

The Green Man's restitution

The Urth list — 5 messages, 4 voices, 20 Jul 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4104>

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.

Lisa Schaffer-Doggett — 20 Jul 2003, 01:25

All of this talk about Silk (the man who doesn't eat) put me back on the track of a question that's been nagging me. How does the Green Man repay Severian for setting him free? The rescue from the Ascians doesn't count (the Green Man's own words) and he claims that he will aid him again. Then, nothing. No more Green Man. In my mind there are three explanations for this. Wolfe forgot about the Green Man's promise, or decided not to bother with it (not a viable option for me), Severian decided to omit any more mention of the Green Man for his own reasons (too close to the first, basically a cop-out), or the Green Man, being a master of the corridors of time has already aided Severian in his past (though it would be the Green Man's personal future). "When" in the text could this have happened, and what action could it be?

Don

StoneOx17 — 21 Jul 2003, 20:52 · follows Lisa Schaffer-Doggett

Don says:

All of this talk about Silk (the man who doesn't eat) put me back on the track of a question that's been nagging me. How does the Green Man repay Severian for setting him free? The rescue from the Ascians doesn't count (the Green Man's own words) and he claims that he will aid him again. Then, nothing. No more Green Man. In my mind there are three explanations for this. Wolfe forgot about the Green Man's promise, or decided not to bother with it (not a viable option for me), Severian decided to omit any more mention of the Green Man for his own reasons (too close to the first, basically a cop-out), or the Green Man, being a master of the corridors of time has already aided Severian in his past (though it would be the Green Man's personal future). "When" in the text could this have happened, and what action could it be?

This question has been bugging me for some time as well.

The Green Man promises to set Severian free when he is imprisoned, so we only need to look at times when he is imprisoned (although there are a lot of those). I am also convinced that the Green Man's restitution happens before Severian frees him, thus creating yet another time loop. When Severian is imprisoned in the antechamber, one of the other prisoners there sees a green face, which I am convinced is the Green Man looking for opportunities to set Severian free. I think this shows that Wolfe hasn't just dropped this thread. However, this can't be the time that the Green Man redeems his promise, since Severian gets out of the antechamber by himself (remembering Thecla's use of the hidden door's word of power).

Any takers on this one?

Stone Ox (Peter S.)

--

Michael Andre-Driussi — 21 Jul 2003, 21:26 · follows StoneOx17

Stone Ox quoted Don and wrote:

All of this talk about Silk (the man who doesn't eat) put me back on the track of a question that's been nagging me. How does the Green Man repay Severian for setting him free? The rescue from the Ascians doesn't count (the Green Man's own words) and he claims that he will aid him again. Then, nothing. No more Green Man. In my mind there are three explanations for this. Wolfe forgot about the Green Man's promise, or decided not to bother with it (not a viable option for me), Severian decided to omit any more mention of the Green Man for his own reasons (too close to the first, basically a cop-out), or the Green Man, being a master of the corridors of time has already aided Severian in his past (though it would be the Green Man's personal future). "When" in the text could this have happened, and what action could it be?

This question has been bugging me for some time as well. The Green Man promises to set Severian free when he is imprisoned, so we only need to look at times when he is imprisoned (although there are a lot of those). I am also convinced that the Green Man's restitution happens before Severian frees him, thus creating yet another time loop. When Severian is imprisoned in the antechamber, one of the other prisoners there sees a green face, which I am convinced is the Green Man looking for opportunities to set Severian free. I think this shows that Wolfe hasn't just dropped this thread. However, this can't be the time that the Green Man redeems his promise, since Severian gets out of the antechamber by himself (remembering Thecla's use of the hidden door's word of power).

Any takers on this one?

Wasn't someone mentioning fairly recently that we don't know what happened during Severian's Year as an Ascian Slave?

One of the few things we know about that period of Severian's Reign is that he did not have the Claw (and thus no magical powers to help out when things got rough).

I guess I'm the only one who figures that the Green Man saved Severian's bacon at least once during that unmentionable year.

(Then again, I'm the same lunatic who thinks that Severian the Cruel married Agia . . .)

=mantis=

cilluff1 at optonline.net — 21 Jul 2003, 21:51 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

Mantis, further to Stone Ox and Don's Green Man musings, writes:

<<Wasn't someone mentioning fairly recently that we don't know what happened during Severian's Year as an Ascian Slave?

One of the few things we know about that period of Severian's Reign is that he did not have the Claw (and thus no magical powers to help out when things got rough).>>

Hmmm, it's been a while but I always thought that the Claw itself doesn't have any magical powers per se, it was always Severian himself that had them but it seemed on first blush to be the Claw because we do not realize until later in the series that Sev is the Conciliator. It was, e.g., Sev, pre-Claw, who brought his dog back from the dead at the start of the first book. I haven't read the passage in a bit and don't have the book to hand, but I thought that was the point of Severian's 'every grain of sand, every thorn' (paraphrase) soliloquy upon the beach.

<>

I like the Green Man as Silkhorn concept just for it's creativity, but I'm not sure if Wolfe really meant that. I always think of the Green Man sort of as Tom Bombadil, a character inserted purely as an interested red herring unconnected to anything else. I also think it's not impossible that Wolfe either forgot this or the second Green Man scene got edited out. But in support of the "forgetting" theory it always bugged me that the slave Sev meets asks Severian to mention him to Malrubius and to ask Malrubius a question and, when Sev later meets up with Malrubius again the matter, as far as the reader knows, never comes up again....

- Shell

Lisa Schaffer-Doggett — 22 Jul 2003, 01:52 · follows cilluff1 at optonline.net

On Monday, July 21, 2003, at 02:51 PM, cilluff1 at optonline.net wrote:

I also think it's not impossible

that Wolfe either forgot this or the second Green Man scene got edited out.

But in support of the "forgetting" theory it always bugged me that the slave Sev meets asks Severian to mention him to Malrubius and to ask Malrubius a question and, when Sev later meets up with Malrubius again the

matter, as far as the reader knows, never comes up again....

Don (referring to himself, as pleases him, in the third person) replies,

I think you mean Palaemon rather than Malrubius. I don't think Wolfe forgot to have Severian mention the slave to Palaemon. I always took it that Severian took it upon himself to answer for his master and that was the end of it. Of course I also think Severian and Palaemon are essentially the same person so take my opinion for what it's worth to you.