the torturer is the most shameful thing that can happen to a client ... which is relevant to this question no matter whether it actually happened or not.